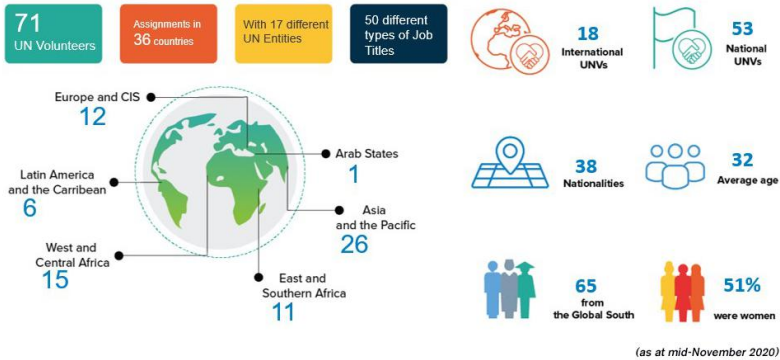


VOLUNTEERS WITH DISABILITIES IN 2020



UN Volunteers with disabilities and an inclusive COVID-19 response

On 3 December, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme joins the international community in celebrating the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. On this and every day, we raise awareness of the challenges faced and the contributions made by people with disabilities. At UNV, we host an increasing number of UN Volunteers with disabilities every year, with the kind support of our funding partners. Learn more about UNV and persons with disabilities in 2020, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and over the years. **EXPLORE OUR TIMELINE: UNV AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

To date in 2020, at least 71 UN Volunteer with disabilities are deployed with our UN entity partners. We say at least, because these figures only factor in those volunteers who voluntarily disclosed their disability. There are many more, serving on regular volunteer assignments.

These assignments are funded by the governments of Sweden, Germany, Finland, France and Switzerland, among others. This year has seen deployments of UN Volunteers with disabilities for the first time in Burkina Faso and Egypt, Guatemala and Nigeria, North Macedonia and Timor-Leste, to name just a few.

Not only are the currently serving UN Volunteers deployed in 36 countries across all regions, they are also engaged with 17 different UN entities. Many host entities have a close relationship with the UN Partnership for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD), which further strengthens UNV's contribution to leaving no one behind.

Our volunteers with disabilities serve in 50 different technical and thematic areas, ranging from human rights, inclusion and diversity, via projects and operations, partnerships and communications, human resources and law, to climate change and engineering, medical care and education.

One of our successes is that 51 per cent of them are women and 65 per cent come from the global South. Another is that the number of candidates with disabilities registered in the UNV Talent Pool is growing. In addition, about three per cent of our Online Volunteers have declared a disability.

DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE COVID-19 RESPONSE

UNV is working closely with UN entities by providing flexible, cost effective volunteer capacity (onsite and online, international and national) to support the COVID-19 response. This includes **organization-wide support from UNV headquarters**, like sharing specific and accessible information on the disability-inclusive response with staff and UN Volunteers, and providing reasonable accommodation support for the home office setting.

UNV's focus is on leaving no one behind in the COVID-19 response, also in regional and country-level activities. In numerous duty stations, for example, UNV adjusted the assignments of a number of UN Volunteers to include activities within the framework of our partners' response to COVID-19, as well as to ensure that the response is disability inclusive and responsive.

UN Volunteers with disabilities are supporting a disability-inclusive response to COVID-19 across technical and thematic areas. In the Dominican Republic, for example, UN Volunteer Olga Altman, serving with UNDP, focuses on the [abilities we have to unleash](#). Olga developed [accessible videos on COVID-19](#) and the response, advocated for people with disabilities to be included in the emergency plans of the state and UN system, and for disability to be included in data gathering surveys.

[UN Volunteer Dao Thu Huong leads by example and champions disability rights](#) with UNDP in Viet Nam. She supported the [provision of sign language interpretation on national TV](#) and conducted a rapid assessment survey on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on people with disabilities. The same volunteer supported publishing an op-ed on [disability inclusive response to COVID-19](#) and a blog on [stigma and COVID-19](#).

A UN Volunteer serving with UNDP in Namibia, Pelgrina Ndumba, has been working on the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) project since July 2020. She is [strengthening coordination and data collection systems](#) to inform planning, budget allocation and service delivery to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

At the 2019 United Nations/International Organizations Career Development Roundtable, [UNV and UNDP won the award for Innovation in recruitment](#) for the Talent Programme for Young Professionals with Disabilities.[]

Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 3: Good health and well-being](#) [SDG 10: Reduced inequalities](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)