UNV commits to more action for the Decade

Over the past fifty years, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme has mobilized tens of thousands of UN Volunteers who contribute to the successes of the United Nations in all areas of sustainable development. Moving ahead, we recognize the need to step up to the challenges of our times – and promote volunteerism even more actively as a means of tackling migration, inequalities and climate change during the Decade of Action.

In September 2019, the declaration, “gearing up for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development” was adopted at the United Nations General Assembly. World leaders called for a decade of action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and committed to their own actions to advance the agenda.

Now that the Decade of Action is upon us, UNV is also committing to more action for the achievement of the SDGs.

UNV is a common service of the United Nations system which mobilizes UN Volunteers and promotes volunteerism worldwide for the achievement of the SDGs. With only 10 years left to achieve the Global Goals, there is an urgent need for UNV to act more, mobilize more volunteers and include more diverse groups in volunteerism at the local and global levels.

For the Decade of Action, UNV is pledging to lead in including everyone, everywhere to take action, through volunteering, for the SDGs. UNV will:

- continue and increase UNV’s unique ability to help the UN system to tap into an expanded global talent;
- innovate to engage people all around the world through volunteering; and
- promote volunteerism, with our partners and civil society, as a solution for the 2030 Agenda.

UNV has a unique vantage point to provide people, especially those who are often excluded, with opportunities to be part of solutions for the SDGs, through volunteerism.

In 2019, we reached gender parity among UN Volunteers. Likewise, we established the joint UNDP Talent Programme for Young Professionals with Disabilities to offer volunteering opportunities in the UN system.
Our UN Volunteers come from over 160 countries, and eighty per cent come from the Global South. We must continue to reach for more inclusion and diversity, not only among UN Volunteers, but among the over one billion volunteers worldwide.

Volunteering allows all people – including those furthest behind – to engage as agents of change for the SDGs. UNV has been providing spaces and opportunities for people to do just that – act for the 2030 Agenda. For example, just last year, one of our refugee UN Volunteers was a speaker at the World Economic Forum in Davos. In the coming decade, UNV will bring youth and other voices even more to the forefront.

For the Decade of Action, we, together, have 10 years to transform our world. The obstacles are large and many, but UNV is committed to being part of innovative solutions through volunteer action.

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals