

Be a UN Youth Volunteer, be inspiration in action

// How can a UN Volunteer complement the work of the United Nations?

Volunteerism is one of the most vital delivery mechanisms for social, environmental and economic transformation, ensuring a lasting impact with its ability to change people's mindsets, attitudes and behaviours. People become actors of change and equal partners in the attainment of local, national and international progress towards sustainable human development and global peace.

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme recognizes the shared universal values underpinning volunteerism – free will, commitment, equity, engagement, solidarity, compassion, empathy and respect for others. Since its establishment in 1970, UNV has enabled thousands of volunteers around the globe to contribute to advancing human development and fostering progress towards a better world.

// UN Youth Volunteers

UNV manages a value-driven talent pool of global citizens motivated to contribute to the peace and development work of the United Nations. It is a diverse group; they come from all over the world and are ideally suited to areas where there is a need for innovation, community outreach, youth engagement, social media or work with marginalized communities.

UN Youth Volunteers can make an impact by improving access to and delivery of basic services, especially primary health care, HIV/AIDS and basic education, and enhancing community resilience and capacities for disaster risk reduction and for the environment, including for instance, by supporting community adaptation to climate change. They contribute to peacebuilding through enhancing conflict resolution skills among children and youth and promoting community dialogues.

UN Youth Volunteers assist in the establishment of new national and sub-national volunteer schemes and enhance the capacity of local partners to mobilize and manage volunteers more effectively.

Advancing the role of youth engagement in local and national economic, social and environmental progress, UN Youth Volunteers support the innovative initiatives of young people, developing creativity and facilitating decision-making. UN Youth Volunteers are particularly involved in the promotion of youth engagement in different areas of development and peace – from economic to environmental – and on every scale, from local to national. In addition, UN Youth Volunteer assignments provide an invaluable opportunity for the growth and personal development of the volunteer.



When Nabeera Rahman was given the chance to be the first national UN Youth Volunteer in Bangladesh, she gladly accepted the exciting opportunity. She first heard about the UN Youth Volunteer opportunity through the United Nations Youth and Students Association of Bangladesh and her own networking. She was eager to begin her work as soon as she learnt the details of her assignment. Her project focuses on pro-poor trade, exploring the linkages between trade, growth and poverty reduction.

In her work, she has collaborated with the University of Dhaka's Department of Development to train students in collecting micro-narratives. "I also had a lot of fun meeting other UN Volunteers, making friends from different parts of the world and hearing incredible stories of their journeys and experiences. I would highly recommend the Youth Volunteer opportunity with the UN. It is a fantastic learning opportunity in a great working environment." (Photo: Aya Aya Maung, 2014).

// Why become a **UN Youth Volunteer?**

Becoming a UN Volunteer is a unique opportunity to enrich personal and professional experiences, and it benefits both the individual volunteer and the society at large.

In 2015, over 4,700 UN Volunteers from over 100 different professions served with 32 United Nations entities in 122 countries. Some 46 per cent served in assignments in Sub-Saharan Africa, nine per cent in the Arab States, 18 per cent in Asia and the Pacific, six per cent in Latin America and Caribbean and 19 per cent in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Of these UN Volunteers, 66 per cent served on international and 34 per cent on national assignments, 80 per cent were from the South, 43 per cent were women and 24 per cent were youth aged 18-29.

UN Youth Volunteers have less than two years of work experience. However, they have a commitment to global peace and development, are motivated, enthusiastic and adaptable to new cultures and situations, and are willing to step outside their comfort zone and contribute to proactive problem solving.

UN Youth Volunteer assignments can be an initial contract of six to 12 months, generally with a possibility to extend for one to two years. Short-term assignments of three months or less, for example as UN University Volunteers, are also offered, in collaboration with UNV's university partners.

// What are the minimum requirements to serve in a **UN Youth Volunteer** assignment?

- High motivation and enthusiasm;
- 18-29 years old;
- Good working knowledge in **at least** one of the three UNV working languages: English, French and Spanish (Portuguese or Arabic an asset for some countries);
- Strong commitment to the values and principles of volunteering;
- Respect for diversity and a willingness to work in a multi-cultural environment;
- The ability to adjust to changing and at times difficult living and working conditions;
- Willingness and ability to dedicate six to 24 months to a youth volunteering assignment.

// What **support is provided** to UN Youth Volunteers during their assignment?

- Settling-in-Grant calculated on the duration of assignment, which is paid at the beginning of the assignment;
- Volunteer Living Allowance (not a salary) intended to cover basic living expenses, which is paid each month;
- Travel to duty station on appointment and return/repatriation at the end of assignment as applicable;
- Life, health and permanent disability insurance;
- Annual leave;
- Resettlement allowance calculated based on the duration of assignment, which is paid upon satisfactory completion of the assignment;
- Learning and training allowance, including for local language acquisition.

// What **opportunities to volunteer** does UNV offer?

International UN Youth Volunteers serve in countries other than their own, and are highly-skilled individuals who work actively with development partners and within communities, responding to national priorities and needs. UNV maintains a database which is a dynamic pool of talent fed by over 50,000 registrations annually and tailored to meet the needs of our partners. The majority of assignments are filled from UNV's database, however, difficult, highly specialized or high volume assignments are advertised on the UNV website, professional associations and on social media/networks.

To create your UNV profile, visit our website at:
www.unv.org/how-to-volunteer.html.

National UN Youth Volunteers serve in their own country and combine their professional expertise with in-depth knowledge of local conditions. For further information, contact your local UNDP/UNV office.

A **UN Youth Volunteer** programme for 18 to 29 year olds was launched in 2014 in response to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's call on UNV to support his Five-Year Action Agenda with its extensive expertise in youth volunteer placement. For UN Youth Volunteer assignments and further information, visit www.unv.org/youth.

The **UNV Online Volunteering service** connects volunteers with organizations worldwide to advance peace and development through collaboration over the Internet.
www.onlinevolunteering.org.

