

# Volunteering to achieve the SDGs



 VOLONTAIRES  
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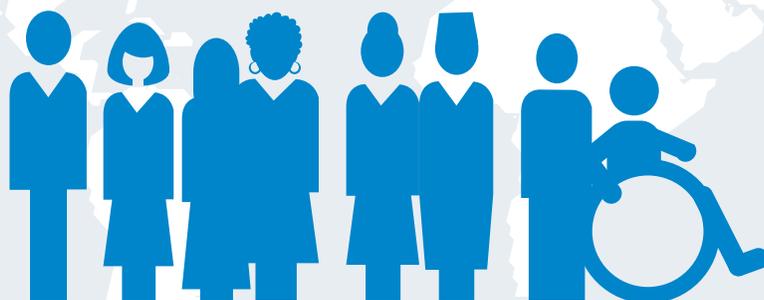
# UNV facts and figures 2019

**8,282**

**UN Volunteers**

from over **100**  
**different professions**

served with **54**  
**United Nations**  
**partners worldwide**



**13,186**

**Online**  
**Volunteers**

Online Volunteers served virtually worldwide with

**33 United Nations partners** in support of  
**183 civil society organizations**  
**working on peace and development**

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. UNV works with partners to integrate qualified, highly motivated and well-supported UN Volunteers into United Nations (UN) efforts and promotes the global recognition of volunteering for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNV is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and reports to the UNDP Executive Board.





UNV Executive Coordinator, Olivier Adam, with the participants of the All-Russia Youth Educational Summer Forum, 'Terra Scientia Forum', in Vladimirskaia oblast, Russia. (UNV, 2018)

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# Welcome

As I write, we are months into the global COVID-19 response. This unprecedented challenge has rallied volunteer action throughout the world. Now it is more evident than ever that volunteering is essential to the future of people and the planet. This timely reminder comes as the United Nations Secretary-General launches the Decade of Action to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme continues to expand its support to the United Nations system through both advocating for volunteers worldwide and creating opportunities for qualified global citizens to contribute to United Nations efforts to achieve peace and development.

We are proud of our 8,282 UN Volunteers who served in 54 United Nations missions, agencies, funds and programmes across the globe in 2019 – the highest number of volunteers deployed in the history of the organization. Each of them contributed to the achievement of the SDGs with their exceptional expertise and commitment. In addition, in the context of ongoing global digital transformation, UNV matched 13,186 global citizens to online volunteer assignments.

Making our own contribution to United Nations reform, in 2019 we reached gender parity for the first time among our serving UN Volunteers, 51 percent being women. We recognize that global averages often conceal regional disparities and are

pursuing our target to achieve gender parity in all countries where UN Volunteers serve.

UNV continued to champion South-South and triangular cooperation. In 2019, 67 percent of international UN Volunteers were from the Global South while 3,917 national UN Volunteers served with United Nations partners in their country of origin, bringing critical local knowledge and cultural understanding to their assignments.

Furthermore, the creation of two new categories of UN Volunteers, refugee and community, expanded our options for drawing local talent into the United Nations while at the same time empowering target populations.

UNV's achievements this year, which you will read about in the Report that follows, would not have been possible without strong partnerships. I thank all our partners for their continued trust and collaboration with UN Volunteers.

**Olivier Adam**, Executive Coordinator

# Volunteering for people

UN Volunteers tackle social disparities in communities worldwide. With unfailing commitment, UN Volunteers are at the front line with United Nations partners to address poverty and hunger, provide basic services for all and promote gender equality.

## Education for all

In the Arab States, there were 125 UN Volunteers in **Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the State of Palestine, Sudan, Syria** and **Tunisia** deployed to the United Nations Children's Fund (**UNICEF**). In **Lebanon** and the **State of Palestine**, UN Volunteers designed educational materials for parents on child development and organized cultural exchanges with universities abroad for students.

The "Street to School" campaign in **Nigeria**, supported by UN Volunteers serving with the United Nations Development Programme (**UNDP**), reached over 5000 people. The UN Volunteers distributed much-needed school supplies to 500 children who were significantly below the poverty line.

In **Cambodia**, UN Volunteers, in collaboration with the government youth agency, trained 1,781 local young people in entrepreneurship to put them in charge of their own career development.

In **Colombia**, UN Volunteers contributed valued enthusiasm and dedication to **UNICEF's** local activities in education, social inclusion and public policy for child protection.

## Gender parity

In 2019, 51 per cent of serving UN Volunteers worldwide were women. Thanks to focused outreach to women candidates, there was a 156 per cent increase in female applications to the UNV Global Talent Pool.

In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, 63 per cent of national UN Volunteers were women. Women leaders from indigenous communities served as UN Volunteers in **Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala** and **Peru**. In **Brazil**, UN Volunteers in **West and Central Africa** implemented a widely circulated social media campaign, #BalanceForBetter, which improved awareness on the need for gender equality.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in **Afghanistan (UNAMA)** and UNV collaborated to address gender barriers to employment by appointing 30 Afghan women as national UN Youth Volunteers for the first time in UNAMA's history. UN Volunteers with **UNDP** used social media platforms to agitate for country-wide change in attitudes to gender roles.

UN Volunteers trained 11,429 women, including 537 refugee women, as part of the "My Sister" project in **Turkey**. The training focused on economic decision-making, financial awareness and entrepreneurship.

The first-ever assignments for national UN Volunteers in **Saudi Arabia**, the majority women and all youth, were hosted by **UNDP** in the areas of operations and communications.

In **Bangladesh**, UN Volunteers serving with the United Nations Population Fund (**UNFPA**) provided their professional expertise and commitment to work on girls' education, gender equality, reducing gender-based violence and improving reproductive health.

In 2019, 272 UN Volunteers served with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (**UN Women**), 18 percent more than in 2018. Of these, 75 per cent of assignments were aimed at increasing women's voices in



UN Volunteers during a visit to a field unit in Burundi to monitor health and well-being. (UNV, 2019)

decision-making and ensuring equal access to economic and social opportunities.

## Tackling health, hunger and humanitarian need

In **Kenya**, UN Volunteers with **UNICEF** and the World Health Organization (**WHO**) improved access to primary health care and social protection services. Of the UN Volunteers working on public health projects with **WHO** in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, 40 per cent were women. In **Egypt**, UN Volunteers contributed to the **WHO** Regional Cancer Control Programme.

In **Viet Nam**, UN Volunteers serving with **WHO** took on responsibilities around health systems, communications, research and project management. In **Indonesia**, UN Volunteers with **WHO** were assigned to reporting, human resource management, procurement and communications roles.

In **Columbia**, **Peru** and **Venezuela**, UN Volunteers serving with **UNFPA**, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (**UNHCR**), **UNICEF** and **UN Women** assured the prioritization of programmes for women’s health, including prevention of adolescent pregnancy, improvement of maternal and child health, mitigation of infant and maternal mortality and assistance to victims of gender-based and sexual violence. In **Venezuela**, UN Volunteers with **UNICEF** coordinated a national de-worming campaign in schools.



Yuly Enith Gómez Calvache, specialist national UN Volunteer in health and nutrition, supports UNICEF in early childhood development activities in Colombia. (Josué Mejía Cuartas/UNICEF, 2019)

UN Volunteers posted with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (**OCHA**) provided critical assistance in the most challenging emergencies. In **Sudan**, UN Volunteers carried out communication and coordination roles for effective humanitarian support. UN Volunteers participated in an evaluation of the humanitarian conditions in the **State of Palestine**, and in **Iraq**, UN Volunteers mapped key data informing the distribution of emergency humanitarian aid.

In 2019, a total of 198 UN Volunteers served with the World Food Programme (**WFP**), an increase of 71 per cent on 2018. UN Volunteers with **WFP** worked on nutrition

and agriculture in **Niger**, where more than 5.8 million people are affected by food insecurity. Community UN Volunteers with **WFP**, 59 percent of them women, supported the Integrated National School Feeding Programme in **Benin**. UN Volunteers with **WFP** in **Lebanon** delivered life-saving food to conflict-ridden areas in **Syria**.

In **Yemen**, UN Volunteer nurses and doctors served with **UNDP**, mitigating the shortage of medical services there. In **Iraq**, the skills and knowledge of specialist UN Volunteers deployed under **UNDP**’s Funding Facility for Stabilization were indispensable in the reconstruction efforts in Mosul and its surrounds.

## How UN Volunteers contributed to the Global Goals for People



Figures are based on UN Volunteers’ self-reporting on the contributions their assignments with United Nations partners made to the SDGs, choosing up to three Goals. (Source: UN Volunteer Report 2019)

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# Volunteering for the planet

UN Volunteers help communities adapt to the impacts of climate change. With a wide range of educational and professional backgrounds and unwavering commitment to the environment, they seek unique climate action solutions – from alternative energy to climate-smart agriculture – for the communities they serve.

## Climate action

UN Volunteers with **UNDP** strengthened land and ecosystem management in **Senegal**, helping communities, especially women-led households, recover many hectares of land for productive agriculture in the Niayes and Casamance regions. Almost 25 per cent of UN Volunteers in **Kenya** were engaged in climate action projects during 2019. Alongside **UNDP** and the United Nations Environment Programme (**UNEP**), they monitored, reported on and verified climate policies and programmes taking positive steps towards change and adaptation.

In **Bolivia**, UN Volunteers with **UNFPA** and **UNDP** supported the “Young Cities” initiative to help Bolivian cities become sustainable and better meet the needs of young people. UN Volunteers designed and created a participatory

process whereby ideas, challenges and proposals from youth were collected to inform the National Urban Policy and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

## Alternative energy

In **Jordan**, UN Volunteers supported **UNDP**-led regional advocacy for low-carbon energy solutions. Young engineers serving as national UN Volunteers championed climate change mitigation in **Lebanon**, discovering and disseminating ways to optimize the allocation and use of scarce water resources.

In **Zimbabwe**, UN Volunteers serving with **UNDP** developed innovative solar energy solutions for local communities in the Gokwe region. The use of solar dryers enhanced the process of preserving



*Shadi Rachid, national UN Volunteer with UNDP, conducts a survey with the most vulnerable communities in Lebanon to assess the need for alternative energy solutions. (UNDP, 2017)*

vegetables and led to a demonstrable increase in local agricultural production.

## Climate-smart agriculture

UN Volunteers posted with **UNDP** and **WFP** in **Sri Lanka** provided key support to projects around climate-smart villages, community enterprises and market access. UN Volunteers supported 5,000 people in the Walapane and Polonnaruwa agricultural communities to create a total of 40 community enterprises and develop appropriate value chains.

UN Volunteers worked with **UNDP** to implement its biggest programme in Oé-Cusse, **Timor-Leste**, which entailed directly volunteering with rice farmers, coffee farmers and other agricultural enterprises to boost production.

In **Zambia**, UN Volunteers with **UNDP** promoted biodiversity conservation and alternative livelihood opportunities through a Global Environment Facility funded project. Notably, rural women took on decision-making roles in the newly formed village action groups.

## Disaster preparedness

When **Mozambique** was hit by two subsequent cyclones in 2019, UN Volunteers with **UNFPA** were there to provide critical people power for the emergency response operations. Their contributions ensured women's access to



A primary school student plants a tree as part of a tree-planting drive organized by UNV and its partners in Nigeria. (UNDP, 2018)

sexual reproductive health services and gender-based violence protection in the wake of the disaster.

UN Volunteers in the **Marshall Islands**, **Palau** and **Fiji** supported procurement and communications activities for UNDP's "Enhancing Disaster and Climate Resilience" project, which improved the region's preparedness for and mitigation of man-made, geophysical and climate-related hazards.

## Preserving biodiversity

In **Peru**, UN Volunteers serving with **UNDP** worked towards the conservation, management and rehabilitation of a vulnerable ecosystem in metropolitan Lima, Las lomas de Lima. Working with local government and civil society organizations, UN Volunteers designed strategies for diversifying incomes while conserving and sustainably using the local ecosystem.

