



Advocating Change

“In our community, women are restricted from participating in public spheres due to cultural traditions. UNV is doing a great job, promoting gender equality and engaging youth, who now effectively advocate against gender-based violence in our community. We need to promote volunteerism and volunteers in order to facilitate change in our society.”

Community member Junaid Ahmed, Pakistan

Volunteerism engages communities and individuals in development efforts at the grassroots level. Volunteers raise awareness of the challenges we face and improve community access to information.

UNV promotes global understanding and recognition of volunteerism as a means of enabling communities to contribute to peace and development in their immediate surroundings. UNV volunteers empower communities to make change happen, enhancing social cohesion and developing the capacities of communities and individuals.

UNV volunteers are advocating change in the Asia-Pacific region, which has some of the highest reported levels of gender-based violence in the world. According to Oxfam International (2004), half the women in South Asia face violence at home; a World Health Organization (WHO) survey in 2005 revealed that 62 per cent of women in Bangladesh and 47 per cent in Thailand reported suffering sexual and/or physical violence.

UNV is partnering with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in ‘Partners for Prevention’, a joint regional programme to reduce the prevalence of gender-based violence in 10 countries across the Asia-Pacific region (2008-2011). Focused on primary prevention – stopping violence before it starts –

the programme addresses the root causes of gender-based violence and strives to create societies where this is unacceptable to all.

Working with local partners, national UNV volunteers reach out to communities and mobilize community volunteers to address violence prevention. They also consolidate research, document volunteering contributions and support new studies to strengthen advocacy.

Rajeev Narayan is an Indian national UNV volunteer Network and Outreach Coordinator. He actively participates in violence prevention campaigns, mobilizes volunteers, documents case studies and shares good practices. Based at the Centre for Health and Social Justice in Delhi, he works with Men’s Action for Stopping Violence Against Women, a network of over 100 organizations challenging gender stereotypes.

*UNV volunteers and volunteers from the UN Mission in Liberia, UN agencies and civil society clean up the beach in Monrovia, Liberia, on International Volunteer Day, 5 December.
(Philip Sen/UNV, 2009)*



Mainstreaming volunteerism in Sudan

In Sudan, UNV engaged volunteers from within their own communities in tackling the culturally-sensitive issue of female genital mutilation (FGM), involving males and youth as well as women (community volunteer pictured above, photo: Blazej Mikula, 2008). National partners since 2006 have included the Sudanese National Committee on the Eradication of Traditional Practices, the Sudanese Network for Abolition of FGM and the Ahfad University for Women.

The project's community-based approach to awareness-raising and peer education through volunteerism was key to its success, and FGM practice decreased

notably in the targeted communities.

To ensure sustainability, UNV helped establish the NGO Menath, through which local community members are now coordinating their activities. Since the pilot phase ended in 2009, UNFPA and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are replicating the community-based volunteerism approach.

"Volunteers focused on positive messages and engaged religious leaders, men and the younger generation in changing attitudes about what is considered a women's issue," says UNFPA Deputy Resident Representative Athanase Nzokirishaka. "UNFPA believes

in innovation, and this emphasis on volunteering for social transformation opens the door to broader aspects of gender-based violence and new ways of empowering women and girls."

Ending Female Genital Mutilation (2009), a report of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, recognized that UNV and partners, "capitalized on volunteerism and local action to help combat female genital mutilation through awareness-raising and education". The UN Evaluation Group is also using the project evaluation as a model for a handbook on integrating human rights and gender into evaluation processes.

"This volunteer-driven movement works with a chain of volunteers taking responsibility at the individual level and in each district," Rajeev explains. "We count on these men and prepare them for future leadership roles. I have also been assisting young people in monitoring their own gender behaviour. A tremendous change that I

have witnessed is that youth have started engaging in non-traditional roles like assisting their sisters and mothers with housework."

"Linking masculinity, patriarchy and gender-based violence is a new approach... and volunteers from within this culture are key to sensitizing men and boys on gender equality and issues of violence against children and women."

Rajeev's counterpart in Pakistan, Rizwan Latif, is a national UNV volunteer Outreach and Capacity Development Officer serving with Rozan, an Islamabad-based NGO working on emotional health, gender and violence.

"At Rozan, I work on the *Humqadam* (Working Together) project, an initiative to involve males in addressing gender-based violence," he says.

"I facilitate awareness-raising sessions at the community level aimed at initiating and sustaining a change in attitudes of males about themselves and their role in society. Linking masculinity, patriarchy and gender-based violence is a new approach in the Pakistani context, and volunteers from within this culture are key to sensitizing men and boys on gender equality and issues of violence against children and women".

The work Rizwan and Rajeev do is not without its challenges. Rizwan acknowledges the difficulty inherent in changing mindsets. "It is great to fight for a cause and involve individuals and groups to bring about change in society." Rajeev says, "I have been able to gain strength, courage and confidence through a clear-cut message: 'Not all men are violent'".

In Morocco, UNV is working with UNDP and the Government to raise awareness of women's rights and ensure that gender issues are considered in all development programmes. UNDP has developed an approach linking so-called 'gender mainstreaming theory' with day-to-day realities faced in project activities. Six national UNV volunteers were fielded as the 'gender-sensitive eyes and ears' of six pilot projects after receiving training in gender concepts, analysis and reporting through a national NGO, the Institute for Training of Development Workers.

Fouzia Chkar and Hasnaa Fassah were placed in projects in their home regions. Fouzia served with a project for the Integrated Management of Forests of the Middle Atlas, Hasnaa with a Civil Society Support Programme designed to develop and strengthen the capacity of Moroccan civil society organizations.

Fouzia and Hasnaa had a common understanding of their challenging task. "We had a huge mission ahead of us," Fouzia says. "On the one hand we had to be consensual and convincing while challenging gender relations within the project team and among beneficiaries in general. On the other hand, we had to support the teams with results-based reporting. We wondered at the beginning: Would they like us? Would they take us seriously? Would our work have any results in terms of gender and women's empowerment?"

The national UNV volunteers engaged both men and women in project activities, calling for an improvement in the status and involvement of women in the communities they worked with. Acting as 'gender experts', they raised awareness, challenged stereotypes and identified opportunities to tackle gender inequalities. Communities reacted positively to the income-generating activities the volunteers put in place and the cooperatives they created to influence the socio-economic status of women.

National UNV volunteer Rajeev Narayan (centre right) discusses gender equality and male stereotypes in Uttar Pradesh, India, together with community member Sachita Mishra (in red) and Ram Prakash Pandey (in light blue), from partner organization Tarun Chetna. (Anil Tharayath Varghese/UNV/UNDP, 2009)



The UNV volunteers ensured local ownership and thus the sustainability of the gender-sensitive approach by involving women in the management of the project. Hasnaa reports, "Women were thanking us for our contribution, telling us that they now had more respect because they had more knowledge and experience."

"The communities I visited had severe challenges in all areas of development. Voluntary service allowed us to take action and this was rewarding. Ultimately, we can all make change happen."

Fouzia felt personally enriched and empowered by her volunteer experience. "The communities I visited had severe challenges in all areas of development," she says. "Voluntary service allowed us to take action and this was rewarding. Ultimately, we can all make change happen."

Natalia Gozak (right), a national UNV volunteer E-communities Assistant, and Intel Facilitator Inna Mishurniayeva, train pupils in Kiev, Ukraine, to develop projects benefitting their local community with the help of the 'Skills for Success' programme. (Vladimir Negrebezkiy, 2010)

There is a great need for substantial progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Africa. In Senegal, for example, the majority of its estimated 12 million people, especially those in rural areas, live at or near poverty levels. The UNDP Human Development Index 2009 ranks the country 166th out of 182 nations in the world in terms of the overall wellbeing of its population.

Keen to involve citizens in development, the Government is in the process of approving a legal framework regulating volunteerism and volunteer deployment. A UNV-supported study identified the need for coordination and project management skills among volunteer-involving organizations in Senegal, so UNV and UNDP are helping strengthen their ability to leverage the power of volunteerism for development.

Nine UNV volunteers work with 23 community grassroots organizations, providing training on the MDGs, volunteer management, project development, and monitoring and evaluation. They helped establish *La Maison des Volontaires* (House of Volunteers), a service centre to match potential volunteers with organizations in need of their services, and three satellite offices. The volunteers participated in an exchange visit with the national volunteer programme in Burkina Faso, learning from experiences there and fostering South-South cooperation.

Within the framework of the project, 1,790 community volunteers are sensitizing communities on the MDGs, disseminating information materials in local languages and sharing knowledge via local radio. By raising



awareness of issues like education and gender equality, they contribute to changing attitudes towards the enrolment of children in school or the role of women.

The UNV/UNDP project also provides small grants to fund community volunteering initiatives. In the city of Ziguinchor, 'third age' volunteers, retired professionals with backgrounds in education, took the initiative to address the needs of their community and volunteered to tutor primary school children after school, benefitting 351 girls and 356 boys. Enjoying the chance to contribute as a volunteer, one of them said, "It is better to be used up in action than to rust in inactivity".

Advocating change requires the expertise and participation of all development partners, including the private sector. In the Ukraine, UNV, UNDP and the Government are working with the technology corporation Intel to engage young people and enhance their skills for the job market.

The Youth Social Inclusion for Civic Engagement project develops the capacity of youth centres, empowering the marginalized from urban and rural areas to take part in society through training and voluntary action. Running from 2008 to 2011, the project is integrating volunteerism across its activities, with the youth themselves planning and organizing initiatives such as awareness-raising campaigns on the environment.

Ten national UNV volunteers coordinate the project, which supports 40 youth centres established by UNDP, and has reached over 3,000 community members. UNV volunteers trained young leaders in project management and team building as well as in how to run art, technology and ecological activities.

One activity conducted by the UNV volunteers was educational geocaching, a high-tech team game based on finding hidden items (caches) using geographical coordinates and GPS devices. From July to October 2009, 512 youth took part in geocaching quests organized with the guidance of UNV volunteers.

These activities promoted interaction and developed a feeling of social responsibility. "In Pryvorotyya, there was a girl with health disorders on our team and one boy kept cheering her on every time she dropped behind," says national UNV volunteer Tamara Repyova. "Success



Enhancing trust and inclusion in Guyana

One of the poorest countries in the Americas, Guyana struggles with an often delicate political and security climate, caused, in part, by social tensions between ethnic groups.

UNV is working with UNDP and the Government on the Enhanced Public Trust, Security and Inclusion project to strengthen democratic practices and sustainable peace. The project aims to empower 100 young people, aged 18 to 25, to serve as Community Youth Facilitators through the national UNV volunteer programme launched in 2009.

UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative Kiari Liman-Tinguiri describes the programme as innovative, noting the large numbers of national UNV volunteers. "This is something Guyana should be proud of and the young volunteers congratulated on," he says. "The volunteers come from diverse backgrounds but they all have one thing in common, the desire and potential to be agents for peaceful change at the community level."

To date, about 50 national UNV volunteer Community Youth Facilitators are serving within their own communities. The volunteers receive training in democratic governance, community mobilization, conflict transformation, facilitation and life skills to prepare them for their assignments. They reduce risk by enhancing community dialogue, advocating non-violence and engaging youth in the constructive resolution of conflicts. One of these, Leon Niles, is pictured above (centre) conducting literacy classes in Georgetown (Calvin Bradford, 2010).

