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## Online Volunteering Award Winners: public's favourite

After announcing the ten winners of the Online Volunteering Award 2013, UNV invited citizens worldwide to vote for their favourite team. The online volunteers that helped the Association of African Entrepreneurs (AAE) carry out research on the entrepreneurial environment in African countries and produced an e-book and articles got the most votes. The final product, titled "Hopes and Mirages", is intended to serve as a guide for anyone who wishes to embark on a business enterprise in the region. Get inspired by all winners' stories here: [www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/vol/stories](http://www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/vol/stories)

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Happy Mukama, an attorney born in Uganda, contributed an article on investment trade facilitation in Rwanda, where he now resides. He negotiated the Common Market for East African Community as a Rwandan delegate and is currently conducting regional integration consultancies with the International Finance Corporation/World Bank Group. "Research has shown that intra-regional trade in Africa has been retarded by lack of investment information for markets by investors. AAE is therefore doing a tremendous job to address this issue by linking investors to markets through information sharing. I believe that one article or one piece of legal advice published online can change the 100 or 1,000 lives of a small entrepreneur or farmers that I cannot be able to reach out physically."

Online volunteer Slawosz Fliegner, a German Business Administration graduate with a professional record in investment banking and consulting and lives in Singapore, wrote a report about the business environment in Sierra Leone. "Online volunteering gives me the ability to contribute, as opposed to simply donate. Contribution is a team effort and a form of dialogue, which allows you to help in solving a problem. By volunteering online I can go beyond the notion of charity and work on a project to the best of my abilities to create a social impact. My efforts are guided by the organization, which understands the actual needs and challenges and thus is in a position to maximize the benefits from the project".

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Sustainable Development Goal: