



UN Volunteer Caihong Wang engaging with the local communities in Sierra Leone.

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Advancing sustainable development through South-South cooperation

"Volunteerism has magic power. I feel privileged to be part of it," says UN Volunteer Caihong Wang (China), who serves with the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC). As a Project Analyst, she provides communication, coordination and research support for the UNOSSC Cities Project.

The [Cities Project](#), or project for South-South and Triangular Cooperation among Maritime-Continental Silk Road Cities for Sustainable Development, was initiated by UNOSSC in 2017. It promotes South-South and triangular cooperation at the city level, taking advantage of the strategic opportunities offered by the Belt and Road Initiative in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“ The global South is increasingly becoming a source of innovative solutions to developmental challenges and a key SDG accelerator. By involving cities facing comparable challenges and fostering capacity development, knowledge sharing and partnership

“ brokering, as well as local ownership and specificities, the Cities Project contributes to achieving the SDGs. In this context, I believe the work that I have done, with the support of my team, has contributed to the advancement of SDGs, even in a simple way. --Caihong Wang, UN Volunteer with UNOSSC, China

Since starting her assignment as a UN Volunteer with UNOSSC in April 2019, Caihong has travelled to Nepal, Uzbekistan and Sierra Leone on field missions, where she supported needs assessments of city partners at their request. Subsequently, pilot projects are formulated, based on assessment findings and implemented to address local development challenges.

“I was lucky to be able to participate in field missions, during which I had direct conversations

with local communities and obtained first-hand information on local development demands. “ Otherwise, I would not have learned the story of a young Nepalese girl working in a plywood factory for sustenance, who wanted vocational training for better job opportunities. Nor the story of an Uzbek family that installed hand-pumped wells for sanitation use, anticipating cost-effective solutions to the current shortage of centralized water supply in the city. Nor the story of a young Sierra Leonean agricultural technician who initiated a women’s cooperation for soybean plantation, inviting international development partners to invest in local value chain development. The needs are enormous and there remains much to be done,” shares Caihong

As a UN Volunteer, she says she has had many capacity-building opportunities to enhance her skills and knowledge at a professional and personal level. "Serving as a UN Volunteer has laid a solid foundation for my professional career and helped me grow as a person," Caihong says.

Caihong is a motivated young professional who believes in the cause of the UN and is passionate about making the world a more inclusive and sustainable place.

“ With her diverse academic background, international exposure and advanced skills in communication, graphic design and research, Caihong has added much value to the project and office's advocacy and knowledge work. UN Volunteers are a great asset to our team. --Dingding Sun, Programme Coordination Specialist, UNOSSC

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, Caihong has also been providing communication, research and coordination support to the COVID-19 efforts of the Cities Project under the UNOSSC's office-wide strategy in sourcing medical supplies, organizing capacity development webinars, disseminating technical guidelines and fostering media relations.

Specifically, she has coordinated and provided communication support to UNOSSC's donations of urgently-needed respirators and medical protective suits, worth about US \$100,000, to [two cities in China](#), created newsletters on [South-South solidarity among cities](#) and [UNOSSC and partners' COVID-19 responses](#), prepared news articles for webinars on South-South exchanges between China and [Africa Centre of Disease Control](#) and the [Federal Health Ministry of Sudan](#), on COVID-19 frontline experiences and disseminated World Health Organization (WHO) technical guidelines on preparedness and responses to pandemics and communicable diseases including [Zika](#), [H1N1](#) and [COVID-19](#).

Caihong is confident that the activities she's contributing towards with her team is reaching every corner of the global South, including China, and will help achieve the SDGs during this decade of global action.

 **Asia and the Pacific**

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Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 3: Good health and well-being](#) [SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)