



MDGs in Uzbekistan

Volunteers and the Millennium Development Goals in Uzbekistan

For a better life



UN
Volunteers

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are part of the Millennium Declaration and were agreed by world leaders at the Millennium Summit in September 2000. They are an ambitious agenda for reducing poverty and improving people's lives. The Millennium Declaration outlines a wide range of commitments in human rights, governance and democracy.

There are eight overall goals and related targets and indicators, selected to ensure a common assessment and understanding of the status of MDGs at global, regional, and national levels. The goals and their targets are to be achieved by 2015.

The Millennium Development Goals

Globally	In Uzbekistan
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	1. Improve living standards and reduce malnutrition
2. Achieve universal primary education	2. Improve quality of education of primary and secondary schools
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality	4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health	5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	6. Combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability	7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development	8. Strengthen Uzbekistan's global partnerships for development

Uzbekistan achieved relatively high levels of human development during the Soviet era and made considerable progress towards achieving the MDGs related to education, gender equality, health and provision of clean water and sanitation. However, there are serious environmental problems, particularly in the area including and adjacent to the Aral Sea. The challenge in moving forward is to maintain past achievements while public resources are tightening and to address the negative aspects of the Soviet legacy.



Volunteers in Uzbekistan and the MDGs

In order to maintain and improve the relatively high level of human development in Uzbekistan, it is important to improve living standards in rural areas and for vulnerable groups of the population. There must also be a focus on enhancing access to, and quality of, education and health services, and addressing issues pertaining to environmental degradation. Volunteers in Uzbekistan play a vital role in helping to solve the critical problems addressed by the Millennium Development Goals. In the past decade many volunteers have worked with communities and directly in the field providing their support, experience and commitment to the cause of sustainable human development. Volunteers are an increasingly necessary resource for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, both in Uzbekistan and globally.

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THE UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 1

Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Fighting poverty through voluntary action, individual volunteers and volunteer organisations already help support people living in poor conditions.

Volunteers globally:

- Provide technical support to public services in poverty mapping and analysis;
- Enable local associations and cooperatives of farmers, fishermen and cattle raisers to share good practices on production methods, natural resource management and disease control;
- Promote income-generating activities, such as the work of on-line volunteers to market handicrafts produced by unemployed artisans more effectively over the Internet;
- Promote the exchange of experiences through field visits, documentation and Internet connections among volunteers involving organisations on actions taken in the fight against poverty and hunger.

What are volunteers doing in Uzbekistan to improve living standards and reduce malnutrition?

Within the framework of UNDP programmes on sustainable income generation, UNVs contributed to the promotion of the microfinance sector in Uzbekistan. UNVs supported the establishment of three micro-credit institutions targeting in particular low income women and the development of income generation activities in rural areas.

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 2

Achieve universal primary education

Volunteers promoting education and civic engagement help unleash people's drive for development. Local volunteer organisations and individual volunteers address, for example, low enrolment and issues related to school dropouts and low literacy rates. Volunteers help build the capacity of teachers and other professionals to deliver effective educational services.

Volunteers globally:

- Support the training of trainers at different levels for national education systems;
- Help develop innovative curricula adapted to local realities and needs, including educational packages for local schools developed by on-line volunteers;
- Assist development partners, schools and communities in strategies to promote girls' education;
- Encourage community-based organisations (CBOs) and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) to provide literacy courses and practical skills training for children who do not attend school;
- Connect local parents-teacher associations and community groups with national and international networks of organisations to stimulate innovative approaches to education.

What are volunteers doing in Uzbekistan to improve the quality of education in primary and secondary schools?

Recent surveys have suggested that there is a problem with non-attendance of enrolled children in Uzbekistan, particularly in rural areas. In the context of this Millennium Development Goal, the focus of activity in Uzbekistan has been to develop a range of pre-school opportunities to better prepare children for primary education, whilst improving the quality of education, introducing interactive and participatory learning methods to ensure universal access. The UNV Programme together with UNICEF has made a contribution to this process by providing stimulating educational materials for children of all ages.

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 3

Promote gender equality and empower women

Volunteer activists form the backbone of the international women's movement, raising their voices on policies that have an impact on women, speaking from their everyday practical experience on the ground. Working to mainstream gender throughout society,

Volunteers globally:

- Assist development institutions in mapping and collecting data on gender disparities;
- Develop networks and training programmes for women decision-makers and lobby for greater gender balance in key positions, such as in parliaments;
- Support single mothers and their families;
- Help local groups advocate for compulsory education for girls and boys;
- Protect the rights of teenage girls, including those pressured to marry at an early age.