UNV volunteer Keeran Williams, a Regional Coordinator in Linden, explains, "I work on a one-on-one basis with these youth, which is a privilege: showing them it's okay to dream, to want more, and to do more. Having come from a poor background myself, with a father who abused alcohol, I provide inspiration to these youth," Keeran continues. "I'm really appreciative to UNV: youth are actually involved in this programme, not just sitting in meetings."

Jean Wintz, a UNV volunteer Community Facilitator in Georgetown, agrees. "This project is making an impact," she says. "When we first came to this neighbourhood, there were fights every day – that's no exaggeration! But the change is being felt: our monitoring shows that school attendance is up, behaviour is changing, and participation is improving. We're training children and youth to be volunteer leaders and set examples, even after we're gone."



Fatou Diallo (left) is a member of the Unité de transformation et de production des céréales locales Seddo Ndam (Seddo Ndam Local Cereal Processing and Production Unit). Here, she shows cereal products to national UNV volunteer Aminata Diagne Barre. UNV volunteers manage the daily operations of the project. (Harald Franzen, 2010)

depends on the contribution of each participant. The teams have to cooperate since each member has different qualities, from knowledge of the site to imagination, physical strength and endurance. No matter how the quest finished, teams worked together and this positively influenced their collaboration afterwards."

In Brazil, UNV is supporting UNDP in preparing the next National Human Development Report (NHDR), which started with a national consultation to define its theme. UNV/UNDP engaged in a project with five Brazilian universities called 'Brazil Point by Point', which mobilized 160 local volunteers. The volunteers surveyed more than half a million people, who reported that they considered values such as responsibility, respect, love and reciprocity essential for a better life. As a result, UNDP chose the theme 'Guiding Values for Life' for the report.

"The UNV volunteers reported a rich array of experiences that called their attention to human suffering and hardship co-existing with happiness, friendship and human solidarity all over the country."

A total of 40 national UNV volunteers were engaged in the elaboration of the NHDR and collected primary data for the creation of a new indicator, the 'Human Value Index'. The UNV volunteers were scattered across Brazil, and interviewed 6,000 people on human values, education, violence and demographic variables. Subsequently, they assessed and compiled the data for statistical analysis.

Flávio Comim is the Coordinator of the National Human Development Report at UNDP. He explains, "Rather than paying a private company to do the job, we took on organizing the logistics of a very complex survey ourselves. But the returns were priceless. The UNV volunteers reported a rich array of experiences that called their attention to human suffering and hardship co-existing with happiness, friendship and human solidarity all over the country."

UNV works with UN partners in developing countries around the world to advance the development agenda, advocating for more participation and engagement. UNV supports the UN 'Delivering as One' ('One UN') initiative by integrating volunteerism for development in eight pilot countries: Albania, Cape Verde,

Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam. In Uruguay, UNV forged strong alliances to strengthen civil society, and is supporting the Government in planning for a national youth volunteer programme.

Matías Rodríguez, Director of the National Youth Institute at the Social Development Ministry, explains, "UNV has helped the National Youth Institute to define its role in promoting volunteerism. UNV conducted a survey on volunteerism that facilitated decision-making regarding policies for the promotion, recognition and establishment of a legal framework for volunteerism in the country".

"In 2009, we launched a national roundtable on volunteerism with the full involvement of a range of actors, from UN agencies, a network of public institutions, corporations, civil society organizations, public and private universities and city mayors," says UNV volunteer Antonio Graziano (Italy). UNV also partnered with Civicus: World Alliance for Civic Participation on a national study of volunteerism in 2009, which revealed that around 20 per cent of Uruguayans had volunteered in some way, making an economic contribution equivalent in value to about US \$145 million or one percent of the gross domestic product.

In Viet Nam, UNV is also working through the One UN programme to strengthen the capacity of volunteerism for development, promote the greater involvement of people living with HIV/AIDS and ensure that gender issues are reflected in development.

