

Tuesday, October 30, 2018 12:00-1:00pm

Alumni Center, 716 Columbus Av.

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Professor and Director Matt Baillie Smith
Centre for International Development, Northumbria University

Volunteering and resilience in humanitarian and development settings

Local volunteers play critically important roles in humanitarian crises and international development activity. They are essential to the delivery of humanitarian aid and often central to efforts to foster resilience in the face of crises and shocks. They are also increasingly identified with ensuring the local ownership and sustainability of development efforts, particularly in the context of delivering the Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite this, research on volunteering is dominated by the activities of international volunteers, or emerges from the experiences of volunteers in the global North. Matt Baillie Smith will discuss how volunteering research at the Centre for International Development at Northumbria University is developing new understandings of the ways volunteers contribute to resilience in humanitarian and development settings. Drawing on a large collaborative project with the Swedish Red Cross on Volunteers in Conflicts and Emergencies, Professor Baillie Smith will suggest that the emphasis on the contribution of volunteers to building community resilience fails to pay attention to the resilience of volunteers themselves. His talk will also explore what some of the challenges are in doing this across humanitarian and development settings.



Matt Baillie Smith is Professor of International Development and Director of the Centre for International Development at Northumbria University. He previously worked for a development NGO, and continues to work in partnership with a range of international development organisations. His research interests are focused on international development, citizenship and civil society, with a particular focus on volunteering in humanitarian and development settings. Current projects include the Volunteers in Conflicts and Emergencies Initiative and research on youth citizenship and agency in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

About the Global Resilience Institute

GRI is a university-wide, interdisciplinary institute committed to advancing the security, sustainability, health and well-being of communities and societies around the world.

Our aim is to serve as both a channel and a catalyst for experts in industry, academia, and government to collaborate on solving the world's most pressing resilience challenges.