UNV Executive Coordinator, Richard Dictus (right), and the Head of the UN Division from BMZ, Simon Koppers, sign a cost sharing agreement to support a global multi-stakeholder partnership for Online Volunteering. (UNV, 2015)

UNV and Germany strengthen their partnership

United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme Executive Coordinator, Richard Dictus, and the Head of the UN Division from the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Simon Koppers, engaged in a strategic partner dialogue, with the aim of strengthening collaboration and exploring further partnering opportunities, in particular in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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The Government of Germany is one of UNV’s long-standing key partners, and the organization engages regularly with different stakeholders, in particular BMZ and the
Federal Foreign Office, in diverse thematic areas relevant to peace and sustainable development. In 2014, the German contribution to UNV’s programme resources was US $5,471 million, which makes Germany the top donor.

“UNV, for me personally, embodies the essence of ‘We the peoples,’ as it is the UN organization closest to the people through volunteerism, civil society and volunteer engagement of ordinary men and women. My vision is that UNV continues to grow in importance and development impact, and that we continue to work together successfully.”

Mr Dictus and Dr Koppers announced Germany’s support to two UNV interventions during the period 2015-2017. The first initiative is in support of UNV’s Online Volunteering service, a global multi-stakeholder partnership for sustainable development. This service connects volunteers with organizations working for sustainable human development via the internet. With the support from Germany, the global reach of the Online Volunteering service will be expanded and innovative methods explored to ensure the broadest possible participation by all members of society, including the private sector.

Another new partnership relates to a Peace Education and Youth Empowerment project in Mali. The project aims to support the Malian Government’s efforts in building the culture of peace among young women and men. This builds on previous initiatives in the areas of youth, good governance and civil society capacity development, mainly focusing on inspiring youth volunteerism for peace and development at the grassroots level.

Speaking at the strategic dialogue event, Mr Dictus emphasized UNV’s appreciation of its strong partnership with Germany. “We are grateful to have a friend who stands with us with such commitment as we embark on new initiatives. Online Volunteering is becoming a springboard into the corporate engagement of larger global companies with the United Nations. We are grateful for the support we have from Germany that enables us to have these kind of discussions. In Mali, we are working with new partnerships in a situation that, while stabilizing, remains fluid from a crisis perspective. We are working closely with Germany, which has a great interest in Mali, and we both have an interest in promoting peace through volunteerism.”

Germany’s support for these two UNV interventions further expands the strong partnership between UNV and Germany.

In recent years, Germany has supported several UNV interventions, such as the Gender-responsive Peacebuilding Initiative and the Arab Youth Volunteering for a Better Future programme. Furthermore, Germany has contributed to the UNDP/UNV Youth Volunteer Trust Fund, 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.
BMZ, in partnership with GIZ, also fully funds UN Volunteer assignments. The 2016 intake of 15 UN Volunteers will mainly support UN system coordination in line with the SDGs.

Germany and UNV are committed to strategically deepening and broadening the cooperation. This partnership draws on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in June 2013 between BMZ, UNV and GIZ. The MoU lauded volunteers for contributing to a more effective response to pressing global environmental, social, economic and political challenges.

• Germany • BMZ • partnership • GIZ

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals