GLOBALLY ORIENTED CITIZENSHIP AND INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE

Interrogating Nigeria's Technical Aid Corps Scheme

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Contents

List of tables

List of charts

GLOSSARY

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States is made up of 79 countries, including 48 from Africa, 16 from the Caribbean and 15 countries in the Pacific region of the world. It was created by the Georgetown Agreement in 1975 for sustainable development and poverty reduction among its member states.
AN	Assistance to needy people
ANC	Assistance to needy developing countries
AP	Allowances of participants
AV	Adventure
Brain Drain	Human capital flight from Nigeria is commonly referred to as "brain drain". The large-scale emigration of highly-skilled people from the country is one of the main criticisms against TAC.
BW/MI	Better Wages/More Income
CD	Civic duty
CE	Cultural Exchange
CE	Cultural exchange between Nigerians and Gambians
Certificate of Service	Presented to volunteers by the Nigerian government after the completion of their service and return to Nigeria.
CNSG	Correlating Nigeria's sacrifices to Nigeria's gains
CS	Conditions of Service [in The Gambia]
CSR	Conditions of service in recipient countries
CTA	Crucial assistance from a sister African country
DV	Departing Volunteers. Volunteers who are about to leave Nigeria for the countries of assignment.
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States is a regional group of fifteen West African countries founded in 1975 to promote economic integration among the member-countries.
EM/TE	Emigration/Temporary escape from the socio-economic conditions in Nigeria.
EO	Employment Opportunity
EV	Ex-Volunteers. Volunteers who have completed their service and have returned to Nigeria
INY	Increase in number of years [of service]
IVS	International Voluntary Service
IY	Increase in number of years of service;
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NA	None of the above
NG	Needs of Gambia
NR	Needs of recipient countries

NRC	Number of recipient countries
NTAC	Nigerian Technical Aid Corps, volunteer programme run by the Federal Government of Nigeria
Orientation Programme	Two week programme of orientation for would-be volunteers, including lectures, talks and discussion, which prepares them for the work and challenges of volunteering in the recipient countries.
Peace Corps	Volunteer programme run by the United States' Government
PHS	Promotion of human solidarity and understanding
PIP	Promotion of international peace
PNI	Promotion of Nigeria's image and interest in The Gambia
PS	Public Service to fellow human beings
RNY	Reduction in Number of years [of Service]
RP	[Ensuring] Return of participants to Nigeria
RPN	[Ensuring] Return of Participants to Nigeria
RY	Reduction in number of years of service
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program is the economic policies implemented by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in developing countries
South-South Cooperation	United Nations General Assembly established the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, hosted by the UNDP in 1978 to promote, coordinate and support cooperation among developing countries, recognised as countries in the global South.
SV	Serving Volunteers. Volunteers who are currently serving
TAC	Technical Aid Corps (same as NTAC)
TAC Directorate	The federal agency in charge of the Technical Aid Corp Scheme
TCDC	Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. The formation of the body was adopted in 1978 based on the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.
UE	Unemployment
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNVS	United Nation Volunteers Service

Acknowledgements

Foreword

This Discussion Paper explores Nigeria's Technical Aid Corps (TAC) programme within the context of South-South international assistance, and as an example of an international volunteer service scheme. The author provides a concise history of TAC, locating its establishment in the adoption of a new approach in Nigeria's foreign policy in the mid-1980s. The policy shift was partly the result of growing criticism of the country's cash-driven aid diplomacy towards developing countries of the global South in the face of shrinking oil export earnings. Influenced by the US Peace Corps scheme and intent on opening a new window in the quest to promote Nigeria's interests abroad, then Nigerian Foreign Minister Bolaji Akinyemi suggested an international volunteer service based on deployment of highly skilled Nigerians to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) member states. The study provides an empirical basis for evaluating the impact on Nigeria's external image of the TAC programme after two decades of existence. The author provides comprehensive empirical, theoretical and policy perspectives on international volunteerism and locates TAC between civil nationalism and globally oriented citizenship. After a rigorous conceptual examination of the paradoxes between civic nationalism and global citizenship, the author explores the notion of globally oriented citizenship as a 'space of mediation' between national and global space(s). Linked to this is the analysis of the views of TAC volunteers themselves on the effectiveness of the programme in terms of its professed goals and motives and how the programme has affected them as individuals. This involves an analysis of the expectations and experiences of participants as well as those of their hosts in the recipient countries. This paper provides a new perspective on development aid in terms of the transfer of skills by volunteers from one African country, Nigeria, to ACP member states and as an example of South-South development cooperation. The findings bring to light the successes, limitations and potential of TAC as one of Nigeria's contributions in the spirit of globally oriented citizenship and in projecting a positive national image abroad. The information and knowledge generated by this Discussion Paper will be of immense value to development actors, scholars and policy-makers with an interest in exploring new vistas in Nigeria's aid diplomacy within the framework of South-South solidarity.

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Abstract

Conventional studies of international society have been concerned with the right relationship between duties to fellow-citizens and duties to the human race, particularly against the backdrop of the Kantian idea of cosmopolitan citizenship, which extends the sense of moral community beyond co-nationals to every member of the human race. Using Nigeria's international volunteer service programme, the Technical Aid Corps (TAC) scheme as a case study, this monograph examines the practical challenges and paradoxes inherent in this Kantian ideal, and the ways in which international volunteering is capable of mediating the limitations of nationalism and cosmopolitanism. Based on data from close- and open-ended interviews, questionnaires, newspaper reports and ethnographic study in Nigeria and the Gambia, this publication engages with the concept of globally oriented citizenship in attempting to resolve the paradoxes of civic nationalism and IVS in the African context. While noting the limitations and paradoxes of South-South international assistance programmes such as TAC, the study provides important contexts for understanding international volunteering by putting civic-national commitments in internationalist vision and conceptions of shared humanity. On the whole, the data show that international volunteering adds value to both the recipients of the goods and services of volunteering and the volunteers. This study concludes that, whether the volunteers are always altruistic or not in their motivation, the vital contributions they make, which help to accomplish the goals of human welfare and social development in their countries of service, should constitute the focal point of analysis and scholarly interest.

Introduction

Given her vast human and natural resources, particularly in the context of Africa, Nigeria has always been called on to offer assistance to less endowed countries on the continent and beyond. Since independence in October 1960, these constant requests for assistance from Nigeria were mainly in financial terms. Despite her equally vast human recourses, requests made to Nigeria were not about human resources, except in the case of peacekeeping operations, in which Nigerian soldiers were involved all over the world.

However, this was to change from the mid-1980s when new thinking prevailed on the means and methods of actualising Nigeria's foreign policy. Interestingly enough, this new thinking indicated the power of ideas and the ways in which the internationalisation of American philanthropy through the Peace Corps could encourage the establishment of a similar international voluntary service (IVS) by an African government.

Yet paradoxically, while the US Peace Corps initiative, which served as a model for the Nigerian Technical Aid Corps (TAC), was founded in an age of American renaissance – the 'Camelot years' under President John F. Kennedy – (i) 'to help the people of interested countries and areas in meeting their need for trained workers'; (ii) 'to promote a better understanding of Americans among the people served'; and (iii) 'to promote a better understanding of other people's among Americans' (Coleman 1980; Foroughi 1991; Rodell 2002; MacBride and Daftary 2005:6–7), the Nigerian version was established in an era when Nigeria faced daunting economic, social and political challenges. More than ten years of oil boom from the early 1970s to the early 1980s, when oil revenues quadrupled and accounted for over 90 per cent of export earnings and 80 per cent of all federally collectible revenue, came to an end in the mid-1980s. With this, Nigeria, which had piled up debts in international financial circles, began to face daunting economic challenges, including:

> … rapidly declining output and productivity in the industrial and agricultural sectors … worsening payments and budgets deficits, acute shortages of inputs and soaring inflation, growing domestic debt and a major problem of external debt management, decaying infrastructures, a massive flight of capital and declining *per capita* real income, among others. (Olukoshi 1998:12)

Following this and other political crises, democratic rule collapsed in December 1983.

The termination of the Second Republic (1979–83) on 31 December 1983 was followed by a palace coup on 27 August 1985. The new regime of General Ibrahim Babangida (1985–93) subsequently declared an economic emergency in

the country while adopting the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) proposed by the IMF and World Bank.

Ordinarily, these were not the best circumstances for a country to begin an elaborate programme of IVS, which would gulp several millions of dollars. However, the person who proposed the idea was not persuaded the daunting socioeconomic crises Nigeria faced should prevent her from playing an important role in global affairs. Nigeria's external affairs minister under General Babangida, Bolaji Akinyemi, a professor of political science and former director-general of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, was a product of the 'Camelot years,' as he is eager to claim. He attended Temple University, Philadelphia between 1962 and 1964. President Kennedy had been in office a year before Akinyemi arrived in the US and was assassinated the year after. However, at age 20, Akinyemi met Kennedy at the White House and was struck by the man and his ideas. While in the US, Akinyemi was particularly attracted to the concept of the Peace Corps.

In the mid-1980s and beyond, despite Nigeria's economic crisis, demands for assistance from Nigeria kept on coming from African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. As already stated, earlier assistance had been cash-driven. In response to the new demands, Akinyemi advised the military government that, rather than provide these countries with cash, which encouraged the assisted countries to employ professionals and experts from Europe or Asia, it was better to use the money to pay Nigerian technical personnel to travel to those countries to work. The Babangida regime bought the idea and thus TAC was founded.

In 2007, TAC, the first government-led formally organised IVS programme in Africa, celebrated its 20th anniversary. These two decades provide enough time to take stock of how the programme has fared. Given that it remains a truly 'unusual' international service programme, being based in the global South, the TAC scheme poses interesting empirical, theoretical and policy challenges for students and practitioners of IVS. This study seeks to address these challenges by interrogating the scheme from the perspectives of the government institution that controls the scheme, the volunteers at the three critical stages (before they depart, at the place of posting or service, after they return), and the host institutions in a recipient foreign country – in this case, The Gambia.

Despite the increasing knowledge about civic service around the world, comparatively little is known about the nature of IVS in the global South (for exceptions, see Obi and Okwechime 1999; Adebanwi 2005, 2009; McBride, Sherraden, Lombe and Tang 2007) beyond the literature on Euro-American-sponsored IVS programmes, even though this is the most prevalent form of service (McBride, Benitez and Sherraden 2003:iv). Indeed, 'Southern' IVS programmes such as TAC have been overlooked in the literature. In the global assessment of civic service by McBride, Benitez and Sherraden (2003), for instance, TAC

did not come up for mention. Against this background, this study is a major contribution to extant literature on IVS in the global South (as an example of South-South cooperation), and Nigeria in particular.

Established by the Nigerian government in 1987, TAC primarily provides (human) development assistance to ACP countries. However, given deepening economic, social and political crises in Nigeria, and against the backdrop of the worsening human capital haemorrhage the country is experiencing, critical voices are being raised on the desirability of the scheme. In the early years of his presidency, President Olusegun Obasanjo (1999–2007) instituted a semi-official scheme of attracting Nigerian professionals abroad (particularly in Europe and the US) back home. The question then arises, why should Nigeria still send her best to other nations – some of which have higher living standards than Nigeria – to serve, with the attendant risk of losing them to such countries? This matter has become critical because, as some critics have pointed out, in some cases recipient countries have requested and won the right to grant residency status to such volunteers, who were only too glad to avoid returning to the increasingly harsh economic and social conditions at home.

Consequently, after two decades of operation, the scheme is in need of scholarly evaluation. It is noteworthy that until recently there was no major research on the scheme, despite the interesting theoretical and empirical questions it raises and how it keys into what has been described as the institutionalisation of a 'global ethic' or 'cosmopolitan ideal.' Where there is scholarly attention on service programmes in Africa at all, the gaze is often focused on national (internal) civic service programmes (Adedeji n.d.; Iyizoba 1982; Obadare 2007, 2010; Omo-Abu 1997) and not on IVS. At any rate, most national civic service programmes studied in Africa involve compulsory service. Therefore, the importance of a study of a voluntary service programme that is also international cannot be over-emphasised. This study is a corrective to this oversight in the literature, first by offering a theoretical framework for interfacing IVS and civic nationalism in the African post-colony, and second, by providing empirical illustrations of the theoretical insight.

A conceptual background to the study constitutes the entry point in examining IVS *vis*-à-*vis* civic nationalism. This is followed by an attempt to shed light on the dynamic relationship between these two phenomena – international service and civic nationalism. Then follows a brief history of the Nigerian TAC scheme, including its growth, problems and prospects. The method of research is then discussed, including the approach to the study and data analysis and sources. A discussion of the findings follows this. The conclusion attempts to theorise the relationship between IVS and civic nationalism as informed by the data.

Against the backdrop of a debate about the desirability or otherwise of continuing with the scheme, what has been the contribution of IVS to engendering

civic nationalism in Nigeria? The assumption would be that by serving their country in foreign lands, the participants' sense of patriotism would be enhanced while they become better citizens. How far is this true? This report examines the relationship between participation in international civic service and the participants' commitment to their fatherland. On the other hand, it considers the impact of service on host communities, and how this has enhanced the sense of selfhood and patriotic fervour of the participants.

The overarching question in this paper is broken down as follows:

One: What factors encourage participation in IVS? Received ideas are based on the assumption that 'higher' and selfless ideals such as patriotism, civic-ness and the cosmopolitan ideal influence participation in IVS, thus overlooking or understating other predisposing factors such as sense of adventure, unemployment or even emigration and civic deficit. This study probes the relevance of these other 'lower' influences in the context of the debates in the literature on historical and cultural determinants of volunteering within different nations and cultures.

Two: Has the TAC scheme encouraged and deepened civic nationalism among participants? This question focuses on the relationship between IVS and civic nationalism. The assumption of such a direct relationship – what McBride, Sherraden and Lough (2007:5) described as a '"virtuous circle" of service and civic engagement' (see also Jastrzab *et al.* 2006; Manistsas 2000; Rockliffe 2005) – underwrites the theory and practice of IVS. This study probes the validity of this relationship in the specific instance of TAC.

Three: What is the effect of international service on recipient communities' *vis-à-vis* the 'donor' country? A key reason for the establishment of TAC is the enhancement of Nigeria's image abroad and the effort to boost her power in the comity of nations through the service or contributions of her citizens to the development of other countries. Theoretically, service in such international context is expected to build greater patriotic zeal in the server and engineer greater civicness which, when displayed abroad, is expected to improve the lives of others – foreign hosts – by keying into a 'robust global ethic,' and, ultimately, improving the image of the 'donor' country. It is important therefore to probe this with regard to a recipient country – Gambia – to ascertain if this has been achieved.

Four: Does international service contribute further to the flight of human capital? Particular forms of social, economic, cultural and political realities in the 'natal/donor' country are capable of subverting the achievement of the goals of international service. The paper also explores the relevance of such realities in the Nigerian case, given the disengagement of citizens from the Nigerian state. How international service reflects and responds to – and maybe conditions – the ambiguities and paradoxes of the Nigerian case is therefore important, given that service can also have negative consequences, such as 'brain drain.'

For many years, volunteer/civic service was abstracted from the sociocultural context that conditions it (Brown 1999). However, recent scholarship has recognised the fact that volunteer or civic service is part of, and reflects, the way societies are organised. This forms a departure point for this study.

From the (Augustine) idea of the City of God, through Kant's vision of 'perpetual peace' to Goethe's idea of world society, the notion of 'citizen of the world' has long been part of that utopian imaginary of the citizenship tradition (Isin and Turner 2002:8). Contemporary revival of 'cosmopolitan idealism' or 'transnational moral obligation' has a long chain that links it with classical ideas of virtue (see, Dagger 2002; Sassen 2002; and Linklater 2002).

The literature on civic nationalism and citizenship in Nigeria has been expanding in recent years due to the increasing debate on how to constitute citizenship and state-citizen relations. There is a growing consensus in the literature that citizenship is about care and concern (Adebanwi 2004), with the idea of global citizenship entrenching the position that care and concern is a global ethic. Yet, the implications of what is described as the 'anaemic conception' of citizenship (Taiwo 2000:19) for civic service in Nigeria are often not investigated. This discussion paper intends to explore existing research on the crisis of citizenship in Nigeria to achieve a critical perspective on civic nationalism, specifically civic duty, which is often understated and under-theorised in the contemporary African post-colony.

The Paradoxes of IVS and Civic Nationalism: Arguments for Globally Oriented Citizenship

Classical studies of international society were concerned with the right relationship between duties to fellow-citizens and duties to the human race (Linklater 2002:320). For some philosophers who have promoted the Kantian idea of cosmopolitan citizenship, 'its role is to ensure that the sense of moral community is not confined to co-nationals but embraces the species as a whole' (ibid.). Contemporary theorists of civic republicanism emphasise the role of ethical 'goodness,' specifically, civic virtue and concern for the common good shared by fellow citizens (Honohan 2002:11). This *territorialised* ethical goodness, the idea of 'a determinate community' for the exercise of civic virtues, seems to clash with the 'cosmopolitan ideal,' a 'universal community of humankind' (Linklater 2002:321). Challenging for the theory of citizenship, therefore, is the exploration of ways in which de-territorialised forms of citizenship are linkable to appropriate kinds of global community (Delanty 1998:33). Relating civic republicanism and expanding it beyond the nation state holds a theoretical allure for understanding the interface of civic nationalism and IVS.

As Derek Heater (2002:64) argues, in the civic republican tradition of citizenship, 'citizenly duties are civic qualities put into practice.'

> The whole [civic] republican tradition is based upon the premise that citizens recognize and understand what their duties are and have a sense of moral obligation instilled into them to discharge their responsibilities. Indeed, individuals were considered barely worthy of the title of citizens if they avoided performing their appointed duties.

In this tradition, even though understood within a national boundary in the Aristotelian sense, a critical requirement of citizenship is the possession and display of *aretē* – that is, goodness or virtue. Aristotle had long argued that the possession of *aretē* meant that the citizen must fit social and political behaviour 'to the style of the particular constitution of the *polis*' (Heater 2002:45). Thus, 'the good citizens were those wholly and efficiently committed through thought and action to the common weal. Moreover, by living such a life the citizen benefited himself [*sic*] as well as the state: he [*sic*] became a morally more mature person' (ibid).

However, since the late 19th century, the civic republican tradition of citizenship has been progressively eroded by the liberal tradition that focuses on individual freedom and rights (ibid.:69, 72). Yet, from the early decades of the 20th century there have also been very strong movements for the integration of the civic republican and liberal traditions so as to harness the greatest benefits of both perspectives and practices. This is based on some consensus that 'there

should be … some balance, however rough it might be, between freedom and rights for the individual on the one hand and commitments and duties to the community on the other. Without such a balance, civic virtue is submerged by selfishness' (ibid.:72).

In this context, Heater argues for two approaches to the 'worthy revival by adaptation' of the civic republican model. The first is to adjust the 'detailed precepts and practices' of the approach 'to modern life' and the other is to 'rethink the main components and their relationships to other, successful and relevant ideas' (ibid.:75). In the context of the first, rather than the classical ideas of displaying citizenship virtue by joining the citizen army, young people can now be mobilised instead for civilian voluntary community service (ibid.:76). In the context of the second, the idea of 'community' has been seriously debated. What constitutes the 'community' to which citizens are implored to show commitment and responsibility? In attending to this question, there have been arguments in favour of communities beyond the local or the national state, that is a 'supracommunity,' a 'community of communities' (Etzioni 1993), or a 'global community' (Iriye 2002), which, while linking membership and participation to a primary political community, nevertheless expands that community beyond territorial limits of primary allegiance.

The 'specific realities of citizenship' in this context, both as *status* and *experience* (Falk 1993:40), means that a new form of 'global citizenship' emerges as an expression of 'the dynamics of economic, cultural, and ecological integration that are carrying human experience beyond its modernist phase of state/society relations.' Posits Falk (1993:40-1), 'the extension of citizenship to its global domain tends to be aspirational in spirit, drawing upon a long tradition of thought and feeling about the ultimate unity of human experience, giving rise to a politics of desire that posits for the planet as a whole a set of conditions of peace and justice and sustainability.' Thus, 'the global citizen … adheres to a normative perspective – what needs to happen to create a better world.'

This emergent *form* of citizenship implies that while 'traditional' citizenship operates spatially, global citizenship 'operates temporally, reaching out to a future to-be-created, and making a person a "citizen pilgrim," that is, someone on a journey to "a country" to be established in the future in accordance with more idealistic and normatively rich conceptions of political community' (Falk 1993:48).

However, Bhikhu Parekh rejects the particular forms of 'cosmopolitanism' that underlie the idea of 'global citizenship.' In doing so, I will argue that Parekh theoretically resolves the core paradoxes of civic nationalism and IVS, particularly in the context of the postcolonial states of the global South.

The assumption of a 'global or cosmopolitan citizen, one who claims to belong to the whole world, has no political home and is in a state of what Martha

Nussbaum calls "voluntary exile," is dismissed by Parekh (2003:12) as one that betrays the 'obvious dangers of cosmopolitanism.' This is so because, one, it 'ignores special ties and attachments to one's community'; two, it 'is too abstract to generate the emotional and moral energy needed to live up to its austere imperatives'; and three, it 'can also easily become an excuse for ignoring the well-being of the community one knows and can directly influence in the name of an unrealistic pursuit of the abstract ideal of universal well-being' (ibid.). This form of cosmopolitanism is not only bad in itself, argues Parekh, but it 'also has the further consequence of provoking a defensive reaction in the form of narrow nationalism. Nationalism and cosmopolitanism feed off and reinforce each other, and the limitations of one give pseudo-legitimacy to the other.'

The internationalism evident in the ideal of international volunteering is capable of mediating between the limitations of nationalism and cosmopolitanism. As Parekh posits:

> With all their limitations, political communities in one form or another have long been an inescapable part of our life. They shape us, are centres of our loyalty and attachment, and constitute an important element in our self-definition. Since they are a source of moral and emotional energy, to ignore them is to deprive us of a vital moral resource. We should instead find ways of redefining, reorienting and building on them and using their resources for wider moral purposes. (ibid.)

Parekh explains that modern human beings have both general and specific duties owed to all human beings and to some of them respectively. The different sources of the two sets of duties, even if related, he continues, are distinct and mutually irreducible (ibid.:7). Consequently, a recognition of this 'provides a useful framework for exploring the nature of global citizenship' (ibid.:8).

Parekh successfully provides 'a new meaning to the familiar ideas of global citizenship and cosmopolitanism' by positing a 'globally oriented citizenship' as a corrective to 'global citizenship,' in that the former recognises that 'we have moral duties to humankind, that they have a political content and character, and that they are best discharged through our political communities' (ibid.:12).

> The cosmos is not yet a *polis*, and we should not even try to make it one by creating a world state, which is bound to be remote, bureaucratic, oppressive, and culturally bland. If global citizenship means being a citizen of the world, it is neither practicable nor desirable. There is another sense, however, in which it is meaningful and historically relevant. Since the conditions of life of our fellow human beings in distant parts of the world should be a matter of deep moral and political concern to us, our citizenship has an inescapable global dimension, and we should aim to become what I might call a globally oriented citizen. A global or cosmopolitan citizen, one who claims to belong to the whole world, has no political home and is in a state of … 'voluntary exile.' By contrast a globally oriented

citizen has a valued home of his own, from which he reaches out to and forms different kinds of alliances with others having homes of their own. Globally oriented citizenship recognizes both the reality and the value of political communities, not necessarily in their current form but at least in some suitably revised form, and calls for not cosmopolitanism but internationalism. (ibid.)

There are three important components of this thesis of globally oriented citizenship that are important to resolving the paradoxes of civic nationalism and IVS in the African context. They provide important contexts for understanding international volunteering in that they put civic-national commitments within an internationalist vision and commitments. The first 'involves constantly examining the policies of one's country and ensuring that they do not damage and, within the limits of its resources, promote the interests of humankind at large'; the second 'involves an active interest in the affairs of other countries, both because human well-being everywhere should be a matter of moral concern to us and because it directly or indirectly affects our own. A globally oriented citizen has a strong sense of responsibility for the citizens of other countries, and feels addressed by their pleas for help.' And the third, it 'involves an active commitment to create a just world order, one in which different countries, working together under fair terms of cooperation, can attend to their common interests in a spirit of mutual concern' (ibid.:12).

These three conditions of reconciling territorially specific policies with the promotion of the interests of common humanity; active interest in, and concern with the processes in other countries within the purview of a common humanity; and active commitment to the creation of a just global order roundly reconcile the limitations of civic nationalism with the transcendental ideals that undergird IVS.

One issue that has raised much debate in the literature of volunteerism is the issue of motive in general and altruism in particular. What is the role of motive in determining volunteerism? Is altruism a condition for defining volunteerism? Motives are often described as an altruism-egoism mixture (see, Clary *et al.* 1996; Smith 1981, 1997; Nylund 2000; Van Til 1988; Yeung 2004). However, sociologists are largely sceptical of the existence of identifiable 'drives, needs or impulses that might inspire volunteerism' (Wilson 2000:218). Yet Wilson has argued against this, because 'motives play an important role in public thinking about volunteerism' and 'activities that seem to be truly selfless are the most esteemed' (Cnaan *et al.* 1996:375 in ibid.). Against the backdrop of individual-level theories of human capital, exchange theory and social resource theory, Wilson (ibid:219–30) attempts to explain age, gender and race variations in volunteering.

Michael Palmer has argued that there are two main motivations for volunteering. The first is described as 'the *altruistic*,' while the other is 'the *self-centric*'

(Palmer 2002:638). In spite of the 'non-altruistic' basis identified by Palmer as the second main motivation for volunteering, he still concludes that 'rarely does anyone volunteer strictly for monetary reasons' (ibid.:639). For Anne Birgitta Yeung (2004:21–2), volunteer motivation is a research area of particular significance for two reasons. 'First, individual motivation is the core of the actualization and continuity of voluntary work from both a theoretical research perspective and a practical standpoint …. Second, volunteer motivation provides an excellent research area for reflection on, and exploration of, the sociological conception of late-modern commitment and participation.'

However, while not denying that benefits accrue to the volunteer, some scholars argue that volunteering does not require the establishment of the 'right' motive (Wilson and Musick 1997:695). For instance, in 1981 David Horton Smith argued that 'the essence of volunteerism is *not* altruism, but rather the contribution of services, goods, or money to help accomplish some desired end, without substantial coercion or direct remuneration' (Smith 1981:33). Yet this conclusion does not exclude the ethical condition which is native to the idea and practices of volunteering. For instance, Wilson and Musick (1997:695) see volunteering as premised on an ethical relationship between the volunteer and the recipient because the relationship is 'ultimately mobilized and regulated by moral incentives' (Scheravish 1995:5 in ibid.). Even if, when interviewed, volunteers' explanations of their altruistic motives can be analysed within the regular 'vocabulary of motives,' given that 'volunteer work means that people *give* their time to others,' Wilson and Musick (1997:695), following Wuthnow (1991), argue that, 'we have no right to dismiss as rationalizations of material interests people's statements of commitment to ideals of justice, fairness, caring and social responsibility.'

Notwithstanding this, I would like to argue that the literature on volunteering in general, and international volunteering in particular, has been and can be further enriched by attempting to map the expressed motives of volunteers, as this can help in improving the quality of service delivery and the overall conditions of volunteering both for the volunteers and the recipients.

TAC and IVS

In this section, IVS is linked to the ideals of civic nationalism and placed in the context of Nigeria's TAC scheme. It is assumed that service impacts positively on citizenship (Perry and Katula 2001:336). This connection – located within the republican conception of citizenship emphasising duty (Dagger 2002) – has become part of the received wisdom in the literature of service and citizenship. Though very attractive, the notion of civic nationalism implicit in (state-organ-

ised) IVS, which presents it as the expression of the rational and voluntary will of individuals, can be problematic, particularly in instances where there is great dissonance between this notion and the socioeconomic and political conditions that predispose people towards international service.

There is an emergent consensus among students of volunteerism about the structural changes that have been witnessed between the 'old,' 'classical' or 'traditional' forms of volunteering and the 'new' or 'modern' volunteering (Rehberg 2005:109). 'Old' volunteering 'is closely connected to certain social *milieus* such as religious or political communities, involves a long-term and often membership-based commitment, and for which altruistic motivations play a key role for the involvement of individuals.' However, 'new' volunteering 'is more project-oriented, and volunteers have specific expectations as to form, time, and content of their involvement' (ibid.:109–10).

Voluntary service has been defined as 'an organized period of engagement and contribution to society sponsored by public or private organizations, and recognized and valued by society, with no or minimal monetary compensation to the participant' (Sherraden 2001). The free giving of time and service 'for the benefit of others' (Wilson and Musick 1997:695) is critical to the understanding of volunteerism. However, while national civic service involves the devotion of time and energy domestically, IVS involves spending time in another country (Sherraden *et al.* 2006:165).

There are two principal forms of IVS identified. These include service that promotes international understanding and service that provides development aid and humanitarian relief (Smith *et al.* 2005). The first type of IVS includes 'programs that foster cross-national understanding, global citizenship, and global peace.' Typically, volunteers in this type of programme do not require special skills or qualifications. They only need to be willing to learn and serve, because the emphasis is on 'the international experience and the contributions to cross-cultural skills, civic engagement, personal development, commitment to voluntarism, and fostering development of global awareness' (Sherraden *et al.* 2006:166). On the other hand, IVS for development aid and humanitarian relief 'focus[es] on the expertise and experience which volunteers bring to their assignment.' Significantly, Sherraden *et al.* (ibid.: 168) note that, although the educational value of the experience for the volunteers and the impact that their services have on international understanding are not ignored, such benefits are deemed secondary in comparison to the primary goals of the skills transferred and the technological assistance provided by the volunteer, 'especially contributions to reconstruction and/or sustainable development.'

This description is true for the TAC scheme because, while its primary aim is to provide technical assistance to recipient countries, it also hopes to provide opportunities for cooperation and understanding between Nigeria and recipient

countries and facilitate 'meaningful contacts between youths of Nigeria and those of the recipient countries.'

As Cliff Allum (2007:7) argues, historically the models of international volunteering have not only been North-South, but very often 'from one nation-state to the South.' Therefore, Nigeria's TAC is an exceptional scheme. This explains why in much of the literature on international service, it is often not mentioned (for recent exceptions, see Adebanwi 2005, 2009; Sherraden 2007).

Technical Aid Corps: From the US Peace Corps to TAC

As already stated, the vision of an international civic service scheme in Nigeria was direct influenced by the 'Camelot Years' in the US. Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, who was then Nigeria's external affairs minister (1985–87) and author of the scheme, stated that:

> Firstly, I am an unabashed admirer of President John F. Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States, a President who not only influenced my generation but who molded my world view. I first met President Kennedy in 1962 on the lawns outside the West Wing of the White House. I was only 20 years old. My first year as an undergraduate was spent under the Kennedy presidency and I still remember vividly that day of November 22, 1963 when he was assassinated as if it was yesterday. I had just finished an economics class at Temple University, Philadelphia. (Akinyemi, n.d.).

Even though the Kennedy presidency lasted only one year after Akinyemi arrived in the US, he revealed that 'all of us who studied in the United States in the entire 1960s regard ourselves as the Kennedy generation.'

> We were imbued with the idea that public service was the highest calling, deserving of the service of the 'The Best and the Brightest' [title of a book on Kennedy's appointees by David Halberstam]. We were imbued with the idea that a 'Peace Corps' was better than a war corps, that young and old Americans working in the villages around the world was better than American marines landing in villages in the world … that the human spirit has no limitation in achievement ... My generation grew up to believe that beauty, grace and dignity were important in governance thanks to Kennedy, hence the one word used to describe his administration was CAMELOT. Yes, Kennedy made it possible for us to believe that world civilization was a collection of national civilizations and that it was counterproductive to push a set of national interests to the disadvantage of the interests of other nations. (ibid.)

Thus, TAC can be regarded as a product of the ideas that prevailed in the Kennedy 'Camelot Years'. As Akinyemi explained:

> I admired the Peace Corps, what it entailed; the vision of it. And saw how it turned the 'ugly American' into the 'friendly American'… [So I thought that just] as the Peace Corps helped in putting a human face on the United States, [an international volunteer programme] may also help to counteract the image of Nigeria abroad. So, that when people talk about 419 [Advance Fee Fraud] and the 'ugly Nigerian' in a particular country, they will remember that there was that engineer who helped to build our express road, he was a Nigerian; or the nurse who helped save my baby when my baby was sick, was a Nigerian; or the medical doctor that was attached to the State House was a Nigerian … (Akinyemi, Interview, Lagos, 27 July 2006)

Against this backdrop, Akinyemi proposed that instead of continuing with the pattern of Nigeria's foreign aid assistance that was primarily based on cash to needy countries in Africa and the Caribbean – which was then used to employ French, British or Indian professionals – it was better for Nigeria to send Nigerian professionals to those countries and then pay them (ibid.).

Prior to this era, Nigeria's cash-donations to needy countries were based on altruism de-linked from perceived national interests (Directorate of TAC 2004:16). This form of assistance was eventually regarded as 'wasteful,' thus leading to the articulation of a well-structured and more enduring scheme. As the TAC document explains, the scheme 'was seen as a more durable and visible form of aid as opposed to outright cash donation, which left no remarkable landmark beyond the easily forgettable impact of the moment … This represents an important policy shift from the hitherto uncoordinated policy of direct financial assistance to ACP (African, Caribbean, and Pacific) countries' (ibid.:15). The director-general of the directorate of TAC, Ambassador Mamman M. Daura explained:

> Prior to 1987 [when TAC was established] technical assistance to most countries that Nigeria now assists [through TAC] was cash-based. Nigeria thought that all that these countries needed was money to attend to their needs. The era of cash-assistance is no more. Nigeria realized that the cash assistance only had the impact of the moment. Two, Nigeria also realized that the modern approach to assistance is people-oriented programmes; programmes that will impart on the people of the recipient countries. So, these informed the decision in 1987 to start TAC. (Daura, Interview, Abuja, 27 April 2005)

The statute establishing the TAC scheme, Decree 27, was signed into law in January 1993, six years after the scheme took off.

Background

> *Arise, O Compatriots, Nigeria calls, obey … to serve with heart and might.*
> (Excerpt from the Nigerian National Anthem)

It is important to provide the background for the establishment of TAC as the only institutionalised IVS scheme in Africa (Adebanwi 2005:57). The social, economic and political conditions under which TAC was started and nurtured were 'impossible': only a country defined by paradox, such as Nigeria, could endure them. What influenced the creation of such an elaborate and capital-intensive programme of international service when all the objective, material conditions in Nigeria were against it?

Nigeria in the late 1980s was afflicted by many socioeconomic and political problems, including capital flight, low capacity utilisation, rising and unprecedented levels of unemployment and under-employment, lowered life expectancy, flight (brain drain) of highly skilled manpower, massive devaluation of the Naira, shrinking foreign reserves and an uncertain political future. Only a couple of years earlier, one of the major public symbols of increasing social anomie was Andrew, a fictional disillusioned young Nigerian, who was regularly exhorted not to 'check out' (go into economic exile) of Nigeria. This was the context in which TAC was started: a government working hard to counter brain drain instituted a programme of international service to 'fly the country's flag' outside its borders.

However, despite its economic, political and social crises, the *national imaginary* in Nigeria was that of the 'Giant of Africa,' with an important leadership role on the continent and even in the Black World. This scheme can thus be understood in the context of this national imaginary. The principal foreign policy objective of Nigeria is promoting and protecting the nation's national interests in its interactions with the outside world and particular countries in the international system. Specifically, the national interests comprise:

- defence of the country's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.
- restoration of human dignity to black men and women all over the world, particularly the eradication of colonialism and white minority rule from the face of Africa.
- creation of political and economic conditions in Africa and the world that will facilitate preservation of the territorial integrity and security of all African countries, but also foster national self-reliance in African countries.
- promotion of world peace and justice.

These principles, objectives and interests have been the guiding force behind Nigeria's foreign policy since independence (Itam 2005).

A new military regime came to power in August 1995, headed by General Babangida. The regime promised an action-oriented foreign policy and undertook major initiatives towards enhancing the achievement of Nigeria's national interests and objectives (ibid.). At its inception, the TAC scheme was specifically designed to serve Nigeria's national interests as a component of its foreign policy (Directorate of TAC 2004:15). The directorate states further that the scheme:

> … was conceptualised as a complement to Nigeria's traditional diplomacy. The scheme identified the use of Nigeria's abundant pool of well-trained human resources as a foreign policy instrument and recognized its enormous potential in enhancing cooperation, understanding and develop[ment] amongst countries and peoples with a common background and shared aspirations. (ibid.)

However, the scheme was not only expected to provide manpower assistance, but also and at the same time to constitute a practical demonstration of South-South cooperation, a reactivated form of mutual cooperation and understanding in the global South given much credence in the post-Cold War era. Prior to this, Nigeria's general foreign policy at independence in 1960 included South-South cooperation. This policy assumed greater salience in the context of decreasing development assistance from developed countries in the global North and also of a UN General Assembly resolution in 1975 recognising the concept of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC). The resolution was to be followed by the 1978 Buenos Aires plan to promote and implement TCDC (ibid.:16).

As a 'practical venture' designed to expand relations with recipient countries, TAC was envisioned as a scheme that would create the enabling environment for fostering mutual understanding and cooperation in a global South confronted by expanding circles of poverty and underdevelopment (ibid.).

A directorate of TAC was set up as a parastatal (semi-independent government agency) of the Nigerian ministry of foreign affairs and charged with overall management and general administration of the scheme, recruitment and orientation exercises for volunteers, deployment of volunteers to recipient countries and debriefing of volunteers on their final return home.

