

Measuring the Contribution of Volunteering to the Sustainable Development Goals

The Measurement of Volunteering in the Global South
Bev Russell
Social Surveys Africa





Through insights gained from an extensive study of volunteering undertaken in South Africa:

This paper explores whether the global measurement tools developed in the formal economies of the North are appropriate for the measurement of volunteering in the Global South and its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals



Importance of measuring volunteering in Africa



Contribution of African volunteering to the SDGs

SDGs in Africa are more important than any other region



Addressing: Poverty, hunger, inequality, poor infrastructure, inclusive safe human settlements

Rich culture of Volunteering



Greatest impact most vulnerable in society

Use of exogenous measurement tools



Volunteering under measured and undervalued



social surveys
AFRICA



If we are going to truly measure the contribution of volunteering towards the SDGs we have to make sure the measurement tools we use in Africa, (almost more than anywhere else) are truly effective and local voices are heard in their design



Different measures of volunteering in South Africa



- ❑ There are Critical differences in volunteering behaviours of developed economies of the North and the informal economies of the Global South
- ❑ Explains inefficiencies of global measurement tools when applied in African Countries

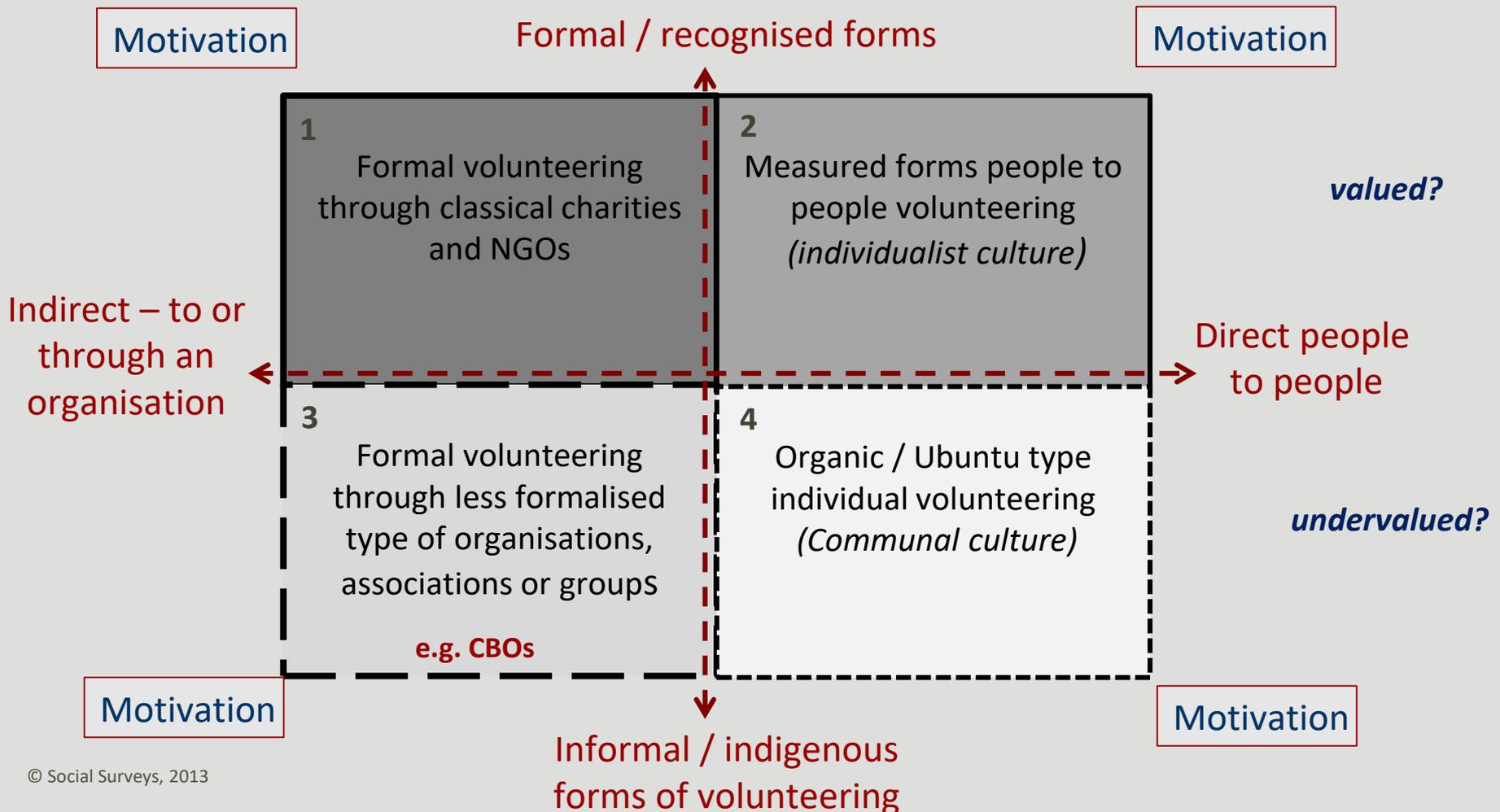
Measures of volunteering in South Africa



Conceptual Framework



Mapping of Individual Volunteering in South Africa



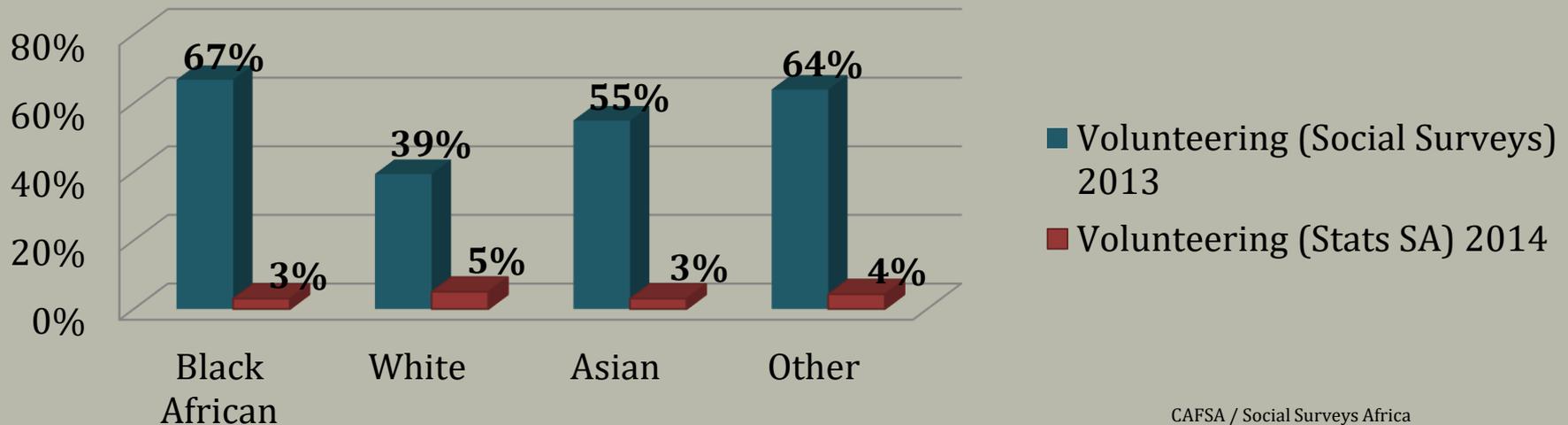
Volunteering in Africa: under-measured & undervalued?



- Use of inappropriate vehicles for surveys on volunteering – efficacy of labour force survey?
- Use of labels such as ‘volunteering’ and ‘volunteer work’?

So much volunteering is done by unemployed people who don't consider it to be ‘volunteering’ or ‘work’)

Comparative measures of volunteering by population group

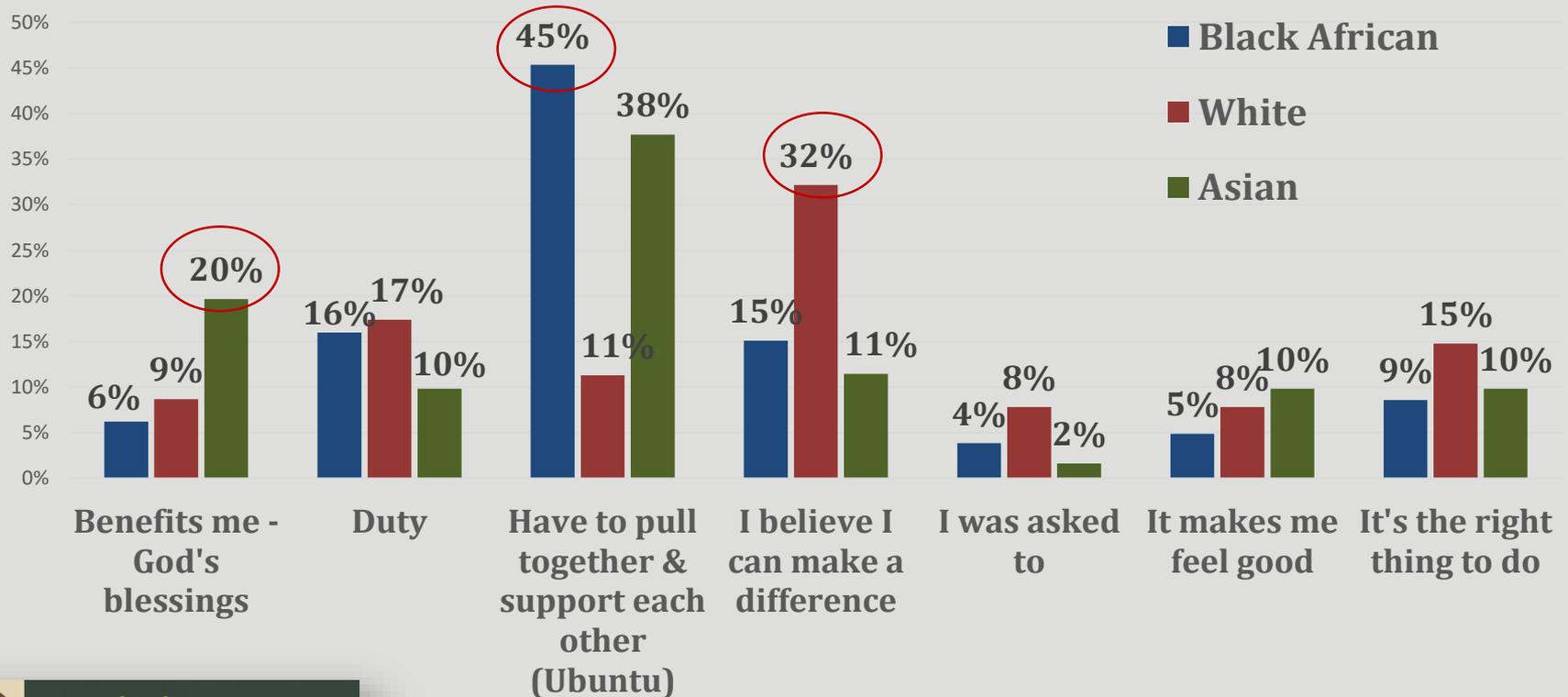


Reciprocal poor to poor giving



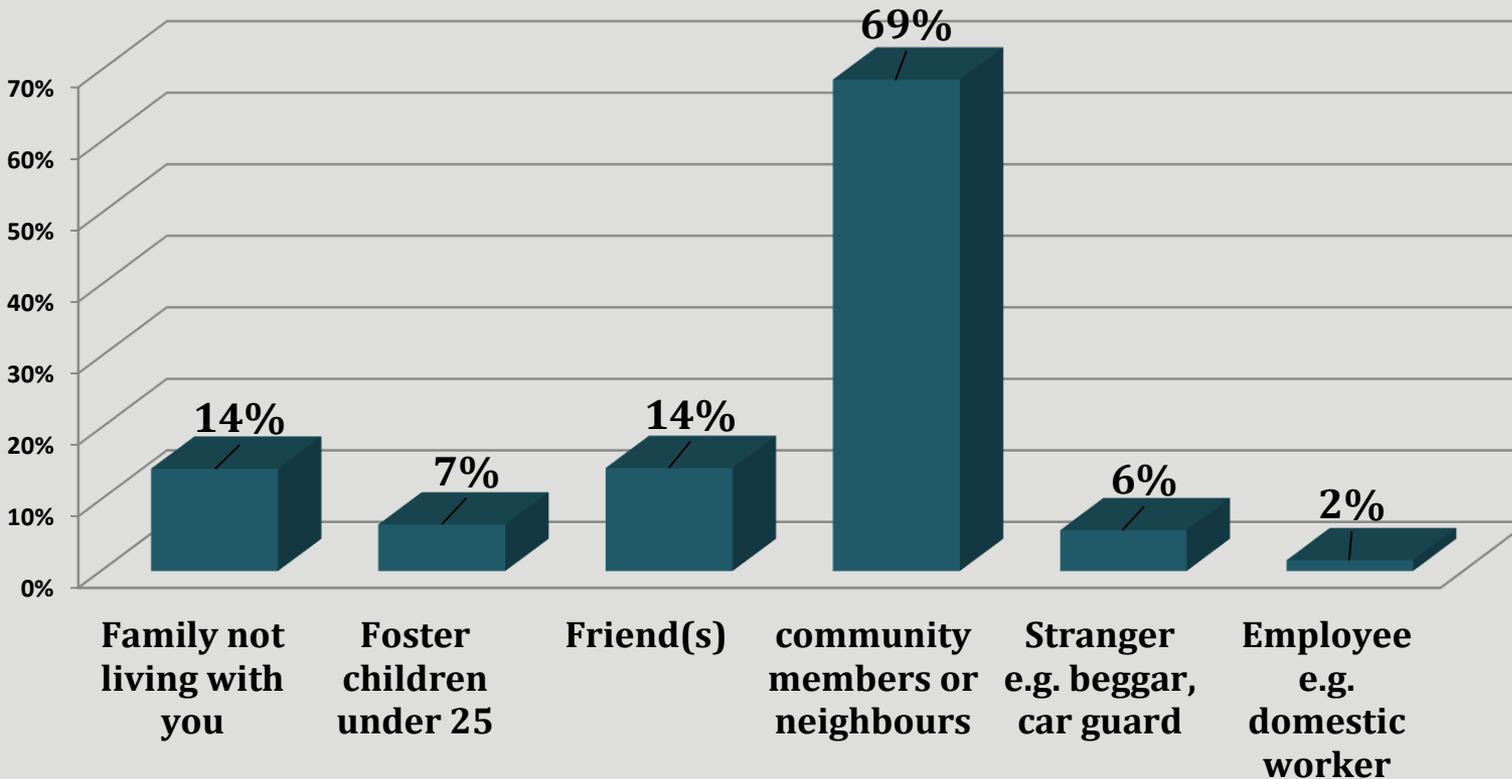
Understanding of cultural differences fundamental to the methodology used

