



Local volunteer Nona Chakma, right, speaks with young women of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility in Rangapani Village, Bangladesh. The UNDP-initiated partnership with the government, communities and NGOs empowers women through skills training and development (Amiya Kanti Chakma, 2011)



Youth discuss adaptation to climate change during a workshop in Iguiwaz, Morocco. The activity was conducted as part of the UNV-supported Community-Based Adaptation Project (UNDP CBA Baptiste de Ville d'Avray, 2010)

Overview

ENGLISH

"After volunteering in other countries, I realized that one thing that all of us young people have in common throughout the world is optimism."
Jane Choi, UN Youth Volunteer, Fiji

UN Youth Volunteers Programme

"Youth are a transformative force... The time has come to integrate youth voices more meaningfully into decision-making processes at all levels."

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on International Youth Day 2012

About UNV

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development worldwide. Volunteerism can transform the pace and nature of development and it benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for volunteerism globally, encouraging partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing volunteers.

UNV is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

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Over the past year, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme has been engaging with the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD), youth-led networks, international volunteer-sending organizations, national volunteering and civil society organizations (CSOs) and the private sector to develop and scale-up the youth volunteers programme. The overall aim of the programme is to empower youth and foster their participation and active citizenship through volunteering, which will positively impact young people as well as development and peace programmes. Through the programme, thousands of young volunteers will be mobilized to support the work of UN agencies around the world.

UNV's mandate on youth

UNV has been actively engaged in youth and youth volunteering since 1976, when the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/Res/31/131 mandating UNV to promote and advance the role of youth in development through volunteerism. Subsequent General Assembly resolutions and UNDP Executive Board decisions have further confirmed and expanded this mandate.

Over the years, UNV has worked with UN partners and Member States at national, regional and international levels to create an enabling environment for youth participation through volunteering. Towards that end, it has launched successful programmes ranging from establishing youth centres and volunteer corps to working on youth policies and legislation. One such collaboration is the recently launched US \$5 million "Arab Youth Volunteering for a Better Future" programme aimed at addressing some of the challenges and aspirations of youth in the context of the Arab Spring. This regional programme, which covers six countries (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen), is already being implemented in four of the six countries.

In addition, UNV has established a number of its own initiatives that promote university-level volunteering in partnership with leading universities in Europe, and the successful Online Volunteering service which opens up possibilities for young people to volunteer off-site through the internet.

UNV (April 2013)



On International Youth Day, national UN Volunteers and beneficiaries of the UNV-supported UNDP Enhanced Public Trust, Security and Inclusion Project joined a parade coordinated by the Ministry of Culture and Sports in Guyana. (Michiru Ito, 2011)

“Half of the world’s population is under thirty years old, and these youth, more than 3 billion strong, comprise the most well-informed and well-connected generation the world has ever known.”

Suzanne Petroni and Meredith Waters
Global Youth Forum, Bali

Strategy

On 25 January 2012, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced his Five-Year Action Agenda, which includes an explicit reference to the importance of youth and volunteering as a theme and priority. In response, UNV took this opportunity to engage with stakeholders to conduct a comprehensive review of its youth volunteer initiatives with the intention to deepen and expand its activities in this area. This provided the foundation for the UNV Youth Volunteering strategy.

The focus of the strategy will be young people themselves as engaged actors and agents of change, as well as on the communities they serve. As such, youth empowerment will be prioritized, with emphasis on skills development, knowledge sharing and youth participation in decision-making. It will be guided by key principles of inclusion, aiming to give young people of all backgrounds and orientations access to volunteering opportunities. Further, it will actively promote South-South cooperation.

Programme Outcome

The programme has three areas of focus:

- Engaging in global advocacy and partnerships for youth volunteering.
Outcome: Increased recognition of the contribution of youth volunteering to development and peace as well as youth empowerment.
- Providing capacity development to nationally and regionally owned youth schemes including policy support to partners.
Outcome: Improved capacity of governments, youth-led organizations and civil society organizations in setting up youth volunteer schemes, formulating youth volunteering policies and providing quality volunteer management to youth volunteers.
- Establishing a UN Youth Volunteering modality
Outcome: Increased and diversified opportunities for youth volunteers to serve and learn during their volunteer assignment.

Current Status

Key components of the Youth Volunteering Programme, including the strategy and modality, are currently in the process of being finalized and are expected to launch in April 2013.

UNV and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have established a dedicated trust fund to support youth volunteerism. In January 2013, the Government of Germany committed 1.5 million US dollars to provide the financial basis for the further design and implementation of the youth volunteering modality.

The fund will also enable UNV to support youth volunteering initiatives which directly enhance the engagement of youth in voluntary activities and strengthen the capacity of governments to develop their own national and regional youth volunteer schemes.

To ensure broader consultation with partners (governments, UN agencies, CSOs and youth organizations), UNV is planning a series of consultative workshops throughout 2014.

Existing UNV projects on youth are being strengthened in many countries. UNV is also currently deploying 87 international youth volunteers to 50 developing countries, an initiative which is supported by the Governments of Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Switzerland and foundations or universities in the Republic of Korea, Japan and Spain. Finally, the UNV onlinevolunteering.org website continues to mobilize thousands of young people annually.

UNV Youth Engagement

1,659 of all UN Volunteers were between the ages of 18 and 30 in 2011

Every year, more than 6,500 online volunteers between the ages of 18 and 30, representing 65% of all online volunteers, are mobilized

Current and Recent Youth Projects

Arab Youth Volunteering for a Better Future - Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen

Social Innovation and Volunteerism in Uzbekistan

Reinforcement of Cultural Aspects of Outreach Settlements through University Volunteer Service (UVS) in Guatemala

Young Football Volunteers in Ukraine

Youth Employability and Retention Programme (YERP) in Bosnia and Herzegovina

University Volunteer Scheme for Youth Empowerment and Development of Papua, Indonesia

ECOWAS Youth Volunteers Programme



“By encouraging the youth to volunteer, we believe that this will have a rippling effect on the community. Our vision is to have a generation of patriotic young people who appreciate the significance of volunteerism and its contribution to development.”

Archie Donkoh, Youth Volunteers without Frontiers, Ghana

Eliceo Quispe Lopen (foreground) and Jose Luis Colque Quispe are indigenous volunteers or «Yanapiris» in Bolivia. They are both engaged in a workshop about the MDGs. (Nicolas Jossierand, 2010)