

**UN****Volunteers**

In FACT:

UN Volunteers and the Millennium Development Goals

MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Target: to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary levels of education

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will require the ingenuity, solidarity, and creativity of millions of ordinary people through voluntary action. Efforts on the part of national governments, supported by the international community, can only complement what ultimately will depend on the full involvement of people all over the world. Six billion people have something to contribute. Recognizing this fact is the first step on the road towards harnessing this vast resource in a global effort to meet the MDG targets.

Women play a pivotal role in family and social cohesion and are engaged in a wide range of economic activities. Their voluntary and collective engagement in development constitutes a formidable force for social and economic transformation. The UN Volunteers (UNV) programme uses its outreach capacity and its proximity to volunteer-involving organizations and their networks to help tap the huge potential of women for development and social change. It further provides practical support to women's groups in such areas as literacy, effective management, financial systems, micro-credit, and income generation.

UNV's work in advocating volunteerism focuses on the promotion, recognition, facilitation and networking of volunteer action, including:

Through individual volunteers, the UN Volunteers programme

- Assists development institutions to map and collect data on gender disparities;
- Develops the capacity of institutions to properly use gender specific data at local and national levels;
- Provides technical support to programmes targeting single mothers;
- Promotes the potential of the Internet and other information and communications technology (ICT) as a library of information and research tools, to raise awareness;
- Assists national initiatives promoting female education.

Through volunteer-involving organizations (VIOs), the UN Volunteers programme

- Helps local groups advocate for compulsory education for girls as well as boys;
- Supports initiatives related to protecting female teenagers, including through setting age limits for marriages;
- Assists VIOs' advocacy efforts for greater gender balance in key institutions such as parliaments;
- Trains gender-focused VIOs in intensive use of information and communications technology for advocacy work.

Through volunteer networks, the UN Volunteers programme

- Helps expand national and international networks of gender-promoting VIOs;
- Facilitates the exposure of gender-oriented VIOs to innovative approaches on gender equality by like-minded organizations.

United Nations Volunteers

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UN Volunteers is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



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UNV is the UN organization that supports the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals through the promotion of volunteerism, including the mobilization of volunteers. To this end, UNV provides the opportunity each year for more than 7,000 women and men - 75 per cent coming from developing countries - to support peace, relief and development initiatives in some 140 countries. In addition, it engages thousands of other individuals in the work of the United Nations through www.onlinevolunteering.org, and manages the WorldVolunteerWeb.org, a portal that serves as a knowledge resource base on volunteerism worldwide.

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