Motivation for Direct Volunteering





Direct volunteering by beneficiary type



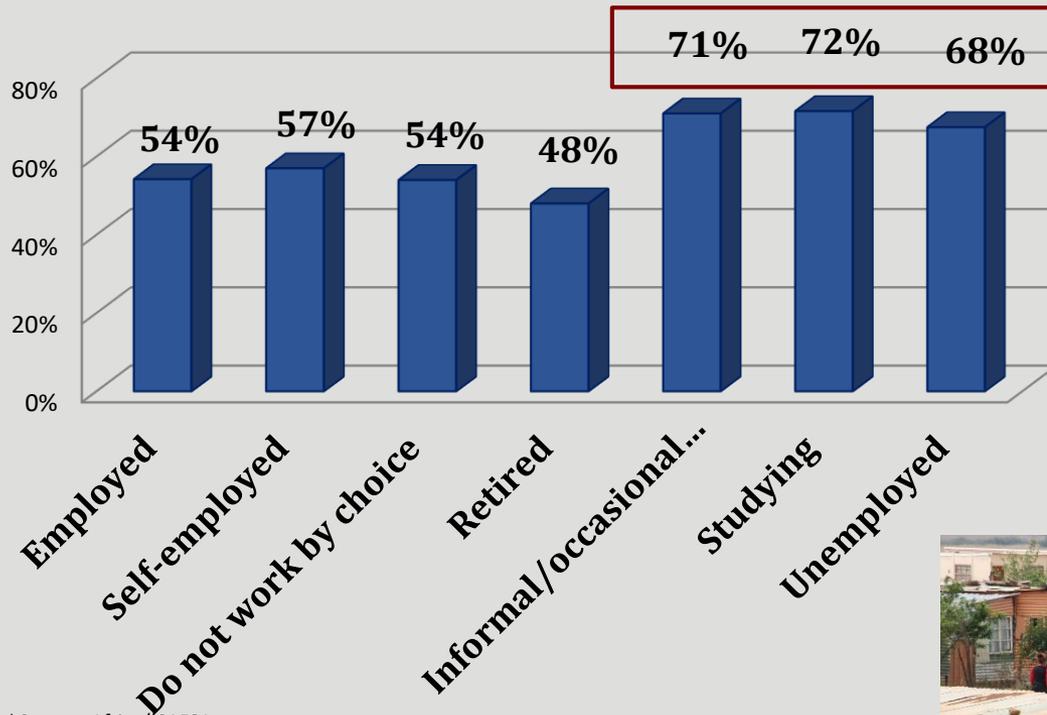
'World Giving Index' measures direct volunteering as volunteering to a stranger excluding 94% of direct volunteering in South Africa.

