Making information available for migrants in Tajikistan

Supporting vulnerable groups and communities with up-to-date services and information is among the key areas that UN Volunteers contribute to in Europe and Central Asia. As part of these efforts, UN Volunteer Sodam Baek, whose assignment is fully funded by the Republic of Korea, joined the International Organization of Migration (IOM) recently. She shares how she helps migrants receive verified news and information useful to ensure the security and welfare of their families in Tajikistan.

Tajikistan is the country of origin for large numbers of migrant workers who seek employment abroad. It is hard to find a single Tajik citizen who does not have a family member or friend currently working abroad. In many cases, however, their journeys are connected with risks of social disintegration and human trafficking. Despite the comprehensive efforts to address the remaining challenges in regards to migration
management, Tajik migrants and their families continue to face a lot of difficulties both abroad and at home.

In order to combat the problem, IOM has been conducting programmes that not only respect the dignity and wellbeing of migrants but also protect their lives – and one of the solutions that they have found is to make verified and useful information available to vulnerable groups.

As UN Volunteer Associate Communications Officer, Sodam Baek serves as part of the IOM communications team. Her colleagues conduct research in Tajik and Russian and Sodam generates content for migrants on popular platforms such as Odnoklassniki. This can include governmental announcements, laws, success stories, or YouTube vlogs about challenges migrants face.

“The primary purpose of my social media project is to provide migrants with the latest and essential information for their welfare and to improve the public awareness of IOM's work in Tajikistan,” -- Sodam Baek, UN Volunteer Associate Communications Officer with IOM

Sodam joined the UN Communication Group team in Tajikistan just four months ago. However, within such a short period she has already made notable contributions in almost all areas of the joint work. From monitoring the media for precise, accurate and regular information to participation in various campaigns held by the office of UN Resident Coordinator in the country and thematic groups, Sodam has been making supporting her team, organization, and most importantly, the community.

“Sodam is responsive and supportive for every initiative. We have always enjoyed cooperation and generous and professional support from UNV colleagues – both under the UNV programme itself and under different agencies and projects. Looking forward to fruitful work!” -- Parviz Boboev, Coordination and Development Analyst, Programme Communications and Advocacy, UN Communication Group

As part of IOM's support to the Government of Tajikistan, Sodam helps to establish safe and well-managed migration procedures and to provide assistance to returned migrants and communities affected by migration in Tajikistan. For instance, she works on success stories
and videos about Tajik-Afghan Integration within Resilience and Reform Building Project (TAIRR). The project was funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom.

“I have always enjoyed learning new tools for extracurricular activities. My first internship in the United States for fundraising and donor engagement helped me to learn essential aspects of public engagement that I am using now. --Sodam Baek

Sodam studied anthropology and initially wanted to work in museums. However, during intensive search for what suits her soul the most, Sodam got inspired to continue learning and pursue a master’s degree in development studies.
Tajikistan. Personal archive.

"Recently, Sodam volunteered to be a member of a panel to select the best drawings and videos submitted for a contest dedicated to the UN’s 75th anniversary and UN Day celebration in Tajikistan," Parviz shares. This is not an easy task to look through hundred of colorful and meaningful artworks depicting the visions of children and youth about the world we want by 2045. And it’s all is done despite the distance working arrangements.

• Full Funding • Republic of Korea • United Kingdom • migrants

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