

06 December 2021



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## Sweden reinforces partnership with UNV with focus on disability inclusion

On the eve of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, partner consultations between UNV and Sweden concluded with an additional financial contribution to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities and a renewed common commitment through this partnership to diversity, inclusion and leaving no one behind.

The strength of the UNV-Sweden partnership was again reinforced this week, following the conclusion of annual consultations between UNV and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), as well as the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden.

Acknowledging the depth of commitment and engagement between UNV and Sweden, UNV Executive Coordinator Mr Toily Kurbanov described the partnership as going far beyond a funding relationship, thanking Sweden for “being a great enabler of UNV results”.

The interactive dialogue with Sida focused on results achieved and outlook of the multi-dimensional partnership. UNV shared highlights from the past year, including on COVID-19 response, gender parity, the development of UNV's 2022-2025 Strategic Framework and Digital Transformation.

“ UNV is a flexible, efficient and effective partner to Sida and we appreciate our joint innovative approaches in finding new and more inclusive solutions contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. --Mr Alan AtKisson, Director, Head of Department for Partnership and Innovation, Sida

UNV, Sida and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs engaged in an exchange on the partnership, focusing on UNV's role as a UN system-wide service provider.

Mr Michael Hjelmåker, Deputy Director, Head of the Ministry's Development Policy Section, applauded UNV for its accomplishments, particularly highlighting UNV's progress with gender parity and contributions in emergency contexts.

Since 2007, Sida has supported UNV with funding for the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF) and for UN Volunteer assignments (full funding). 2021 marks 20 years of Swedish contributions to the SVF, a significant milestone, with Sida announcing an increase of its annual SVF contributions for 2022 and 2023.

Participants in the consultations reaffirmed the excellent cooperation between UNV and Sida teams.

Through the partnership with Sweden, UNV continues to expand its work in recruiting and deploying a diverse base of volunteers. In 2020, 118 Swedish nationals served as UN Volunteers, 104 of these funded by Sida. Over the past two years, Sida has diversified its support, and extended its funding to specialists and expert assignments beyond the initial focus on opportunities for youth. As a further reflection of Sweden's commitment to disability inclusion, in 2020, Sida funded 37 new national UN Volunteer Specialist Assignments for persons with disabilities.

To conclude, Mr Kurbanov thanked Sweden for its continued advocacy for multilateralism, UNV and UN Volunteers, as well as its engagement as a member of the UNDP Executive Board.

“ Sweden is a great enabler of UNV results and a strong advocate for a

“ continued, broader and deeper engagement on volunteerism with the UN development system, Member States, civil society and the private sector. --Toily Kurbanov, UNV Executive Coordinator

UNV looks forward to further intensifying its partnership with Sida and the Government of Sweden to advance the 2030 Agenda through volunteerism in 2022 and beyond.

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Global

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