



# Feature

## Recruitment at UNV Banda Aceh

Confidence, commitment, adaptability and a strong volunteer spirit were the key personal characteristics which qualified Namibian born Metumo Tuilikka as an international UNV Assistant Field Security Coordination Officer.

Her educational background and work experience that includes 14 years of service in the Namibian Military and Police forces, made her one of the most eligible candidates for the post with the United Nations Department for Safety & Security (UNDSS) in Banda Aceh.

Amongst other duties, she would be responsible for preparing, maintaining and updating a duty station security plan and assisting UN agencies in developing and implementing office security and emergency measures.

However, before being assigned to the host agency, Metumo, like any other UNV volunteer applicant, had to follow a number of steps as part of the recruitment process.

"I always wanted to become a volunteer to help people. That is why in the year 2001, after consulting UNV's website, I submitted my Personal History Statement Form (PHS) to the Cyprus Offshore Processing Centre in order to be included on their roster" Metumo explains.

The Centre appraises applications and maintains a database of eligible candidates who must be at least 25 years old. The waiting period to be assigned as a UNV volunteer can vary from two months to two years. However, the inclusion on the roster does not guarantee a UNV assignment.

"UNV initiates the recruitment process following an expressed request from a wide range of partners. These could be UN agencies, non governmental and community-based organizations" explains UNV Project Coordinator Walia SKL, the focal point in Aceh for facilitating the recruitment process in the Sumatra region.

"Once a required position is identified and after writing down the 'terms of reference', the job vacancy is advertised through UNV's website or locally by word of mouth. In the case of international assignments, we get support from our headquarters in Bonn which forward us all relevant resumes for that specific position. Then, the short listing begins", Walia explains.

Metumo was one of five candidates selected for an interview that was conducted via telephone from Jakarta. "Two people called me and asked me several questions for about twenty minutes. I knew I met all the requirements, but I was also aware that there were other applicants besides me", she recalls.

When interviewing national or international candidates, the educational background, personal characteristics, motivation and commitment are among the main criteria. Since assignments in Banda Aceh are mainly in the field, eligible candidates are those who are not afraid to work under challenging conditions.



Once a candidate is selected, she or he receives an official notification from UNV's headquarters. After providing a written confirmation of acceptance for the post and medical clearance, the candidate is expected to assume duties within six weeks thereafter.

"I was so happy when they chose me. I broke the news to my family and after getting their support I departed from Namibia on September 6, 2006. I will be based here in Aceh for at least six months" Metumo proudly says.

UNV volunteer assignments are made primarily based on the best match between a country's needs and a volunteer's skills. They usually last 24 months, however, assignments of shorter duration between 3 to 12 months are increasingly common.

UNV volunteers are professionals who listen and discuss, teach and train and also share and exchange ideas, skills and experience. As such, they are supported through several benefits to facilitate their contributions, but the most important incentive for them is that of volunteering.

"I made my final decision to accept this assignment right after my kids said to me: Mommy, we will miss you a lot, but you have to go and help the people affected by the Tsunami. We saw how much they suffered. We will pray that you come back home safe, but understand that now it's your chance to go and help those in need", Metumo says with a blissful smile.



*UNV volunteer Metumo identifies security areas on a map at host agency UNDSS headquarters*



*UNV volunteer Metumo carries out security inspections in the field*