In **Indonesia**, national UN Volunteers deployed with **UNDP** focused on sustainable development financing initiatives. Working with the Innovative Financing Lab, national UN Volunteers joined the effort to raise awareness about biodiversity finance and helped to implement financing for eligible projects.

In **Papua New Guinea**, community UN Volunteers posted with **UNDP** undertook direct conservation activities in Varirata National Park. They also sensitized the nearby traditional communities and visitors to conservation issues and the critical importance of preserving the country's rich biodiversity.

## How UN Volunteers contributed to the Global Goals for the Planet



Figures are based on UN Volunteers' self-reporting on the contributions their assignments with United Nations partners made to the SDGs, choosing up to three Goals. (Source: UN Volunteer Report 2019)

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# Volunteering for prosperity

UNV advocates for inclusion and access to volunteer opportunities for all. In 2019, UN Volunteers were increasingly active in supporting equal access to economic, social and technological prospects for people in the countries where they served.

## Opportunities for persons with disabilities

At the 2019 International Organizations Career Development Roundtable, the joint UNV-UNDP "Talent Programme for Young Professionals with Disabilities" initiative won the award for Innovation in Recruitment.

In 2019, 45 UN Volunteers with disabilities were engaged across the world in areas including disability rights, inclusion and innovation. In addition, the number of candidates with disabilities in the UNV Global Talent Pool grew to 3,315.

## Strengthening community volunteering

In **Bangladesh**, 131 community UN Volunteers serving with **UNDP** focused their attention on issues of social exclusion by forming community development committees to assess hardship and discrimination, especially for young girls. The UN Volunteers facilitated discussions at the community level on how to tackle child marriage and gender-based violence.

In **Serbia**, community UN Volunteers with **UNDP** and **UNHCR** reached out to Roma youth in 24 municipalities. Through the youth programmes delivered, young Roma learned about their human rights, including education, fair employment and access to social welfare.

## Better futures for the displaced

In 2019, 861 UN Volunteers helped **UNHCR** to protect refugees and ensure access to basic social services, while a new UNV modality provided opportunities for refugees to volunteer in their host communities. In **Burkina Faso**, refugee UN Volunteers served in the two camps near the border with Mali as translators and community engagement officers. In **Kenya's** Kakuma refugee camp, 146 refugee UN Volunteers took on community development activities in health, water and sanitation, sexual and gender-based violence, entrepreneurship, education, environmental protection and sports.



A young woman is trained through the UNV programme for young Roma in Serbia to serve as a UN Volunteer. (UNV, 2018)



Volunteers in Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya, taking part in a clean-up exercise under the UNHCR/UNV refugee UN Volunteer modality. (UNV, 2019)

The Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) and **UNHCR** awarded scholarships to refugees to attain post-secondary education in 2019. In addition, UN Volunteers from DAFI served with nine United Nations partners in **West and Central Africa**. UN Volunteers in **Cameroon**, the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** and **South Sudan** helped **UNHCR** work through its refugee status determination and refugee protection caseloads.

Up to 2019, some 650,000 refugees registered with the United Nations – from Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen – had passed through **Jordan**. UN Volunteers with **UNHCR** provided critical support to these individuals, interviewing asylum seekers to determine their need for international protection.

UN Volunteers deployed with **UNHCR** in **Libya** aided emergency transit activities, responded to the emergency protection needs of refugees, asylum-seekers, children and youth at risk, undertook refugee registration and assisted resettlement.

In 2019, 88 UN Volunteers served with the International Organization for Migration (**IOM**) in support of the humane and orderly management of migration in countries such as **Niger**, **Rwanda** and **Thailand**. Thanks to a joint action plan by UNV and IOM, the number of UN Volunteers at IOM will increase in the

coming years, with assignments focusing on migration health projects, monitoring and evaluation activities and the provision of basic life-saving services for migrants.

In **Ecuador**, national UN Volunteers were recruited to support Venezuelan migrant protection strategies in northern and southern border areas. Their assignments were centred around technical and operational assistance, information management and socioeconomic integration.

