

UNV PARTNERING WITH UN-HABITAT

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is a long-standing partner of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). Some 207 UN Volunteers have served with UN-Habitat in 33 countries over the past eight years.

Why recruit UN Volunteers?

United Nations Volunteers are global citizens motivated to contribute to peace and sustainable development. Working with United Nations entities, governments, civil society and the private sector, UN Volunteers use their experience and talent to bring people to the forefront of development and give them a voice.

UN Volunteers are one of the talent-management solutions available to the UN system. UNV manages this cost-effective talent pool of volunteers who can be deployed to work in synergy with the staff and personnel of United Nations entities to bolster the effective delivery of their programmes and mandates.

UN Volunteers are particularly suited to support UN-Habitat's mandate. They work within communities at the grassroots level, making them well-placed to build community resilience to climate change impacts. UN Volunteers, by the very nature of volunteerism's inclusiveness, advance UN-Habitat's efforts to promote community and civil society participation in urban



National UN Volunteer Natacha Judy, a Social Mobilization Specialist with UN-Habitat, discusses restoration projects with community members at a Community Resources Center in Bristou Bobin, Haiti. (Jose Rendee Torres/UNV, 2012)

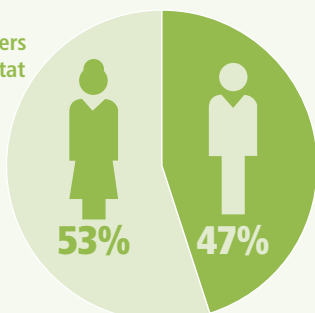
planning, disaster risk reduction and rehabilitation. This includes a focus on advancing gender equity and enhancing youth employability.

What is the added value of UN Volunteers?

Close to 82 per cent of UN Volunteers come from the South. Thus, UN Volunteers tend to be familiar with local development challenges and societal norms. UN Volunteers apply culturally-sensitive approaches that foster participation and generate a sense of ownership. Through engaging community volunteers and strengthening local volunteering structures, UN Volunteers help make development more effective and sustainable.

2007-2015

207 UN Volunteers helped UN-Habitat carry out its mission in 33 countries



Top 3 countries of assignment

2007-2015		
72	32	18
Brazil	Kenya	Kosovo

Top 3 professional titles in 2007

UN Volunteer Planning Advisor
UN Volunteer Engineering Assistant
UN Vol. Urban Development Officer

Top 3 countries of origin

2007-2015		
72	12	11
Brazil	State of Palestine	Kenya

Top 3 professional titles in 2015

UN Vol. Urban Development Officer
UN Volunteer Programme Officer
UN Volunteer Project Manager

“UN Volunteers make an important contribution to UN-Habitat’s work towards sustainable urbanization. Our world is becoming increasingly urban and the efforts of our UN Volunteers contribute to improving the lives of some of the most vulnerable communities in the world.”

Thomas Melin, External Relations, UN-Habitat

UNV is committed to reaching out to youth and bringing their voices to the table in a rapidly changing world. The United Nations Secretary-General has made working with and for young people one of his top priorities in his Five-year Action Agenda, announced at the beginning of 2012. UNV is leading the way on youth volunteerism within the UN with the establishment of a UN Youth Volunteer Programme. Based on the UN Youth Volunteering Strategy launched in September 2013, this programme will start in 2014 and help build the capacities of young people, while at the same time tapping into the energy, unique strengths and perspectives of youth.

What categories of UN Volunteers are available to UN-Habitat?

There are different categories of UN Volunteers, each with its own characteristics, which offer flexible solutions to the needs of our United Nations partners. UN Volunteers serve on contracts lasting three to twelve months on a renewable basis for assignments of up to four years, depending on the category of volunteer.

International UN Volunteers are typically professionals with specialized knowledge. They come from all walks of life and over 100 professions, bringing five to ten years of experience to their assignments. The average age of international UN Volunteers is 38.

National UN Volunteers are nationals of the host country (or a refugee or stateless person with legal status in the country), normally recruited locally. These volunteers concentrate in areas such as local community outreach. Recent university graduates with specialized skills are also recruited as national UN Volunteers.

UN Youth Volunteers are between the ages of 18-29 and may be engaged for national and international assignments of up to two years. UN Youth Volunteer candidates will have demonstrated their commitment to global peace and sustainable development through academic, extra-curricular and volunteer activities they have undertaken and/or up to two years of formal work experience. UNV supports these young volunteers by providing additional learning and guidance so that they are well supported throughout their assignments in

areas such as primary health, education, climate change adaptation and human rights.

UNV also offers an innovative **short-term UN Volunteer** modality through which volunteers can be contracted for assignments of less than three months. This option may be useful for rapid deployment in many areas, such as shoring up emergency responses, census activities, and in general for projects that require a quick scaling up or rapid adaptation to changing circumstances. The short-term modality often suits diaspora nationals, the corporate sector and retirees. It allows partners to have an agile, flexible and adaptable talent solution when specific skill sets are required for a defined period.

Another modality that can provide strategic support to partners is **Online Volunteering**, a rapidly growing service of UNV. Over 11,000 UN Online Volunteers conduct 15,000 assignments over the Internet annually to bolster peace and development activities of United Nations entities, governments and civil society organizations.

In all the above categories, the very nature of volunteering for the United Nations inspires and attracts exceptionally motivated specialists and youth – people dedicated to advancing global peace and sustainable human development. Irrespective of the modality through which they serve, UN Volunteers come from all geographic regions and socio-economic backgrounds.

How can UN-Habitat offices recruit UN Volunteers?

To partner with UNV and recruit UN Volunteers who will help you implement your development initiatives, contact the UNV Programme Officer based in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) country office. The UNV Programme Officer can provide advice and guidance on how to recruit volunteers for assignments relevant to UN-Habitat.

