

Synthesis of the 4 groups production

These are the main points that were expressed during the group discussions, in our 7th January Savi meeting with units and services of Auroville. Were present also some members of Entry, AVCouncil, Weltwaerts; altogether more than 30 persons.

Volunteers are a precious gift to Auroville, that needs to be better recognised by the community

Volunteers bring new energy, support, fresh perspectives and hope...they are like prana, a flow of LIFE!

Auroville do not know their volunteers and their contribution, and Volunteers do not know Auroville; this explains many misunderstandings and suspicious perceptions.

For the Farms and Forests, their input is vital to help feeding Aurovilians; the present policy and registration process are detrimental and should be more welcoming.

Being a much-needed force for the growth of Auroville, there should be no limitation of numbers for long term volunteers and a more qualitative setup of volunteering conditions

It could be interesting to have an objective data about Volunteers becoming Newcomers.

Some have expressed the wish to have a concrete survey of economic input of volunteerism on Auroville economy.

Their integration in the community encounters numerous obstacles

- **Lack of material conditions**, and specifically insufficient affordable housing
- **Counterproductive registration policies**: Volunteer contribution felt like a “Tax”, demotivating AuroCard system encouraging purchases outside Auroville; transparency and objectivity should be brought in this controversial matter.
- **Limited awareness of Units on their responsibilities**: There should be more flexibility in working hours, more care in the welcoming setup, better mentorship and transmission of AV spirit.

Work relations Volunteer/Host will have to overcome many challenges

Most challenges involve the “**human**” element of having Volunteers, mostly young, not familiar with India. Extremely busy schedules, limited capacity to cater for the Volunteers’ needs (safety, food, accommodation, psychological support ...) and expectations about Auroville, about the Tamil culture and their social life.

There is a strong consensus on the need from the community **to give more recognition** to the Volunteers input and convey signs of welcoming, appreciation and gratitude to them.

This should be helped by a better information and communication through newsletters, AuroNet, News & Notes, You Tube, or blogs.... There are many ways to give recognition, like giving in-kind facilities, discounts, etc.

More efforts are to be made to better mentor and follow-up the interns & volunteers

A good number of creative ideas have been produced: induction program, sharing experience moments to bring closer both populations, creating educational or psychological support by resource persons.

Savi team is very grateful to the participants for their friendly and creative contributions to the debate of Volunteers.