UNV and IOM strengthen collaboration to serve migrants and uphold their rights

Through a new Memorandum of Understanding signed this week, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme and the UN Migration Agency (IOM) are strengthening their partnership to mobilize UN Volunteers in support of migrants and to uphold their rights.

UN Volunteers make important contributions to UN action in the pursuit of sustainable development, with a particular focus on people in transition or crisis.

Through this partnership agreement, UNV and IOM aim to deploy UN
Volunteers to achieve more humane and orderly migration. UN Volunteers are well placed for this, as volunteerism promotes greater social inclusion of marginalized groups in development processes. UN Volunteers can serve as catalysts for civic engagement, and build trust and bonds within communities. --Olivier Adam, UNV Executive Coordinator

UNV has been partnering with IOM since 1991. Over the past 10 years, 106 UN Volunteers have served in 36 countries, supporting the organization’s mission to "enhance the humane and orderly management of migration and the effective respect for the human rights of migrants in accordance with international law".

We value the skills and technical expertise that UN Volunteers bring to IOM operations, and we admire their passion and commitment to providing humanitarian assistance to people in need and working towards sustainable development. Signing this Memorandum of Understanding is a way for IOM to further develop and strengthen the existing partnership with the UNV programme and we look forward to working together in the coming years towards our shared goals. --IOM Director General Ambassador William L. Swing

UN Volunteers support the work of IOM by aiding with migration health projects, carrying out monitoring and evaluation activities, contributing to the provision of basic lifesaving services and ensuring protection, among other things.
IOM Director General Ambassador William L. Swing (right) and UNV Executive Coordinator Olivier Adam, after signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations. (UNV, 2018)

Often familiar with local development challenges and societal norms, UN Volunteers promote greater social inclusion of marginalized groups and serve as catalysts for civic engagement, trust and social cohesion within communities.

In Uganda, UN Volunteer Yuji Kawai serves as a UN Volunteer Water and Sanitation Health Specialist with IOM. His supervisor, Peter Nzabanita comments: “Our unit needed a specialist who can assist and strengthen our refugee response operations, considering the geographical location of Uganda where influx of refugees from neighboring countries can occur unexpectedly. It was our first time to recruit through UNV and thanks to them, we have Yuji who is greatly helping us”. Nzabanita adds, “We hope to have more UN Volunteers soon in the future. We hope this will strengthen our projects capacity in Uganda”.

Michelle Pazmiño is a national UN Volunteer Protection Officer who served with IOM in Ecuador in 2016, with a focus on empowering women following the earthquake.

"Living for six months with people affected by the earthquake completely changed my life. It made me greatly appreciate the place where I come from and the human wealth and solidarity of the Ecuadorian people. --Michelle Pazmiño, UN Volunteer Protection Officer with IOM, Ecuador"

Michelle promoted the participation of women and adolescent girls in decision-making processes within the camps. She also organized training workshops to promote new ways of income generation that would help women and their families improve their living conditions.

https://www.unv.org/partners/unv-partnering-with-iom


• IOM • migration

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 10: Reduced inequalities, SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions, SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals