

Be a UN 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.

// Basic social services

Basic social services are at the heart of many UN entities' mandates and activities. Over time, UNV has developed solid knowledge and has learnt lessons about the role and application of volunteerism in service delivery and local governance.

UNV's focus is on gender-sensitive primary health care, HIV/AIDS and non-formal education (such as literacy and vocational training), and strengthening local governance to promote inclusive participation and engagement of communities in planning, implementing and monitoring local development initiatives.

In the area of basic social services, UNV's partners have requested volunteers knowledgeable and experienced in: primary health care, HIV/AIDS prevention, vulnerability and rights, women's empowerment, democratic governance, population policy and administrative management, reproductive health, gender equity, safe motherhood, gender-based violence, national planning, child protection, universal primary education, community health workers, vocational training specialists, inclusive participation of citizens in local development cycles. In addition, they request the full range of medical practitioners, such as doctors, surgeons, midwives, pharmacists etc. strengthening the capacity of volunteer infrastructure, nutrition and food production, inclusive local governance, small and medium enterprise development.



UN Volunteer Gender Officer Adele Libam (Cameroon) has been coordinating the UNDP Poverty Programme in South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 2011. One of the projects under Adele's responsibility is the Women Victims of Sexual Violence Empowerment Project. This project works to improve the economic status of women victims of sexual violence and reintegrate them through community outreach.

UNDP has established six multi-purpose community centres over the past two years, at which 1,250 women have been trained in income-generating activities, such as dressmaking and baking. Adele says, "So far, I have helped women at the centres to organize themselves into sectors and also strengthened their sense of cohesion, solidarity and transparency to work for better income traceability and profit sharing." "These women," Adele says, "face stigmatization and marginalization from the community and are therefore a segment of labour lost for community development. It is then important to promote their integration in order to fight poverty and secure community recovery." (Photo: Jonathan Lorrillard/MONUSCO, 2013)

// Why become an **international UN 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 2017, some 6,500 UN Volunteers in over 100 different professions served with 35 United Nations entities in 131 countries. Of these UN Volunteers, 59 per cent served on international and 41 per cent on national assignments, 83 per cent were from the global South and 47 per cent were women. Additionally, close to 18,500 UN Online Volunteers contributed to development through the UN Online Volunteering service.

International UN Volunteers serve in countries other than their own, and are highly-skilled individuals who work actively with development partners and within communities, responding to development priorities and needs in countries faced with poverty and socio-economic challenges, humanitarian crises, conflict and post-conflict challenges and situations of fragile peace.

International UN Volunteer assignments can be an initial contract of 6 to 12 months, generally with a possibility to extend for one to two years. Short-term assignments of three months or less are also required from time to time by UNV's partners.

// What are the minimum requirements to serve in a **basic social services** assignment?

- A higher technical diploma, university or Master's degree (credentials will be requested);
- A minimum of two years of relevant working experience in your professional field;
- 25 years or older (there is no upper age limit);
- 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.

// What **support is provided** to international UN 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.

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

International UN 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, through professional associations and on social media/networks.

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

National UN 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 was launched in 2014 for the placement of UN Youth Volunteers aged 18 to 29. For further information and assignments, visit www.unv.org/become-un-youth-volunteer.

The **UNV Online Volunteering service** puts volunteers into contact with organizations worldwide to work together for peace and development – over the Internet. www.onlinevolunteering.org.