

HRD PROGRAMME: 2012/13 REPORT

VOLUNTEERING FOR PEACE



A joint programme of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme and the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre. Funded by the Government of Japan.



UN
Volunteers

inspiration in action



ABOUT THE PROGRAMME FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA FOR PEACEBUILDING

Peacebuilding is about resolving violent conflict and establishing lasting peace. It involves restoring justice, healing trauma, reconciliation, development and leadership. With violent conflict never far from the headlines, a central part of the Government of Japan's strategy to help foster lasting peace worldwide is the Programme for Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding (HRD Programme).

Funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Programme aims to demonstrate the role of volunteering in peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities by fielding skilled, trained and committed citizens from Japan and other Asian countries. Volunteers deployed under the Programme bring new skills that expand the reach of peacebuilding efforts.

'WHEN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ASSISTS VULNERABLE POST-CONFLICT NATIONS IN CONSOLIDATING PEACE, THE ACTIVITIES OF CIVILIAN EXPERTS SUPPORTING COHERENT AND COMPREHENSIVE NATION-BUILDING ARE INDISPENSABLE. THE HRD PROGRAMME AIMS TO NURTURE THE CIVILIAN EXPERTS NEEDED TO BUILD PEACE AND CONTRIBUTE TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.'

Fumio Kishida, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Japan

Working alongside national counterparts, HRD Volunteers contribute their skills and experience to projects that range from humanitarian coordination within emergencies and protracted displacement

situations to crisis prevention and post-conflict recovery efforts. There are also a number of assignments that support and strengthen the delivery of basic services with a view to stabilizing local governance and civil society in the long term. Social inclusion plays a vital role in all aspects of the volunteer assignments, with youth, women and marginalized groups proactively included in peace and development initiatives at the community level.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE UNV PROGRAMME STRATEGY, THE HRD PROGRAMME FOCUSES ON HARNESSING VOLUNTEERISM AS A STRATEGIC ASSET AND A POWERFUL CONTRIBUTOR TO PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT. VOLUNTEERISM BENEFITS SOCIETY AT LARGE AND THE INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEER BY STRENGTHENING SOLIDARITY AND RECIPROCITY AMONG CITIZENS. IT CAN TRANSFORM THE PACE AND NATURE OF DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE INITIATIVES.

Promoting volunteerism is a key aspect of the sustainable contribution that HRD Volunteers make under the Programme. The chance to volunteer is a chance to move from being a passive recipient to becoming engaged in peace, reconciliation and development processes. Interventions that genuinely involve beneficiaries – especially those on the margins of society – are known to have a more lasting impact. HRD Volunteers are encouraged to promote volunteerism and community engagement, and often they become role models and inspire the people they work with.

HRD PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

ENHANCING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS THROUGH UNIVERSITY TRAINING WITH INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTES

Hosted by the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre (HPC) at Hiroshima University, the HRD Programme has been running since 2007. The Centre delivers six weeks of classroom-based training in collaboration with Canadian, Swedish and other international institutes. Participants work through problem-solving exercises, discussions and lectures before taking up their assignments as HRD Volunteers.

BUILDING PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

United Nations Volunteers (UNV) is responsible for the volunteer management component of the HRD Programme. Following an extensive matching process, HRD Volunteers are assigned with UN agencies and typically work directly with vulnerable groups such as refugees, women, children and others affected by conflict. Their roles often involve bringing excluded groups into peace and development processes, protecting and supporting those at risk, and strengthening the skills and capacity of authorities so that the basic needs of vulnerable people can be met.

‘BEING A VOLUNTEER MEANS GIVING AND RECEIVING. WHILE YOU PUT YOUR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AT THE SERVICE OF OTHERS, IN RETURN YOU LEARN FROM THEM, YOU BUILD AND STRENGTHEN KNOWLEDGE. PROMOTING VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT AMONG COUNTERPARTS, BENEFICIARIES AND COLLEAGUES IS SOMETHING HRD VOLUNTEERS ARE BEST PLACED TO DO.’

HRD Volunteers often find themselves living and working in challenging conditions. They deal with long hours, limited infrastructure and volatile security situations. Despite this, many say they get as much from the experience as they give. They develop new skills and gain confidence in their abilities. They are also able to make significant contributions towards improving the lives of people affected by crises.

