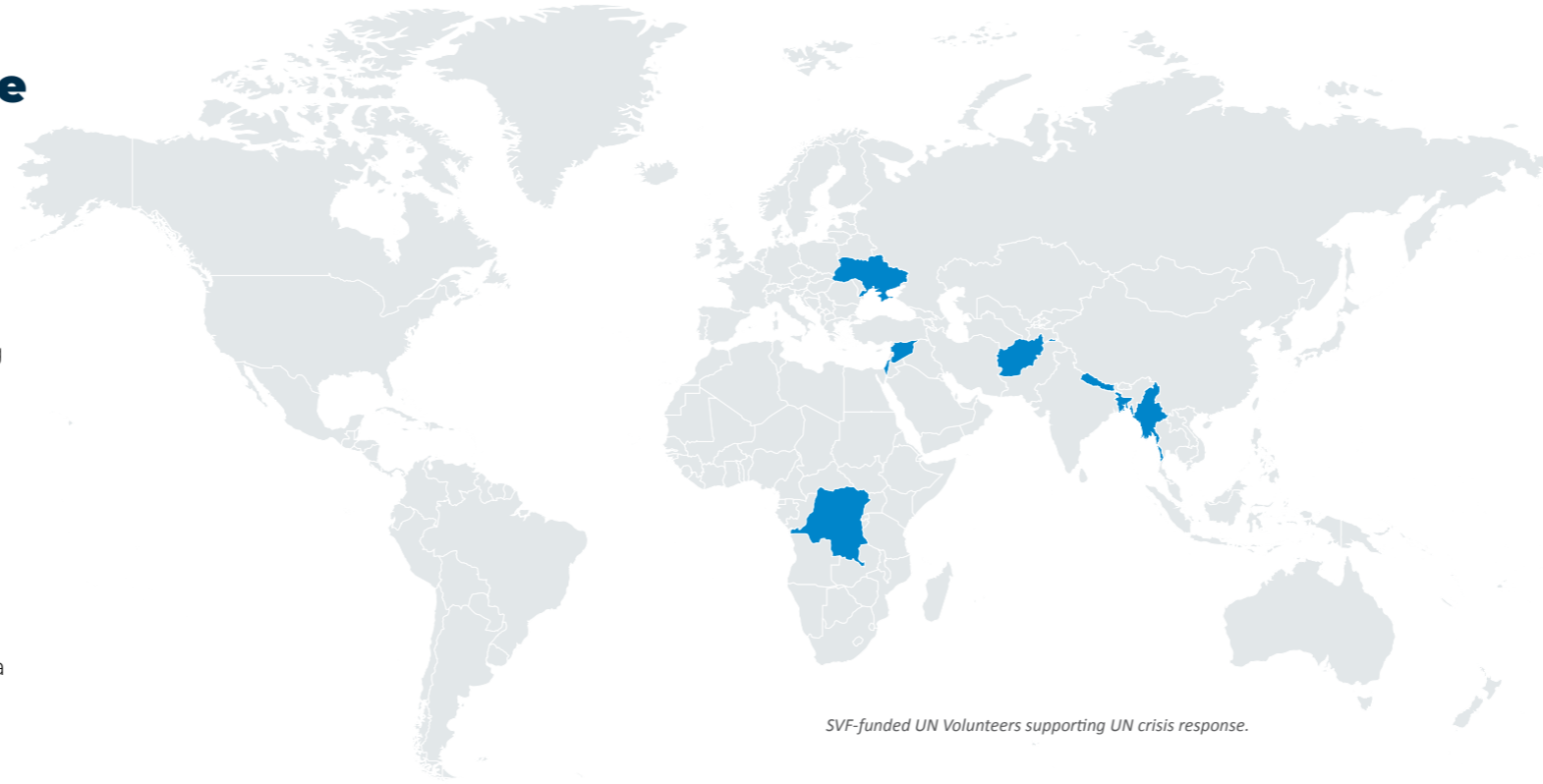


Supporting UN crisis response

The Special Voluntary Fund helped the United Nations to respond to crises by sending volunteers where they were needed most, and fast.

In 2025 in **Syria**, SVF-funded volunteers created an engineering unit that cleared debris and restored vital infrastructure, including schools, hospitals and wastewater plants. In **Gaza**, local volunteers supported by the Fund helped staff working under extreme pressure. In **Ukraine**, UN Volunteers worked with national partners to rebuild cities. In **Bangladesh**, they helped farmers recover from Cyclone Remal. After earthquakes and floods struck **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar** and **Nepal**, SVF-funded volunteers assessed earthquake damage, cleared rubble, restored water access, helped deliver, supported safer housing and helped families rebuild their lives. In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, volunteers kept humanitarian assistance moving amidst a growing refugee crisis.



