

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.

// Medical and health services

UNV has supported many development projects and peace contexts with qualified medical doctors and other health-related professionals. These skilled professionals in **medical and health services** are often deployed to many locations throughout a country and provide immediate medical care to the local population and UN staff. They volunteer in hospitals, peacekeeping missions, ministries of health and UN dispensaries. Through the transfer of specialized skills and knowledge, international UN Volunteers support in building capacity to reinforce local health infrastructure and ensure lasting impact.

Examples of requests from UNV's partners for volunteers knowledgeable and experienced in the medical and health professions, with a minimum of two years of experience in their specialized field, include: general practitioners with clinical experience, surgeons, medical specialists such as anaesthesiologists, orthopaedic trauma surgeons, obstetricians and gynaecologists, paediatricians, ophthalmologists, cardiologists, urologists, internists, medical doctors specialized in public health, nurses, midwives, dentists, staff counsellors, psychiatrists, laboratory technicians and pharmacists.



UN Volunteer Neurosurgeon Dr Asma Bilal Hanif (left, from Pakistan) is one of three neurosurgeons in Malawi, and the only one serving central and northern Malawi. The country's other two practicing neurosurgeons are Malawians who work in private hospitals based in the Southern Region.

Dr Asma considers her contribution to Kamuzu Central Hospital her greatest career achievement. She performs surgery despite a severe shortage of specialized equipment, instruments and medicines. "My parents," she says, "desired that I should become a neurosurgeon and serve poor people who are unable to avail this facility as there are very few neurosurgeons in the whole world, especially female ones. Being a UN Volunteer, I feel proud and have a chance to prove myself and fulfil my parents' wish that really I am serving humanity without boundaries." (Photo: UNV Malawi, 2012)

// 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 **medical and health services** assignment?

- A higher technical diploma, university or Master's degree (credentials will be requested);
- For medical doctors, an average of three years of clinical experience is required;
- 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.