The policy objectives guiding the directorate include (i) giving assistance on the basis of assessed and perceived needs of recipient countries; (ii) promoting cooperation and understanding between Nigeria and the recipient countries; and (iii) facilitating meaningful contacts between the youth of Nigeria and of the recipient countries (Directorate of TAC 2004:12). In addition, the scheme is also aimed at, (i) complementing other forms of assistance to ACP countries; (ii) ensuring a streamlined programme of assistance to other developing countries; (iii) acting as a channel for enhancing South-South cooperation; and (iv) establishing a presence in countries with which, for economic reasons, Nigeria has no resident diplomatic mission (ibid.).

As an IVS through which experienced Nigerian professionals volunteer to serve in developing countries for a renewable two-year period, the assistance offered is covered by a TAC country agreement between Nigeria and each recipient country. This outlines the obligations and responsibilities of each party.

In the past 19 years, thousands of young Nigerian professionals have participated in the programme, with Nigeria spending billions of dollars to finance

the scheme. From the initial 12 countries at the inception of the programme in 1987–88, the number of countries receiving volunteers from Nigeria has increased to 33 in 2004–06. Five new countries have joined in the last five years (Adebanwi 2005:60).

In the past few years, the number of volunteers has hovered around 150,000, of whom fewer than 4,000 are shortlisted for interview. About half this number are eventually selected and sent to the recipient nations. The volunteers are made up of journalists, medical doctors, nurses and other paramedics, as well as lawyers, teachers and engineers, lecturers and university administrators, and they work in the recipient countries in the health, education, legal and public sectors. The Nigerian government pays them a $700 monthly allowance and N10, 000 (less than $100) 'off-shore' (paid into their local account) during their two-year postings.

Given that Nigeria has faced acute economic and political crises herself since 1987, the sacrifices made by the country and her volunteers are therefore empirically interesting and theoretically challenging.

Growth of TAC

The process of recruiting TAC volunteers takes several months, sometimes more than a year. First, qualified volunteers apply to the federal ministry of foreign affairs, which then draws up a shortlist of applicants. The shortlisted candidates are invited for interviews, after which the final list is drawn. Specialised screening and selection committees coordinate the recruitment of volunteers.

Those on the final list undergo security checks and medical check-ups. This is followed by the orientation course. Usually, after the orientation volunteers are released on secondment by their employers. They are then flown to the different countries. This is not automatic, however. The dates of departure depend on the preparedness of the host countries. However, not all those who attend the orientation are subsequently deployed.

The federal government of Nigeria is responsible for paying the tax-free onshore and off-shore allowances, while the host country grants volunteers exemption from local income tax. The host-country also provides accommodation and other facilities, including free medical services and transportation. These services may vary, depending on the TAC-host country agreement signed at the commencement of the programme, which stipulates the roles and responsibilities of both parties in the operation of the scheme (Itam 2005).

The fields covered in the first (1987/88-1990) batch of the scheme included medicine, teaching, engineering, nursing, accountancy, land surveying, law, agriculture, and architecture and they were sent to 12 beneficiary countries. One hundred and five volunteers were deployed. Sports was added in the second

batch of volunteers, with more recipient countries being added, including Ghana, Lesotho, Guyana, Djibouti, Burkina Faso, Liberia and Dominica. However, two fewer volunteers were deployed (103). In the 1992-94 round, microbiology, pharmacy and radiology were added and the number of beneficiary countries increased to 16, with 190 volunteers deployed. In the fourth round (1994–96), 277 volunteers were deployed to 17 countries, while the fifth batch (1997–99) comprised 192 volunteers, who were deployed to 13 ACP countries. In 1999-2001, 254 volunteers deployed to 12 countries. The 2004–06 round saw 382 volunteers deploying to 17 countries.[1]

In all, the TAC scheme has deployed 1,677 volunteers to 33 countries over the last 18 years. The fields covered included, in addition to those already listed, medical laboratory technicians and meteorology (Directorate of TAC 2004: 9–10).

Stages of the Service Program

Below, I describe the three stages of the scheme that were my focus. First was the orientation course for the 2006–08 volunteers (which I witnessed). This was followed by a visit to volunteers onsite in The Gambia and, finally, interaction between 2005 and 2006 with some of the former volunteers in Nigeria.

Selection Process and Orientation Programme

The scheme is regularly advertised in the Nigerian media prior to the selection period. Of a list of 150,000 applicants, for this round 10,000 were shortlisted and invited for interview. The shortlist criteria included at least 10 years experience in the volunteer's profession, evidence of quality work and good conduct in the chosen profession and references from employers or professional bodies. The interviews took place in Kano in northern Nigeria between June and July 2005. Two thousand volunteers were eventually selected.

I attended the two-week orientation programme for volunteers held in the Imo state capital of Owerri between 27 February and 11 March 2006. The volunteers were divided into two batches of 1,000, with each batch going through one week of orientation. The orientation programme took six days for each batch. Before 2006, orientation for volunteers was done within one week, but because of the increase in the number of volunteers applying and being selected, the orientation for this batch took two weeks.

The volunteers who were taken through the first week of orientation (27 February-4 March 2006) were basically in the areas of medicine and health, including medical doctors, ophthalmologists, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, vet-

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1. The figures for the 2006–08 round were not available at the time of conducting this research.

erinary doctors, laboratory technicians and physiotherapists. The second batch, who participated in the orientation course between 5 and 11 March 2006, included engineers, surveyors, architects, town planners, teachers/lecturers, agriculturalists, lawyers and accountants,.

The course included speeches by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Alhaji Abubakar A. Tanko and the governor of the host state of Imo, Chief Achike Udenwa. In addition, there were lectures on foreign policy, health, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, public service rules, the economic programme of the government, Internet, science education, art of teaching, volunteers' perception, legal rights, duties and obligations of a foreigner under international law, experiences of former TAC volunteers, culture and national pride and Nigeria's role in Africa. The lectures and talks were presented by foreign service officials, senior civil servants, lawyers, academics and former volunteers.

The key issues underlying participation by volunteers in the scheme came up regularly, sometimes in informal speeches and in conversation between the volunteers I interacted with. These key issues included 'patriotic service,' Nigeria's (external) image, rewards (psychological, material, personal and national) and the economic implications of participation in the programme and service by the volunteers.

Many of the workshop speakers emphasised these issues in different ways. For instance, the deputy chair of the foreign relations committee of the federal House of Representatives, speaking extemporaneously at the workshop, told volunteers that, 'I know that many of you, ninety percent of you, are here for economic reasons. *Man must chop*' (lit. 'man must eat').[2] Indeed, one volunteer asked during a question and answer session how much the volunteers would be paid, 'so that we can know the extent of our sacrifice.' However, the lawmaker reminded volunteers that negative conduct by a single volunteer could have grave consequences for the image of the country. He therefore enjoined the volunteers, 'as ambassadors of Nigeria, to do your best so as to help correct the bad image of Nigeria' (Owerri, fieldwork notes, 6 March 2006).

Another key issue is the concern among newly recruited volunteers for a 'good posting.' The perception of what constituted a good posting was difficult to measure. However, from the reactions of volunteers to the jokes, prayers and off-the-cuff comments of the officials and my informal discussions with many of them, for most a 'good posting' primarily included the Caribbean countries, from where some hope to be able to 'cross over to the United States.' For others, a 'good posting' was a very comfortable place of primary assignment in a 'good country' and with opportunities for professional fulfilment and access to news

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2.   This is a very popular phrase in Nigeria, emphasising the primacy of earning a living.

tools and techniques.[3] Indeed, one speaker at the orientation programme emphasised this by stating that, 'You give them (foreign hosts) something and take something back (because) the volunteers get new ideas and new insights (into their work)' (Owerri, fieldwork notes, March 2006). These desires were strong among the newly recruited volunteers. All the officials and invited speakers at the Owerri orientation course were very aware of this. They too were sensitive to the economic and social realities of Nigeria. Thus, it was not surprising that during the orientations, prayers and jokes were responded to positively or negatively based on the wish and hope for a 'good posting.'

For instance, the lawmaker mentioned above ended his speech with, 'I wish you *good* and *early* posting.[4] The volunteers chorused aloud, 'Amen!' Also, the anchor person for the programme of events, Mrs. Florence Mohammed, an affable senior information officer at the TAC directorate, often mentioned some very poor countries, asking who among the volunteers would like to go there, to which they would often chorus 'Noooooooo!' But when she mentioned other countries, particularly Caribbean countries, the volunteers often shouted 'Yeeeeeeesss!' or raised their hands to signify their desire to be posted there. However, knowledge and ignorance played key roles in the aspirations of departing volunteers. For example, when Mohammed asked who would like to go to Belize, a few raised their hands, but most did not respond because they were ignorant of Belize's geographical location. Had they known it was in the Caribbean, given the eagerness of many for this region, they would most probably have shouted 'Yes.' By contrast, when she asked if they would like to go to Rwanda – the small East African country that had recently emerged from genocide – the chorus was a loud, 'Noooooo' (Owerri, fieldwork notes, March 2006).

These responses might be taken as on-the-spot reactions or light-hearted. If so, they might not be critical in assessing the views and aspirations of volunteers and how these reflect the degree of their commitment to sacrificing themselves. However, while the implications of these reactions cannot be overstated, yet I suggest they are critical in locating the kind of socioeconomic imaginary that subtends the expected 'sacrifices' of the volunteers.

In my discussions with the departing volunteers during the orientation programme, many expressed anxieties about how they might benefit from volunteering. This is to be expected, since the idea of volunteering is not devoid of expectations of positive effects on volunteers. A few were eager to influence the

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3. This wish for technical knowledge or professional exposure was corroborated by some of the serving volunteers in The Gambia.

4. Due to the delay by certain recipient countries, some volunteers may not travel to their countries of assignment for several months, hence the prayer for an 'early posting.'

countries to which they would be posted. Some, noticing my interaction with officials, even inquired whether I could help in getting them 'good postings.'

Despite this, it can be argued that the issue of perception – particularly wrong perceptions – is one of the primary purposes of the orientation. Indeed, there was emphasis on having the correct perception of service during the orientation. For instance, one of the speakers, Folorunso O. Otukoya of the federal ministry of foreign affairs, specifically told new recruits that what they wanted to embark upon is 'a charitable work,' for which 'money should not be your focus.' He stated that volunteers must be ready to live 'a threadbare life,' adding that 'Nigeria will not be glad if a volunteer is overtly materially-minded' (Owerri, fieldwork notes, March 2006). The chairman of the TAC board, Chief Nathan Nwobodo, described TAC as 'distinctively Nigeria's contribution to continental and global harmony,' and told volunteers their sacrifices would be important building blocks in ensuring Nigeria's image around the world is made positive. Another speaker told the departing volunteers: 'Do not belittle what you do. You are ambassadors of Nigeria' (Owerri, fieldwork notes, March 2006). And yet another told the volunteers that they are 'exporting Nigeria' (ibid.).

On the theme of patriotic service, Otukoya described a TAC volunteer as 'a person who is committed to others more than himself.' Such a volunteer, he told the new recruits 'will pursue actions in disregard of the self … (The volunteers) must be ready to do the job that others are not available to do.' He enumerated the difficult challenges that volunteers might face in their places of primary assignment and suggested general ways of dealing with these. For instance, he stated that hosts may feel 'intimidated' by the knowledge of volunteers and attempt to obstruct them in the discharge of their duties. In such cases, he advised, the best way is to face up to the challenge and triumph over the obstructions.

The position of the TAC directorate and the country on 'brain drain' also came up during the orientation. Some new recruits were eager to know the stance of the directorate should they be retained by their hosts after their service. The head of the directorate stated that it was not opposed to the idea of volunteers staying in their countries of primary assignment as long as due process was followed. The director added that there were many ex-TAC volunteers working in so many recipient countries, adding that the directorate ensured they were not exploited and that their interests were well protected.

'Patriotic Journey':[5] Technical Aid Corps in The Gambia

I chose The Gambia for a number of reasons. The first is that it receives the highest number of volunteers biennially, indeed, more volunteers than any other

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5. This is how a former volunteer, Idris Sada Duwan, described the TAC scheme. Paper presented at the 2006–08 TAC orientation exercise, Owerri, 7 March 2006.

recipient country since the scheme started. Between 1987 and 2004, it hosted 363 volunteers, twice as many in the same period as Zambia (181 volunteers), the second highest recipient country. Health workers comprise the biggest block of volunteers to The Gambia. In the first 18 years, the country hosted 73 doctors and other medical personnel and 87 nurses, a total of 160 health workers. Another reason I chose the country is because it is very poor and obviously in dire need of foreign aid. Yet another reason was ease of access, because as a citizen of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) – to which all countries in West Africa belong – I did not need a visa. Added to that is language, because it is an English-speaking country.

It will be appropriate to give a snapshot of The Gambia. It covers 11,300 sq. km. and has a population of 1,593,256. It is one of the poorest countries in Africa, with no important mineral or other natural resources. About 75 per cent of the population depends on crops and livestock for its livelihood. The Gambia generates revenue of $90.5 million annually, with half of that coming from foreign aid. It has turned to Nigeria for skilled and experienced hands, given the country's incredible shortage of manpower and resources. For instance, Nigeria has helped Gambia to staff its national university, opened only in 1999; started a national youth service programme similar to Nigeria's own NYSC; and provided Nigerian judges to serve as Gambia's chief justices.

There were 81 volunteers in the 2004–2006 round, and they arrived in Gambia in October and November 2004.[6] During their send off from Lagos international airport, the Gambian ambassador to Nigeria, Momodou K. Jallow, asked the volunteers to pursue their primary assignment with dedication and patriotism.[7] Jallow noted that the scheme had served to unify his country and Nigeria, and asked the volunteers as 'ambassadors of Nigeria' 'to be friendly and accessible while striving to leave behind an indelible mark at the end of their service.' The Gambian envoy emphasised Nigeria's 'leadership role in the sub-region and Africa and expressed his country's deep appreciation for Nigeria's assistance as typified by TAC volunteers.'[8]

Upon receiving the first batch of volunteers in October 2004, the Nigerian high commissioner in Gambia, Madam Maryam Mohammed, appealed to the Gambian government to ensure that the TAC volunteers had good accommodation, transportation and prompt utility services in order to make their stay more comfortable.[9] Upon receiving the second batch in November of the same year,

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6. '58 Nigerian TAC Arrive,' *Daily Observer*, (Banjul, The Gambia), 11 October 2004, p. 3; 'More Nigerian TACs arrives (sic),' *Daily Observer*, 22 November 2004, p. 21.

7. 'Ambassador warns TACs to shun local politics,' *Daily Observer* (Banjul, The Gambia), 12 October 2004, p. 3. Culled from *Thisday* (Lagos).

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

Mohammed stated that the relationship between the two countries is 'waxing stronger' and that Nigeria was prepared to assist the small West African country 'in whatever way (she) could.'[10] 'We have similarities,' the ambassador further stated, 'and hope (TAC) will further make the relationship stronger.'

Return and Debriefing

When the volunteers finish their service and return to Nigeria, they are expected to write reports about their experiences during the period of service. After submitting the reports, debriefing sessions are usually held with the directorate. The reports and debriefing, according to the director of TAC scheme, Mamman Daura, are processed and used to advise the ministry of foreign affairs in drawing up and executing Nigeria's foreign policy (Interview, 6 March 2006). With this, he re-emphasised his position that the TAC scheme is a foreign policy tool for Nigeria, apart from being a humanitarian international civic service programme.

After the debriefing, the volunteers are given a 'certificate of service(s)' by the federal government, signed by the minister of foreign affairs as well as the TAC director. Subsequently, volunteers are expected to be reintegrated into their work environments at home. However, in a few cases returnee volunteers, for a number of reasons, are unable to regain their previous employment. A few others claimed that they recorded losses in terms of their status at work or their salaries, because their contemporaries and subordinates had been promoted while they were away.

Problems and Projections

Has the TAC scheme fulfilled its mission? The question is being raised by the government of Nigeria, the TAC directorate, former and serving volunteers and the Nigerian public. However, there is no consensus among these people on whether the scheme has achieved its objectives and whether it should be scrapped or continued.

When President Obasanjo was sworn into office in May 1999 after many years of military rule in the country, he reviewed many of the key institutions set up by the military regimes in the preceding decade-and-a-half. One such institution was the TAC scheme. The president, Akinyemi disclosed, made up his mind to scrap the scheme, but was prevailed upon to stay his decision by eminent Nigerians and some foreign heads of state, who noted 'how enormously useful they have found the (scheme)' (Akinyemi, Interview, Lagos, 27 July 2006). Even though President Obasanjo decided against scrapping the scheme, he had, according to the former external affairs minister and initiator of the

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10. 'More Nigerian TACs arrives (sic),' *Daily Observer*, 22 November 2004, p. 21.

TAC idea, done many things 'to diminish it' (ibid.). For instance, he draws attention to the appointment of a board for the directorate of the scheme, thereby treating the directorate as a parastatal, which Akinyemi insisted was not part of the vision of the scheme. He feared that appointment of a board would lead to interference by politicians in the recruitment of volunteers. The seven-member TAC board was inaugurated in 2001 as a means of 'strengthening the capacity of the Directorate of (TAC) and sustaining transparency in its conduct' (Directorate of TAC 2004:14).

The TAC directorate believes the scheme 'has demonstrated its utility value in consolidating Nigeria's relations with beneficiary states and created same with countries where she has no resident diplomatic presence.' The scheme, states the directorate in its handbook, 'has unquestionably brought a palpable focus to the conduct of our foreign policy, which has consequently gained the country considerable prestige and good image of a promoter of peace and development in the African, Caribbean and Pacific States and beyond' (Directorate of TAC 2004:15).

Further, the directorate argues that through TAC, as the first and perhaps only 'structured non-material (volunteer) assistance program' instituted by a country in the global South, Nigeria has taken an important lead in fostering South-South cooperation. This is the more so given that:

> Since inception, the program has invigorated South-South Cooperation through practical demonstration of the capacity of endowed countries of the South to assist other member countries … The TAC Scheme has established its indispensability within the policy framework of the beneficiary states. New countries are seeking TAC volunteers for their developmental needs while old beneficiary states are expanding the scope of their requests for volunteers. (Directorate of TAC 2004:16)

Ambassador Olu Adeniji, a former Nigerian minister of foreign affairs, believes the scheme has not been derailed in any way. In his opinion:

> The scheme has since its inception reinforced the focus of Nigeria's Foreign Policy initiatives especially aimed at strengthening and sustaining both sub-regional and regional co-operation. The TAC scheme has indeed generally invigorated the South-South Co-operation. The substantial progress so far made by the scheme is evident in the increase in the number of recipient countries, volunteers deployed biennially and the overwhelming interest from Nigerian professionals, who voluntarily show increasing desire to participate in the scheme. (ibid.:5)

Also, Florence Mohammed, head of the TAC directorate's information department, argues that, 'The scheme accords respectability to Nigeria. It is an enviable program and assures cordiality and recognition to the country' (Adebanwi 2006:60).

Sam Nujoma, ex-president of Namibia, shared the same view. '(Nigeria is) a pillar of Africa's freedom … and dependable friend,' he said. 'Nigeria has continued to grant development assistance and personnel to support my government's socio-economic programs, including the Technical Aid Corps Agreement under which Nigerian experts work in Namibia' (ibid.:60). The Zambian high commissioner to Nigeria, Godffrey Musundu, was also most grateful to Nigeria for the gesture, describing the volunteers as 'bridge builders' (*The Guardian,* 7 December 2004). Moreover, during a three-day visit to Addis Ababa in 2003, Nigeria's then foreign minister, Chief Dubem Onyia, met separately with the Ethiopian vice minister of foreign affairs, Dr Tekeda Alemu, and the education minister, Mrs. Genet Zewde, both of whom expressed their country's appreciation for Nigeria's assistance through TAC. They reportedly observed that Nigeria's assistance was desperately needed, given the Ethiopian government's new focus on capacity building. The senior Ethiopian officials told Chief Onyia that 'even though their country was receiving similar manpower training aid from Japan and Britain, their observation in the two years of the TAC scheme in Ethiopia has shown that Nigerian volunteers were the most dedicated.' They added that 'Nigeria's efforts in deepening South-south cooperation … had renewed their faith in the ability of Africans to help themselves' (*Thisday,* 4 August 2003).

However, Kingsley Osadolor, the Lagos *Guardian* columnist, disagrees with all these assessments. For him, '(A)fter 15 years of operation and several hundreds of Nigerian professionals sent abroad at government expense, the time has come to scrap the TAC scheme … TAC has become a virtually worthless program, a drainpipe with little or no foreign policy dividend to reap from it' (*The Guardian,* 26 February 2003: 60–1). He specifically mentions the number of volunteers from certain northern states in the federation, which 'are in dire need of local manpower, yet … prefer to export whatever little human capital is at their disposal … [R]ather than maximize their local human capital, the states are about to suffer another hemorrhage as TAC volunteers are interviewed, selected and posted abroad' (ibid.). Osadolor argues further:

> And it is not as if this country has excess manpower problems. Instead, there is insufficiency of manpower. Now, we are back to the classic case of exporting what we don't have and importing what we have. As things go with us Nigerians, the TAC program has become patronage gravy. So there is a whole bureaucracy managing it and all kinds of favor-seekers rush to it for a bit of the gravy. Otherwise, it is mind-boggling that educationally backward states, which should be thinking of retaining manpower, have hundreds of their indigenes scrambling to become TAC volunteers. (ibid.)

Indeed, one newly recruited volunteer asked during the orientation course in Owerri in March 2006 why Nigeria spends so much on TAC and yet failed to

secure the support of many of the countries it assisted. She cited the example of Nigeria's bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. Was Nigeria not wasting its resources? she asked. But the officials responded by telling the volunteer she was one of the people who would help reverse the 'hostile attitude' of such countries to Nigeria through her excellent service (Owerri, fieldwork notes, March 2006).

However, Folorunso Otukoya, a ranking official of the TAC directorate in its early years, contended that the question of 'waste of resources' does not arise since Nigeria would still have had to provide financial assistance to the recipient countries, even if there was no TAC scheme (Owerri, fieldwork notes, March 2006). He stated in his lecture at the orientation course for the 2006-08 cohort that during the oil boom of the late 1970s and early 1980s, Nigeria gave huge grants to many ACP countries, which were eventually pocketed by the leaders. Despite this, 'Nigeria has a duty to awaken the colored people of the world to realize their collective dreams.' What TAC does, he argued, is to ensure that assistance is rendered directly to the people of these countries, rather than having the cash end up in the pockets of leaders.

Otukoya gave two examples of TAC's usefulness to both recipient countries and Nigeria. In Fiji, he said, a Nigerian volunteer in the Fijian ministry of justice drew up the charges against the failed coup plotters in the country. This role, he claimed, drew attention to the volunteer and raised his profile so much so that security around him had to be beefed up. This was an example of how volunteers serve the course of justice and promote human rights around the world. On the other hand, he gave the example of a Nigerian head of state who wanted an urgent message delivered to the president of a small, unnamed Caribbean country where Nigeria did not maintain a mission. He revealed that when the foreign ministry officials arrived in that country on a weekend, they found a TAC volunteer who had befriended the prime minister. The volunteer then took them to the prime minister's village to meet him (Owerri, fieldwork notes, March 2006).

Ambassador Mamman Daura, the director-general of the scheme, used the continued requests by recipient countries for volunteers from Nigeria to illustrate the success of the scheme. Apart from this, he cited examples of places where TAC volunteers have become crucial to nation-building. For instance, he stated that a TAC volunteer was currently the surveyor-general of Belize:

> I think the scheme has been most successful judging by the expansion of the scheme over the years. We started with a few countries, but now we have more than 30 countries benefiting from the scheme. The other evidence is that the number of volunteers has increased over the years. So there is a phenomenal increase in the interest both within and outside Nigeria. Continuously, we have new countries joining. (Interview, Abuja, 27 April 2005)

Likewise, the permanent secretary in the ministry of foreign affairs in Abuja, Ambassador Wadibia-Anyanwu, lauded the track-record of TAC, and declared the scheme 'a total success' (*The Guardian,* 7 December 2004):

> TAC as an instrument of Nigeria's foreign policy has continued to play an enduring role in cementing relations between Nigeria and the beneficiary countries of Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific. It has sufficiently demonstrated its value as an effective instrument of South-South cooperation. It is gratifying … that the scheme has created fraternal bonds, mutual respect, strong spirit of co-operation and endearment between Nigeria, on one hand, and African, Caribbean and Pacific nations, on the other. (Directorate of TAC 2004:7)

Wadibia-Anyanwu's understanding of the benefits of TAC, though expressed at the level of the nation-state, can be translated into the personal level – of the served and the servers (Adebanwi 2006:61). As regards the latter, it is often assumed that participation in international service provides a chance for the volunteers 'to make a contribution at the global level, to experience hands-on learning about another country and culture and exchange ideas with people you might not otherwise meet' (CCS, www.crossculturalsolutions.org).

However, Osadolor disagrees with the argument that, on the whole, TAC is a worthy exercise for Nigeria. He contended that the scheme was started at a point when 'the naira had not been slaughtered in the abattoir called Structural Adjustment Program,' so the naira-dollar exchange rate was far more favourable. Given current realities, he concluded, the scheme should be scrapped (Osadolor 2003).

Apart from the state of Nigeria's economy and the absence of foreign policy gains, another point usually raised in favour of scrapping the scheme is 'brain drain.' Some claim that it is absurd for a country to be sending its needed manpower abroad to help other countries while it was at the same time imploring its professionals and experts already abroad to return to help in the task of national rebuilding (Adebanwi 2005). In contrast, Daura has argued that Nigeria is too strategically placed to abandon her international responsibilities simply because of her economic crises. Regarding 'brain drain,' Daura maintains that this does not even arise because Nigeria has abundant human resources, as was evident in the number of applicants and potential volunteers eager to serve, only a fraction of whom are selected. Asked Daura:

> How do you call that brain drain? Is it not a source of pride for Nigeria that there are so many qualified Nigerians? These are people who want to serve this country; and we have the record that they serve creditably well, introducing new skills that were not there in the recipient countries, and receiving commendation. And by the time they come home, they are really ready to participate in the development of this country. (Interview, Abuja, 27 April 2005)

Daura's point about the effect of service on the servers seems to be understated in the official literature on TAC and most of the statements made by officials in the programme. The benefits of the scheme are often couched in the language of the nation-state, rather than in terms of the individuals who serve that nation-state and how the benefits that accrue to them translate into the good of the nation-state and humanity at large. Is this a reflection of the often stated citizenship crisis in Nigeria and the African post-colony at large? Does it in any way reflect the tendency to *discount* citizens? Even though international service is supposed to key into a 'global ethic' or 'cosmopolitan ideal,' is wo/man not the measure of all things? Why is the effect on the servers the least important of all the benefits that are expected to accrue to Nigeria from the scheme?

Method of Research

Approach to the Study

This study tests the following hypotheses: that there is a relationship between international service and civic nationalism; that the effect of service on the server is conditioned by the socioeconomic and political context; that under some conditions, international service may become a means of 'exit' from a state/society rather than an expression of civic commitment; and lastly, that international service can produce both positive and negative effects on the servers and the served.

Data Sources and Data Analysis

This study is based on a qualitative data-gathering method. The data for this research were gathered through primary and secondary sources. These include the library-historical method, interviewing (unstructured), questionnaire (close-ended) and narrative method. The library-historical method was used to analyse the literature on international service in general and the official documents, press releases and media publications on TAC, both in Nigeria and in The Gambia. This was done so as to understand the official and unofficial contexts in which the scheme is set and with which it interacts. This was followed by unstructured (tape-recorded) interviews with officials of the programme in Nigeria, officials of the Gambian foreign ministry, former participants, serving members of the scheme, top government officials and members of the host institutions in Gambia. Close-ended questionnaires were administered to three categories of service participants: new recruits (during the orientation programme in Owerri, Nigeria, 27 February–11 March 2006 for the 2006–08 batch), former participants and serving members of the scheme. Given the fact that officials in the TAC directorate regard the scheme as a civil (foreign) service scheme bound by the Official Secrets Act, it was impossible to do random sampling, since the principal

researcher and his research assistant could not get access to the official register of volunteers in the three categories. We tried to get round this by doing purposive selection of volunteers to fill out the questionnaires. This culminated at each stage with in-depth formal and informal interviews with volunteers. However, we tried to ensure that the different categories as regards sex, ethnicity, profession, rank and age were reflected the participants.

For the first category, the new recruits or Departing Volunteers (DV), of a population of roughly 1,000 volunteers, questionnaires were administered to 50 respondents, 5 per cent of the target population. Seven of these responses were poorly completed and had to be discarded, leaving 43 (See Table 1). For the second category, Serving Volunteers (SV) in The Gambia, 50 questionnaires were administered, of which 39 were filled out correctly and returned (See Table 2). For the last category, Ex-Volunteers (EV), 20 of the 40 questionnaires dispatched were completed correctly and returned (See Table 3). Those targeted were not chosen in random form, given the difficulties encountered and the fact that this preliminary study was not geared towards quantitative conclusions.

The author spent two weeks in The Gambia conducting interviews with volunteers and host institutions. A local research assistant was also recruited. In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 TAC volunteers, male and female, working in fields such as medicine, teaching and communications. We also interviewed seven Gambians in Banjul and Serekunda who are direct beneficiaries of TAC, including the former Gambian minister of foreign affairs, the registrar

Table 1. Survey index of departing volunteers

AGE RANGE		SEX		Area/Discipline/Profession	
20–29	3	Male	26	Engineering	4
30–39	29	Female	16	Teaching/Education	21
40–49	9			Administration	1
50 and above				Regional and Urban Planning/	1
	1			Architecture	
N/A	1	N/A	1	Health and Medicine	
TOTAL	43		43	Social Services	
				Rural Development	
				Service Industry	
				Agriculture	5
				Civil Service	
				Law	6
				Finance (Accounting,	4
				Economics, etc.)	
				Science and Technology	
				Media and information	
				N/A	1
				TOTAL	43

Table 2. Survey index of serving volunteers in The Gambia

AGE RANGE		SEX		Area/Discipline/Profession	
20–29	0	Male	28	Engineering	0
30–39	26	Female	9	Teaching/Education	18
40–49	14	N/A	2	Administration	0
50 and Above	0			Regional and Urban Planning/ Architecture	0
TOTAL	39		39	Health and Medicine	21
				Social Services	0
				Rural Development	0
				Service Industry	0
				Agriculture	0
				Civil Service	0
				Law	0
				Finance (Accounting, Economics, etc.)	0
				Science and Technology	0
				Media and information	0
				N/A	0
				TOTAL	39

Table 3. Survey index of ex-volunteers in Nigeria

AGE RANGE		SEX		Area/Discipline/Profession	
20–29	0	Male	16	Engineering	2
30–39	12	Female	2	Teaching/Education	8
40–49	6	N/A	2	Administration	0
50 and above	2			Regional and Urban Planning/ Architecture	0
TOTAL	20		20	Health and Medicine	2
				Social Services	1
				Rural Development	0
				Service Industry	0
				Agriculture	0
				Civil Service	0
				Law	0
				Finance (Accounting, Economics, etc.)	1
				Science and Technology	1
				Media and information	2
				N/A	3
				TOTAL	20

of the University of Gambia and the president and immediate past president of the Student's Union of the university.

The narrative method was used to elicit information that could not be gained through ordinary interviews and questionnaires. A few of the participants – both serving and past servers – were selected and given the latitude to tell their

stories as these connected to their motivations for service, the experiences they had and their future trajectories. This is different from the interview and questionnaire methods that sought short answers to relatively specific questions that structured the expected answers. This method brings out people's lived experience (Patterson and Monroe 1998:326–7) and provided very rich details of the experiences of volunteers.

The data gathered was subjected to qualitative analysis. First, the tape-recorded unstructured interviews were transcribed. Since the questions centred on certain basic themes relating to international service and civic nationalism, the responses were coded under specific themes and then subjected to cognitive mapping, which is a method of modelling a person's beliefs, perceptions and attitudes in a diagrammatic form (Jones 1985:59–60). Data gathered from the close-ended questionnaires were analysed through the framework method (Ritchie and Spencer 1994).[11] This involved a systematic process of sifting, charting and sorting materials according to key issues and themes.

Findings

TAC: Significance of International Civic Service

One of the key things I attempted to find out in this research was what constituted the significance of TAC for the volunteers (departing, serving and ex-volunteers) and the host community in The Gambia. It is assumed that what the volunteers regard as the significance of the scheme would in some ways affect their understanding of their roles in that context. The question of the significance of TAC was therefore posed in both the questionnaire and the in-depth interviews (See Table 4 and Chart 1). The responses to the questionnaire present general patterns of understanding of the significance of the scheme, while the in-depth interviews present a more nuanced understanding of its significance. In the case of the serving volunteers, they were also specifically requested to share their understanding of the significance of the scheme for The Gambia in particular, as opposed to their general understanding of the significance of TAC. This was also done through the questionnaire method and the in-depth interviews.

The volunteers were asked in the questionnaire to rate their responses from what they regard as the most significant to what they regard as the least significant. *Some of the options were related,* or ('positively') mutually reinforcing, but we wanted to map their conception of the scheme along different, but some-

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11. The method 'relies on the creative and conceptual ability of the analyst to determine meaning, salience and connections.' Ritchie and Spencer 1994: 177.

Table 4. General significance of TAC

	PS	EO	PHS	PIP	PNI	ANC	CD	CE	NA
D Volunteers	167	101	214	204	323	343	129	94	0
S Volunteers	223	64	235	222	228	342	109	106	0
E Volunteers	96	50	126	89	120	135	69	73	0
TOTAL	486	215	602	515	671	820	307	273	0

Codes: PS – Public service to fellow human beings; EO – Employment opportunity; PHS – Promotion of human solidarity and understanding; PIP – Promotion of international peace; PNI – Promotion of Nigeria's interests and image; ANC – Assistance to needy developing countries; CD – Civic duty; CE – Cultural exchange; NA – None of the above. 10 is awarded for the most significant, while 1 is awarded for the least significant.

Chart 1. General significance of TAC
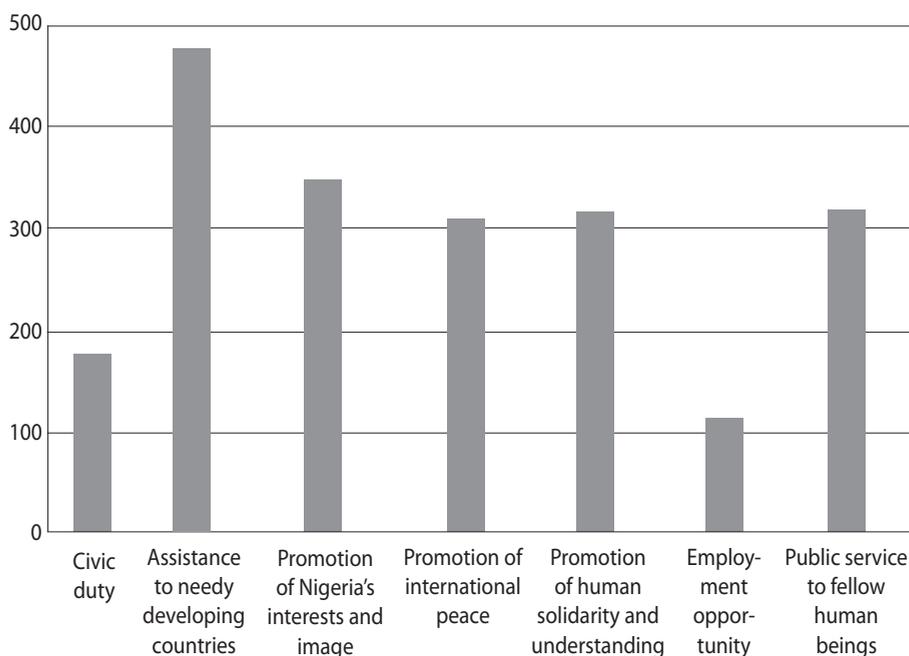
times related lines. The DVs regard 'assistance to needy developing countries' as the most significant basis for the creation of the international civic service scheme. This was shared by the Serving and Ex-Volunteers. It can therefore be concluded that for all categories of volunteers, TAC is understood as an international civic service designed by Nigeria to help needy developing countries. For the DVs, next is the 'promotion of Nigeria's national interests and image.' But this view of TAC is not shared by SVs and EVs. For both categories, the 'promotion of human solidarity and understanding' is next in the ranking of TAC's

significance. This difference can be explained by the experience of the SVs and EVs. Unlike the DVs, who have no practical experience of volunteering and therefore rank 'promotion of human solidarity and understanding' lower than 'promotion of Nigeria's national interests and image,' SVs and EVs are able to rank the significance of TAC based on empirical experience. The 'promotion of Nigeria's national interests and image' ranks as the third most significant basis for the creation of TAC for the SVs and EVs.

Also, while DVs regard the 'promotion of international peace' as the fourth most important aspect of the TAC scheme, the SVs and EVs regard 'public service to fellow human beings' as the fourth most significant characteristic. It must be said, however, that the two rank very closely with each other more for the SV than for the EV. For DVs, 'public service' ranks a distant fifth to 'promotion of international peace.' Both DVs and SVs see 'civic duty' as next in rank, while EVs regard 'cultural exchange' as more important. While 'employment opportunity' is of the least importance to SVs and EVs, it is more important to DVs than 'cultural exchange.'

The volunteers' altruistic conception of TAC was reinforced in our interactions and interviews during fieldwork in The Gambia. For instance, Opuwari Mimonitu, who was teaching physics at the Gambia University, considered the establishment of the volunteer service programme to have been motivated by service to humanity. For his part, Sunday Ayuba Magaji, a microbiologist who was serving at the Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital in the capital Banjul, saw TAC as designed to 'send people [Nigerians] to where they are needed … to assist countries where there is a desired need.'

Other volunteers also pointed to other purposes such as the need 'to promote good relationship between Nigeria at the host countries,' as Mercy Abigail Idehenre, a paediatric nurse serving with the teaching hospital in Banjul said. She also mentioned the sharing of culture as another important facet of TAC. A midwife educator in the Gambia School of Nursing and Midwifery also added 'the creation of friendship and cordiality between Nigeria and host countries' as one of the purposes of TAC. Some of the volunteers added that Nigeria, 'being the big brother of other African countries such as The Gambia,' has a duty to help such countries.

The significance of TAC was expressed by some of the Gambians interviewed along roughly the same lines as those expressed by the volunteers (See Table 5 and Chart 2). For instance, Hassan Nyai, president of the Students Union at the school of nursing stated during an interview that 'TAC volunteers are sent by Nigeria to help us in The Gambia,' adding that Nigeria, as 'a superpower in Africa,' has the responsibility to help other less privileged countries on the continent.

On the whole, the survey points to the fact that the volunteers share a very altruistic conception of TAC. The challenge is, do these conceptions match reality?

Table 5. Significance of TAC for The Gambia

	CTA	PHS	PIP	CE	PNI	NA
S Volunteers	348	251	215	205	201	20

Codes: CTA **–** Crucial assistance from a sister African country; PHS – Promotion of human solidarity and understanding; PIP – Promotion of international peace; CE – Cultural exchange between Nigerians and Gambians; PNI – Promotion of Nigeria's image and interest in The Gambia; NA – None of the above

Chart 2. Significance of TAC for The Gambia
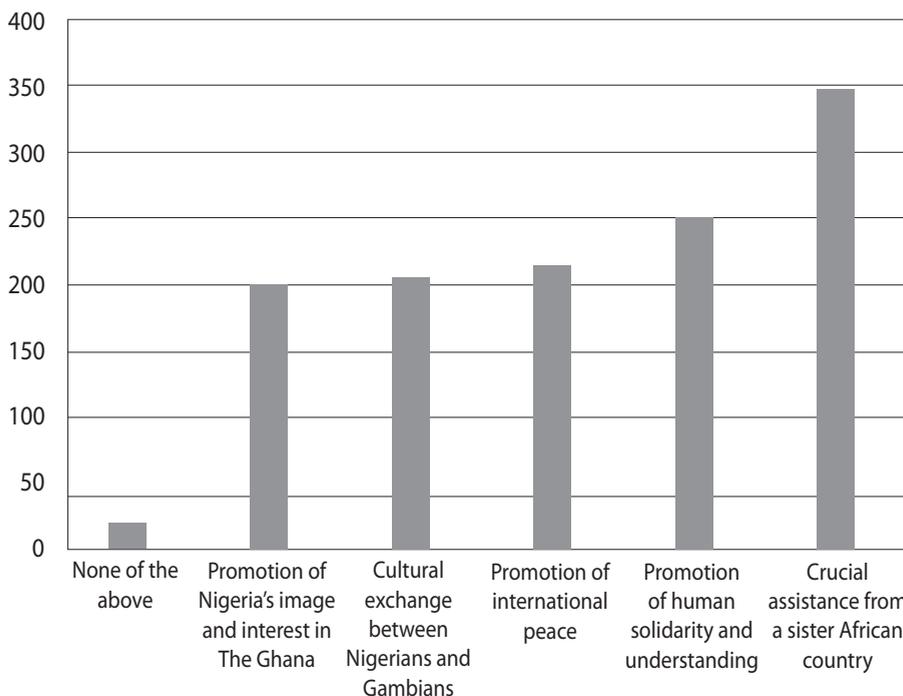
What, in specific terms, is the significance of TAC for The Gambia? Serving volunteers in Gambia were specifically requested to state in the order of preference what they regard as the significance of the scheme for the host country. The result of the survey reinforces the position of the all the volunteers (DV, SV and EV) regarding the general significance of the scheme. The SVs overwhelmingly voted 'crucial assistance from a sister African country' as TAC's greatest significance for Gambia. They also regarded 'promotion of human solidarity and understanding' as next in rank. Next to that is 'promotion of international peace.' It is significant that the SVs found 'cultural exchange between Nigerians and Gambians' more important than the 'promotion of Nigeria's image and interest in The Gambia.' Indeed, the SV view of this consideration as the least significant rationale for TAC is corroborated in the in-depth and informal interviews the researcher and his assistant conducted with the SVs.

Most of the volunteers in The Gambia I spoke and interacted with in the course of the research expressed the view that TAC is crucial to the national needs of the host country. However, they were ambivalent about Nigeria's gains, while many of them expressed disappointment that The Gambia had not shown enough appreciation of their contributions and had not treated the volunteers well.

'Here in The Gambia, there is serious need of medical personnel in general, and medical laboratory science in particular,' said one a volunteer medical microbiologist.

> I am heading the medical laboratory unit of the teaching hospital. Without my presence, a lot of things would not have been possible. I am also participating in training of Gambian medical laboratory assistants and technicians. If we don't train them, they will not have professionals who can take over when we finally return home. In Nigeria, we can have another government in power that will scrap the TAC; therefore, if we don't train them, there will be no manpower if the scheme folds up.

'If there is not TAC, I don't know how The Gambia will cope with her manpower challenges,' said Mercy, a volunteer who worked in the directorate of science, information, communication and technology in the Gambian department of state for education. '[A] majority of the teachers here are foreigners. Majority of the TAC teachers take on most of the responsibilities. There are places in The Gambia where there are no Gambians teaching. Gambian teachers do not like to go to the interior places to work, particularly science teachers. Most of the science teachers in the interior places are TAC volunteers.'

In many cases, the volunteers and some Gambians revealed the heroic efforts of the volunteers in some critical sectors. For instance, in certain public hospitals in The Gambia there are no facilities for surgical operations or operating theatres. However, Nigerian surgeons, who are used to improvising, took on the challenge and improvised surgical operations. The experience of Dr Jibrila Yahya, who served at the Fajikunda Health Centre, which is second in rank to the university teaching hospital, was instructive.

> When I resumed at Fajikunda, the operating theatre had not functioned in eight years because they had had no surgeon in all the years. I reorganized things there. Equipments donated by Germany were not in use. Particularly, the inner part of the theatre was not in use at all. I directed the washing of the theatre. There was no air conditioner there, no power generator. But many patients needed operation. They will die or be in worse medical conditions without this. Therefore, I decided to do something about it. I asked that a fan be fixed in the operating theatre. We mobilized resources around the Western Division Health team. I scanned around for things we needed. You know, we were trained to improvise in

> Nigeria. We are used to that. But I was running a big risk by assembling all sorts of make-shift items to improvise and use the equipments available. There were implications for the relationship between Nigeria and The Gambia if the surgical operations I planned to do in that makeshift theatre lead to deaths. Everyone was afraid. But if we don't do operations, people will die. That is why I decided to go ahead. Apart from this, if I don't do any operation here for the two years, I will not be able to function when I go back to Nigeria as a surgeon.

By the time I visited The Gambia in 2006, Yahya had successfully operated on 150 people in that makeshift theatre – including a hernia operation. 'They tried to stop me,' said Yahya. 'The Cuban doctors here were not doing any operations because the facilities were not available and the operating theatre was not ready. I took the risk and with every success, more patients were brought to me.'

Dr Yahya also concentrated on training Gambians, particularly in malaria control systems. By the time of my visit, he had trained 150 people. 'I am focused on African issues,' he explained. 'There is severe malaria problem here, particularly among children and pregnant women. A lot of people die from this. By preventing the spread of malaria and teaching people how to cure it, we can protect not only Gambians, but other West Africans, including Nigerians.'

Dr Yahya emphasised that the impact of the work done by volunteers goes beyond Gambia. He cited the example of two American medical students interested in tropical medicine who came to the hospital on attachment. Prior to this, students from the US who visited The Gambia to study tropical medicine often returned without learning much because there were no qualified medical personnel to mentor them. 'This time that I am here, they leant a lot and were with me on my malaria prevention program. They acknowledged what they leant under my supervision.'

Yahya gave me a copy of an email from one of the American students, who wrote to him on 28 October 2005 saying he had told his friends in the US 'countless stories from my experience in Gambia.' The student continued:

> I am realizing that my time in Gambia was truly the most amazing experience I have ever had. I have been looking into elective rotations in Tropical Medicine and Infectious Disease which might bring me back your way. I am also proud to report that I have been thinking about surgery more since I left Gambia than I ever have before. … I must say that it is truly amazing what you have done for that health clinic [in Fujikunda]. I can only dream to have the impact that you have had in your short time there …

Dominique Mendy, Gambia's former minister of foreign affairs stated during an interview that TAC 'has reinforced the manpower base [in The Gambia], especially in those areas where The Gambia is seriously handicapped. [It] has been the main backbone of [our] health sector for a very long time.'

Mendy said further that 'It will be an understatement to say that the scheme is useful. Discontinue the TAC scheme and the effect will be felt immediately… It is still highly needed by The Gambia.' He continued: 'We appreciate that [Nigeria's] taxpayers' money is involved, but at the same time, that is what the big brother should do. The impact is felt mostly in the medical and educational sectors. The university has benefited immensely from the TAC scheme since its inception.'

Yusupha Touray, the president of the Students' Union of the University of The Gambia, when interviewed in late 2005 reinforced the significance of TAC for his country. 'You cannot imagine the future of the university without TAC support. The greatest impact that I know of is in the area of education.'

Christopher Belford, Touray's predecessor, and a Gambian lawyer who wishes to remain anonymous, added the judiciary to medical and educational sectors as the three areas where the impact of TAC is most felt. 'I am aware that it was through TAC and similar schemes that the [Gambian] judiciary was able to attain its present capacity. Apart from this, the impact has especially been felt in both the medical and educational sectors,' said the lawyer.

Magaji agrees with Yahya on the significance of TAC volunteers for the host nation. 'TAC has been very, very useful for The Gambia. If you look at our medical team, certain departments in the hospitals here cannot run without TAC volunteers. The equipments might be there, but there would be no competent medical personnel.'

Another volunteer, a peri-operative nurse, illustrated the significance of TAC volunteers by stating that if she failed to show up at the operating theatre, 'it will look as if the theatre is not functioning ... They really need our service.' Yet another medical volunteer, Dr Bello, who worked at the Basse Health Centre in the Upper River division of The Gambia added that most Gambian doctors work in Banjul and do not like to work in the interior. TAC volunteers fill the vacancies in the interior. 'All the other public hospitals are run by Nigerians and some of the Cubans. They are entirely dependent on us [Nigerians, in particular, and Cubans too] …'

When I met Bello in Banjul, he had been there for about two weeks on holiday. He disclosed that even though there are Cuban doctors in his Basse base, he has been receiving calls to return to the hospital because most patients wanted to see Nigerian doctors. 'They know when we do things, we do it well ... The ordinary Gambians know the services we render. It is not that the Cuban doctors do not have the same ability as we do. But they are just not ready to take the trouble to do things that are stressful,' said the medical doctor. 'Where I serve, there was no surgeon for two years before I arrived. They used to refer every surgery case to the capital city. If Nigeria takes away TAC volunteers for a few years, these services will crumble.'

One of the three medical doctors volunteering at the Sulayman Junkung General Hospital in Bwiam, a small town in the Foni Kansala district of south-western Gambia, said that before they arrived in 2005, the hospital, which is one of only four public hospitals serving the country, was providing only skeletal services. It was built in 2003 by the Gambian government and serves the local and surrounding population of 100,000, treating approximately 16,000 patients annually. It was the arrival of the three TAC doctors and eight TAC nurses that changed the fortunes of the patients and potential patients of the hospital. 'We built the operating theatre and started surgery,' said one of the doctors. Before their arrival, one of the volunteer nurses said, most people at the hospital had not heard of, or were unfamiliar with, caesarean section. It was through TAC that the first series of c-section operations occurred, all of which were successful. 'Before we arrived,' said a nurse, 'eighty percent of cases were referred to the hospitals in the capital city. With our arrival, the percentage of referrals to Banjul was reduced to between twenty to thirty percent.' One of doctors added that when a Gambian minister visited the hospital and was told what the volunteers had accomplished, he described it as 'a real transformation.'

In all, the scheme, according to the volunteers and Gambians interviewed and officials at the Nigerian high commission in The Gambia, has played a critical role in the development of The Gambia. 'When you look at what has happened in The Gambia, you will come to the conclusion that TAC is very important for the country. It has positively affected the Gambians.'

TAC: Motivation for International Civic Service

Beyond what is regarded as the significance of the international civic service by the volunteers, I also wanted to know what constituted their motivation for volunteering (See Table 6 and Chart 3). What factors encourage participation in international civic service? Received ideas assume that 'higher' and selfless ideals such as patriotism, civic-ness, and the cosmopolitan ideal influence participation in international service, leading to the neglect of other predisposing factors (adventure, unemployment, emigration, civic deficit). This study, therefore, probed the relevance of these other 'negative' or not altogether altruistic influences, in the context of the debates in the literature on certain historical and cultural determinants of volunteering within different nations and cultures.

As some scholars and experts on international volunteer service have noted, there are two main motivations for volunteering abroad, the *altruistic* and *self-centric,* 'though these inevitably co-exist in varying degrees' (Palmer 2002: 638). However, there has been new thinking about the traditional assumptions on 'positive motivation' for volunteering. No longer is volunteering 'framed within the discourse of altruism, with its assumptions that exceptional motivation

Table 6. Motivation for volunteering

	PS	UE	AN	CD	CE	AV	BW/MI	EM/TE
D Volunteers	247	44	265	247	144	153	157	55
S Volunteers	253	35	313	228	130	205	106	80
E Volunteers	87	45	110	101	82	96	76	68
TOTAL	**587**	**124**	**688**	**578**	**356**	**454**	**339**	**203**

Codes: PS **–** Public Service to fellow human beings; EU – Unemployment; AN - Assistance to Needy people; CD – Civic duty; CE – Cultural exchange; AV – Adventure; BW/MI – Better wages/ More income; EM/TE – Emigration/Temporary escape from the socioeconomic conditions in Nigeria.

Chart 3. Motivation for volunteering
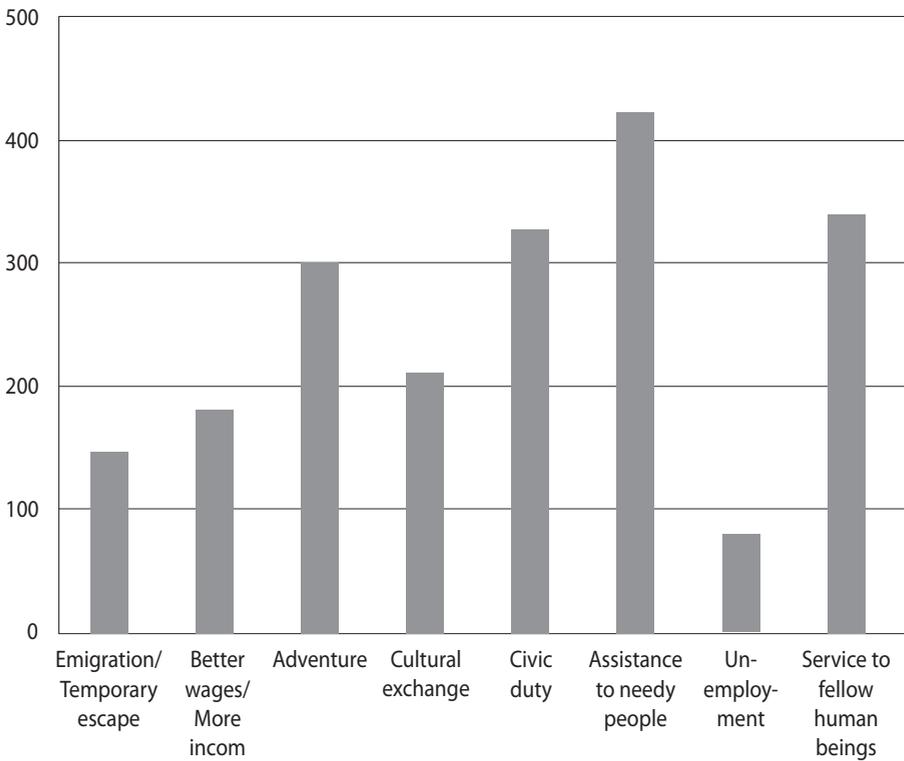
is a sufficient condition for its performance' (Musick, Wilson and Bynum Jr. 2000:1541). Yet we cannot ignore the influence of motivations on volunteering (Clary, Snyder and Stukas 1996; Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen 1991) partly because 'people are motivated to volunteer for different reasons, which may affect participation, volunteer activities, and outcomes' (Mueller 1975; Law 1994; Carson 1999; Wilson 2000; Sherraden, Lough and McBride 2008).

There are some interesting contrasts and complementarities between what the TAC volunteers regard as the significance of the scheme and their motivation for volunteering. *As already noted, some of the options given to the volunteers were related or mutually reinforcing 'positive' options.* All three categories of volunteers maintained that 'assistance to needy people in other countries' motivated them to join the scheme, which was what they also regarded as the greatest significance of the scheme. The SV regard 'public service to fellow human beings' as next in rank, while the EV regard 'civic duty' as the second crucial reason why they decided to serve. For the DV, 'public service to fellow human beings' and 'civic duty' carried the same weight in the decision to serve. For the SV, 'civic duty' ranked third, while for the EV, significantly, 'adventure' ranked third, higher than 'public service to fellow human beings.' 'Adventure' for both the DV and SV constituted the fifth and fourth most important motivation respectively. The least important motivation for all three categories was 'emigration/temporary escape from the socioeconomic conditions of Nigeria' and 'unemployment.'

However, during interviews and interactions, the volunteers also reflected 'self-centric' or 'negative' motivations. As already indicated, during my interactions with departing volunteers in Nigeria, many indicated 'self-centric' motivations. Many were eager for career advancement, professional experience, opportunities for enhanced post-service employment elsewhere – particularly in the West – or migration from Nigeria, opportunities for double pay for those who were qualified for leave of absence with full pay in Nigeria, opportunities for foreign travel/tourism, curiosity, etc.

Even though some of the 'very negative' motivations, such as opportunities for migration or double pay, might negatively affect service delivery at the place of volunteering, yet, as some have argued, such self-centric motivations are not necessarily and not always incompatible with altruistic motivations.

Some of the volunteers in The Gambia did not see both as separable. To draw a few examples, Sunday Mogaji, a medical microbiologist in Banjul Teaching Hospital, conflated both motivations. 'I came here to enable me to put in my best as professional medical microbiologist and a medical laboratory scientist, to enhance the diagnoses of diseases in the tropical African sub-region.' He continued: 'This enables me to identify different kinds of pathogens that are common within the tropics. With my experience here, [I discovered that] there are lots of findings here common to what you would find in Nigeria. We work here on different specimens.' Mogaji also noted, 'The uppermost thing in my mind [in coming to The Gambia] was my ability to exhibit my professionalism in a country outside Nigeria.'

A volunteer nurse at the Ahmadiya Muslim Hospital in The Gambia stated that she was motivated as much by 'service to humanity as well as the search for adventure.' Another volunteer, a nurse, confessed that she joined TAC as a way

of seeking a better life outside Nigeria. 'In Nigeria,' she stated, 'nearly everybody wants to go out of the country to look for greener pastures. That was why I was interested.' A medical doctor revealed that one of his primary motivations was 'to have the experience of health systems different from the system in Nigeria.' Yet another nurse who was serving at the General Hospital in Bwiam revealed that she joined TAC because 'I wanted to have an opportunity to leave for Europe or the US from my place of primary assignment.'

Despite such 'self-centric' or 'negative' motivations, on the whole the majority of all the categories of volunteers hold that 'assistance to needy people' is their most important motivation for joining the scheme, while 'public service to fellow human beings' ranked next. It can be safely concluded from the responses that overwhelmingly volunteers were positively motivated to join, because they wanted to provide assistance to needy people and offer public service to fellow human beings in other countries.

Service and Human Solidarity

Against this backdrop, we asked the DVs and EVs if they think that TAC is capable of promoting human solidarity and understanding across national boundaries (See Table 7 and Chart 4). Except for two of the DVs, who strongly disagreed that this was possible, all the other volunteers agreed that TAC was capable of achieving this.

An official at the Nigerian high commission in Banjul argued that the promotion of human solidarity and understanding by TAC in The Gambia will be made more manifest over time. 'The impression that the volunteers will leave on the psyche of the Gambians is important. Gambians will remember over the years to come that there was a Nigerian teacher or a Nigerian doctor who was there for them. In that regard, I think there is a lot that can be said for TAC.'

A volunteer nurse was of the view that 'most of the students here, even the Gambian nurses here, will tell you that there was one Nigerian teacher at some point that taught them. They appreciate our services and contributions as time goes on.'
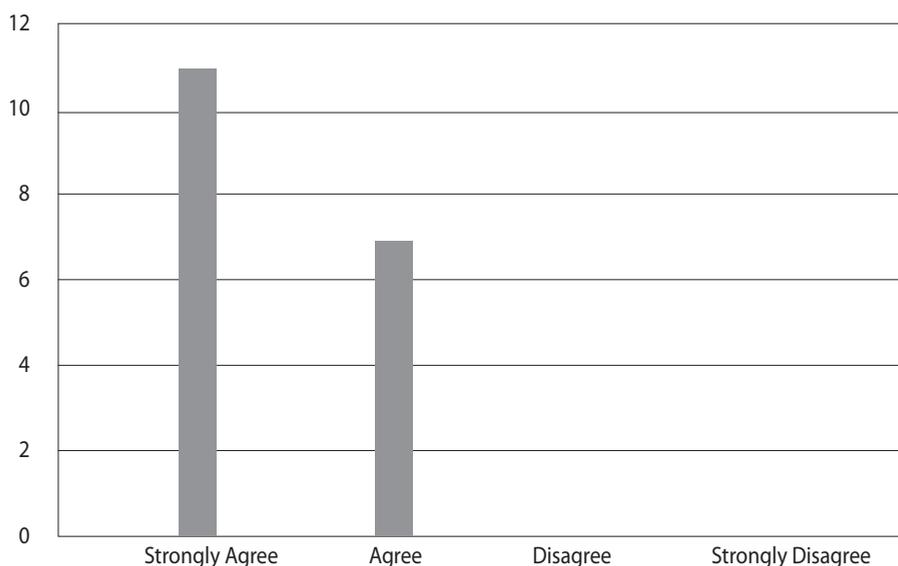
Table 7. Service and cross national human solidarity

Do you think TAC promotes human solidarity and understanding across national borders?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
D Volunteers	25	16	0	2	0
E Volunteers	11	7	0	0	0
TOTAL	36	23	0	0	0

Chart 4. Service and Human Solidarity

Does TAC promote human solidarity and understanding?

Effects of Service

We also sought to find out from the volunteers if international civic service has impacted or will impact them positively, particularly in encouraging what they regard as 'civic virtues' (See Table 8 and Chart 5). For the DVs it was purely a matter of expectation or speculation.

However, a majority of the DVs were hopeful that service would enhance civic virtues in them. A small minority were either unsure or strongly disagreed with that possibility. Among the SVs and EVs, no one expressed disagreement that participation in TAC could encourage civic virtues in them, even though a minority was not sure. But most servers in both categories agreed that TAC has enhanced civic virtues in them. These civic virtues were defined to include leadership qualities, patriotism, selflessness, sacrifice, civility, trust, capacity for human solidarity and understanding, etc.
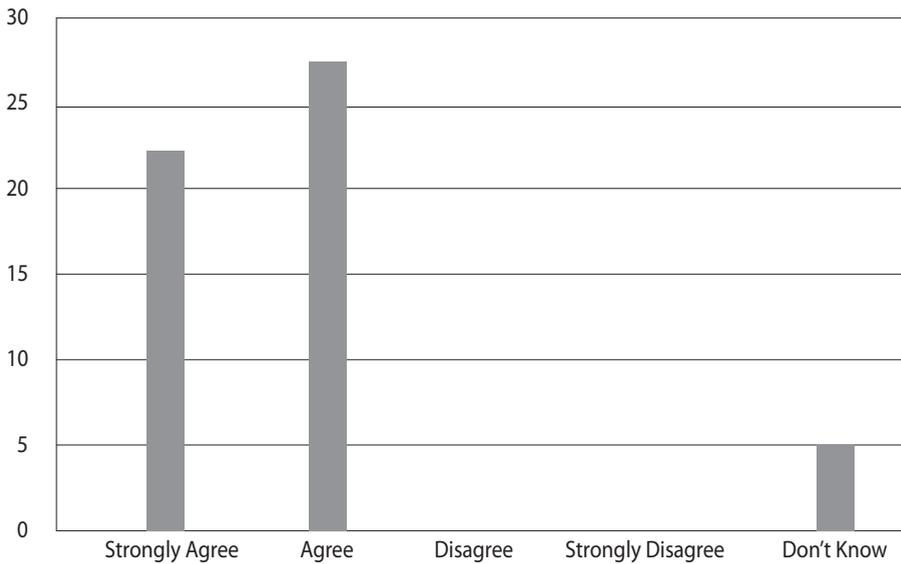
Table 8. Service and civic virtues

Do you think TAC will (has) enhance(d) civic virtues in you?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
D Volunteers	28	10	0	2	3
S Volunteers	14	21	0	0	4
E Volunteers	9	7	0	0	1
TOTAL	51	38	0	2	8

Chart 5. Service and Civic Virtues

Has TAC enhanced civic virtues in you?

Sunday Mogaji said that volunteering in The Gambia has helped him to learn many leadership values. It has also helped to teach him the virtues of sacrifice, he added, particularly when confronted with the lack of appreciation of his efforts by ordinary Gambians. A volunteer nurse stated that one of the most important virtues she had learnt during her period in The Gambia is patience. Bello, a medical doctor, has learned to appreciate Nigeria more. 'The things we take for granted in Nigeria are not available here. We often condemn our country and assume that things are perfect even in smaller African countries. But I have found that it is not so ... Here, I have learned that Nigeria is envied and admired, because of Nigerians' ability to make things happen.'

Dr Yahya argued that the TAC scheme 'has created unity in the Diaspora among the Nigerian volunteers.' 'No one talks about tribal segregation here. The brotherhood – and sisterhood – among the Nigerian volunteers is very strong here. We can use TAC to reorganize civic virtues in Nigeria. We see Nigeria better from outside; and we appreciate Nigeria better as international volunteers. We can go back and solve Nigeria's problems better. We are more united when we go out of Nigeria.'

'Volunteering in The Gambia has helped me to be tolerant of other cultures,' said another volunteer. 'It is a great cultural experience for me.' An official of the Nigerian mission to The Gambia added that the volunteers make 'comparative analysis of what is available here, what they get here and what they can work

with and then compare these to what obtains in Nigeria. This has largely affected their civic views.' He continued: 'It has also enhanced their patriotism ... They are often eager to go back to Nigeria to impart what they have learned here and to educate Nigerians about the great potentials of the country vis-à-vis other countries in West Africa.' 'I appreciate Nigeria more by being in The Gambia. East or west, home is the best ... I now feel proud to be a Nigerian. I look forward to returning home,' said another volunteer.

Some others emphasised the ways in which volunteering has helped them to nurture a passion for going the extra mile. For instance, a medical microbiologist stated that 'one has to give a lot of extra time and commitment to enable the work to be done properly.' This volunteer cited a particular example of the sense of commitment nurtured by international volunteering.

> I recall that during the cholera epidemic that occurred last year, I was coming to the office everyday and there was no limit to the number of working hours. We kept working as long as patients were coming. This was absolutely without any additional payment. Since one is out to assist humanity, one did it joyfully. The cholera epidemic is over for now. We thank God for the sacrifice we made and the professionalism one was able to display.

Service Scheme: Creation and Objectives

Against the backdrop of the debate in Nigeria on whether TAC should have been established or not, we asked TAC volunteers, both serving and ex-volunteers, if they think Nigeria should have established the international civic service scheme at all (See Table 9 and Chart 6). The overwhelming majority of the DVs and EVs agree that the government of Nigeria was right to create TAC. This general question was not posed to the SVs, because they were asked a more specific question in relation to the scheme in their country of service.

There were some clear objectives set out by the government of Nigeria when TAC was instituted. We wanted to know from the volunteers (serving and ex-) if they thought that the scheme had achieved its objectives (See Table 10 and Chart 7).

Table 9. Establishment of service scheme

Should Nigeria have started the scheme at all?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
D Volunteers	25	11	2	1	4
E Volunteers	10	6	1	0	1
TOTAL	35	17	3	1	5

Chart 6. Establishment of TAC

Should Nigeria Have established TAC at all?
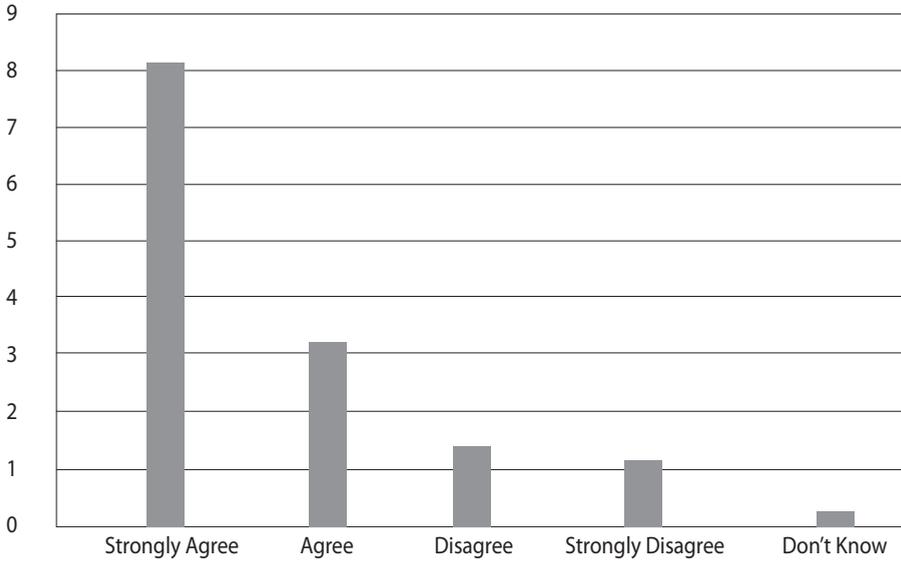
Table 10. Service objectives

Do you think TAC has achieved its objectives?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
S Volunteers	18	23	0	0	2
E Volunteers	6	8	0	1	3
TOTAL	24	31	0	1	5

Chart 7. Service Objectives

Do you think TAC has achieved its objectives?

The majority of SVs and EVs think that generally Nigeria has achieved most of its foreign policy objectives in setting-up TAC. However, a significant percentage (more than 20 per cent) of the EV either disagreed that Nigeria's objectives had been achieved or were not sure (see also Chart 7).

However, we asked the SV volunteers if, in the specific case of The Gambia, Nigeria's image and interests had been promoted and enhanced as a result of the international service scheme (See Table 11 and Chart 8).

Table 11. Service objectives

Has TAC promoted and enhanced Nigeria's image and interests in The Gambia?

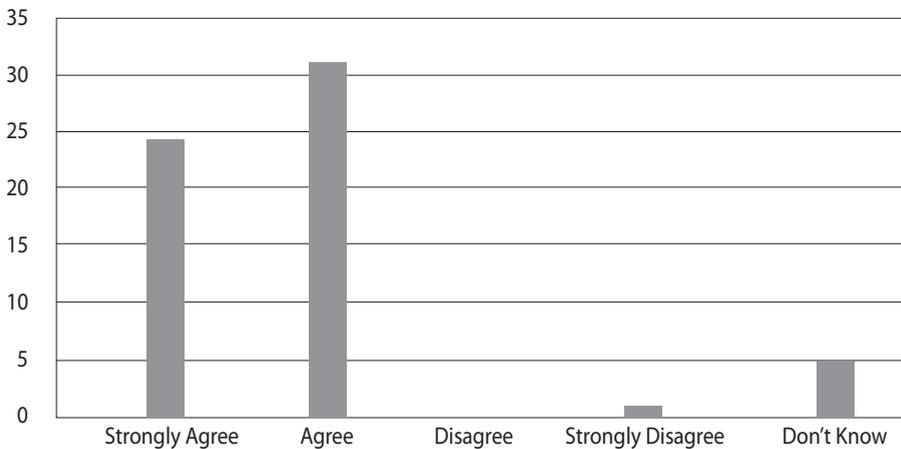|	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	TOTAL
Serving Volunteers	10	15	3	2	9	39

Chart 8. Service Objectives

Has TAC promoted and enhanced Nigeria's image and interests in The Gambia?
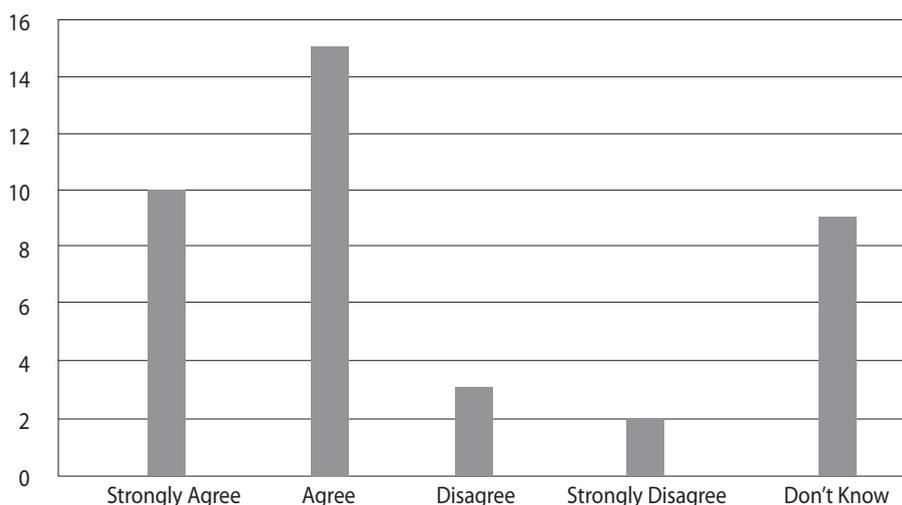
While a majority of the volunteers surveyed in The Gambia (25 out of 39) agree that this is so, a very significant minority (14) either claimed not to know or disagreed that Nigeria's image and interests have been enhanced by the scheme in the West African country.

Those who believe that TAC has promoted Nigeria's image and interests in The Gambia point to the significance and the impacts of the volunteers' contributions and the positive reactions of the beneficiaries. 'Politically, The Gambia is one of Nigeria's "younger brother-nations",' said an official of the Nigerian mission to The Gambia. 'The country is always ready to support Nigeria in our international initiatives when we need her.'

A volunteer medical doctor also stated that 'most Gambians have very high esteem for Nigeria ... I have heard people say that from primary school to high school they have been taught and trained by Nigerian volunteers. Most ordinary Gambians hold TAC volunteers in very high esteem.' Another volunteer argued that 'our (TAC volunteers') importance is highly felt; [therefore] Nigeria is held in high esteem ... In the medical area, if you have one-on-one dialogues with the Gambians, they show their appreciation. The image of Nigeria is thus improving in the country because of TAC.' A volunteer nurse added that The Gambia has been increasing its requests for TAC volunteers, proof that the scheme has enhanced Nigeria's image in the country.

There are various reasons for the conclusions of the volunteers who were either not sure or disagreed that Nigeria's image and interests have been enhanced by TAC in The Gambia. Many volunteers complained of the perception of the ordinary Gambians and the way they were treated by The Gambian government, officials at their institutions of primary service and ordinary Gambians.

'If you want to talk in terms of immediate benefits, which a realist [in international relations] will want to see, it is not obvious,' said an official of the Nigerian high commission.

'They [Gambians] don't have the technical know-how. But instead of appreciating our efforts, they try to bring the volunteers down,' said one of the volunteers who claimed not to have had very good experience with the hosts. 'Nigeria is not benefiting anything from sending volunteers to The Gambia … Nigeria's support for The Gambia is a waste.' One volunteer illustrated his view that Nigeria is not appreciated by Gambians and their government through the case of the national medals handed out by the Gambian president during the period of service of the 2004–06 TAC cohort. He recalled that medals were given to Cuban volunteers, but not one to Nigerian TAC volunteers, despite his belief that Nigerian volunteers contribute far more than the Cubans to The Gambia. 'That was a stab in my heart ... Those were medals of appreciation for service. Nigerians should have been included in the list. What has The Gambia to give to Nigeria? Nigeria helps The Gambia financially and otherwise. They should show that they appreciate us,' concluded one angry volunteer.

Another volunteer added that most Gambians are ignorant that they are volunteers paid by the Nigerian government.

> The ordinary Gambians do not know that their government is not paying us. When we arrived there, a reception for us where one permanent secretary at the Department of State said that the government had brought 69 doctors from Nigeria. He did not explain that this was paid for by the Nigerian government. They aired that claim on the television and radio. So, the people think we were employed by the Gambian government.

Service Impact, Efficacy and Continuation

Despite the above, most volunteers surveyed were certain their service had been very useful for the host country (See Table 12 and Chart 9). A very small minority were not sure, while only one disagreed that TAC has been very useful for The Gambia. This might be explained by the area of service of the volunteer, which s/he might not consider as crucial for the host of country.