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Reciprocal poor to poor giving



Volunteering by employment category



- Volunteering not about advantaged to disadvantaged but ordinary poor people assisting other equally poor people
- Contribution to SDGs not only in terms of beneficiaries but in terms of volunteers as well

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“The SDGs will only succeed ... if they can succeed in Africa”

Kofi Annan and Graça Machel’s Africa Progress Panel Report, 2015)

So Too

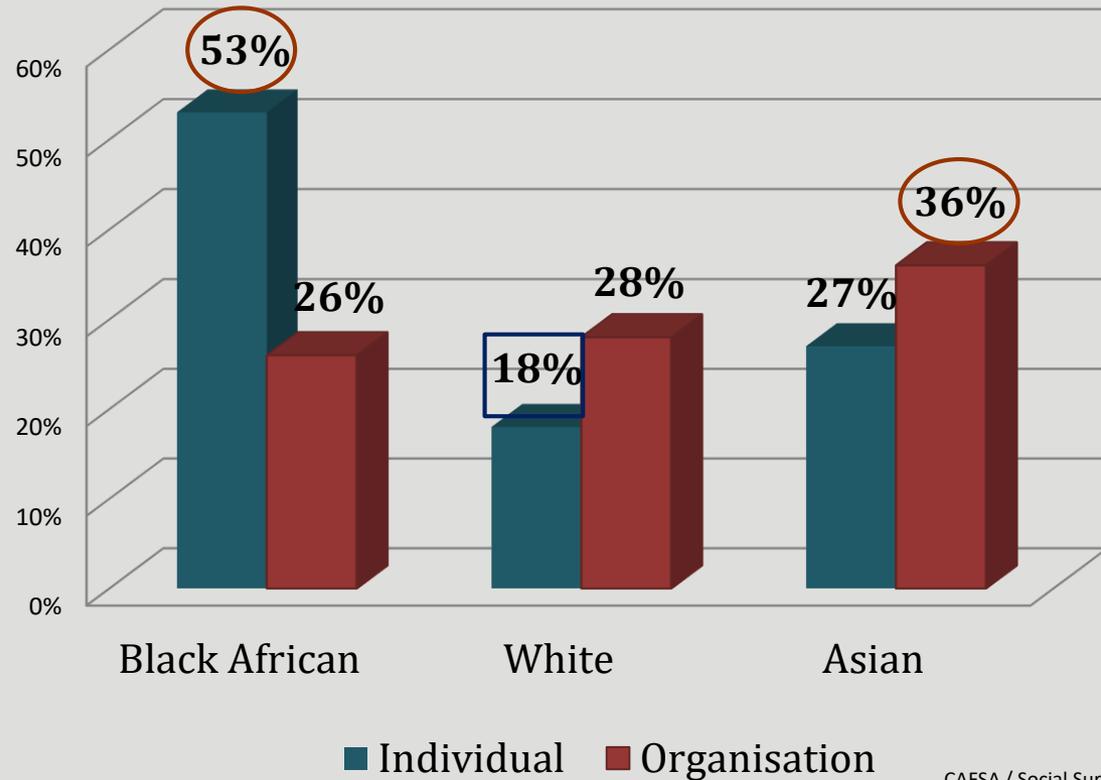
If we cannot measure the contribution of volunteering to the SDGs in Africa we will not be able to measure the contribution of volunteering to the SDGs at all.

Cultural differences in volunteering



- Volunteering is not about advantaged to disadvantaged but about reciprocal poor to poor giving
- Cultural understanding is fundamental to the measurement of volunteering
- Methodologies need to access the informal economy

Type of volunteering by population group



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