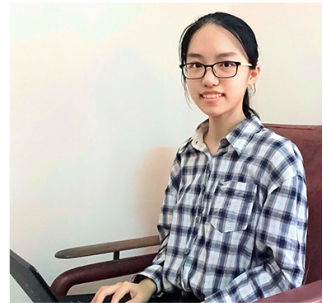


18 June 2020



Online volunteers have been crucial to upscale the impact of Youth Co:Lab's regional programmes. Here (from left to right): Rui Du from China, Avimukt Verma from Australia and Binh An Nguyen from Viet Nam.

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Empowering youth entrepreneurs through online volunteering

The Youth Co:Lab regional team of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) is partnering with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme in Asia and the Pacific to advocate for volunteerism and engaging with volunteers through UNV's Online Volunteering system.

Online volunteers have been crucial to upscale the impact of Youth Co:Lab's regional programmes. Coming from different countries and ethnicities, these online volunteers bring a variety of skills to the table. They have applied their skills and knowledge through a range of activities, including proofreading and translating communications materials, conducting research supporting COVID-19 related efforts.

Co-created in 2017 by UNDP and the Citi Foundation, Youth Co:Lab aims to establish a common agenda for countries in Asia and the Pacific to empower and invest in youth. It targets accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through leadership, social innovation and entrepreneurship.

Avimukt Verma (Australia) works in business development for a large software company and advises startups who are looking to leverage the power of technology to grow their

business. Avimukt supported Youth Co:Lab with research on youth empowerment and entrepreneurship initiatives in the Asia and the Pacific.

“ I am passionate about development issues and wanted to be a part of the largest youth social entrepreneurship movement in the region. I am enjoying working with a vibrant, diverse team and have been exposed to a range of research material. --Online Volunteer Avimukt Verna

"At Youth Co:Lab, I have been collating inspiring stories of young, bright individuals who have utilized their entrepreneurial mindset to create innovative solutions that address the SDG challenges," Avimukt shares. "This journey as a volunteer has been truly rewarding, and I hope to be further involved in similar projects in the near future."

Rui Du (China) translated a [questionnaire on the impact of COVID-19 on young entrepreneurs across Asia-Pacific](#), from English to Chinese, to amplify its reach and engage more young people, particularly those from remote communities who might not speak English.

“ While translating responses to the questionnaires, I learned more about how certain enterprises in China were affected due to COVID-19. I find this voluntary task meaningful, and sincerely hope that enterprises can weather the storm. --Online Volunteer Rui Du

Rui adds, "Besides, I also got to work with the excellent staff of the UNDP, and I have also learnt a lot from them. They are energetic, hard-working and professional. I am grateful for this opportunity and look forward to more opportunities like this in the future."

Bình An Nguyễn (Viet Nam) supported Youth Co:Lab by translating a training of trainers toolkit on youth social entrepreneurship into Vietnamese for the [Movers Programme](#). This is a regional movement of youth which will utilize this toolkit to develop SDG awareness, entrepreneurial mindsets and soft skills at a grassroots level.

"Before applying to the Movers Programme translation project, I never thought I could contribute in any way to advance entrepreneurial mindsets and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development," Binh shares.

“ As a volunteer, my main task is to help Youth Co:Lab reach and serve more Vietnamese youth, especially those in remote communities, by translating this well-crafted toolkit on social cohesion and entrepreneurship. This has been such a fresh and inspiring experience. --Online Volunteer Binh An Nguy”

The Youth:CoLab team also engaged online volunteers to translate the toolkit into Bahasa, Bengali, Burmese, Chinese, Hindi, Khmer, Mongolian and Nepali.

“ We recognize and celebrate the will, positive energy and innovation of millions of people through volunteering. As the world turns digital, it is fantastic that UNV, through platforms such as the Online Volunteering system, continues to expand opportunities for people to connect and provide a multitude of volunteering services. In UNDP, volunteering is an expression of our common aspiration and a means of building mutual respect, understanding, trust and solidarity. -- Beniam Gebrezghi, Programme Specialist, Civil Society and Youth, Governance and Peacebuilding Team, UNDP Regional Hub in Bangkok

Since early 2020, Youth Co:Lab has welcomed around 25 Online Volunteers to support various activities of the programme.

Over half a million online volunteers, with a range of skills, willing to support organizations worldwide are registered on the UNV Online Volunteering platform. onlinevolunteering.org is a platform for solidarity and collaboration, which you can join from anywhere in the world, from any device. Like the volunteers engaging with Youth:CoLab, if you wish to team up with organizations to address sustainable development challenges or provide support to COVID-19 response efforts from your home during the lockdown, join now!



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Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 10: Reduced inequalities](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)