SVF-funded UN Volunteers supporting UN crisis response.

“

Even in hardship, kindness reaches across villages and hearts, Aung Htin Shar, UN Volunteer with UNDP Myanmar while assisting earthquake-affected communities in Pyawbwe Township.

Every time we visit a village, we're not only delivering emergency support, but also bringing presence, empathy, and solidarity.

UN Volunteers played a crucial role in FAO's emergency response efforts, particularly ensuring last-mile distribution.

Azzizun Nahar Tania from FAO's Monitoring and Evaluation in Bangladesh.



UN Volunteers reached the hardest hit areas following the earthquake in Myanmar in March 2025.



Volunteers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo supported UN crisis response, including vaccinations, by assisting health workers.

Making every voice heard—and valued

The Special Voluntary Fund focused on people who are often left out—**young people, women, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous communities.**

Gender

Volunteers worked with UN Women and UNFPA on the 16 Days of Activism against **gender-based violence**, reaching communities in 30 countries* through a campaign in multiple languages and formats.

Many of these volunteers were young people from **minority groups**. In India, volunteers helped connect government programmes on health, education, and **girls' empowerment** to tribal communities in remote villages. In Latin America and the Caribbean, volunteers from minority groups worked alongside communities often left out of decision-making—championing inclusion, raising awareness, and building local skills to help ensure **no one is left behind**.



Inclusion

Through the Special Voluntary Fund, UNV opened the door for 56 **persons with disabilities** to serve as national volunteers in 42 countries*. They brought their experience, their voices, and their leadership—helping make the

UN's work more inclusive, while building stronger partnerships with UN entities, supporting communities, and changing how inclusion is seen in practice.

* Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bhutan, Bolivia, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Türkiye, Ukraine, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Sustainable Development Goals supported by the SVF



Volunteers with disabilities bring new solutions, new perspectives, and new ways to reach those who are often left behind. We need to keep building structures that empower—workplaces that include—systems that listen.

Parkhat Yussupjanov, UN Volunteer with UNV's International Volunteer Year 2026 Secretariat.

The Special Voluntary Fund plays a critical role—particularly in emergency response to disasters and crises, as well as in promoting diversity, inclusion, and volunteerism. We are convinced that supporting these efforts is of utmost importance in a rapidly changing world. Therefore, we call upon all UN Member States to contribute to the Special Voluntary Fund. This is an effective way to strengthen UNV's capacities and advance the achievement of the SDGs in developing countries.

Niels Annen, State Secretary of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany.

* Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cameroon (in photo), Comoros, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guinea, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo (UNC 1244), Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Moldova, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Turkmenistan, Türkiye, Ukraine, Uganda and Uzbekistan.



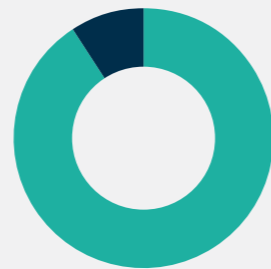
The Special Voluntary Fund in 2025

Total number UN Volunteers funded by the SVF:

