



UN VOLUNTEERS

WRITING 'VOLUNTEER VOICES'

A 'Volunteer Voices' article is a brief account (maximum 500 words) of your experiences as a UN Volunteer. These articles are posted on the UNV website (<http://www.unv.org/en/volunteer-voices.html>) to provide information to readers – including potential and serving UN Volunteers – about the experience of UN Volunteers during their assignments. They provide helpful insights into the UNV programme and the work of UN Volunteers. They also provide you with a unique opportunity to express your thoughts in a tangible way and support those who will follow in your footsteps. Think of them as an electronic legacy!

The style and format is up to you. This is an opportunity for you to express yourself. The following guidance is designed to help you get started and ensure that your story will be helpful and easily understood:

1. When planning your story, think firstly about the main idea you want to express: e.g. what did you set out to achieve, what was your biggest challenge, your biggest success, your greatest lesson? (example: "UN Volunteers can help other people contribute to development. I thought I would teach people how to volunteer for development, but found they were already actively volunteering, in their own way");
2. Identify the difference that you made as a UN Volunteer, especially in terms of the main idea that you identified for this story (example: "The people I met didn't call themselves volunteers but were actively helping each other. I am proud that my work raised awareness among many people that they could use their voluntary effort to advance their own development");
3. Share impact: let us know how you are helping the people of the community and/or region in which you are serving;

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4. Add your thoughts about what it means to volunteer: share insights and experiences about how volunteering influenced your life and the lives of those whom you met and with whom you worked;
5. Be sure to comment on your daily work as a UN Volunteer: highlight your responsibilities, the type of work you are engaged in, the people you work with, etc.;
6. Cultural aspects: perhaps remark (briefly) on some differences from your home country and share what you learned about living in a different cultural setting;
7. On the other hand, refrain from commenting on the political situation in your country of assignment or making general statements about its status of development or social advancement. Avoid sweeping generalizations and stereotypes;
8. This is not the appropriate venue to make complaints or requests. If you have such concerns, send them directly to your Programme Officer or to UNV headquarters;
9. Avoid technical jargon and excessive text. Keep your story simple and straightforward. Write it in a way that is comfortable and natural to you, as if you're sending a letter to a family member or friend (which will be read by the wider world!);
10. Be positive: the UNV tone of voice is confident, clear, inclusive and genuine. Refer to 'Express: The UNV brand communication user guide' for further information about the UNV tone of voice.
11. Send a photograph (jpeg format) showing you in action or at work, plus a portrait shot to show what you look like: no group photos, please!

This article is your voice. The UNV Communications Section will review your article but will only make minimal corrections if needed, e.g. to the grammar and consistency of descriptions of UNV (refer to 'Express: UNV brand communication user guide' for details of how to talk about UNV). The rest is up to you!