

UNV PARTNERING WITH UNEP

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme has been partnering with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for the conservation, protection, enhancement and support of nature and natural resources, including biological diversity. Some 170 UN Volunteers served with UNEP in 14 countries during the period 2007-2016.

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 rich 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 UNEP's mandate. They work within communities at the grassroots level, making them well-placed to build community resilience to climate change impacts. UN Volunteers support communities in sustainable recovery



UN Volunteer Dana Siedemova (Czech Republic) participating in a clean-up by the river Dubale at the launch of the environmental campaign in Ethiopia, "Clean Up the World – Clean up Addis!" (UNV, 2013)

from disasters and conflicts, using natural resource and environmental management. UN Volunteers, by the very nature of volunteerism's inclusiveness, advance UNEP efforts to promote the participation of communities in enhancing environmental governance and sustainability.

What is the added value of UN Volunteers?

Some 83 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.

2007-2016

170 UN Volunteers helped UNEP carry out its mission in 14 countries



Top 3 countries of assignment

2007-2016		
136	13	4
Kenya	Ethiopia	Thailand

Top 3 countries of origin

2007-2016		
104	9	5
Kenya	Republic of Korea	Ethiopia

Top 3 professional titles in 2007

UN Volunteer Website Officer
UN Volunteer Programme Officer
UN Volunteer Data Entry Assistant

Top 3 professional titles in 2016

UN Volunteer Programme Officer
UN Volunteer Environment Officer
UN Volunteer Legal Assistant

“As the UN Secretary General has said, when young people volunteer, we all win. You, the volunteers, gain valuable life and job skills and we at UNEP benefit from your enthusiasm and positive contributions. Through volunteering, young persons strengthen leadership skills and build capacity, which benefits local communities and the wider global society.”

Naomi Poulton, Head of Publications Unit, UNEP

UNV is committed to reaching out to youth and bringing their voices to the table in a rapidly changing world. UNV is leading on youth volunteerism within the UN, and established a UN Youth Volunteer Programme in 2013. Based on the UN Youth Volunteering Strategy launched in September 2013, this programme helps develop the skills and enhance the employability 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 UNEP?

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 36.

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 UNEP 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 UNEP.

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

UNV-UNEP success stories

Youth volunteerism to boost Global South-South Development

Youth volunteerism is an innovative way for boosting South-South Development at the global level. This is the message UNV delivered to participants in this year's Global South-South Development Expo held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 28 October to 1 November 2013.

Together with partners such as UNDP, UNEP, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), the African Union and the East African Community, the UNV delegation discussed innovative ways to facilitate South-South cooperation through youth volunteerism, as an efficient and adequate response to challenges and threats to development and peace in the world.

At the Youth for South-South Development forum, Kevin Gilroy, Chief of the UNV Peace and Development Division, stated: "We want to work with partners, including youth-led organizations, NGOs and governments in the Global South. To do this, we will support the inclusion of youth

volunteerism in UN development frameworks, and work with governments and civil society partners to strengthen national and regional youth volunteer programmes".

"Volunteering is a successful means of helping young people to realize their full social, economic and human potential," said UNV Programme Officer Dmitry Frischin (Belarus). "It empowers youth to lead, while providing them with valuable job and life skills. This better prepares young people for the workforce and increases their employability."

About 40 volunteers actively supported the event, providing logistic support and editorial services, reporting on the proceedings of meetings, writing summaries of round-table discussions and disseminating information using social media tools. UNV played a crucial role in mobilizing 25 UN Online Volunteers in support of the Global South-South Development Expo.

Saving forests through volunteerism

UNV is collaborating with UNEP on a project in Viet Nam that helps the country prepare to implement measures to reduce emissions from deforestation. The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD) is co-founded by UNDP, the Food and Agriculture Organization and UNEP.

Akane Hanai (Japan), a UN Volunteer Programme Specialist with the project, supported stakeholder engagement. UNV involvement ensures that capacity building and awareness raising campaigns for government staff, civil societies and the public are integral to the changes taking place.

"At first I struggled to develop relationships with NGO stakeholders and government counterparts," explains Akane, "because there are numerous stakeholders who have initiated various kinds of projects related to UN-REDD and forest protection in Viet Nam. However, once I began participating in technical working groups, participants got engaged, providing valuable input and sharing their opinions."

"During her UN Volunteer assignment, Akane was active in stakeholder engagement and awareness raising," outlines UN-REDD Programme Manager Nguyet Thi Thu Huyen. "In addition, she successfully facilitated knowledge management and information sharing within the national UN-REDD network." Akane maintained the UN-REDD website also working on improving its usability and accessibility.



Youth volunteers reporting on the proceedings of meetings during the Global South-South Development Expo hosted by UNEP in Nairobi, Kenya, from 28 October to 1 November 2013. (UNV Kenya, 2013)

Encouraging communities to think globally and act locally

UN Youth Volunteer Dana Siedemova (Czech Republic) served at the UNEP Liaison Office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as a UNV Environmental Outreach Specialist. Her role included increasing UNEP's visibility and enhancing environmental awareness and communication, as well as liaising with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Forestry.

Dana was also responsible for engaging local government and Ethiopian civil society organizations that work closely with communities, youth and volunteers. One of Dana's major tasks was organizing environmental outreach events and running environmental campaigns. The recent campaign *Clean Up the World – Clean Up Addis!* showed that with a minimal budget, high levels of motivation and a strong commitment to environment and volunteering, a lot can be achieved.

The UNEP office in Addis Ababa has been organizing *Clean Up the World* events with local partners for several years. This year, the theme in Ethiopia came from a local

youth association that approached UNEP to organize the 2013 campaign together and to link the global campaign with a local one called *Hidar Sitaten* – an Ethiopian annual clean-up event first initiated by the Emperor Menelik II in the 19th century. The aim was to build on this local clean-up tradition which is rooted in the Ethiopian culture and adjust it to modern environmental practices.

Clean Up the World – Clean Up Addis! took place from 21 September to 21 November 2013 with the aim of raising environmental awareness and pinpointing the significance of proper waste management.

Following the launch of the campaign, many new partners committed their support and got involved. These partners had different backgrounds and resources, however, their motivation was the same: to promote environmental protection in Addis Ababa and to follow the motto "Think globally, act locally".

UN Volunteers build community resilience to climate change, reduce the environmental risks and impacts of crises, advance ecosystem management and environmental governance, improve inclusive participation and engagement of communities, 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).