337



Women **54%**
Men **46%**

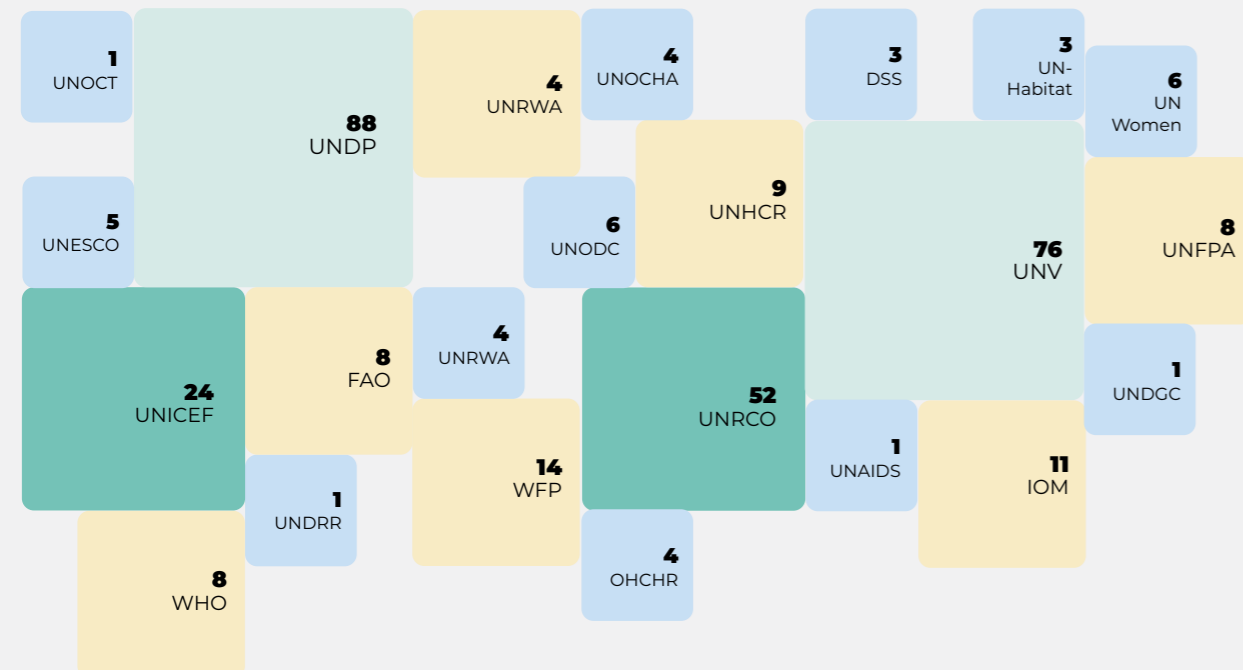


National **306**
International **31**

Specialist **227** Community **45** Youth **38** Expert **23** University **6**

One Volunteer may serve in multiple assignments.

UN host partners of UN Volunteers funded by the SVF



Together we share a collective obligation to support the UNV and help ensure its continued success. We therefore invite Member States, as they are able, to either contribute to the Special Voluntary Fund, which plays a crucial role in supporting UN crisis response, or help fund additional volunteers who can actively contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in developing countries. The International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development is an opportunity for all of us to promote and recognize volunteerism as a powerful driver of sustainable development.

As per official statement of Bulgaria (and on behalf of 14 other Member States) delivered before the UNDP Executive Board in 2025.

We look forward to further strengthening collaboration with global partners and, through SVF's innovative mechanisms, jointly cultivating a more adaptive, technology-driven, and culturally inclusive volunteer ecosystem to inject sustained momentum into accelerating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The China International Centre for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE).

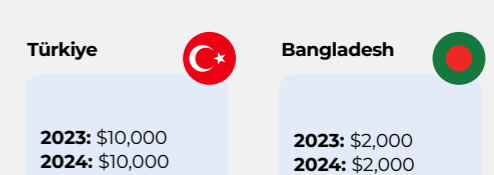
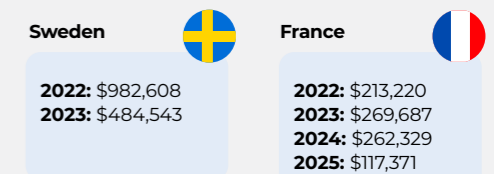
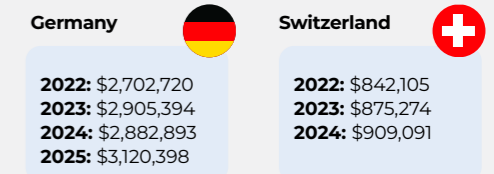
We are pleased to note Türkiye's contribution to UNV's Special Voluntary Fund, which facilitates equitable access to volunteer assignments and enables rapid deployment in emergency settings. We encourage other Member States to contribute to this fund, as it enhances the responsiveness and inclusivity of the UN system.

As per official statement of Türkiye delivered before the UNDP Executive Board in 2025.



SVF contributions (USD)

Each contribution to the SVF reflects the trust and commitment of our partners.



2025: Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology: \$10,000
2025: Open Society Foundations: \$430,000

Promoting volunteerism through research and advocacy

Through the Special Voluntary Fund, UNV strengthened how volunteerism is understood, measured, and used.

The **2026 State of the World's Volunteerism Report**, developed with partners in South Africa and the United Kingdom, offers practical tools and measurement insights into the roles of volunteers in communities worldwide. In 2025, UNV helped make volunteerism something governments and the UN can act on—35 countries included it in their **Voluntary National**

Reviews, and 23 linked it directly to the Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, 18 UN country teams brought volunteerism into United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, making it part of how national plans are delivered.

