

28 June 2013



On 28 June 2013, State Secretary of BMZ Hans-Jürgen Beerfeltz (left), GIZ Managing Director Cornelia Richter (centre) and UNV Executive Coordinator Richard Dictus (right) signed a Memorandum of Understanding. (Photo: Celine Bolton/UNV, 2013)

UNV signs Memorandum of Understanding with Germany

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme signed a Memorandum of Understanding today with its long-standing partners, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ). UNV Executive Coordinator Richard Dictus signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the State Secretary of the BMZ Hans-Jürgen Beerfeltz and GIZ Managing Director Cornelia Richter. The ceremony took place at the premises of the Ministry, following discussions about the current and future collaboration between the three partners to support volunteerism for development.

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“We took this step in recognition of the strong partnership and successful cooperation we have had with BMZ over the past years,” said UNV Executive Coordinator Richard Dictus. “Germany is a key partner of UNV in strengthening the role of volunteerism in the international development discourse, and we aspire to expand and broaden our partnership with BMZ, GIZ and other German development partners.”

The Government of Germany supports volunteerism and civic engagement by strengthening civil society at national and global level, also in partnership with UNV. State Secretary Beerfeltz said, “BMZ has advanced development goals in partner countries through joint agenda-setting, financial support to UNV and the global promotion of volunteerism. Volunteerism and voluntary engagement foster strong civil society engagement, which is critical for sustainable and effective development.”

In recent years, Germany has funded the “Arab Youth Volunteering for a Better Future” programme which aims to facilitate young people’s participation in five Arab states through volunteerism as a positive and sustainable mechanism for effecting social change.

Germany has also contributed to the UNDP/UNV Youth Volunteer Trust Fund (YTF), which was established in 2012 in response to the UN Secretary General’s Five Year Action Agenda. In this agenda, Ban Ki-moon recognized the enormous potential of young people to contribute positively to their societies and requested UNV to create a youth volunteer programme. Another example is Germany’s strong support, as one of the key partners, in marking the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers in 2011 (IYV+10).

The partnership between GIZ and UNV currently focuses on the joint recruitment and full funding of UN Volunteers placed with UN entities worldwide. In the current year, about 25 UN Volunteers have been deployed through this partnership, including UN Volunteers in the age range defined by the new UN Youth Volunteer modality, namely between the ages of 18 and 29. These include German nationals and UN Volunteers from the South, who also serve in the South.

Since the 1970s, the former Deutsche Entwicklungsdienst (DED) gGmbH (German Development Service) cooperated with UNV to fund UN Volunteer assignments for strategic assignments in UN peace and sustainable development projects for German/EU nationals. Building on this long-standing collaboration, GIZ and UNV intend to actively explore further synergies for mutual cooperation.

Through this Memorandum of Understanding, BMZ, UNV and GIZ aim to solidify their

strengthened relationship and consolidate a long-term partnership to support volunteering, also engaging other German development actors and bringing new partners into the development discourse, like the private sector that could contribute to development through corporate private sector volunteering. The partners intend to enhance their strategic partnership to contribute to peace and development, in particular to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and recognition of the importance of volunteering in the post-2015 development framework.

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development worldwide. Volunteerism can transform the pace and nature of development and it benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for volunteerism globally, encouraging partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing volunteers.

Germany-related articles:

<https://www.unv.org/what-we-do/countries-and-territories/germany.html>

Fact sheet on UNV Arab youth volunteering initiative:

<https://www.unv.org/en/news-resources/resources/fact-sheets/doc/fact-sheet-on-unv.html>

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Sustainable Development Goal: