



▶ Sara Zorc, (USA), UN Volunteer with UNHCR, following up with resettlement case in Baan Mai Noi Soi Temporary Shelter Area, Thailand. (Panupong Changchai, 2016)

Engaging with UNV



HOSTING A UN VOLUNTEER SPONSORED BY A UNV FUNDING PARTNER

When the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme was created in 1970, its mandate was to establish a corps of volunteers, sponsored by UN Member States, to contribute to the work of the United Nations in peace and development. This original intent remains relevant today. In 2016, out of 6,590 onsite UN Volunteers, UNV fielded 420 UN Volunteers whose assignments were funded by their respective governments; in 2017, close to 500. They served under two contractual modalities: as UN Volunteers and UN Youth Volunteers, including University Volunteers.

UNV enables its partners – including **governments, universities, civil society organizations and the private sector** – to sponsor UN Volunteer assignments. Traditionally, governments funded their own nationals. Germany and Luxembourg then expanded their funding to include UN

Volunteers from the global South to serve in other countries, as well as national UN Volunteers.

In 2016, UNV engaged in partnerships with over 20 funding partners who sponsored UN Volunteer assignments contributing to their strategic development priorities and to delivering on the SDGs. These included the Governments of Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain and Switzerland. In addition, UNV partnered with other organizations such as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (Germany), Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), Japan International Cooperation Agency (Japan), Agency for Volunteer Service Hong Kong (SAR China), the Kwansai Gakuin University (Japan), and CISCO Systems Inc.





HOW DOES THE FUNDING ARRANGEMENT WORK?

UNV is the main interlocutor for UN partners and for funding partners when it comes to sponsored UN Volunteer assignments.

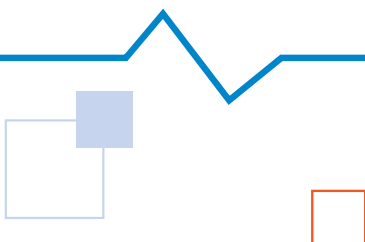
UNV liaises closely with the funding partner regarding thematic and geographic priorities for the sponsored UN Volunteer assignments. These are aligned with the funding partner's development strategy, priorities and/or foreign policy and respond to the most pressing needs of UN entities.

Together with the funding partner, UNV determines a timeline for the deployment of sponsored UN Volunteers, and defines the involvement of the latter in different stages of the process, from identification of assignment to UN Volunteer deployment.

The main entry point for UN entities to discuss the possibility to host a sponsored UN Volunteer is **the UNV Field Unit**, or, for countries without a UNV presence, the respective **UNV Regional Office**.

WHAT STEPS NEED TO BE TAKEN?

- The UN entity at the field level contacts** a UNV representative at the UNV Field Unit or Regional Office and expresses its interest in hosting a sponsored UN Volunteer. The UNV Field Unit or Regional Office will inform about the priorities of UNV's funding partners with regard to country, UN partner or thematic focus, as well as the anticipated timelines for submission of Description of Assignment (DoA) for consideration.
- UNV launches a **decentralized call for DoAs** according to the timelines negotiated with the respective funding partners (this usually happens during the first half of the year). The UNV Field Unit or the Regional Office will then approach UN entities to support the development of DoAs in line with the priorities of the funding partners.
- The UN entity develops and submits the DoA** to the respective UNV Field Unit, or to the UNV Regional Office focal point. Upon request, the UNV Field Unit can provide the most recent DoA template. The DoA needs to be aligned with the priorities of the funding partners, as well as country/regional development priorities and/or the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The UN entity can then initiate the drafting of the DoA for the submission to a specific funding partner or to various funding partners. In cases where a DoA is supported by UNV funding partner representatives at country level, the UN partner will still need to submit the DoA through the UNV Field Unit or Regional Office.
- UNV headquarters screens and submits the DoAs** it has received to the funding partner for selection. The selection of DoAs is competitive, demand is high and there are more submissions than opportunities for sponsored UN Volunteers. For ten donor-funded assignments UNV usually receives forty to fifty DoAs.
- The funding partner selects the UN Volunteer assignments it is willing to sponsor.** UNV has no influence on the criteria, nor on the process of the selection. UNV transmits all DoAs to the funding partner, provided they are in line with the thematic and geographic priorities.
- The UNV Field Unit or the UNV Regional Office communicates the outcome of the funding partner's **selection of assignments** to the UN partners.
- UNV headquarters**, in close consultation with the funding partner, **initiates the identification and selection process**. This includes the official announcement of the assignment on the funding partner's website, the shortlisting of the candidates by UNV or the funding partners (optional), and the submission of shortlisted candidates' profiles to the UNV Field Unit for further selection by the UN host entity at the country level.
- The UN host entity engages in the recruitment process** by reviewing the profiles of 3-5 shortlisted candidates who meet the requested profile requirements; and by interviewing shortlisted candidates, with the support of the UNV Field Unit. Note that the identification process is often limited to a pool of candidates from only one nationality.
- The UN host entity selects** the most suitable candidate and informs the UNV Field Unit of its decision by submitting the interview report.



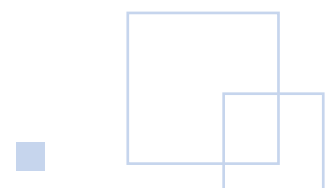


▶ In Sri Lanka, UN Volunteers teamed up with the Scouts to celebrate International Youth Day 2016, convening a workshop on the SDGs. (Vihanga Kariyawasam Photography, 2016)

10. **UNV proceeds with the recruitment and makes an offer to the candidate**, concludes contractual arrangements, ensures medical and other clearances as appropriate, and helps the UN Volunteer prepare for travel to the duty station.
11. The **UN host entity prepares for the arrival of the UN Volunteer** – this includes ensuring the availability of a work space; preparing induction training and making supervisory or other arrangements that will enable the UN Volunteer to have a successful assignment.
12. The **UN host entity ensures proper onboarding of the UN Volunteer**: This includes a robust induction process to enable the UN Volunteer to understand the

host entity's work, structure and priorities, as well as his or her own responsibilities within the broader picture. The individual responsibilities and deliverables for the assignment period should be agreed upon between the supervisor and the UN Volunteer, and be documented in a work plan that can be used for the final performance assessment. If the needs of the assignment have changed by the time the UN Volunteer arrives, the UN host entity should liaise with the UNV Field Unit to ensure adjustment of the DoA in close coordination with UNV headquarters, who will inform the funding partner.

Variations to the above process are possible and depend on the contractual modality of the UN Volunteer and on the funding partner's involvement in the recruitment process.





IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO NOTE:

1. **The quality and substance of DoAs** is essential to funding partners as, based on this, they will select the assignments to be funded. It is therefore recommended that responsibilities and expected results from the UN Volunteer assignment are clearly identified and aligned to the funding partner's priorities.
2. **UN host entities are responsible for the overall supervision, mentoring and coaching** of the UN Volunteer. This is particularly important where UN Youth or University Volunteers are concerned because of their young age. Direct supervisors should ensure that each UN Volunteer has a clearly defined work plan with identified, realistic and measurable key results. Supervisors at UN host entities are encouraged to take the eLearning course 'Hosting a UN Volunteer' accessible on the [UNV e-CAMPUS](#).
3. **Supervisors are encouraged to facilitate the learning of UN Volunteers** by including them in relevant training opportunities that emerge in the country/region of their assignment. UNV provides UN Volunteers with access to learning through online platforms, as well as learning allowances and training leave. In addition, UN Youth Volunteers participate in a group **Assignment Preparation Training**, either at UNV headquarters or in the field, before being deployed or within the first three months of the assignment. In addition, the [UN Youth Volunteer Learning Journey](#) comprises training and development opportunities, resources and tools.
4. **The quality of volunteer administration and management** (including induction and onboarding) affects the level of satisfaction of UN Volunteers and funding partners, and has an impact on potential extensions or continued interest of funding partners to select assignments in a specific country or with a specific UN host entity. The most common feedback received from UN Volunteers and UN Youth Volunteers relates to insufficient induction, onboarding and supervision. Therefore, volunteer satisfaction directly impacts on resource mobilization and continuation of sponsorship amongst existing and potential new funding partners.
5. **The identification of assignment and deployment** of sponsored UN Volunteers is conducted in close consultation with the funding partner and UN host entity and may take 6 to 12 months. The time between the submission of the Description of Assignment and their arrival at the designated duty station is determined by several aspects:
 - **The selection of DoAs** by funding partners and their involvement in the pre-selection or clearance of candidates.
 - Sponsored UN Youth and University Volunteers are mostly deployed in batches at specific times in a year. This allows them to attend the **Assignment Preparation Training**.
 - **Application and availability of qualified candidates:** The pool for sponsored UN Volunteers is usually limited to the nationality of the funding partner country. The identification period is longer as the funding partner advertises the DoA and interested candidates must apply. In some cases, an insufficient number of applications can lead to the re-advertisement of the assignment, and this results in a longer recruitment process.
 - The **final selection at the field level** involving the UNV Field Unit and the UN host entity can significantly affect the timeframe of the overall deployment process. A swift final selection contributes to retaining candidates. Any delay in the selection process increases the risk of losing the candidate, and inevitably results in re-identification or even cancellation of funding.
6. **Contract extensions:** Some funding partners, but not all, may fund the extension of a UN Volunteer assignment. The UN host entity should contact the UNV Field Unit or Regional Office three months before the contract is due to end. UNV will check with the funding partner and advise if funding for a contract extension is available and how to apply for it. UNV might also advise to seek decentralized funding.

For further information, please contact the UNV Field Unit in your country or the responsible UNV Regional Office. The [UNV Annual Report 2016](#) highlights UNV's collaboration with UNV funding partners. You can read about sponsored UN Volunteers and related statistics here: [EN](#) / [FR](#) / [ES](#).

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. We work with partners to integrate qualified, highly motivated and well supported UN Volunteers into development programming and promote the value and global recognition of volunteerism.

UNV is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*