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Launch of the publication "South-South Volunteering as a driving force for development: Experiences from the Asia-Pacific region" in Bangkok, Thailand
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Volunteering at the heart of South-South cooperation

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme, together with Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) launched the publication South-South Volunteering as a driving force for development: Experiences from the Asia-Pacific region.

The event, held in Bangkok, Thailand, to mark the UN Day for South-South Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific, was attended by UN partners, government representatives and other stakeholders, while many others also participated online.



“ Volunteerism is important in ensuring participation, and in localizing the Sustainable Development Goals and accelerating action on the ground. --Ms Pattarat Hongtong, Director-General of TICA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Thanking all stakeholders for the invaluable partnership, Ms Hongtong pointed to the case studies highlighted in the publication, reiterating, "Thailand is able to extend this approach far beyond geographical barriers and to bridge peoples of Thailand and other countries" through the programme.

Normative discussions of volunteerism and South-South cooperation note that they share common principles of 'mutuality, reciprocity, respect and equality', and that they have the potential to promote participatory and needs-based approaches to development, while cultivating global citizens and strengthening people to people ties. The publication reiterates that South-South cooperation and volunteerism are mutually reinforcing and highly compatible concepts.

“ There are still gaps in evidence, and there is a need for exchanging practices on how to document volunteer contributions to recipient country national development strategies and broader Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) efforts. --Shalina Miah, UNV Regional Manager for Asia & the Pacific

Launching the publication, UNV Regional Manager for Asia and the Pacific, Shalina Miah, said, "We hope that this publication will further enhance understanding of the roles of volunteerism and South-South cooperation in supporting communities through the current crisis and into the future".

“ Volunteers may have been the magic ingredient behind Thailand's success with managing the COVID-19 pandemic [...] At ESCAP, we are convinced that South-South cooperation and volunteerism will be critical means to chart a pathway for our region's inclusive, resilient and green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. --Mr Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary for Sustainable Development, ESCAP

Mr Zahedi continued, "The role of volunteers, however, goes beyond such emergencies. In this regard, I welcome the publication launched today. This document not only highlights the contribution of volunteerism, but also helps us to build on these initiatives to make the movement of volunteerism in our region even stronger than before."

[A subsequent event](#) organized by the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Fiji, UNV and UNOSSC was held in Fiji to mark the UN Day for South-South Cooperation and the launch of the publication in the Pacific.

Cover photo (from left to right) Mr Neil Buhne, Regional Director, UN Development Coordination Office, Mr Denis Nkala, UNOSSC Regional Coordinator & Representative for Asia and the Pacific, Ms Gita Sabharwal, UN Resident Coordinator in Thailand, Ms Shalina Miah, UNV Regional Manager for Asia and the Pacific, Ms Pattarat Hongtong, Director-General of TICA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, and Mr Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary for Sustainable Development, UNESCAP

The publication, produced as part of the UNOSSC *South-South in Action* series can be downloaded [here](#). [Read the blog](#) by UNV Executive Coordinator, Mr Olivier Adam, and Director of the UNOSSC, Mr Jorge Chediek, who reflect on the importance of South-South volunteering as a driving force for development. [Watch the full event](#) held in Bangkok to mark UN Day for South-South Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific.



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