What are volunteers doing in Uzbekistan?

Peace Corps Uzbekistan has recently established a Gender and Development Network of volunteers and community partners. The network intends to bring men and women closer together to understand and evaluate how development issues affect women and men differently. One of the network's first projects is the Gender and Development Young Writer's Workshop and Essay Contest in six regions of Uzbekistan. Peace Corps Volunteers and communities will work with local educators and share experience on how to conduct discussions and writer's workshops on four themes: heroines in the history of Uzbekistan, contemporary women as role models, women's roles and responsibilities in their work and family life and men and women working together for development.



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MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4

Reduce child mortality

Local and international volunteers work together to address child mortality, including through local health committees and village pharmacies run by indigenous people.

Volunteers and their organisations also:

- Support capacity development of local gynaecologists, midwives, doctors and nurses;
- Train traditional birth attendants on basic child delivery techniques and hygiene;
- Help organise and implement national immunisation campaigns;
- Promote ICT use by communities and local volunteers to facilitate their access to health information about prenatal care and health care for children, including on nutrition, child spacing and breastfeeding.

What are volunteers doing in Uzbekistan?

Infant and child health in Uzbekistan are under threat from poor nutrition, lack of micronutrient intake and childhood illnesses. UNICEF UNVs are actively involved in addressing these problems, through immunisation and micronutrient supplementation campaigns. The UNV Programme in Uzbekistan has also made a significant contribution to the organisation of a national campaign to encourage women to consume adequate amounts of iodine, through the use of iodised salt.



Photo ©Anthony Burnett 2004

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 5

Improve maternal health

Thousands of volunteers serve as health workers and birth attendants in communities around the world, helping women prepare for the life-giving tasks relating to motherhood.

Volunteers and organisations globally also:

- Train local medical personnel and traditional healers;
- Expand the outreach of medical care, such as through mobile medical units;
- Help set up local health committees to promote village health centres and pharmacies;
- Mobilise local human resources to volunteer time and services in response to national public health issues;
- Support CBOs in launching community initiatives critical for health improvements, such as safe motherhood and health counselling hotlines.

What are volunteers doing in Uzbekistan?

UNFPA in Uzbekistan works with a number of national NGOs who have been successfully employing the services of national volunteers to mobilise communities and to raise awareness of reproductive health issues, especially among young people. National volunteers are especially active in the Samarkand region. Based on the success achieved so far, UNFPA intends to encourage the use of more national volunteers in future programme activities.

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 6

Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

No health campaign can be effective without the support of local communities and groups. The involvement of local communities through their volunteer-involving organisations is key to promoting public health, including prevention of epidemics such as HIV/AIDS and malaria.

Fighting disease and bringing hope through their care, volunteers globally:

- Support development partners in preventing and mitigating epidemics;
- Fill vital human resource gaps caused by epidemics such as HIV/AIDS;
- Mobilise volunteer-involving organisations' support for health campaigns in such areas as immunisation, the use of condoms and contraceptives, cleaning of disease-breeding places;
- Inform people at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS through prevention programmes – youth seminars, debates and health-related web sites – many of which are supported by on-line volunteer writers, researchers and organisers;
- Support networks of people living with HIV/AIDS that aim to share experiences about, and knowledge of, the epidemic and reduce its stigma.

Volunteers in Uzbekistan help to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other diseases

With the support of international organisations the government of Uzbekistan has established a number of Trust Points in the country. Trust Points provide vulnerable groups the opportunity to receive counselling and information materials in relation to HIV/AIDS. The Trust Points rely on the work and commitment of national volunteers whose involvement has greatly improved the efficiency of the services. Volunteers work at outreach activities such as distribution of syringes, provision of condoms and improving communication with vulnerable groups.

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 7

Ensure environmental sustainability

Harnessing the potential of civic engagement for the environment, local volunteers and volunteer organisations raise awareness about environmental issues affecting their communities and sometimes, through networks, influence policy decisions. Many volunteers support local initiatives that promote the sustainable use of environmental resources and address related challenges.

Volunteers globally also:

- Provide hands-on training to municipalities in natural resources management — water, land, forests;
- Strengthen local capacity to ensure access to natural resources;
- Encourage the participation of volunteer organisations and local user associations in natural resources management;
- Stimulate exchanges of experiences, knowledge and skills among environmental volunteer organisations at the local, national and international levels.

What are volunteers doing in Uzbekistan?

The UNV Programme together with UNDP helps the State Committee for Nature Protection (Goskompriroda) implement environmental information management within the Environmental Indicators Project. This project aims to monitor the environment of Uzbekistan through a number of selected indicators and to create a national environmental data repository. The project will eventually enable government agencies and the public to access environmental information and to work towards better environmental sustainability in Uzbekistan.



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MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 8

Develop a global partnership for development

Volunteers are strong networkers who constitute a force for development by building partnerships with the private sector. Volunteers work with corporations to create job opportunities and enlist company programmes to support social development in communities.

Promoting a better world, volunteers and volunteer organisations are tapping into expanding global networks to:

- Organise international campaigns such as the ban on landmines, debt reduction or the protection of the environment;
- Channel affordable medicines, freely available computer software and other resources from governments, companies and private foundations to where it is most needed;
- Advise companies on how to set up corporate volunteering schemes;
- Encourage dialogue between private companies, local CBOs and NGOs;
- Promote, through volunteer networks, the spread of good practices on civil society/corporate partnership for community development.

What are volunteers doing in Uzbekistan to strengthen partnerships?

Volunteer work can stimulate cooperation with the private sector and make available the benefits of new technologies. UNITeS volunteers share their skills and expertise with national counterparts to promote Information and Communication Technology in Uzbekistan (see page 10 of this brochure). Volunteers contributed to the UNITeS programme by processing data for the review of ICT Development in Uzbekistan. They also helped with the preparation of the second national ICT summit in Uzbekistan in 2004.



UNV PROGRAMME IN UZBEKISTAN

The UNV Programme in Uzbekistan has a relatively short history. It was established in April, following the official opening of the UN Representative's office in early 1993, the Programme was established in April. More than 70 UN Volunteers, composed of more than 50 internationals and nearly 20 nationals, have been fielded in the country so far. The priorities and strategies of the programme now emphasise projects and activities directly aimed at bringing about "sustainable human development".

As of December 2004, there were 4 International UNV Specialists and 3 National UNV Specialists serving in Uzbekistan. These UNV Specialists use their different skills and experiences at work for UNDP, UNDP Projects/Programmes, UNICEF, UNESCO and UNHCR. Four more International UNV specialists are expected to join the team winter 2004-2005 (2 to WHO, 1 to UNODC and 1 more to UNICEF).

In order to promote local volunteerism and to facilitate capacity building of local specialists, UNV Uzbekistan has started to explore more extensive employment of National UN Volunteers in various UN projects/programmes. For the year 2005, UNV Programme plans to establish the National UNV Scheme and also expects to dispatch Uzbek nationals abroad as International UN Volunteers.

UNV VOLUNTEERS IN UZBEKISTAN: WHO AND WHERE

Reiko Nakano — UNV Programme Officer

Reiko deals with the communication between different UN Agencies and NGOs and fields UN Volunteers to various organisations and projects in the country. Volunteers can expect to serve at country level UNV programmes, under the supervision and overall guidance of the Regional Chief at UNV HQ, or for the UNDP country office, under the supervision of the Resident Representative.

Anthony Burnett — UNV UNICEF Communications Specialist

Anthony was trained as a journalist and video-maker. During his time with UNICEF in Uzbekistan, he has written numerous publications and leaflets, produced video documentaries, designed posters and other materials and organised events which provide information and awareness to vulnerable groups. In addition, he has trained local staff and young people in media and communication techniques and skills.

Matteo Modè — UNV UNDP Environment Specialist

Matteo's professional background is in the field of environmental information management and environmental change in relation to development. Matteo provides advice and support to the UNDP Environment Programme. He contributes to a number of projects such as the monitoring of the environment in Uzbekistan and the stabilisation of the ecosystem conditions of the Aral Sea and Kyzylkum Desert regions. Matteo also works on photo-reportage documenting the state of the environment in Uzbekistan.

Igor Chantefort — UNV UNESCO Architect

Igor provides his architectural expertise to conserve the remains of the Fayaz Tepa Buddhist archaeological site in Termez. His activities focus on the preservation of the site in its present state and on the restoration — but not reconstruction — of this important cultural heritage of Uzbekistan.

Shakhnoza Yunusova — UNV UNHCR Registration/Eligibility Assistant

Shakhnoza is a National UNV working for UNHCR Uzbekistan. Her job is to maintain the refugee registration database, keep refugee files up-to-date, provide statistical information on refugee caseload for various reports, liaise with government officials and exchange information and conduct interviews when necessary. Since the vast majority of the refugee caseload is Afghan, she is now studying Dari, in order to improve her communication with them.