Table 12. Service efficacy

Has TAC been very useful for The Gambia?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	TOTAL
Serving Volunteers	27	8	1	0	4	39

Chart 9. Service efficacy

Has TAC been very useful for The Gambia?
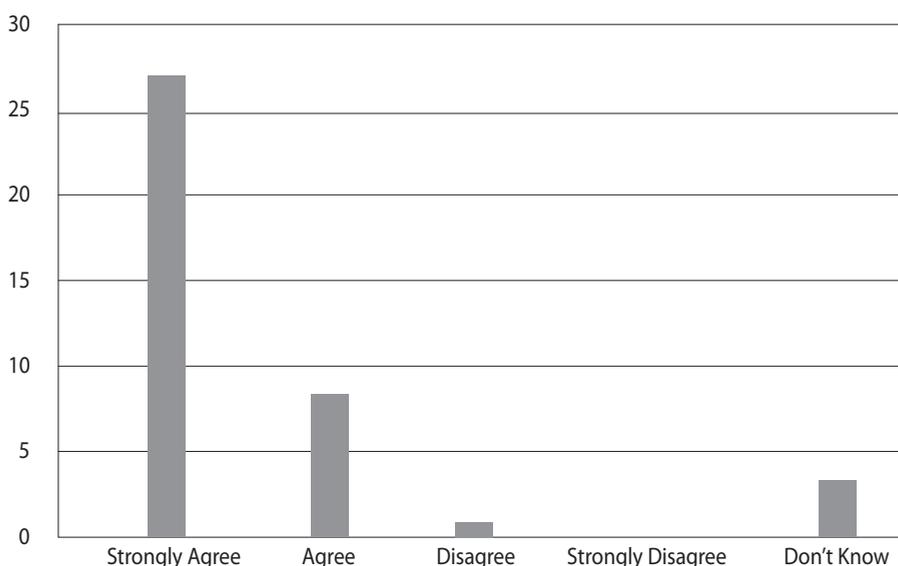
If the servers believe that TAC has been very useful for the host country, we also wanted to reinforce that by knowing what level of impact they think the scheme has had. Most volunteers (21) think that TAC has had a high impact, while some (15) think it has had some impact. Only three volunteers were either not sure or thought it had had a low impact (See Table 13 and Chart 10).

Against the backdrop of the efficacy (or otherwise) and the impact of the scheme, we asked the DVs and the EVs if they think that the scheme should be continued. Every single DV and EV surveyed wanted the scheme continued (See

Table 13. Impact of service scheme

What is the impact of TAC in The Gambia?

	High Impact	Some Impact	Low Impact	No Impact	Don't Know	TOTAL
Serving Volunteers						
	21	15	2	0	1	39

Chart 10. Service Impact

What is the impact of TAC in The Gambia ?
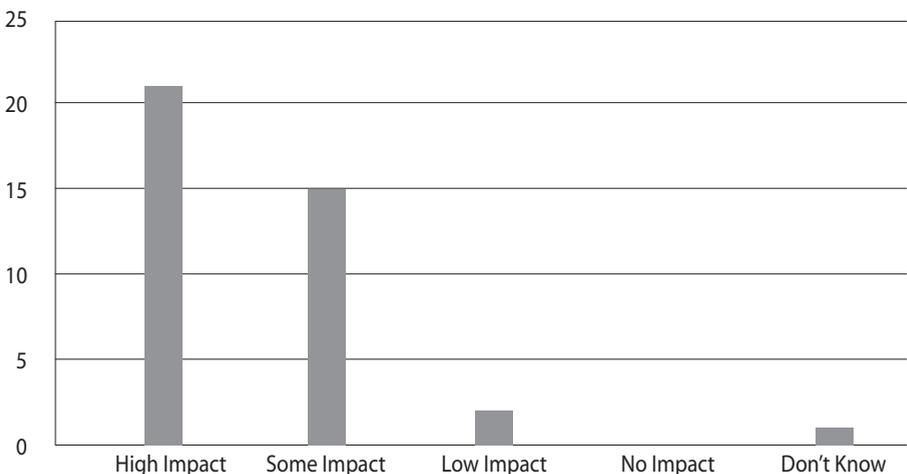
Table 14 and Chart 11). This is interesting and can be explained. In the case of the DVs, they are looking forward to the period of service and are therefore unlikely to want a scheme they have applied to be scrapped. As regards the EVs, it can be argued that having returned for quite awhile, they have reflected on their experience and were convinced that, on balance, the scheme is worth sustaining.

However, this overwhelming support for the continuation in the questionnaire was contested by a few of the EVs who participated in the in-depth interviews based on their specific experience. A volunteer who served as a nurse in Dominica stated:

> I think TAC should be discontinued because our volunteers are not coming back. We are losing our volunteers. They are using it as a stepping-stone. If it were a scheme in which Nigeria spends all that huge money and the volunteers would return with the knowledge they have acquired, and the experience, and where there is the opportunity to put these into use in Nigeria, then it would be desirable to continue the scheme. It would be a laudable program. But the volunteers don't return, thereby increasing the problem of the brain drain.

Table 14. Continuation of service scheme

Do you think TAC should be continued?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
D Volunteers	32	11	0	0	0
E Volunteers	13	5	0	0	0
TOTAL	45	16	0	0	0

Chart 11. Continuation of service scheme

Do you think TAC should be continued?
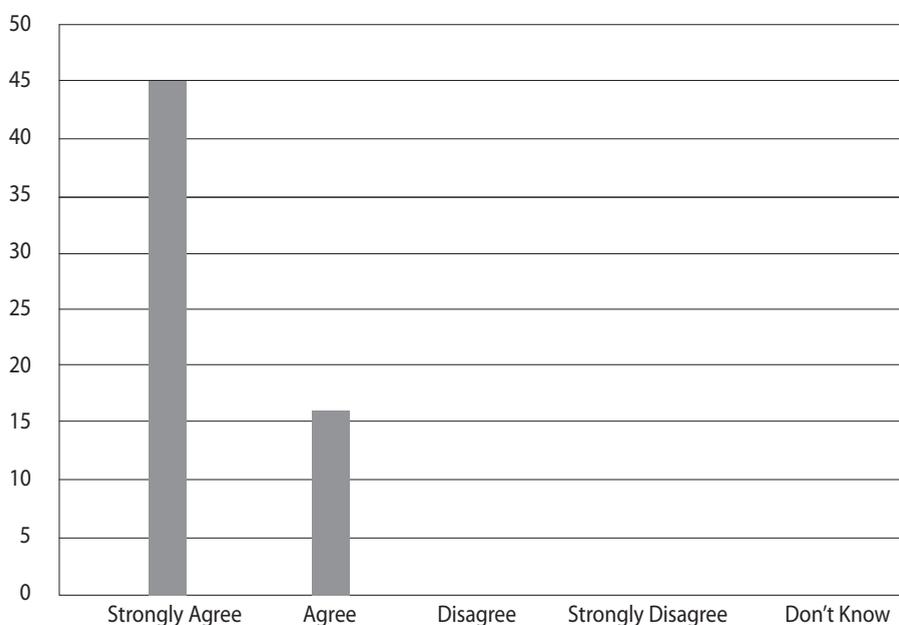
However, this ex-volunteer seems to have exaggerated the problem of non-return. A very limited number, according to the TAC directorate, do not return, either because their hosts requested them to stay on or because they had other employment opportunities in their countries of assignment or in neighbouring countries.

We also asked the SVs if they think the scheme should be continued in The Gambia. Of those completing the questionnaires, 32 of the 40 agreed while 7 either disagreed, disagreed strongly or were unsure (See Table 15 and Chart 12). This can be contrasted with the table above (14) where none of the DV and EV disagreed that TAC should be discontinued. Indeed, it cannot be assumed that volunteers in The Gambia wanted TAC scrapped as a whole: their reaction was based on their specific experiences in The Gambia. This was further discussed in the in-depth interviews with the volunteers in The Gambia.

Many of the calls for the scrapping of TAC by the SVs in The Gambia were based on their negative experiences or what they described as 'non-appreciation' of their efforts. 'If Nigeria decides to stop TAC volunteers from coming to The Gambia for some years, some the [public] services will crumble. Perhaps then the actual impact of TAC volunteers will be felt; perhaps, they will then begin to appreciate what Nigeria is doing,' reacted a volunteer.

'The reception of TAC volunteers in terms of welfare is very bad,' said another. 'In the agreement with Nigeria, they promised to provide well-furnished accommodation and that they will pay our utility bills or provide money in lieu of this. They also promised to provide means of transportation. But many of us have to fast to be able to buy cars to transport ourselves … Poverty shouldn't stop them from appreciating what we are doing.'

One incensed volunteer stated that 'Personally, if I am in power in Nigeria, I will scrap TAC in The Gambia. They prefer financial assistance to human resource-assistance. It is not worth sending TAC volunteers here. They appreciate the Cubans more … Nigeria's support for The Gambia is a waste.'

However, one volunteer said that 'Despite the problems in the long run, Nigeria is recognized as a big brother. I think it is worth it to continue the scheme.' Another added, 'They need our help, even if they don't appreciate it. We [Nigeria] are far ahead of them. As a brother African country, we should help them.'

In this, some of the volunteers revealed the paternalism and dependency (Sheradden, Lough and McBride 2008:398) or 'paternalistic charity' (Devereux 2008:358) often cited by scholars as part of the challenge of international volunteerism.

Table 15. Continuation of service scheme

Do you think TAC should be continued in The Gambia?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	TOTAL
Serving Volunteers	12	20	3	4	1	40

We also sought to know specifically why volunteers think TAC should continue in The Gambia. The SVs ranked 'Gambia's needs' as the most important reason for continuance. Nigeria's image is of far less importance for volunteers among the three reasons provided, even if it ranked second. 'Human solidarity' was ranked third by volunteers. In this way, it can be affirmed that Gambia's crucial needs for human resources in specific sectors like medicine and education are recognised and ranked by the volunteers (See Table 16)

A few volunteers believe that the 'failure of the scheme to achieve in objectives,' followed by 'Gambia's national pride' and the 'scheme's irrelevance' are grounds for the discontinuation of the scheme in The Gambia (See Table 17).

Table 16. Continuation of service scheme

Why TAC Scheme Should Continue in The Gambia

	Gambia's Needs	Nigeria's Image	Human Solidarity	None of the above
Serving Volunteers	530	215	185	0

Table 17. Continuation of service scheme

Why TAC Scheme Should be discontinued in The Gambia

	Schemes Irrelevance	Failure to achieve the aims	Gambia's national pride	None of the above
Serving Volunteers	35	60	50	0

In the case of the EVs, Nigeria's image and interests were given as the most important reason for sustaining the service scheme. Idris Sada Duwan, who served in Ethiopia, said that through the services of the volunteers 'the negative ideas that Ethiopians had about Nigeria changed.' He added that 'We [volunteers] contributed to the development of Ethiopia and helped to foster greater understanding between Nigeria and Ethiopia.' Another EV stated that 'TAC is an instrument that Nigeria uses to foster understanding and development to ACP countries. Every TAC volunteer wears the garb of a diplomat. We constantly educate people about Nigeria and propagate Nigeria's greatness ... Besides offering service, we also launder Nigeria's image.'

The next reason EVs noted as high on the list of why TAC should be sustained is the 'needs of the recipient countries.' Many of the EVs interviewed emphasised these needs. For instance, Paschal Ugwu, a medical laboratory scientist who served in Dominica, a Caribbean island nation, stated that many of the professionals in the country had either left for the US or Europe or were waiting to leave. Therefore, TAC volunteers, particularly medical personnel, were greatly needed in the country.

Also, a former volunteer and dentistry professor, Silas Ogunwande, used his own experience in Zambia to illustrate why the scheme should continue. He said there was no dentistry department at the University of Zambia medical college. He was then posted to the Dental Training School, 'where they would be able to use me for their planned program of dentistry at the University of Zambia, Lusaka.' There:

> I taught courses in the Dental training School, wrote a program for the degree of dental surgery for the university … which was approved by the Senate [of the university], took part in workshop programs of HIV-AIDS in the Ministry of health, advised the Oral health Specialist of the Ministry on key issues, served as consultant in oral health in hospitals and clinics, took part and delivered papers at scientific conferences of the Zambia Dental Association, [and] became a member of [the] committees if the Zambia Dental Association. (Ogunwande 2006:7)

The fact that TAC provides opportunities for performing 'civic duties' was regarded as the next most important reason, while 'employment opportunity' and 'human solidarity across borders' were ranked as the second least important and least important reasons respectively for sustaining the scheme (See Table 18 and Chart 12).

Table 18. Continuation of service scheme

Why TAC Should Continue

	NRC	EO	NI	CV	HS	NONE
E Volunteers	127	103	155	110	97	0

Chart 12. Continuation of service scheme

Why TAC Should Continue Everywhere
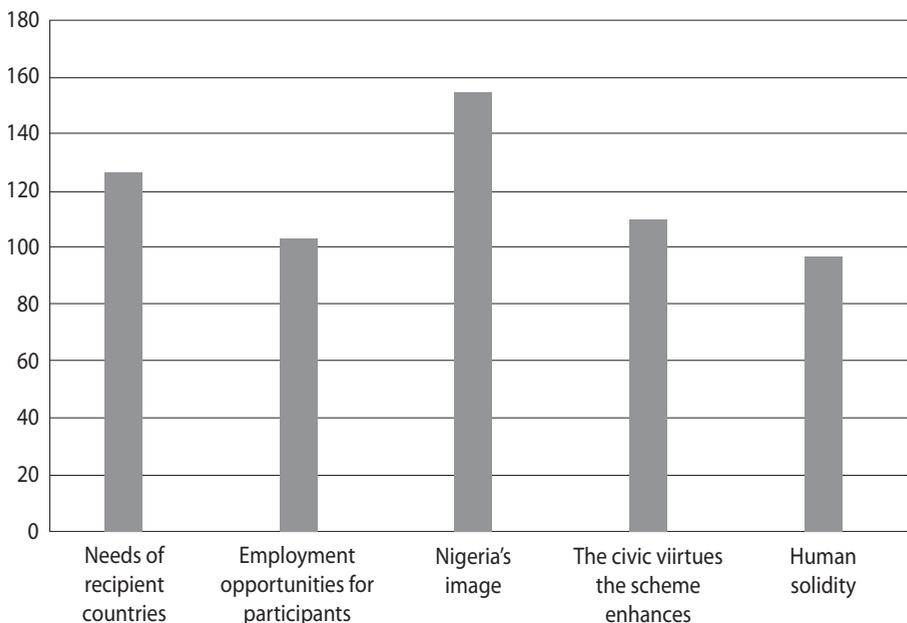
On the other hand, a very small minority of EVs wanted the scheme discontinued, the sole reason given being that the scheme contributes to 'brain drain.' It is significant that brain drain, which constitutes one of the strongest arguments of those wanting the scheme scrapped, received such a minor score among the EVs (See Table 19).

Table 19. Continuation of service scheme

Why TAC Should be Discontinued

	NEC	SI	SF	NN	BD	NOA
E Volunteers	0	0	0	0	10	0

Effects of Service

Some scholars have already pointed out in the literature that service also has negative effects on the servers (McBride, Benitez and Sherraden 2003). So we asked the volunteers what specific negative effects participation in TAC has had on them. 'Intense home sickness,' which was ranked highest by the EVs, was ranked second highest by the SVs. But, while the SVs voted for 'uncomfortable personal experience,' as the most important negative effect of service, the EVs ranked that second. 'Hostility to host community' as a result of their experience was next for the SVs, while career break was third for the EVs. The EVs also expressed significant 'hostility to host community' as a negative effect of service. However, on the whole, 'uncomfortable personal experience' was noted as the most important negative effect on the servers (both SV and EV), while 'intense home sickness' ranked next to that. 'Hostility towards host community' ranked third, while 'career break' and 'economic hardship' were next. It is significant that many of the volunteers stated that service has had no negative effect on them (See Table 20 and Chart 13)

Table 20. Negative effects of service

	Uncomfortable personal experience(s)	Economic hardship	Intense Home Sickness	Career Break	Health prob- lem(s)	Hostility towards hosts	None
Serving Volunteers	167	100	136	100	56	118	140
Ex- Volunteers	67	38	76	63	38	52	50
TOTAL	234	138	212	163	94	170	190

However, negative effects resulted when some of the EVs returned home. In my interviews with the EVs, some indicated they knew of a few colleagues who had lost before or upon return to Nigeria in terms of promotion in their jobs because some of their peers were elevated before their return.

As already indicated, many of the volunteers complained of various uncomfortable personal experiences in The Gambia. EVs also cited examples in their countries of service. During in-depth interviews and interactions, it was noted that intense home sickness, which is the number one negative effect of service noted by SVs in The Gambia, is related to their uncomfortable personal experiences. Hostility towards hosts is also correlated with the uncomfortable personal experiences.

Stated a volunteer medical doctor: 'Truly speaking, we are serving in a country where people regard us as threats rather than see us as people assisting them. Because we are highly qualified and very professional, the few qualified Gambi-

Chart 13. Negative Effects of Service
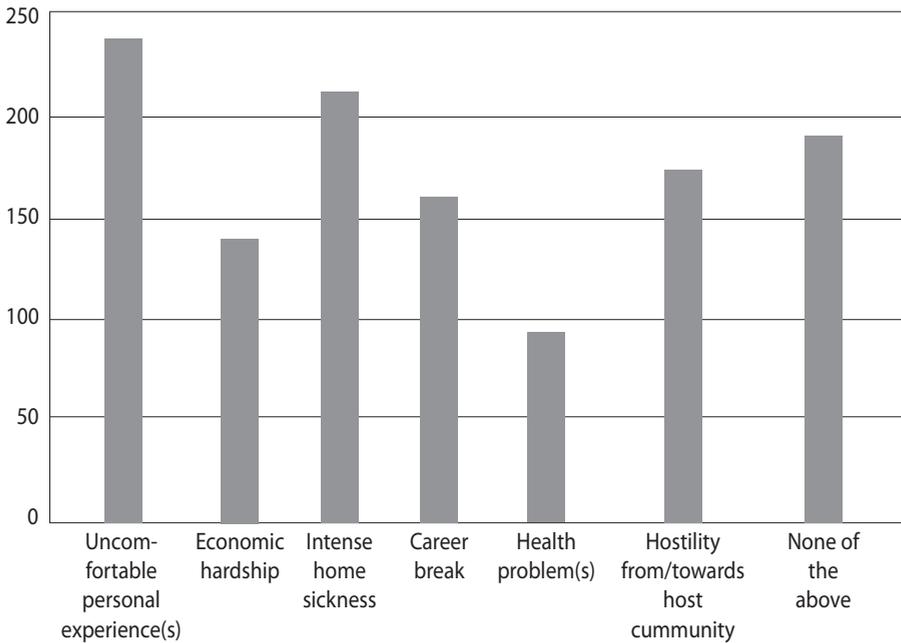
ans on the ground regard us as people coming to compete with them. We always try to explain to them that that is not why we are here … that they should have no fear.'

One EV, Professor A.B. Ogunwande, the head of the dentistry department, Delta State University, Abraka, and one of 56 volunteers who served in Zambia between 2002 and 2004, also reported that some Zambians saw TAC volunteers as 'threats to their positions though they were not qualified for the [positions that] the TAC members occupied.' Notwithstanding this, in the paper he presented at the orientation of the 2006 cohort, entitled, 'The TAC Scheme in Zambia: Problems and Prospects,' Ogunwande declared TAC 'unequivocally … a winner in Nigeria's history' (Nwachikwu 2006:30).