The UNV **Knowledge Portal** continued to grow as a practical resource, adding 16 new studies along with webinars and discussions, while also improving accessibility for persons with disabilities.

International Volunteer Day Around the World

International Volunteer Day (IVD) on 5 December highlights everyday volunteering activities around the world. From city clean ups in Bangladesh to beach restorations in the Gambia and Fiji; from tree planting in Kenya and Samoa to food rescue initiatives in Mexico, in 2025, volunteers transformed care into action under the global theme *“Every contribution matters.”* In Senegal, volunteers worked alongside humanitarian organizations to raise awareness of vulnerable communities—particularly street connected children—and to advocate for improved access to health services.

Launching a Year of Action International Volunteer Year 2026

The International Volunteer Year 2026 was officially launched on IVD 2025. Events took place around the world and came together in New York—marking a shared global moment. It set the direction for visibility and investment in volunteerism in 2026 and beyond.



2026 State of the World Volunteerism Report launched along with International Volunteer Year at UN headquarters in New York on 5 December 2025.



In an era of political division and social isolation, volunteering offers a powerful way to forge connections and foster our shared humanity.

An excerpt of the statement of United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, on the occasion of International Volunteer Day 2025 and the launch of International Volunteer Year 2026.



UNV's Online Volunteering Service

UNV's Online Volunteering, supported by the Special Voluntary Fund, connects thousands of people to support the UN, governments, and civil society—in 2025, demand continued to grow—with requests for 32,541 Online Volunteers—up from 22,962 in 2024.

More than 1,000 volunteers helped run a **UN-wide campaign** for the UN's 80th anniversary, reaching over 500,000 people each month. In Asia and the Pacific, nearly 2,000 volunteers supported **multiple projects** such as China's Movers4Climate and HerDigitalFuture, Bangladesh's Futurenation, post-conflict housing work in Myanmar, and Pakistan's 16 Days campaign against gender-based violence. In Europe and Central Asia, more than 1,700 volunteers contributed skills in **health-related areas**. To support Onsite Volunteers clearing rubble in Gaza, Online Volunteers used satellite images to **map debris**. They also documented recovery efforts for the **earthquake-affected** population in Türkiye and mapped 50,000 rural roads in Guatemala to help connect **remote communities**.

Powered by Volunteer Spirit

Across three major **global events**, SVF-funded UN Volunteers supported the Second World Summit for Social Development in Qatar, the United Nations Convention against Cybercrime in Viet Nam, and the XX Bolivarian Games in Peru.

The XX Bolivarian Games in Peru were supported by SVF-funded UN Volunteers.

The SVF in 2026

Guided by the Strategic Framework 2026–2029, UNV will continue to use the Special Voluntary Fund to support the United Nations system and Member States in addressing global challenges and advancing volunteerism. Building on the momentum of the International Volunteer Year, the Fund prioritizes crisis contexts—placing volunteers where they are most needed.

All UNV accomplishments were made possible through the support of our funding partners, UN Volunteers and UN partners.

From 84 to 337— and Growing

Between 2022 and 2025, the Fund increased its support by sending more UN Volunteers—from 84 in 2022 to 337 in 2025, largely by expanding national volunteers. These volunteers worked across different roles and supported UN efforts in development, humanitarian, and peace settings.

Over the same period, the Fund expanded its reach to 96 countries and strengthened work in key areas, including crisis response and better representation of women and underrepresented groups, including persons with disabilities.



We welcome UNVs strategic use of the Special Voluntary Fund. The government of Thailand has been a longstanding contributor to the Fund, and we encourage continued contributions from Member States to ensure that volunteerism remains accessible, flexible, and responsive.

As per official statement of Thailand delivered before the UNDP Executive Board in 2025.

The Fund is an essential resource that allows UNV to allocate resources flexibly to strategic areas in support of the UN. We echo others in encouraging Member States to consider contributing to the Fund in support of UNV.

As per official statement of Kazakhstan delivered before the UNDP Executive Board in 2025.





25

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) is grateful to partners for their contributions to the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF). Established in 1970, the Fund supports the United Nations initiatives in crises and emergencies, expands access for diverse groups, and promotes volunteerism for sustainable development.

13 Member States contributed to the SVF (2022-2025)



Bangladesh



China



Czechia



France



Germany



India



Ireland



Kazakhstan



Spain



Sweden



Switzerland



Thailand



Türkiye

Others: Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology and Open Society Foundations also contributed to the SVF

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We are
inspiration
in action

