



UN Volunteer Barbora Chmelova is a UN Youth Volunteer in Agricultural Economics with FAO in Viet Nam, fully funded by the Czech Republic. Here, she is sharing her experience at a learning session for UN Volunteers and national volunteers about community-based projects and volunteer mobilization in the Czech Republic. (UNV, 2017)

Enhancing rural livelihoods and food security with FAO in Viet Nam

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I am currently serving as an international UN Youth Volunteer in Agricultural Economics with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Hanoi, Viet Nam. I'm one of the six UN Youth Volunteers fully funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic in 2017.

Since April 2017, I have been assisting the FAO Viet Nam office in the development and implementation of programmes and projects linked to two strategic areas under the Country Programming Framework (CPF), mainly Pillar one: supporting effective policies and legal framework on rural livelihood, food and nutrition security and food safety; and Pillar two: support for climate change adaptation and mitigation in Viet Nam.

I am assigned to two principle tasks. The first is the National Zero Hunger Challenge, a major initiative addressing poverty reduction, food security and nutrition in rural areas of Viet Nam, especially those that are remote and isolated, home to ethnic minorities and vulnerable groups. I support the development and implementation of the National Zero Hunger Challenge by reviewing project documents, liaising with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and preparing the workshops and technical meetings of the working group.

My second principle responsibility is to serve as Secretariat for the Result Group on Climate Change, elaborating the group's Joint Work Plan in compliance with the UN's One Plan – aiming to enhance the coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of the UN system at country level and globally. My work consists of organizing and facilitating the meetings, securing communication among group members and preparing drafts of documents for further discussions by the working group.

“In general, I am an active member of both agencies—FAO and UNV. This brings perfect balance to my work life. I find it unique to have the opportunity to combine in my work two areas which I am truly passionate about—agriculture, climate change and sustainable development, along with volunteerism.”

In my opinion, there is a great potential to mobilize national UN Volunteers to work with FAO, especially in the areas of Disaster Risk Reduction and preparedness, climate change awareness raising, and technical extension work in rural communities of Viet Nam. Recently, I have also been assigned as focal point for the Vietnam Energy Partnership Group's Renewable Energy Section – an initiative established by the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

My work is predominantly office-based, with occasional project monitoring visits across Viet Nam's provinces. I also frequently represent FAO at diverse conferences and workshops organized by UN agencies, government ministries and national development partners. I work under the direct supervision of the FAO Representative and the Assistant FAO Representative. Occasionally, I assist the National Programme Officer for Rural Development.

An important part of my work beyond my duties at FAO is my engagement with the UNV Field Unit. There is a broad number of activities for which I am actively involved, starting from organizing experience sharing sessions for UN Volunteers and national volunteers, up to joint preparation of project proposals on capacity building and mobilization of volunteers in Viet Nam. There is a great team spirit in our UN Volunteers group, with many opportunities for learning and exchange.

Every day at the UN, I experience the utmost feeling of broadening my horizons in terms of both professional and personal development. I truly appreciate the opportunity to work with experts, which offers me great possibilities for learning and networking, meeting national and international volunteers, sharing experiences and my perspective with diverse teams. This experience will shape me both in the field of agriculture and sustainable development, and volunteerism for peace.



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Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 2: Zero hunger](#) [SDG 13: Climate change](#)