Volunteering for resilient recovery

Over 100 participants, including the representatives of international organizations, governments, academia, volunteer associations and volunteers from Asia, Europe and the Pacific took part online and onsite in an International Dialogue on "Volunteering for Resilient Recovery: Fostering Solidarity and Pulling Together", held in China recently.

The event was arranged within the new innovative partnership between the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme, UN Development Programme (UNDP), Beijing Volunteer Service Federation (BVF) and China International Centre for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE) "Promoting Sustainable Urban Development through Volunteer Service for the Beijing Winter Olympics". The main goal of the partnership is to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the establishment of a trinity demonstration system of synergy model-talent system-collaboration networking on Olympic volunteering and sustainable urban development.
The dialogue is the first international event under this partnership, where the participants gathered together to co-create new ideas for effective mainstreaming of volunteering for sustainable development and crisis response, to strengthen collaboration on volunteering for development between the stakeholders and to advocate for global Olympic volunteering network.

Volunteers are the pioneers and bonds in the response to COVID-19. Volunteerism crosses race and national boundaries. Youth volunteers fight against the pandemic at the forefront in China and actively support local prevention and control in foreign countries. – Mr Li Jian, Vice President and Secretary General, Beijing Volunteer Service Federation

Delivering the opening remarks, Ms Shalina Miah, UNV Regional Manager for Asia and the Pacific, stressed the importance of the event to exchange the cross-regional, national, local level practices, approaches, models & research on volunteer engagement in implementing SDGs as well as on support COVID-19 recovery through volunteerism. She also recognized the initiatives of UN Volunteers in the frontlines providing innovative solutions for COVID-19 support and recovery.

There is no limit to the power of volunteerism and volunteers during this crisis, extending their helping hand to everyone in need, bringing hope instead of desperation, unity instead of separation, inspiration instead of stress to many and many people around the world. – Ms Shalina Miah, UNV Regional Manager, Asia and the Pacific
Partners also recognized and commended the efforts of volunteers to rise up to the challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Young people are central to the achievement of the SDGs, and volunteering is an important way to implement the SDGs. Volunteers showed their selflessness, initiative and heroism, making a lot of contributions during the COVID-19. --Mr Devenand Ramiah, Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP China

Delivering the keynote address UNV Deputy Regional Manager for Asia and the Pacific Dmitry Frischin spoke on volunteering for recovery and resilience towards a sustainable future.

“UN Volunteers have many best experiences in different countries around the world in the response of COVID-19, including Kazakhstan, Russia, Thailand and Nepal among them. We gain unique knowledge and experience through volunteering. Sharing them regionally will better equip us in the times of the pandemic as well as on the way to recovery and resilience. --Mr Dmitry Frischin, UNV Deputy Regional Manager for Asia and the Pacific

The international dialogue also consisted of two virtual sessions and a campus advocacy roadshow for international volunteer service. Delegates from China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Thailand, India, Malaysia, Pakistan and Singapore shared experiences and success stories on youth volunteering, as well as community and professional volunteer services during the two
virtual sessions. UN partners, IFRC, IAVE, VIOs, community leaders, university representatives were among the participants who joined the event.

Sustainable Development Goal: **SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals**