

UNV PARTNERING WITH UNESCO

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme has been partnering with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) since 1971. In 1984, the two organizations signed a formal agreement on Principles and Modalities of Cooperation. In 2017, UNV and UNESCO reaffirmed their commitment to the partnership by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. Some 69 UN Volunteers, 71 per cent of them women, served with UNESCO in 30 countries during the period 2007-2016.

Why recruit UN Volunteers?

United Nations Volunteers are global citizens motivated to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. 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 work in synergy with the staff and personnel of United Nations entities to bolster the effective delivery of their programmes and mandates.

UN Volunteers effectively support UNESCO to develop education systems that foster high quality and inclusive lifelong learning for all, and empowering learners to be creative and responsible global citizens.



Irene Bronzini, an Italian UN Youth Volunteer fully funded by Belgium, preparing a presentation with her colleague, Lassane. (UNESCO/M. Blanco, 2017)

UN Volunteers, by the very nature of volunteerism's inclusiveness, advance progress towards UNESCO's goals of building peace, eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture and communication.

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.

2007-2016

69 UN Volunteers helped UNESCO carry out its mission in 30 countries



Top 3 countries of assignment

2007-2016		
6	6	5
Tanzania	Viet Nam	Kenya / Thailand

Top 4 countries of origin

2007-2016	
10	7
Finland	Rep. of Korea / Belgium / Spain

Top 3 professional titles in 2007

UN Volunteer Project Coordination Off.
UN Volunteer Communications Officer
UN Volunteer Education Officer

Top 3 professional titles in 2016

UN Volunteer Education Officer
UN Volunteer Programme Officer
UN Volunteer Cultural Heritage Officer

"We believe together in the power of youth as agents of change to take forward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate Agreement. We believe in the power of dialogue to foster new forms of global citizenship. We believe in the importance of volunteering to strengthen the foundations of peace and sustainable development. Volunteering is more than working for a good cause. It is about forging bonds of trust to reinforce a sense of shared destiny."

Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO

UNV is committed to reaching out to youth and bringing their voices to the table in a rapidly changing world. UNV is leading the way on youth volunteerism within the UN, and established a UN Youth Volunteer Programme in 2014. Based on the UN Youth Volunteering Strategy launched in September 2013, this programme develops the skills and enhances 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 UNESCO?

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 12 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 UNESCO 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 UNESCO.

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

UNV-UNESCO success stories

Irene Bronzini is a UN Youth Volunteer fully funded by Belgium, who was assigned in Mali in 2015 with UNESCO's Social Sciences Department. Irene, who is of Italian origin, supports the department in co-running UNESCO's youth and peace education programmes.

For two years, Irene has been working to strengthen and consolidate peace within Malian civil society. Her position involves working with Malian communities, particularly their young people, to help young people develop skills as peacemakers and promoters of tolerance, intercultural dialogue and non-violence.

As part of her role as a young volunteer, Irene accompanies the Malian government as they cooperate with various ministries to implement national programs and policies aimed at youth development and peacebuilding.

Peace is not simply the absence of conflict; it combines many areas, from social to cultural, on which we all have to work together

Peace is about education first!

"Working at the heart of UNESCO has enriched my knowledge of peace and culture. It has allowed me to think more profoundly about ways to prevent conflicts. Peace is not simply the absence of conflict; it combines many areas, from social to cultural, on which we all have to work together". It is this conviction that stokes Irene's enthusiasm for working tirelessly to promote peace through citizen education.

According to Irene, who is in sub-Saharan Africa for the first time, these two years of service have allowed her to discover another little corner of the world with values and a culture in which she could integrate herself to the point of being able to speak in certain local dialects.

"I believe that as a volunteer my personal and professional commitment has allowed my department to reach its objectives in all of the activities it has undertaken." She concluded that "This commitment, which is a state of mind nourished by the idea that volunteering brings us closer to people, brings work back to the human level in order to achieve long-lasting change."

Promoting global citizenship through learning and dialogue

Simon Kuany (South Sudan) is a UN Volunteer with the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP), in New Delhi, India. Funded generously by the Indian Government, MGIEP was formed in 2012 and since then has contributed to transforming education for humanity. It is an integral part of UNESCO, and the organization's specialist institute on education for peace and sustainable development to foster global citizenship.

Simon serves as the Associate Project Officer at the institute, which follows Gandhi's principles – inclusion and non-violence.

During his assignment, Simon has been working on three projects, with a focus on empowering the young generation and training their independent thinking skills by asking them to solve real, tough global issues.

The first of these projects is Talking Across Generations on Education (TAGe), which facilitates free dialogues between distinguished experts and youth participants about global issues related to education. In 2016, TAGe Delhi brought 50 youth and policy makers together to deliberate the role of education during the UNESCO International Conference on Prevention of Violent Extremism through Education in New Delhi.

LIBRE is the second project Simon has been working on. He shares, "LIBRE is envisioned to be a series of digital learning modules on Education for Global Citizenship. These will explore global issues such as migration, climate change and the prevention of violent extremism through the lenses of Critical Inquiry, Firing Gandhi Neurons and moral courage to change, and to equip the students to see how these issues are interrelated." The modules are still under design.

The third project Simon has been working on is a research-based video game inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals – a World Rescue Game. Users are asked to solve global issues inside the game, for instance diseases and deforestation.

"As a South Sudanese and a former refugee, I have gone through violence, and have experienced first-hand conflict, war and other development issues like poverty and bad education," Simon says. "As a UN Volunteer, I bring the on ground perspective that is always lacking in policy design and policy making to UNESCO's work, and especially to MGIEP's work related to transforming education for humanity. I went through bad education and now I want to transform it, I grew up in conflict and now I want to contribute towards peace."



UN Volunteer Pastoralist Literacy and Education Specialist Solomon Bekele (centre) serves with UNESCO in Juba, South Sudan. Here, he leads a discussion meeting with community members on the benefits of education at Aliet/Warabyie cattle camp. (Swokiri Jams, 2016)

Enhancing capacity to resolve conflicts and build peace

Solomon Bekele is a UN Volunteer Pastoralist Literacy and Education Specialist with UNESCO in Juba, South Sudan. He serves as Field Manager with the Enhanced Knowledge and Education for Resilience Pastoralist Livelihoods project. This is a three year EU-funded project being implemented in the former Lakes State. The project is implemented by UNESCO, in partnership with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and government line ministries, Ministry of Education, Agriculture and Animal Resources.

Solomon focuses on supporting UNESCO's education component of the project, implementing literacy and numeracy programmes at cattle camps within the Lakes State pastoralist communities. "As a volunteer, I have gained experience and understanding of the diverse ways of life of communities in the pastoral communities. I am glad I am helping build their capacity and resilience."

In the first step, UNESCO/FAO (the project) trained 32 community facilitators, who are now facilitating learning in the cattle camps, and 15 county facilitators drawn from government offices, who provide support and closely monitor the project. This approach ensures local engagement and long-term programme sustainability. Solomon says that "county and community facilitators are getting back-up, technical support and necessary materials from UNESCO in relation to implementing the integrated curriculum at the field level". As part of UNESCO

staff and UNV, Solomon is a highly skilled professional human resource input to the achievement of the project objectives.

As a result, 1,064 children, adolescents and adults from pastoral communities in five counties are attending literacy, numeracy and life skills training programmes. These include 278 children, 477 youth and 309 adults. Some 252 participants are girls and women. The life skills training is integrated in the accelerated learning curriculum given particularly to youth, aimed at building the capacity and attitude to resolve conflicts and contribute to peace building.

Solomon provides technical support to the community facilitators and to the teachers who provide the learning in cattle camps. He is also involved in building the capacity of the county and community facilitators to implement the curriculum, and guides facilitators to prepare lesson plans. The outcomes from Solomon's voluntary role are far reaching, ensuring that "the literacy, numeracy and life skills activities initiated are being implemented in the pastoral communities at cattle camps".

Solomon represents UNESCO within the education cluster in the Lakes district, and liaises closely with partner stakeholders FAO and government representatives, making his role as a UN Volunteer professionally diverse and deeply rewarding. "As a volunteer, I have gained a lot of experience relating to professional aspects, as well as working with people having diverse areas of expertise, culture, background and experiences."

UN Volunteers develop education systems, foster inclusive lifelong learning empower learners to be creative and responsible global citizens, eradicate poverty, promote sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information, 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).



Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