Others talk of economic hardship, citing the 'unreasonably strong' Gambian currency (dalasi). One volunteer described the situation thus: 'The exchange rate is very challenging. When we came here, a crate of eggs was about 80 Gambian dalasi, but now, it is almost 200 dalasi. You take 100 (US) dollars[12] to the market and you come back with few things. Unlike home [Nigeria] where when you take $100 worth of naira to the market, you can buy a lot of things.' The volunteer continued: 'This is affecting a lot of the volunteers. We have to sustain our families and relations back home. This is a very big problem.'

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12.   In 2006, 1 US dollar exchanged for about 25 Gambian dalasi and about 120 Nigerian naira.

Others cited the hostility they feel towards their hosts arising from hostility they encountered from their hosts. 'I have had a bitter experience here,' said a volunteer nurse who was placed in a private hospital against the principles of the agreement between Nigeria and The Gambia, but without protest from the TAC directorate in Nigeria. 'The people are very hostile; the work environment is not conducive. This is a private hospital; the organizational structure is very poor. So they don't appreciate change. My Gambian colleagues look at me as a threat; as if I am here to usurp their positions and take away their resources.' Incidentally, the possible hostility of host communities is one of the major challenges for which departing volunteers at the Owerri orientation were asked to prepare psychologically.

Many volunteers in the medical professions emphasised that Gambian authorities treat Cuban medical personnel better than Nigerian volunteers, even though they claimed that the Nigerians gave more service and made more sacrifices. Said one of the volunteers, 'At the official level, the Gambian government play some diplomacy by stating their appreciation of TAC. But there is no reciprocity. They recognize that we have improved their health care system. But they give a pride of place to the Cuban doctors at public events and not the Nigerian volunteer doctors.'

Improvement of Service Scheme

In terms of what needs to be changed or improved in the service scheme, the EVs think that 'allowances to participants' should be the most important improvement. For the SVs, 'allowances to participants' was a very important issue but next in rank to the 'conditions of service in The Gambia.' As a volunteer nurse serving at a hospital in Bwiam said, the volunteers considered these in The Gambia to be generally below expectations. Most of them emphasised the accommodation and the allowances.

'They [The Gambian government] provide decent accommodation for the Cubans,' said the nurse.

> They treat them well, even though the Cubans only stay in the city, in Banjul. But TAC volunteers who go to the provinces have no decent accommodation. There was a case of a Nigerian volunteer in the provinces who had no bathroom in the house she lived. She had to bath in the open daily, even in the cold season. The house she lived in also had no window. Her hosts told her that she was a volunteer, so they *use* her anyway they liked. They emphasized 'use' and not 'service.'

Incidentally, during the 2006 orientation for the new volunteers I attended, one resource person, Folorunso O. Otukoya, of the Nigerian ministry of foreign affairs, asked volunteers to be ready to 'live a threadbare life.' It is, however,

unlikely he expected this to include a lady volunteer having to bath in the open and living for about two years in a house without a window!

An ex-volunteer, Idris Sada Duwan, who served in Ethiopia, told the departing volunteers that even though international volunteering is a 'journey of immense challenges and pleasure,' they must 'be prepared to face inconveniences.' He added that, 'the essence of being a volunteer is service.'

However, the experience of 'threadbare life' or indecent accommodation is not shared by all volunteers. For instance, Silas Ogunwande, the professor of dentistry who served in Zambia, had a different story. He told departing volunteers in Owerri: 'I was treated sumptuously to traditional Zambian hospitality as I stayed in the hotel for one and a half years … and later moved to a private three-bedroom apartment for the last section of my stay in Lusaka. From the apartment, an official vehicle … [took] me to work every day. When the vehicle got grounded, the authorities paid for my taxi fare to and fro every day' (Ogunwande 2006: 9). However, he admitted that other volunteers were not as lucky. Some had 'sour stories of poor and inadequately furnished accommodation,' while 'some volunteers were harassed because of the non-issuance of the [work permit].'

Another volunteer asked that the 'welfare of the volunteers' be reconsidered by the TAC directorate in Nigeria. 'They should ensure that what the volunteers need, such as accommodation … are well provided for by the host country. The officials of TAC should check and inspect these facilities before posting volunteers to the host countries ... They should also increase the allowances.'

The EVs considered the 'condition of service in recipient countries' as next to 'allowances.' When both are related, it is obvious that the most important target of reforms for volunteers is their emoluments and comfort while serving. The EVs think that Nigeria should also expand the number of recipient countries where possible, while the SVs think that the needs of The Gambia should inform reorganisation and improvement of the service scheme in that country (See Tables 21 and 22).

In the unstructured interviews, some EVs suggested there should be an overhaul of the selection process to ensure that only people totally committed to service and altruistic purposes are selected. Dr Obododinma Oha, who teaches in the University of Ibadan but was a volunteer between 1999-2001 at the Université Gaston, Berge de St-Louis in Senegal, suggested that Nigerian embassies in all host countries should also be made to monitor the welfare and activities of the volunteers more closely. He also suggested that, apart from their places of primary assignment, volunteers could also be made to jointly organise specific public projects in their host countries.

Table 21. What should be the focus of change or improvement in tac?

	NRC	AP	NR	RP	CNSG	CSR	RY	IY	None
Ex-Volunteers	89	120	84	77	85	118	46	59	20

Codes: NRC – Number of recipient countries; AP – Allowances of participants; NR – Needs of recipient countries; RP – [Ensuring] Return of participants to Nigeria; CNSG – Correlating Nigeria's sacrifices to Nigeria's gains; CSR – Conditions of service in recipient countries; RY – Reduction in number of years of service; IY – Increase in number of years of service; None – None of the above

Table 22. What should be the focus of change or improvement in tac in the gambia?

	AP	NG	RPN	CS	RNY	INY
Serving Volunteers	232	199	91	265	14	114

Codes: AP - Allowances of participants; NG - Needs of Gambia; RPN - [Ensuring] Return of participants to Nigeria; CS – Conditions of service [in The Gambia]; RNY – Reduction in number of years [of Service]; INY – Increase in number of years [of service]

Policy Recommendations

There are a few important policy recommendations that arise from this study. First, there is the need for a comprehensive auditing of the scheme after more than two decades. In 2007, one year after visiting the volunteers in The Gambia, the scheme marked its second decade, though there was neither an elaborate celebration of this milestone nor a critical reappraisal of the scheme. Yet, a fundamental and elaborate reappraisal is necessary. This can be aided by the volumes of official documents that are available to TAC and the ministry of foreign affairs and perhaps the Nigerian intelligence agencies from the process of official debriefing of volunteers upon return to Nigeria. Also, scholarly studies of the scheme such as this should be further encouraged to provide more nuanced understanding of the strengths and weaknesses and the challenges of the scheme, that is, in addition to several reports and debates on the scheme in the media in Nigeria and abroad. All these will aid the process of a reappraisal.

Second, there is the need to take the scheme more seriously in the context of Nigeria's international relations and strategic interests. At the highest levels of government in Nigeria, this study found that there is still a lack of systematic appreciation of the scheme's strategic importance. Even though many officials speak of its importance and relevance, there is little evidence that the remarkable potential of the scheme has been fully realised at the highest level of governance in Nigeria. As the man who designed the programme, Nigeria's former External Affairs Minister Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, puts it:

> If I were Nigeria's president, I will have special meetings with TAC volunteers in every country I visited. I will even have a certain day when I would visit the

volunteers at their posts. I would have done what the Dubai Development Fund has done on the CNN. I would have done it for the volunteers ... I would have shown to the world how many countries have requested that the TAC volunteers should please stay back after they had finished their period of service. These are the things I would have loved to see done in the national interest ... We would have been projecting the nation [Nigeria]. But the people holding high-office in Nigeria belittle Nigeria and belittle what Nigeria has accomplished for the ACP countries through TAC. Why can't the federal government use TAC members where they are serving on the CNN to project Nigeria's image? Why are we not giving it the kind of publicity that would have helped Nigeria's global image? President Obasanjo is probably the most travelled Nigerian leader, has he ever visited the TAC volunteers at their places of assignment?' (Interview, Akinyemi, Lagos, 27 July 2006).

Third, there is the need to rework the terms of the agreements between Nigeria and recipient countries to ensure the welfare of volunteers becomes paramount and to capture emerging experiences. Also, TAC officials and Nigerian embassy officials must ensure that every recipient country fulfils its obligations, promises and pledges to the volunteers. In this context, it might be advisable to attach a TAC official to Nigerian embassies in all recipient countries.

Even though not all the volunteers could have the same provisions in their different places of primary assignment, there should be agreement on an irreducible minimum to which every recipient country must subscribe. In this context, Nigerian embassies in different recipient nations should constantly monitor compliance with the clauses of the agreement and ensure protection of volunteers. It is inexcusable that any volunteer would have to live in a house without windows and with no private bath for almost two years.

Related to the above is the need to ensure that specific procedural and documentary issues required by host countries are speedily and competently addressed. One such is the work permit. In some recipient countries, volunteers are not speedily granted the work permits needed for the period of their service. This often leads not only to anxieties among volunteers, but even, in some cases, harassment by local law enforcement agencies.

Fourth is the issue of publicity for the scheme, both within Nigeria and in recipient countries. As many volunteers in The Gambia and those who have returned have stated, in most recipient countries the ordinary people are ignorant about TAC and unaware that the professionals and technicians sent from Nigeria are volunteers, not job-seekers. This, as most volunteers claim, was the source of much hostility by the host communities and co-workers towards many volunteers. As one of the volunteers said, 'There is lot to be done for the awareness of [the] local population on what we are doing' (Adebanwi 2005:66). In doing this, the TAC directorate and Nigerian missions in recipient countries should

work together with host governments to emphasise the voluntary nature of the service and the technical assistance offered by Nigeria. This will not only evoke appreciation from the host communities where volunteers work, but would also provide the most conducive environment for volunteers to give more. Also, it is important to publicise and demonstrate the concrete gains of the scheme within Nigeria to ensure public support, which could be critical, particularly given the country's susceptibility to having a government in power that would willingly scrap the programme. If there is widespread understanding within Nigeria of the programme's benefits within civil and political society, any government would have greater difficulty in scrapping it. In this context, there is the need to formally document, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the impact of the specific services rendered by volunteers so as to provide the data with which to publicise the scheme and bring it further respectability.

There is also the need to showcase the initiative globally, not only to promote Nigeria's image, but perhaps also to encourage other well-endowed developing nations in the world to establish similar programmes in the global South. This would reverse the trend whereby IVS programmes are almost always from the global North to the global South. The impact of the TAC volunteers in the ACP countries in which they have served or are serving is an important illustration of the high-quality human resources available within the global South that can be shared with less-developed members of the comity of developing nations of the world. This will further promote international solidarity among countries of the global South and nurture more globally sensitive citizens across the world.

Fifth, some sources we interacted with during the period of this study alleged that the selection of volunteers is being gradually affected by non-bureaucratic processes. While they admitted that, compared to many agencies in Nigeria, TAC still ranks very high in following laid-down procedure for selecting volunteers, some critics noted the process may have been corrupted by the decision of President Obasanjo's administration to appoint a board for the TAC directorate, whereas in the past it had been a semi-independent agency under the ministry of foreign affairs. The founder of the scheme, Professor Akinyemi, was particularly eager to go on record that the appointment of a board was 'a waste of resources,' and has led to a situation in which the selection process for volunteers has 'become a dumping ground for some board members eager to use their influence.' Although the director-general of TAC, Ambassador Mamman Daura, denied that the selection of the volunteers has been compromised by the appointment of a board, it is difficult to see the value of the board when the directorate is under the supervision of the ministry of foreign affairs. The resources allotted the board and board members, therefore, constitute a waste, since they provide no critical support for the scheme.

Conclusion: Towards Globally oriented Citizenship

The TAC scheme, as MacBride and Daftary (2005:7) note about the Peace Corps, 'struggle[s] with [the] duality in approach between reciprocity and paternalism, creating ambivalence in policy as well as implementation.' Related to this ambivalence in the context of IVS is the tension between those who propose global citizenship on the basis of 'cosmopolitan idealism' or 'transnational moral obligation' (See, Dagger 2002; Sassen 2002 and Linklater 2002) and those who emphasise duty to co-nationals as a crucial, even if under-emphasised component of citizenship in the global South, particularly Africa. This tension has energised thinkers from classical times in their search for the right relationship between duties to fellow-citizens and duties to the human race (Linklater 2002: 320). As earlier stated, the Kantian idea of cosmopolitan citizenship – that is, ensuring 'that the sense of moral community is not confined to co-nationals but embraces the species as a whole' (ibid.) – has been salient in this attempt to reconcile both dimensions of duties.

Furthermore, the imagination of, or attempts to create a 'supracommunity,' a 'community of communities' (Etzioni 1993) or 'global community' (Iriye 2002), are important features of the struggle for reconciling nation-specific and globally attuned duties to humankind. As I have argued, the internationalism evident in the ideal of IVS is capable of mediating civic nationalism and cosmopolitanism. We can resolve the ambivalence in the approach to IVS between reciprocity and paternalism by creating a fundamental approach to IVS – here, in the context of the global South – informed by the theory of globally oriented citizenship.

As Bhikhu Parekh argues, as modern human beings, international volunteers have both general and specific duties owed to all human beings and to some of them respectively. However, these duties, though related, are distinct and mutually irreducible (Parekh 2003: 7). Therefore, rather than approach IVS from the perspective of global citizenship, which can be problematic – as the experiences and expressions of the TAC volunteers indicate – it is more useful to approach it from the perspective of 'globally oriented citizenship,' which recognises the volunteers' moral duties to humankind, but does so in the context of the political community to which the volunteers primarily belong.

As this study of TAC volunteers shows, 'if global citizenship means being a citizen of the world, it is neither practicable nor desirable' (ibid.:12). Yet, 'since the conditions of life of our fellow human beings in distant parts of the world should be a matter of deep moral and political concern to us, our citizenship has an inescapable global dimension, and we should aim to become … globally-oriented citizen[s].' Such 'a globally oriented citizen has a valued home of his own, from which he reaches out to and forms different kinds of alliances with

others having homes of their own,' (ibid.). The TAC volunteers represent such globally oriented citizens.

The volunteers, one, 'promote the interests of humankind at large'; two, demonstrate 'active interest in the affairs of other countries, both because human well-being everywhere [is] a matter of moral concern to [them] and because it directly or indirectly affects [their] own'; and, three, show 'an active commitment to create a just world order, one in which different countries, working together under fair terms of cooperation, can attend to their common interests in a spirit of mutual concern' (Parekh 2003:12). Reconciling [Nigeria's] territorially specific policies with the promotion of the interests of common humanity can help to reconcile the limitations of civic nationalism with the transcendental ideals that undergird IVS.

This study shows overwhelmingly that 'higher' and selfless ideals such as patriotism, public-spiritedness and the 'cosmopolitan ideal' influence participation in IVS, but does not overlook or understate other predisposing, factors such as adventure, unemployment, emigration and civic deficit. Also, the results point to the fact that participation in the scheme encouraged and deepened the civic nationalism of the volunteers and in many cases encouraged or deepened their awareness of the obligations owed to other members of the global community.

However, even though the study could not show conclusively that the scheme has enhanced Nigeria's image abroad and boosted her influence in the comity of nations, yet isolated cases and evidence point to its relevance and potential in this area. Specific reactions and praise, or requests for memoranda of understanding from international agencies, also point to this. To draw a few instances, the UN Volunteers Service (UNVS), an affiliate of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), has officially commended the TAC scheme, while the Commonwealth signed a memorandum of understanding with the Nigerian government in March 2003 calling for 'broad areas of cooperation between the two sides in a collaborative venture geared towards extending the TAC programme to needy member states of the Commonwealth' (Hastings 2006:17). The Japanese Overseas Volunteer Force also signed an MOU with Nigeria to benefit from the experiences of TAC.

Finally, because of the enormous human capital possessed by Nigeria, the 'loss' of some of the volunteers to recipient – and other foreign – countries through this scheme would seem to be negligible. Even though some volunteers point to the possibility of the scheme worsening the brain drain to other countries, particularly Western countries, it is not evident that this scheme has led to significant loss of human capital by Nigeria. However, more research, particularly drawing on quantitative data, would have to be conducted in this area.

As Peter Devereux (2008:368) argues, 'solidarity and mutual learning are precisely some of the key ingredients of long-term international volunteering

for effective development work.' Devereux further contends that international volunteers from the South – such as the TAC volunteers – who are 'returning to their homes in the South may also have renewed opportunities to build networks and collaboration for change in all directions: South-South and globally, on the basis of their new links and understanding.' It is expected that the experiences and reports of returnee volunteers will also help over time to build new and more links and understanding between Nigerians and citizens of other countries around the world. This is suggested by the case of the American medical student attached to the hospital project headed by a TAC volunteer and illustrated by the contacts some of the volunteers have with volunteers from other countries such as the US, Britain, Germany and Cuba.

On the whole, the data suggest that the TAC scheme, in the classical sense of volunteering, has added value to the 'goods and services' offered by international volunteers. Regardless of whether the volunteers are always altruistic in their motivation, what is most important is that, without being coerced and without commensurate remuneration, they make vital contributions to accomplishing the goals of human welfare and social development in their countries of service. Given the *actual* positive consequences of TAC volunteer work, we can therefore assume the commitment of most of the volunteers to globally oriented 'ideals of justice, fairness, caring and social responsibility' (Wuthnow 1991, in Wilson and Musick 1997:695).

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Ambassador Mamman Daura, TAC Director-General, Abuja, Nigeria

Bello, TAC volunteer, Banjul

Christopher Belford, former president of the Students' Union, University of The Gambia, Banjul

Dr Jibrila Yahya, TAC volunteer, Banjul

Dr Obododinma Oha, former volunteer, Ibadan, Nigeria

Idris Sanda Duwan, former volunteer, Owerri, Nigeria

Lamin Jahteh, registrar, University of The Gambia, Greater Banjul

Mercy, TAC volunteer, Banjul.

Dominique Mendy, Gambia's former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Banjul, The Gambia

Opuwari Mimonitu, TAC volunteer, Banjul

Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, Nigeria's former Minister of External Affairs, Lagos, Nigeria

Several anonymous TAC volunteers, officials of TAC and diplomats in Nigeria's High Commission in Banjul, and Gambian students and professionals

Sunday Mogaji, TAC volunteer, Banjul

Yusupha Touray, president of Students' Union, University of The Gambia, Banjul

Hassan Nyai, president of the Student Union of the School of Nursing, Banjul

Henre, TAC volunteer, Banjul

Nigerian newspapers

Nigerian Tribune
The Guardian
Thisday

Gambian newspaper

Daily Observer

The author (extreme left) with some of the volunteers in Serekunda, The Gambia

Departing volunteers during the orientation programme in Owerri, southeastern Nigeria, in February 2006.

Departing volunteers during the orientation programme in Owerri, southeastern Nigeria, in February 2006.

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