The Government has a strong commitment to gender equality, and the gender gap in education and the workforce is narrowing. However, traditional attitudes persist, particularly among the rural poor. Tanja Noponen (Finland) is a UNV volunteer Gender Specialist who ensures that women's issues are taken into account in development programming. "Projects cannot meet their goals efficiently if there is no consideration of the different effects on men and women," she says.

"Climate change will affect agricultural and ecological systems," Tanja explains. "Because women in Viet Nam depend on natural resources for their livelihoods, they are more vulnerable to resource scarcity and the impacts of natural disasters. Therefore, gender is a key factor in considering ways to adapt to climate change."



Meet UNV volunteers... recognized for outstanding service

UNV advocates for recognition of the dedication and contribution of volunteers to development. Every year, UNV volunteers around the world receive awards, symbolizing the appreciation of the partners they work with.

In China, national UNV volunteer Liu Hui, a Communications Officer at the Beijing Volunteers Association, volunteered to provide logistical support for a team of doctors in the immediate aftermath of the May 2008 Sichuan earthquake (Liu Hui pictured above, photo: Gao Wei /UNV, 2008). In 2009, she received an award as one of the 'Beijing Top Ten Volunteers'. Another national UNV volunteer, Canaria Gaffar, was recognized for her work on HIV/AIDS with Aids Care China and named 'Outstanding National Volunteer of 2009'. UNV and UNDP received the 'National Brand [Model] Project of the Year 2009' award in China, recognizing cooperation on an Early Recovery and Disaster Risk Management project.

Linda Germanis (Italy), a UNV volunteer with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was named 'Outstanding Volunteer' in Thailand. She received the award from Mr Issara Somchai, Minister of Social Development and Human Security, for her work with a volunteer project that helps marginalized people document their lives through photography.

Clement Dubarry (France) and Ana Nunes (Portugal), UNV volunteers with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Jordan, received awards from Princess Basma Bint Talal for their work with refugees. During a celebration at the Princess Basma Youth Resource Center they highlighted the valuable contributions of volunteers to development.

Force Commander Lt. Gen. Babacar Gaye of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) recognized UNV volunteers William Mulongo (Kenya) and Makhtar Ba (Senegal). Working with movement control operations, they had handled loading and off-loading cargo from seven flights a day for four weeks under harsh conditions, including 211 metric tons of incoming cargo.

UNV volunteer Rukaya Mohammed (Ghana) received the Creativity and Innovation Award from UNDP Liberia for raising the profile of the UNV country office.

In Burkina Faso, 79 volunteer teachers working in primary schools received certificates recognizing their service within the context of the National Volunteer Programme from UNDP Country Director Ruby Sandhu-Rojon.

Advocacy in action

“The decisions and actions of individuals may seem insignificant in the face of global challenges. But when people choose to devote their time and energy they can, together, make a difference.”

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, International Volunteer Day 2009

UNV advocates for volunteerism, inspired by the conviction that every individual can contribute skills and knowledge to advance human development. Every year, on International Volunteer Day (IVD), 5 December, we recognize the contributions of volunteers reaching out to governments, civil society, development and private sector partners, and communities all over the world.

With the eyes of the world focused on the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, the ‘Seal the Deal’ campaign of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) aimed to galvanize public support and bring the voices of the people to the leaders. UNV launched a theme-based campaign for IVD 2009, ‘Volunteering for our Planet’, which sought to illustrate environmental action already being taken by volunteers around the world.

An interactive page hosted on the Seal the Deal website registered more than 1.5 million hours volunteered for the planet between World Environment Day (5 June) and IVD. The highest numbers of volunteers registered were from developing countries, including India, Ecuador, Kenya, Pakistan and Nigeria. Actions being taken indicated a heightened awareness of climate change challenges within developing countries, as well as a determination to take practical steps to address them.