Angela Guzova — UNV UNHCR Programme Clerk

Angela is a National UNV whose major duty is to assist the Programme Officer with assessment on refugee needs in close collaboration with government authorities, implementing partners and the refugees. She is also in charge of the design and setting of Programme objectives within the framework of UNHCR activities.

Zarina Ashurova — UNV Resident Coordinator System Human Rights Assistant

Zarina is a National UNV and is responsible for handling individual complaints on alleged violations of human rights. She is also in charge of coordinating the implementation of the joint OHCHR/UNDP Assisting Communities Together (ACT) Project. Zarina organises and attends workshops and conferences on human rights issues and assists the UNDP Country Office in promoting human rights standards and practices.



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UNITES UZBEKISTAN

UNITeS — United Nations Information Technology Service — works under the Digital Development Initiative (DDI), a joint programme of UNDP and the Communication and Information Agency of the government of Uzbekistan. UNITeS was launched in Tashkent in June 2002 with the primary goal of supporting local organisations in their ICT capacity building through the help of volunteers and to provide self-development opportunities for the young through volunteer participation.



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The UNITeS Uzbekistan scheme consists of a group of local volunteers, mainly students with good ICT skills. Volunteers offer their support and their expertise to non-commercial organisations by training their staff in basic computer and software skills and, by developing web-sites and databases and by taking part in ICT activities in Uzbekistan.

Since June 2002 more than 41 volunteers have been assigned to help various government and non-government organisations such as the Economic Research and Education Centre, the Uzbek State Parliament, the Women and Children Support Centre and the Trust Centre.

By the end of the second quarter of 2003, UNITeS Uzbekistan had received approximately 71 fostered volunteers and 60 host organisations.

Since July 2004 UNITeS Uzbekistan is working in cooperation with technical support of the Digital Development Initiative. Today the number of volunteers has reached 250, with 43 of them engaged in different assignments.

UNITeS ICT Volunteers provide their skills to several ICT activities, such as:

- Implementation of e-governance at the Academy of State and Social Construction under the President of Republic of Uzbekistan;
- Helping organise the 2nd National Summit on ICT Development in Uzbekistan;
- IT training for the staff of AIDS Research Centre, Hidrogeological Research Institute, Istiqbolli avlod, SOS-Children's Village of Uzbekistan Association, RS OSO Vatanparvar (Association of Technical Sports);
- Creation of the web-site for the Centre of Women with Disabled Children ("Kamilla") and for the "State Grain Inspection" governmental organisation.

Vildan Mingachyov — UNV UNITeS Focal Point

Vildan Mingachyov is a National UNV acting as coordinator of UNITeS Uzbekistan. He manages and supervises the activities of the UNITeS volunteers and scrutinises the requests of ICT assistance from non-governmental organisations. These requests mainly consist of training staff with the help of UNITeS Volunteers.

"At the heart of volunteerism are the ideals of service and solidarity and the belief that together we can make the world better. In that sense, we can say that volunteerism is the ultimate expression of what the United Nations is all about."

Kofi Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations

CONTACT INFORMATION

APPLICATION FOR UNITeS VOLUNTEERS

To volunteer with UNITeS log onto <http://www.unv.ddi.uz> or <http://www.unites.ddi.uz>

UNV PROGRAMME UZBEKISTAN

For any inquiries on the UNV Programme in Uzbekistan, please contact the UNV Programme Officer, UNV/UNDP, 4 Taras Shevchenko St., Tashkent. Tel.: 139-48-35.

APPLICATION FOR NATIONAL UNV (you work in Uzbekistan)

Positions are advertised in the vacancies notice board in front of the UNDP gate.

APPLICATION FOR INTERNATIONAL UNV ROSTER (you work outside Uzbekistan)

It is possible to apply via the web. Log onto <http://www.unvolunteers.org>, click on "Apply Online" and fill in the application form.

Requirements for International UNV candidates

1. Sound academic credentials (Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Doctorate or higher technical diplomas).
2. Several years of relevant working experience, preferably a minimum of five years.
3. At least 25 years of age (there is no upper age limit)
4. A volunteering spirit
5. A good working knowledge of at least one of the following UN official languages: Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Russian*, Spanish
(*It is getting more common that a working level of English Language is necessary for any UNV assignments).

UNV HEADQUARTERS

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MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

For detailed information log onto <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>

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