

**UN****Volunteers**

In FACT: Humanitarian Assistance

UN Volunteers take up a variety of activities in the area of humanitarian assistance. They work as food aid monitors, field officers, civilian camp officers, logisticians, procurement specialists, storekeepers, warehouse managers, material management specialists, emergency administrative assistants, transport coordinators and radio technicians. Over the last five years, UN Volunteers have supported humanitarian activities in war-torn countries such as Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kosovo, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, Timor (East and West), Uganda and the former Yugoslavia.

Recent UNV Humanitarian Operations

In 2000-2001, the largest involvement of UN Volunteers providing humanitarian aid was in Bosnia. Attached to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Volunteers have worked to register and secure the protection of some 67,000 refugees and displaced people from ethnic minorities. Other UN Volunteers assisted UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) in Guinea in supporting refugees from Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea-Bissau. In East Timor, UN Volunteers working with UNHCR carry out tasks relating to the reception, monitoring and initial reintegration assistance for returnees as well as for internally displaced persons (IDPs). With WFP, their functions range from administration and finance support officers to food aid monitors or convoy leaders. In Somalia, they are at work under a project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in running air traffic control systems and providing electrical engineering support. The project, which began in March 1993, aims to rehabilitate essential civil aviation services in Somalia, most of which were destroyed during the country's civil war. Other UN Volunteers active in humanitarian operations are working with UNHCR and WFP in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Tanzania and Kosovo. Following the crisis in Afghanistan last year, additional UN Volunteers were sent to Afghanistan and Tajikistan to work with UNHCR, WFP and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) as water/sanitation engineers, site planners, rural rehabilitation specialists, field officers, finance/administrative officers, logistics officers and public information officers. Due to positive developments in Angola's peace process, UN Volunteers are currently being mobilized for OCHA to assist the families of demobilized soldiers.

Partner Agencies

The main agencies with which UNV is cooperating and in which UN Volunteers have been deployed in the context of humanitarian assistance are: UNHCR, WFP, UNDP, ICAO, OCHA, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Funding

Funding sources include: UN agencies, full funding from governments (e.g., Belgium, Finland and Spain), financial contributions from the Governments of Japan and Germany and Argentina's support for the UNV/White Helmet Volunteers, who work in rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

Based in Bonn, Germany, UNV is the UN organization that supports sustainable human development globally through the promotion of volunteerism, including the mobilization of volunteers. As a part of its activities, each year, UNV provides the opportunity for over 7000 skilled and experienced professionals, 70 percent coming from developing countries, to support peace, relief and development initiatives in some 150 countries. In addition, it engages thousands of other individuals in the work of the United Nations through www.onlinevolunteering.org, and manages the WorldVolunteerWeb, a global volunteering portal that serves as a knowledge resource base for campaigning, advocacy, information dissemination and networking.

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