ASSISTING PEOPLE AFFECTED BY WAR AND DISASTER AND THOSE EXCLUDED FROM DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By the end of 2012, a total of 98 HRD Volunteers from 15 Asian countries had completed their UNV assignments since the HRD Programme began. Overall, they have supported more than 14 UN agencies and partner organizations in providing humanitarian assistance and improving basic services for vulnerable people. In some of the world’s most troubled places, they have assisted in crisis prevention and recovery efforts and served with UN missions to boost their operational capacity and build the skills of their national counterparts. Across the breadth of circumstances in which HRD Volunteers have served, they have focused particularly on empowering women, young people and marginalized groups, and in doing so they have contributed to building trust, capacity and resilience among ordinary people involved in some of the world’s most fragile peace processes.

‘THE FIELDS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION, PEACE ENFORCEMENT, POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND EVEN CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES IN POLITICALLY TENSE ENVIRONMENTS REQUIRE ‘READY-TO-WORK’ PROFESSIONALS WITH CRITICAL THINKING. THESE ARE THE PEACEBUILDERS THIS PROGRAMME AIMS TO TRAIN.’

Kenji Isezaki, President, Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre

For more information, visit: www.peacebuilderscenter.jp

DELIVERY OF BASIC SERVICES

UNV's commitment to activities related to gender-sensitive primary health care, non-formal education and effective local governance is based on the principle that strengthening the **delivery of basic services** can impact upon many priority areas at the same time, with multiplier effects on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

In 2012, the HRD Programme supported five UNV assignments that had the delivery of basic services at their core, including: capacity-building of local government accounting staff in the management of public funds in Liberia; promoting girls' education to year 9 and expanding access to preschool programmes

in Tajikistan; and extending primary health care to remote crisis-affected populations with a proposal for 'nomadic clinics' in Kenya.

Two assignments featured the highly successful mobilization of community health volunteers – 'cholera brigadiers' in Haiti and 'hygiene promoters' in Somalia – to promote safe water and hygiene practices and combat the spread of cholera in camp situations. In both cases, the HRD Volunteers assisted to build that local capacity, leveraging their positions as professionals working in a voluntary capacity to encourage the formation of sustainable volunteer networks to respond to public health needs at the household level.

Yuki Yoshida visits an IDP camp in Port-au-Prince, Haiti



KAZUMI HOMMA

UNV Education Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist

Served in Tajikistan to support UNICEF's Basic Education and Gender Equality programme



*A monitoring & evaluation officer of Gharm District Education Department.
(Photo: Kazumi Homma)*

With more than eight years' experience as an educational professional and programme management specialist, Kazumi brought much knowledge and professionalism to her UNV assignment with UNICEF's Basic Education and Gender Equality (BEGE) programme in Tajikistan. She also took away a much deeper understanding of what it means for a population to be subjected to a controlled democracy: 'The restricted freedom of expression, coupled with widespread corruption in Tajikistan, might be the major reason that the country remains as vulnerable as the poorest African countries,' she noted.

The objectives of the BEGE programme over the timeframe 2010–2015 are to increase the completion of girls' education to year 9 to more than 90 per cent and expand access to preschool education. In 2012 UNICEF conducted its mid-term review of the programme, and Kazumi made a major contribution to evidence-based education planning and programming by conducting rigorous performance monitoring in UNICEF's priority districts.

With the benefit of mentoring during Kazumi's assignment, UNICEF's education officers, programme assistants, and field monitors were able to strengthen their relationships with other stakeholders and initiate steps towards improve existing monitoring mechanisms. 'The biggest challenge of promoting girls' education in Tajikistan is that all decisions are being made with no concrete evidence. I contributed to evidencebased education planning and programming by enhancing UNICEF's monitoring and evaluation capacity. For example, I produced five trend analysis reports on education and employment in Tajikistan based on the 2010 population and housing census,' said Kazumi.

WHO BENEFITED?

- **SCHOOLCHILDREN**
AGED 3–18 IN 12 UNICEF
PRIORITY DISTRICTS
- **GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**
OF EDUCATION ADMINISTRATIVE
BODIES AT NATIONAL, REGIONAL
AND DISTRICT LEVELS

'THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF PROMOTING GIRLS' EDUCATION IN TAJIKISTAN IS THAT ALL DECISIONS ARE BEING MADE WITH NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE'

COMMUNITY'S CAPACITY TO
PLAN, IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR
MDG PROGRESS THROUGH LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES
ENHANCED

ATSUSHI IJIMA

UNV Programme Officer

Served with UNDP to assist the Liberia Decentralization and Local Development programme

WHO BENEFITED?

- **3 PILOT COUNTIES,** THEN ALL 15 COUNTIES IN LIBERIA
- **STAFF** AT THE MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND THE GOVERNANCE COMMISSION

'I'VE GAINED LOTS OF EXPERIENCE AND MANY SKILLS THROUGH MY ACTIVITIES IN LIBERIA, AND IT HAS BROUGHT CHANGES IN MY PERSPECTIVE OF WORKING IN AN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT IN A POST-CONFLICT COUNTRY'

Atsushi with the project's staff and implementing partners (Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Governance Commission). (Photo: Samuel Nyakron)

The UNV Programme Strategy notes that 'strong local governance enhances the delivery of basic services', and it was with this guiding principle in mind that Atsushi approached his role with the Liberia Decentralization and Local Development (LDLD) programme, a national-owned programme of innovations for supporting local government established with the assistance of the UN Capital Development Fund and UNDP.

Atsushi was primarily involved in building the capacity of the LDLD programme's implementing partners, particularly in the area of public expenditure management at county, district and sub-district levels. This was achieved through both on-the-job training and workshops. Atsushi's aim was to engender professionalism among his counterparts through leading by example, demonstrating the proper management of public funds and encouraging 'learning by doing'. He also provided administrative support to procurement, asset management and public relations activities.

Keen to use his position as a UN Volunteer to advocate for the role of volunteerism, Atsushi was able to highlight the concept of volunteerism in the programme's newsletter with a story about one of his counterparts in the Ministry of Internal Affairs who was working on community-based income generation activities.

On a personal level, Atsushi was positive about all that he had learnt during his assignment: 'I've gained lots of experience and many skills through my activities in Liberia, and it has brought changes in my perspective of working in an international environment in a post-conflict country. I have come to understand the culture of an international work environment, in particular the way of working in Africa, and I have understood the necessity of adjusting myself to it.'



WATARU KASHINO

UNV Migration Health Physician

Worked with IOM on improving access to health care among crisis-affected populations in Kenya



Coordinated initial rapid needs assessment training, Eldoret.

As a UNV migration health physician, Wataru was involved in two major projects led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Kenya, also covering the Horn of Africa. With three years' experience in the emergency department of a tertiary care hospital in Japan, he provided project development and technical assistance to a proposal for 'nomadic clinics' to expand primary health care services to crisis-affected populations in northern Kenya. The target group for this project totals approximately 250,000 people, and it is envisaged that after one year IOM would be able to hand over operation of the clinics to the Ministry of Health.

The second project was in direct response to inter-community fighting in the border town of Moyale in July 2012, leading to some 8000 Ethiopians with urgent humanitarian needs taking refuge on the Kenyan side of the border. IOM worked together with the Government of Kenya to establish shelter, boost livelihoods and promote peace among those who had been displaced. Wataru acted as one of the investigators for IOM's rapid needs assessment, and for its project implementation he provided valuable technical assistance.

Wataru also contributed his significant expertise to the temporary emergency response by undertaking an analysis of the overall situation of health and prevalent diseases among the displaced population, with special attention paid to water, sanitation and hygiene. Thanks to this needs assessment highlighting the extremely limited water resources and total reliance on the Government of Kenya and Kenya Red Cross for food, international NGOs had accurate information about how much water and food to deliver to the displaced communities.

WHO BENEFITED?

- **EMERGENCY RESPONSE:**
8184 DISPLACED
ETHIOPIANS AND HOST
COMMUNITY MEMBERS
- **NOMADIC CLINICS PROPOSAL:**
250,000
PEOPLE IN 2 COUNTIES

UN VOLUNTEERS, COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITIES ENGAGED IN LOCAL CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES AS PART OF HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

YUKI YOSHIDA

UNV Health Project Officer

Served with IOM's Health Unit assisting IDPs in Haiti

WHO BENEFITED?

141,264 IDPS LIVING IN 31 CAMPS IN THE PORT-AU-PRINCE METROPOLITAN AREA, PARTICULARLY CHILDREN, PREGNANT WOMEN AND LACTATING MOTHERS, THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED, AND PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC DISEASES

As of mid 2012, approximately 369,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) remained in 541 camps in Haiti following the devastating earthquake of 2010. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) continues to provide assistance to those IDPs, and IOM's Health Unit, to which Yuki was assigned as a UN Volunteer, works to address critical gaps in public health while supporting vulnerable individuals in camps.

During her assignment, Yuki – a trained midwife with a master's degree in public health and prior experience working with UNICEF – was primarily responsible for epidemiological data analysis and reporting on IOM's cholera response project in camps in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. With her proactive attitude and initiative, she was also quickly engaged in a range of management and coordination activities, including during the emergency responses to Hurricanes Isaac and Sandy. Yuki's supervisor praised her work: 'Yuki has shown exemplary work in supporting the activities of the IOM Health Unit to reach its target goals. She was able to share her experience and contribute to the successful implementation of humanitarian assistance programmes.'

Yuki visits the general hospital's pediatric ward, Port-au-Prince.



'AS THE HEALTH UNIT TRAINS AND SUPPORTS COMMUNITY HEALTH VOLUNTEERS FOR THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF CHOLERA, HIV/AIDS AND OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, MY POSITION AS A UN VOLUNTEER ADDED POSITIVE VALUE AND LED TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH THE COMMUNITY LEADERS AND LOCAL VOLUNTEERS IN THE IDP CAMPS'

Being a volunteer and bringing the spirit of volunteerism to the cholera project's training of community health volunteers, known as 'cholera brigadiers', was a noticeable advantage to Yuki: 'As the Health Unit trains and supports community health volunteers for the prevention and treatment of cholera, HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, my position as a UN Volunteer added positive value and led to effective communication with the community leaders and local volunteers in the IDP camps.'

KOJI KUMAMARU

UNV Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Specialist

Served with IOM on a safe water and cholera prevention project in Somalia



Koji carefully examines a water sample in Burco, Somaliland. (Photo: Ali Eid)

As a water, sanitation and hygiene specialist, Koji had much to contribute to the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) ongoing safe water and cholera prevention project in Somalia. He provided technical advice to the project's seven implementing partners (local NGOs) on water treatment facilities, hygiene promotion and baseline/post-intervention assessment, and he supervised and monitored assessment activities, including 450 household surveys and over 200 water quality samples and tests in the field.

Koji also supported training for the project's implementing partners and more than 250 'hygiene promoters' in order to develop their skills in conducting household surveys and water quality sampling. Throughout this training, IOM emphasized the importance of the beneficiaries themselves taking ownership of the process and empowering communities to work towards eliminating water-borne and sanitation-related diseases. As Koji reported, 'My role was to transfer skills and knowledge in water quality analysis and water treatment, while considering gender equality', and during his assignment over 80,000 IDPs and host communities benefited from house-to-house visits and community dialogues conducted by the trained hygiene promoters.

Building on his prior experience in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector in the development context, Koji noted that the main area in which he gained new knowledge was how to apply his professional background to a humanitarian emergency, whether man-made or natural.

WHO BENEFITED?

- **50,787** BENEFICIARIES PROVIDED WITH **9,328,000** LITRES OF CLEAN, SAFE WATER PER MONTH THROUGH 13 WATER TREATMENT FACILITIES
- **250** HYGIENE PROMOTERS TRAINED
- **80,000** IDPS AND HOST COMMUNITIES BENEFITED FROM HOUSE-TO-HOUSE VISITS AND COMMUNITY DIALOGUES BY HYGIENE PROMOTERS

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Two primary motivators underpin the involvement of the HRD Programme in the priority area of **environment and climate change**: a global recognition of volunteerism's role in environmental protection, and the UNDP executive board's call for UNV to contribute to the global environment and climate change agenda. UNV has been mandated to contribute to projects that support access to energy and climate change mitigation techniques; promote sustainable livelihoods, food security and climate change adaptation; and focus on natural resource management and biodiversity conservation.