For further information, refer to the partners section of our website at unv.org/partnerships/host-volunteer.

UNV-UN-HABITAT success stories

After the devastating earthquake of 2010, the Government of Haiti identified the urgent need to reduce the vulnerability of the population. There was a need not only to rebuild the country, but also to strengthen capacities to better prevent, mitigate and respond to future disasters. A Caribbean island country, Haiti is prone to a wide range of natural phenomena – earthquakes and cyclones among them. Coupled with difficult socio-economic conditions, the Haitian population is exposed to high levels of risk.

With this in mind, UNDP established a Disaster Risk Reduction Unit and launched a programme in support of the National Disaster Risk Management System. UNV provided three international UN Volunteers based in Port-au-Prince and nine national UN Volunteers spread across the country, all serving as Disaster Risk Reduction Experts. Some UN Volunteers worked on donor advocacy, external communications and inter-institutional coordination. Others conducted simulation exercises, documented lessons learned, and facilitated thematic groups on protection, shelter and awareness.

Wadson Montisino Cledanor, a trained agronomist, was a national UNV Technical Coordination Assistant in the south of the country. As tropical cyclone Tomas threatened the island in November 2010, Wadson coordinated activities to inform and assist people to prepare for the storm and helped contain an existing cholera epidemic. "I am proud of my work as a UN

Reconstructing Haiti, one volunteer at a time

Volunteer," Wadson said, "because I have the opportunity to serve the most vulnerable communities in my own country and I get the chance to encourage others to become volunteers and contribute to the development of Haiti."

UNV provided an additional international and three national UN Volunteers in Haiti to work with UN-Habitat in creating emergency plans and returning people to safe houses and neighbourhoods. The volunteers helped set up ten emergency community and shelter centres in the greater Port-au-Prince area, among other things. The centres aim to strengthen the capacity of local communities to articulate their needs.

Natacha Jeudy, a national UN Volunteer specializing in social mobilization, manages the resource centre in the Bristou Bobin neighbourhood. She sees it as a 'one-stop-shop' for the coordination of technical assistance and information for community leaders, community organizations and households. "When I arrived, participation was limited," explains Natacha. "Thanks to the guidance I've been providing, we have started to see a lot more people voluntarily taking part in the activities, especially women." This last point, she says, makes her especially proud. "Community participation makes the recovery process inclusive, participatory and broadly owned," Natacha notes.

Advancing peace by promoting community volunteering

During the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a delegation from UNV and UN-Habitat visited the Cantagalo favela. The Pacifying Police Units social initiative of the city of Rio de Janeiro, in partnership with UN-Habitat, aims to improve urban, social and economic integration in urban areas. The initiative includes volunteerism components that are implemented in partnership with UNV.

Fifty-seven youth from the 'comunidades pacificadas' (pacified communities) support the project as UN Volunteers. The 57 UN Volunteers all come from Cantagalo

itself and are engaged in the renewal of their own community. They gather information on the needs of the community, for example in electricity and sanitary facilities, and provide this information to public authorities.

Although conditions are still difficult, this social initiative, through the crucial involvement of UN Volunteers from within their own communities, has greatly improved living conditions in Cantagalo. It is now a pacified community where people can go about their daily activities with less fear of violence.



National UN Volunteer Rogeria Nascimento Jorge, gathering information on her community's needs. In Brazil, the Pacifying Police Units social initiative of the city of Rio de Janeiro, in partnership with UN-Habitat, aims to improve urban, social and economic integration in urban areas through the deployment of UN Volunteers. (Didier Gentilhomme/UNV, 2012)

Empowering youth to promote environmental health education

David Sanchez (Spain), a 26-year-old student of Environmental Sciences, served as a UN Volunteer with UN-Habitat in Ecuador for six months, assigned to a Joint Programme on Local Governance for Water and Sanitation.

David established alliances with local actors for the creation of an Ecological Youth Club in Manabi, a province with challenges in drinking water supply and sanitation. "The programme works with established development institutions and organizations, and I wanted to work more at the grassroots level and generate community action", David explains.

Although environmental issues are addressed in the education system, including a subject on environmental education, David thinks that what was lacking was the drive for youth to get involved. "I think my main contribution has been empowering youth to act, helping them realize that they can do something", David says. "They have realized that it is possible to go to the municipality, talk to the mayor and demand certain services. They have realized that they are actually listened to and their demands taken into account – they are, after all, those who will lead the canton in the future."

David started his work at a national school in the Rocafuerte canton, working with about 25 pupils aged 12-15 to form a youth group that would carry out environmental health education campaigns.

"The Ecological Club organized activities to sensitize the community about the adequate use of water in homes and schools. It also encouraged the community to take good care of water sources, identifying which are the most commonly polluting elements," says Bruno Bellettini, UNDP Coordinator of the Programme on Local Governance for Water and Sanitation in Manabi. "Those who benefited from David's work were inspired by his creativity and enthusiasm and are keen to encourage the volunteering spirit in youth."

The UN World Youth Report 2003 outlined the special concerns and responsibilities youth have in relation to the environment. "A number of environmental risks and hazards disproportionately affect young people, who have to live for an extended period with the deteriorating environment bequeathed to them by earlier generations. Young people will be compelled to engage in new forms of action and activism that will generate effective responses to ecological challenges." Volunteerism gives them this opportunity.

UN Volunteers build community resilience to climate change, enhance inclusive participation and engagement of civil society, secure access to basic social services, prepare young people for the workforce and increase their employability, advance gender equality, and so much more.

Is your office investing in UN Volunteers?

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 active in around 130 countries every year. With field presences in over 80 countries, UNV is represented worldwide. UNV is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