UN Volunteers deployed with **UNFPA** in **Peru** delivered prompt assistance to Venezuelan refugees and migrants through the Binational Border Services Center, assisting Venezuelans to access social benefits, in particular pregnant women and victims of gender-based and sexual violence.

In **Bangladesh**, UN Volunteers with **UNICEF** focused on improving the quality of education and health services in Cox's Bazar and providing support to the protection of Rohingya refugees.

## Innovation

In 2019, UN Volunteers at the **UNDP** Accelerator Lab in **Fiji** helped develop a prototype for a digital financial inclusion product which connected women farmers in the Pacific to greater economic opportunities and income.

## How UN Volunteers contributed to the Global Goals for Prosperity



Figures are based on UN Volunteers' self-reporting on the contributions their assignments with United Nations partners made to the SDGs, choosing up to three Goals. (Source: UN Volunteer Report 2019)

UN Volunteers serving with **UN Women** at the Pulse Lab, **Indonesia**, assisted with a safety audit in Jakarta, resulting in publication of the research paper "After Dark: Encouraging Safe Transit for Women Travelling at Night".

In **Moldova** and **Armenia**, UN Volunteers with **UNDP** collaborated on innovative solutions for achieving the SDGs. Their assignments centred around the use of big data and blockchain technology to tackle development challenges.

UN Volunteers with **UNICEF** in **Chad** managed an innovative archive digitization project that saw more than 2,000 documents digitally catalogued in 2019. In **Rwanda**, YouthConnekt, a flagship regional youth initiative supported by UNV and **UNDP**, promoted youth volunteering for socioeconomic development.

**UNFPA** and UNV deployed Population Data Fellows for the first time in 2019, with volunteer population data professionals aiding the analysis of data for civil registration and vital national statistics.

# Volunteering for peace and justice

**In 2019, 2,055 UN Volunteers contributed to 17 United Nations peacekeeping and political missions along with other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes leading crucial peacebuilding efforts in fragile contexts.**

## Building peace

In 2019, 1,921 international and 138 national UN Volunteers were placed with United Nations missions.

In **South Sudan**, 520 UN Volunteers served with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (**UNMISS**), 39 per cent of them women. They were involved in the protection of civilians through local dialogue and engagement, the provision of physical protection and the establishment of protective environments.

In West and Central Africa, 1,020 UN Volunteers, 36 per cent women, served with United Nations missions in the **Central African Republic (MINUSCA)**, the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)**, **Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS)** and **Mali (MINUSMA)**.

**MINUSCA** hosted 307 UN Volunteers in 2019, with an improved gender ratio of 38 per cent – up from 33 per cent in 2018. In the **Central African Republic**, UN Volunteers played an active role in protecting the most vulnerable through various assignments centred around human rights, civil affairs and political affairs.

In 2019, UNV along with United Nations partners supported women's political awareness and empowerment projects in the contexts of peacebuilding and conflict recovery in **Central African Republic, Colombia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, South Sudan** and **Sri Lanka**.

UN Volunteers deployed with **UNHCR, UNICEF** and **UN Women** assisted with the creation of protective environments for children, adolescents and youth under the auspices of the **Colombia-Ecuador** binational project "Protective Communities".

## Promoting people's voices

In **Papua New Guinea**, international UN Volunteers supported the historic Bougainville Referendum Support Project in the areas of logistics, outreach and awareness, and field coordination in remote areas.

In **Guinea-Bissau**, UN Volunteers delivered crucial administrative management and technical advice to the national electoral management team in the lead-up to the country's legislative and presidential elections. In **Mozambique**, UN Volunteers with **UNDP** disseminated public information about the electoral process and provided operational and logistical capacity, contributing to a credible and transparent electoral process.

In **Afghanistan**, UNV mobilized 107 volunteers with the United Nations Electoral Support Project (**UNESP**) to support the free and fair election of the country's president at central and regional levels. In **Pakistan**, national UN Youth Volunteers with **UNDP**'s "Strengthening Electoral and Legislative Processes" project assisted in civic rights and voter education, reaching 40,000 people in local communities, youth groups and academia.

UN Volunteers also supported **UNDP** in **Madagascar** to implement civic education and communication prior to its legislative elections.



