UNV and UNICEF sign a Memorandum of Understanding confirming their joint commitment to volunteerism

The Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme, Olivier Adam, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ms Henrietta Fore, Executive Director of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), confirming their commitment to bolstering their partnership. The agreement strengthens the ongoing efforts of the UNV and UNICEF to co-create innovative solutions for children in the broader framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

During the signing ceremony, Mr Adam and Ms Fore highlighted the importance of working closer together to reach the full potential of the partnership.
The agreement facilitates the deployment of UN Volunteers to support UNICEF in delivering on its mission to protect children, reduce child mortality, support quality education, provide life-saving emergency support and empower women and girls.

A global joint Action Plan for an enhanced strategic UNICEF-UNV partnership 2019-2021 was launched alongside the MOU to guide collaboration at the global, regional and country levels.

“At UNICEF, we believe that volunteering is a state of mind – one that can positively influence communities and societies. By volunteering their time and ideas, youth, women and vulnerable groups have the opportunity to speak up, be heard and become active agents of change in their societies. Through the MOU we are signing with UNV, we want to create more opportunities for these people to play this important role and lend their hands to shaping a better future. --Ms Henrietta Fore, UNICEF Executive Director

For over 40 years, UNV has partnered with UNICEF to deliver results for children. Over the past 10 years, over 1,075 highly qualified UN Volunteer specialists and UN Youth Volunteers have served with UNICEF. In 2018, there were 420 UN Volunteers, 62 per cent of them women, deployed with the organization.

“Through this MOU and its corresponding Action Plan, UNV looks forward to scaling up its collaboration with UNICEF, especially in Africa. We are here to support UNICEF’s efforts to bring youth and diversity to its strategic operations. --Olivier Adam, UNV Executive Coordinator
UNV partnering with UNICEF has already resulted in several innovative initiatives, including the Youth Advocates programme. Under this innovative programme, 42 young people (18-24) were engaged as agents of change in UNICEF country offices. Of these, 74 per cent were women – including refugee women – demonstrating our shared commitment to creating inclusive opportunities for the most vulnerable groups through volunteerism.

UNV and UNICEF are committed to empowering young people to transform education and realize their full potential. From fostering skills development to enabling education attainment, UN Volunteers work with UNICEF to deliver for children in their first decade and through their crucial second decade.

The new agreement between UNICEF and UNV offers an opportune moment for field offices to discuss opportunities for enhanced collaboration and deployment of international, national, youth, community and online volunteers.

The collaboration between UNICEF and UNV reflects two basic principles:

- The first is that volunteerism is universal and inclusive, and that values of free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity are paramount in all volunteer actions.
- The second is a growing recognition that volunteerism brings benefits to both society at large and the individual volunteer, makes important contributions, economically as well as socially, and contributes to more cohesive societies by building trust and reciprocity among citizens.

- Tags: UNICEF • Children • Memorandum of Understanding

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 10: Reduced inequalities, SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals