Bangladesh Government and UN Volunteers sign historic partnership agreement

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme signed a partnership agreement with the Government of Bangladesh this week - to deploy Bangladeshi civil servants as UN Volunteers.

The Government of Bangladesh will fund these UNV assignments. With this agreement Bangladesh becomes the first country to enter into an agreement with UNV, to deploy civil servants. Bangladesh is also the first South Asian country to be a signatory to the Fully-Funding partnership with UNV.

Bangladesh will fund 10 UNV assignments for Bangladeshi nationals. They will be selected from a pool of civil servants, to serve as UN Volunteers across the UN system, globally. They will bring their expertise and
innovative ideas to the UN and contribute towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Additional Secretary and Wing Chief of United Nations Wing at Economic Relations Division at the Ministry of Finance Bangladesh Ms Sultana Afroz, and UNV Regional Manager for Asia and Pacific Ms Shalina Miah signed the MOU, in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Over 30 participants, including senior officials from the Government of Bangladesh and media, were present at the signing ceremony.

Expressing her views on the new partnership, Ms Sultana Afroz said “With this partnership, Bangladesh is going to be a champion country, supporting Fully Funded International UN Volunteers. Bangladesh is also the first LDC country to do so”.

“This indeed brings pride to Bangladesh. We are promoting a rich legacy of national volunteerism practice for the development in the country. This partnership will also promote the role of Bangladesh, in the UN and at the international level, as we contribute to the global development process to achieve SDGs”. - Ms Sultana Afroz, Ministry of Finance Bangladesh

The selected Bangladesh civil servants will be assigned to eight countries (Cambodia, Laos, Greece, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Uzbekistan and Nepal), for a one-year assignment.

“UNV strives to expand the number of UN Volunteers mobilized worldwide to advance the 2030 Agenda in this decade of action and beyond. We are very pleased that Bangladesh is joining the network of partners, providing volunteer solutions to the UN. It is indeed a proud and historic moment for all of us” said Ms Shalina Miah, commenting on the new collaboration.

Partners sponsoring UN Volunteer assignments provide direct support to the achievement of Agenda 2030 as fully funded UN Volunteers are able to have a significant impact on development and peace results and support
transformative change at national, regional and global levels.

“The UNV Full Funding Programme represents a win-win situation for UN Volunteers, Bangladesh and UN agencies and the host communities alike. This partnership will support the development of Bangladeshi human capital. Our officers will be able to widen their opportunities. Once they complete their assignments, they will bring back their enhanced expertise to address the country’s development challenges. I believe, this landmark partnership will also create more opportunities for South-South collaboration” Ms Afroz commented further.

Over 200 UN Volunteers are currently serving in Bangladesh. Among them are 22 international UN Volunteers from 14 countries. Fourteen Bangladeshi nationals are serving as international UN Volunteers, globally. One hundred and thirty-one UN Community Volunteers in Bangladesh are supporting poor urban communities and community organizations to reduce urban poverty. This is through UNV Bangladesh’s largest deployment - a result of the UNV’s strong partnership with the United Nations Development Programme. UN Volunteers across Bangladesh support in diverse areas contributing to the advancement of SDGs. They are tackling migration, inequalities, environmental protection, health, education, gender, youth, refugee protection, economic growth, women empowerment and climate change.
“It is no secret that volunteerism is deeply rooted in Bangladesh. Yet, we have much more work to do. We only have ten years left to achieve the SDGs. We must all act together to ensure the inclusion of people left behind and marginalised” Ms Shalina Miah - UNV Regional Manager, Asia Pacific

At present, more than 15 funding partners are collaborating with the UNV Full Funding Programme. These partnerships funded more than 600 UN Volunteer assignments across the world in 2019.

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