*UN Volunteer with UNMISS in South Sudan supports the protection of civilians through dialogue and engagement. (UNV, 2018)*



UN Volunteers with UNDP in Goiânia, Brazil, implement an electronic system for efficient access to justice by converting paper-based files to digital. (UNV, 2019)

In **Myanmar**, national UN Youth Volunteers serving with **UNFPA** on its “Empowering Young Women and Men as Agents in Peacebuilding” project were well placed to ensure the national youth voice was heard and acknowledged during the peacebuilding process.

## Strengthening justice

Over 120 UN Volunteers monitored the peace and transitional justice process with the United Nations Verification Mission in **Colombia (UNVMC)**. Through the Peace Court, UN Volunteers assisted due legal process in more than 4,500 cases of armed conflict.

In the **Lao People’s Democratic Republic**, UN Volunteers with **UNDP** supported gender and social inclusion and created greater awareness of the support available to victims in legal processes through community radio programmes broadcast in different ethnic languages.

UN Volunteers served with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (**UNODC**), mostly in **West and Central Africa**, to help fight terrorism, the illicit drug trade and transnational organized crime. UN Volunteers with UNODC also worked to strengthen the judicial system in **Niger**.

In **Sri Lanka**, UN Volunteers carried out research and data analysis for the Human

### How UN Volunteers contributed to the Global Goal for Peace

**43%**

**16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS**

Figures are based on UN Volunteers’ self-reporting on the contributions their assignments with United Nations partners made to the SDGs, choosing up to three Goals. (Source: UN Volunteer Report 2019)

Rights Commission. In addition, UN Volunteers working with the National Youth Services Council put their skills towards increasing the engagement of young people in decision-making processes.

UN Volunteers serving with **UNDP** in **Brazil** addressed access to justice through the implementation of a digitization project

for criminal procedures, resulting in the digitization of criminal procedure records such as probation, pardons and electronic warnings. Furthermore, 50 national UN Volunteers in **Guatemala** assigned to the **UNDP** project “Promoting the Integrity of Transitional Justice” contributed to the preservation of the Historical Archive of the National Police.

# Growing partnerships

The deployment of UN Volunteers and the promotion of volunteerism worldwide is made possible through strong collaboration with United Nations partners, Members States, regional organizations, civil society and the private sector.

## New directions for partnerships

In 2019, **UNICEF** and UNV signed a new global memorandum of understanding and joint action plan to guide deeper collaboration. In the same year, there was a 51 per cent increase in UN Volunteers serving with UNICEF across 97 countries.

The **United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation** and UNV signed a memorandum of understanding to promote South-South cooperation through volunteerism. Under this agreement, UNV organized a side event with government partners, academia and volunteers at the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40).

In 2019, UNV and **UNFPA** partnered on the Young Innovators Fellowship Programme. The young people recruited through this programme brought out-of-the-box ideas to UNFPA projects, including a mobile phone app to increase access to sexual reproductive health services for adolescents and young people.

UNV partnered with the **China** Soong Ching Ling Foundation to launch an international platform for volunteer service training and youth exchange, with the first training for UN Youth Volunteers commencing in late 2019. UNV also launched a new cooperative arrangement with the China Youth Volunteers Association.

Mount Kenya University, a private university in **East Africa**, signed a memorandum of understanding with UNV making volunteering opportunities available to students under a national UN Volunteer programme for universities.

In 2019, 19,270 volunteers were mobilized for large-scale international events around the globe. UNV recruited and trained volunteers for the Pan American and Parapan American Games in Lima. In addition, UNV coordinated the volunteer programme for the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Spain, under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**). UN Volunteers also assisted the 7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development.



UNV signed a partnership with Mount Kenya University on 1 November 2019 for the deployment of UN University Volunteers in East and Southern Africa. (UNV, 2019)

## Strengthening collaboration

In 2019, **Australia** signed an agreement with UNV to fund UN Volunteer assignments for Australian nationals. **Kazakhstan** signed an agreement with UNV to fund both international and youth UN Volunteers for 2020. Following the successful implementation of a one-year pilot, the **Russian Federation** signed a three-year agreement for Russian citizens to become international UN Volunteers over the next three years.

In 2020, UNV's Digital Transformation, funded by **Germany**, improved the way UNV does business to better serve United Nations partners through more efficient and effective UN Volunteer management. This included developing a digital volunteer platform with integrated artificial intelligence, machine learning and automation.



Huong Dao Thu, a national UN Volunteer recruited under the UNDP-UNV Talent Programme for Young Professionals with Disabilities, supporting children in Viet Nam on International Youth Day. (UNV, 2019)

In 2019, the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** and UNV partnered closely in preparations for the co-organized Global Technical Meeting 2020 on Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda.

UNV also signed a global agreement with **Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO)** to promote volunteerism under the 2030 Agenda, to increase research and evidence exchange and to share learning on the principles and values of effective volunteering for development.

“Social Champions” is the name of an innovative approach to mobilizing UN Volunteers for **UNICEF** grass-roots fundraising. The initiative was piloted in **Ecuador** and linked enthusiastic and committed UN Volunteers who were interested in supporting work for children with UNICEF’s Face-to-Face fundraising teams.

In **Burkina Faso**, UNV organized a round-table discussion on the contribution of volunteerism to peace and development in the Sahel region. About 60 representatives from civil society, academia, governments and United Nations partners from Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger prioritized goals and set targets for the promotion of volunteerism in the region.

UNV supported the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** in organizing a regional forum for volunteer institutions in **Ghana** in 2019. About 80 participants from 14 West African countries discussed regional peace and security solutions that could be ably assisted by volunteering.

UNV in **Guatemala** provided technical support to the Guatemalan Volunteer Centre, and for the first time the contributions of volunteerism to the 2030 Agenda were able to be measured in the country.

### Partnering with the private sector

In 2019, UNV signed an agreement with **IMPACT2030**, a private sector network committed to advancing progress towards the SDGs, to work together with the private sector in promoting volunteering for sustainable development. Also in 2019, the **Google** Policy Fellowship programme, the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub and UNV mobilized a UN University Volunteer to support the prevention of violent extremism through policy and technology approaches. In addition, **Cisco** funded national UN Volunteers to support innovation, outreach and youth engagement in **Sri Lanka** and **Bangladesh**.

### How UN Volunteers contributed to the Global Goal for Partnerships



Figures are based on UN Volunteers’ self-reporting on the contributions their assignments with United Nations partners made to the SDGs, choosing up to three Goals. (Source: UN Volunteer Report 2019)

# Promoting volunteering worldwide

UNV advocates widely for volunteerism through research, consultation and the provision of expert advice on volunteer policy and legislation.

## Sharing expertise on volunteering

Through its advisory services to Member States, UNV promoted the integration of volunteerism across policy, legislation and programming.

## Developing volunteer policies and legislation

In 2019, UNV provided support to **Cambodia, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Guinea-Bissau, India and Sri Lanka** to develop national policies and legislation on volunteerism. UNV Regional Offices engaged with Member States on their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) on progress towards achievement of the SDGs. Out of 47 VNRs presented at the High-Level Political Forum in 2019, 28 recognized the specific contribution of volunteering to the SDGs.

## Establishing national volunteer schemes

During 2019, UNV supported the establishment and operation of formal national and regional volunteer schemes in **Cambodia, Cameroon, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, India, Sri Lanka** and **Uganda** along with **ECOWAS**.

In **Cameroon**, UNV supported the mobilization of 435 youth volunteers in the areas of health, education and agriculture in 10 regions of the country. With technical support from UNV, the **Uganda** Graduate Volunteer Scheme deployed 115 women and 91 men, 7 per cent of whom were people with disabilities. In **India**, UN Volunteers supported UNDP's "Strengthening Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and National Service Scheme" project through which young people had the opportunity to bring positive change to their communities.



UN Volunteers with UNDP in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama and Uruguay supported biodiversity conservation and indigenous knowledge under the Nagoya Protocol. (UNV, 2019)



UN Volunteers serving in with various UN partners came together to celebrate International Volunteer Day 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. (UNV, 2019)

In 2019, UNV collaborated with **UNDP** to establish five community volunteer networks in the **Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama** and **Uruguay**. These initiatives made a positive impact on conserving biodiversity and preserving indigenous knowledge. With the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, UN Volunteers provided capacity in the areas of human resources, legal frameworks and institutional processes.

## Supporting the Plan of Action

The Plan of Action to Integrate Volunteering into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>1</sup> calls on Member States, United Nations partners, civil society, academia and the private sector to scale up and enhance the ways in which volunteering can help achieve the SDGs. It also calls for the organization of a Global Technical Meeting on Re-imagining Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda (**GTM 2020**) during the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2020.

In 2019, UNV, together with partners, strengthened the evidence base for the Plan of Action on how volunteering has contributed to SDG progress. As a result of regional and online consultations, the contribution of volunteering under the 2030 Agenda was included for the first time in the outcome documents of the regional forums. This included a call to mainstream

volunteerism into international development strategies and national road maps for the achievement of the SDGs.

## The role of research

In 2019, UNV led global research on the role of volunteerism in working towards the 2030 Agenda, focusing on the role of gender in volunteerism for community resilience and on the statistical measurement of volunteer work.

During 2019, UNV and the International Labour Organization (**ILO**) supported nine Member States on the statistical measurement of volunteer work, up from five Member States in 2018. Support provided to **Ecuador, India, Nepal, Paraguay, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Ukraine** and the **United Arab Emirates** included advice on integrating volunteer measurement into population census and labour force surveys along with the testing of new tools and volunteer surveys to capture the diversity of volunteer work across different contexts. UNV and ILO also published guidance on volunteer measurement in population census surveys, completed the compilation and processing of volunteer data from labour force surveys in 60 countries and provided gender analyses and insights on women's unpaid work using volunteering data.

The development of a UNV knowledge portal on volunteering started in 2019 with a stakeholder survey and an evidence

gap analysis. The portal will be a global volunteering database and a targeted evidence library for policymakers and development practitioners.

The results in this area of UNV's mandate were funded by the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF), and more detailed information can be found in this report's supplement on the SVF.

## Volunteer for an Inclusive Future - IVD 2019

Every year, **International Volunteer Day** is an opportunity for UNV to promote volunteerism. In 2019, UN Volunteers in over 100 countries along with 15 United Nations partners joined UNV in the global campaign, "Volunteer for an Inclusive Future". Special statements recognizing the contribution of volunteers to the achievement of the SDGs were made by the UN Secretary-General, the UNDP Administrator and the UNICEF Executive Director.

<sup>1</sup> On 17 December 2018, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/73/140, Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

# UNV key statistics 2019

During 2019

**8,282**

**UN Volunteers**

on the ground  
were hosted by  
UN entities



in **154 countries**  
of assignment

and, as  
Online  
Volunteers,  
virtually  
worldwide



**13,186**



**Online  
Volunteers**

UN Volunteers  
were from

**162**

**countries**

**81%**

**from the Global South**

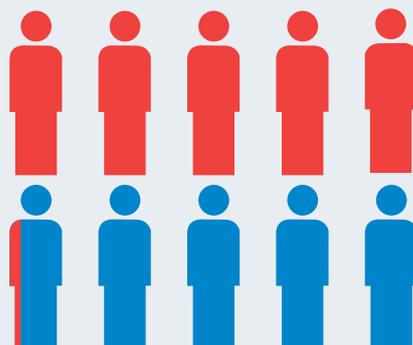


**48% national  
UN Volunteers**

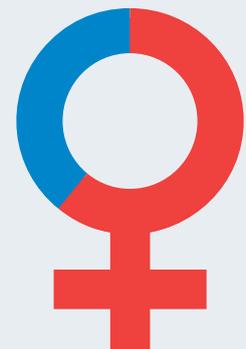
**29% of UN Volunteers on-site  
were under the age of 29**



**51%** of  
**UN Volunteers**  
on-site were  
**women**



**58%**  
of  
**Online  
Volunteers**  
were  
**women**





## We are inspiration in action

### United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme

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