Volunteers reclaimed the beaches and coastal cities of West Africa, with thousands of local people allying with UNV volunteers, UN personnel and authorities in cleanup activities in Conakry, Freetown, Monrovia, Abidjan and Accra. In Zimbabwe, UNV supported a national tree planting day at the International Friendship Forest, launching the wider Harare Greening Project which

aims to plant two million trees by 2015.

Volunteers in Honduras mopped up the docks at Puerto Lempira, set up waste containers, and raised awareness about the importance of recycling. The Peace Corps, the Japan International Cooperation Agency and UNV joined together in Kyrgyzstan to study and construct solar barrel heaters which they distributed as sources of clean energy for rural people. Assisted by UNV, the Muslim Scouts of Algiers cleaned up a forest, collecting two truckloads full of refuse.

Though International Volunteer Day happens just once a year, it aims to create a lasting impression of the impact of volunteerism. Among the legacies of the UNV ‘Volunteering for our Planet’ campaign was the creation of an online community that has become self-sustaining as volunteers contribute their thoughts and evidence of their actions to improve the environment through volunteerism around the world.

The General Assembly, Invites Governments to observe annually, on 5 December, an International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development, and urges them to take measures to heighten awareness of the important contribution of volunteer service, thereby stimulating more people in all walks of life to offer their services as volunteers, both at home and abroad... A/RES/40/212. International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development (17 December 1985)

‘Volunteering for our Planet’ highlighted the grassroots commitment to environmental voluntary action. The 1.5 million hours registered sent a strong message to delegates at the 2009 UN Climate Change Conference. Participants also demonstrated their support at the UNV booth in Copenhagen. (Scott McQuade/UNV, 2009)



Marking the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers

“We engage the will, the positive energy and the innovation of millions of people towards realizing the Millennium Development Goals and in building social cohesion, mutual understanding and the achievement of community-centred goals.”

Extract from the vision statement for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers

The International Year of Volunteers in 2001 put volunteerism for peace and development on the international agenda like never before. Its tenth anniversary in 2011 is another unique opportunity to celebrate the impact that volunteers and voluntary action have around the world.

Activities under consideration for the year 2011 promise to showcase the diversity, breadth and depth of volunteering. The anniversary offers a renewed chance to truly raise the profile of volunteerism for peace and development, and to mobilize a constellation of volunteers from all backgrounds and nationalities. Once again, the United Nations General Assembly nominated UNV to be the focal point to coordinate a common approach, and in October 2009, UNV brought together stakeholders from across the UN and civil society for a consultative meeting at its headquarters in Bonn.

The gathering resulted in a global plan of action for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers ('IYV+10'), including a vision statement and an invitation to join the celebrations. This global call to action encourages stakeholders to reinvigorate the spirit of the International Year of Volunteers and its four pillars: recognition of the contributions of volunteers; understanding of how volunteerism can change the pace and nature of development; continued advocacy and policy development; and enhanced cooperation among volunteer-involving organizations.

Stakeholders are responding. In Namibia, a Volunteerism for Development Coordinating Committee is spearheading national volunteerism policy

development and plans to commemorate IYV+10. The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has established a senior management steering committee to oversee its involvement in IYV+10 at the global level and to facilitate national campaigns.

The year 2011 also promises close synergies with the International Year of Youth, which begins on 12 August 2010, and the European Year of Volunteering designated for 2011 by the European Commission. Planning is underway on joint activities between UNV and the European Commission, such as a regional conference on volunteerism for the MDGs.

UNV and its partners will continue to use the World Volunteer Web as the main platform to facilitate collaboration and make information on volunteerism more accessible to all. Information related to the marking of IYV+10 is also available on this portal (www.worldvolunteerweb.org).

The General Assembly, Invites Governments, with the active support of the media, civil society and the private sector, as well as development partners and the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to carry out activities focused on marking the tenth anniversary of the International Year, in 2011, at the regional and national levels...

A/RES/63/153. Follow-up to the implementation of the International Year of Volunteers (18 December 2008)