In light of this directive, one of the 2012 HRD Programme assignments was with UNDP in Timor-Leste developing national capacity to manage and reduce disaster risk, particularly among communities vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change. Working with the National Disaster Operations Centre, the HRD Volunteer contributed to improvements in inter-institutional coordination of disaster risk management programming and the availability of information on community-level planning for natural disasters.

Tree planting campaign on International environment day in Haiti. Photo: UNV Jose Rende Torres



VULNERABILITY TO FOOD INSECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE REDUCED THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED ADAPTATION MECHANISMS

AIMKORITA SAKUMA

UNV Monitoring & Evaluation Officer

Served with UNDP in Timor-Leste in support of the National Disaster Operations Centre

Around 80 per cent of Timor-Leste's population has experienced the effects of a natural disaster, and every year there are localized weather events that require some kind of disaster response. Aimkorita served as a UNV monitoring and evaluation officer for a joint UNDP/government project designed to strengthen disaster risk management at the national and district levels, particularly focusing on communities vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change.

Preparing hazard maps and DVDs for display in support of a national event on disaster risk reduction was one of the practical ways in which Aimkorita was able to share her expertise with her counterparts in the Ministry of Social Solidarity. The theme of the 2012 event was 'Women and girls becoming more resilient to natural disasters', so schoolchildren, teachers and aid agency staff were briefed on reducing risk in natural disasters from a gender-sensitive point of view.



In another community-level approach to environmental awareness, Aimkorita participated in a UN-coordinated activity that aimed to educate children about reducing their impact on the environment, such as separating organic and nonorganic garbage to reduce landfill. 'Since environment and natural disaster risk reduction are correlated, what I contributed during the weekend for children should benefit them directly,' Aimkorita said.

Personally, Aimkorita experienced both hardship and fulfillment, accumulating many valuable experiences and the kind of practical knowledge that cannot be learnt from books or study: 'I gained experiences working with multinational staff and learned the different ways of work styles, communication styles and values.'

WHO BENEFITED?

- MORE THAN **50** GOVERNMENT STAFF
- **500** COMMUNITY MEMBERS (MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN)

'I GAINED EXPERIENCES WORKING WITH MULTINATIONAL STAFF AND LEARNED THE DIFFERENT WAYS OF WORK STYLES, COMMUNICATION STYLES AND VALUES'

UNV's preparation for the national event on disaster risk reduction.

CRISIS PREVENTION AND RECOVERY

Many communities around the world continue to suffer the after-effects of violent conflict, from the physical problem of landmines in Laos to ongoing social fragmentation in the Solomon Islands. Common to all of the **crisis prevention and recovery** projects that the HRD Volunteers of 2012 supported was a will to involve community members in their own conflict prevention and recovery efforts. The types of activities undertaken in this priority area focused on building trust, social cohesion, peaceful coexistence and mutual support – all essential ingredients of reconciliation and peace consolidation.

UNDP's interventions in the post-conflict situations of Laos, South Sudan and the Solomon Islands were ably and enthusiastically supported by HRD Volunteers, who worked towards stabilizing community security at the grassroots level in the case of South Sudan; improving communications among UNDP's partners in eradicating unexploded ordnance in Laos; and empowering ex-combatants in the Solomon Islands to lift themselves out of poverty by providing income-generation opportunities and facilitating human security.

In Burundi, after years of civil war, UNV is supporting the implementation of an innovative UNDP project to ensure the durable socio-economic reintegration of people affected by the crisis. Beneficiaries are encouraged to form association with other ex-combatants and community members to start income generating activities. (Photo: Aude Rossignol/UNV, 2012)



YOSHINORI IKEDA

UNV Peace and Community Security Officer

Served in South Sudan with UNDP's Community Security and Arms Control project

UNDP's Community Security and Arms Control (CSAC) project supports the South Sudan Peace and Reconciliation Commission (SSPRC), other relevant government agencies and local communities to identify the key drivers of violent conflict and develop interventions to mitigate them. The aim is to stabilize community security at the grassroots level by implementing infrastructure projects such as boreholes, police posts, mechanized farming and the renovation of county administration buildings and community centres – a 'bricks and mortar' approach to conflict mitigation and extending the rule of law. The project also assists traditional authorities to build their conflict transformation skills and establish mid to long-term conflict resolution mechanisms.

Yoshinori's contribution to the CSAC project focused on improving coordination with the SSPRC and monitoring the progress of conflict transformation training. This training was intended to create locally based agents of change to identify potential sources of conflict and come up with 'homegrown' solutions to allow the peaceful coexistence of all members of the community. Notably, most of the traditional authorities who participated in the conflict transformation training (approximately 780 individuals, including traditional chiefs, youth leaders and women) did so on a voluntary basis, meaning that the intervention was more likely to be sustainable because it empowered government counterparts and community members.

In a two-way exchange that typifies the volunteering experience, Yoshinori grew professionally, honing his conflict analysis and project management skills even in the face of the kinds of challenges common to many complex postconflict situations – low capacity of government staff, lack of basic social/physical infrastructure at both national and local levels, and low literacy and education standards.

WHO BENEFITED?

- CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION TRAINING:
780 TRADITIONAL
AUTHORITIES FROM **13**
COUNTIES, AND THEIR
COMMUNITIES

Conflict transformation training for traditional authorities in Upper Nile States, South Sudan. (Photo: UNDP South Sudan)



GENDER-DIFFERENTIATED UNV
RECOVERY PROGRAMMING
STRENGTHENED

YUMIKO HORIE

UNV Programme Officer

Served in Lao PDR with UNDP on a UXO clearance, risk education and victim assistance project

WHO BENEFITED?

PEOPLE IN CONTAMINATED AREAS

‘INITIALLY I WAS PLANNING TO CREATE THE ROADMAP FOR A BETTER WEBSITE. HOWEVER, IF I HAD TAKEN THE LEAD IT WOULD NOT DEVELOP MY COUNTERPART’S CAPACITY. SO I DECIDED TO LET THEM WORK ANYWAY AND ASSIST LITTLE BY LITTLE. THIS WOULD TAKE SOME TIME BUT BE A BETTER WAY FOR THEIR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT’

Since 1996, UNDP has run a project to assist the national UXO (unexploded ordnance) clearance agency in Lao PDR to eradicate UXO and, by doing so, to contribute to the reduction of poverty in Lao PDR. The project focuses on providing policy advice, aid coordination support and technical support to UXO Lao. Specifically, UNDP technical advisors support UXO Lao’s operations as well as its programme and financial management, and this in turn provides learning opportunities for UXO Lao staff at national and provincial levels.

With a background in communications, Yumiko was proactive in strengthening UNDP’s communications strategy, particularly contributing to the renewal of the UXO project’s website and ensuring that it communicates appropriate perceptions of UNDP’s involvement in the joint UXO project among its government and NGO partners.

Noting the fine balance between providing assistance/capacity-building and project ownership of national staff, Yumiko explained: ‘Initially I was planning to create the roadmap for a better website. However, if I had taken the lead it would not develop my counterpart’s capacity. So I decided to let them work anyway and assist little by little. This would take some time but be a better way for their capacity development.’

Yumiko also saw the need to collect gender-disaggregated data on the beneficiaries of UNDP’s support to UXO clearance activities, and she planned and began a research project to bring gender mainstreaming into the project’s forward planning for 2013–16.

UNVs donated blood to the Red Cross on International Volunteer Day.



INCLUSIVE LOCAL CRISIS RECOVERY STRATEGIES AND MECHANISMS DEVELOPED AND STRENGTHENED

JUNKO KAWATA

UNV Programme Specialist (Recovery and Reintegration)
Served in the Solomon Islands in support of a joint UNDP/ILO/UNICEF post-conflict recovery initiative



Junko with officials from the Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace.

In 2012, UNDP, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNICEF commenced a joint initiative in the Solomon Islands to, firstly, empower ex-combatants and communities affected by ethnic tensions through improving local governance and community participation and, secondly, promote successful post-conflict recovery by ensuring human security and the peaceful coexistence of ethnically diverse populations.

With a masters degree in public administration, Junko was recruited as a UN Volunteer to coordinate the project activities for the UNDP component of the joint initiative and to represent UNDP in the broader national community of practice on recovery and reintegration. Taking on the additional role of Project Coordinator, she had many practicalities to attend to, from setting up the project management office to recruiting project assistants and UN Volunteers for the partner UN agencies. She then set about identifying targeted communities that were hosting ex-combatants: 'To prevent duplication of supports from other organizations, I held two mapping workshops to collect information on which communities had already been supported by stakeholders such as the government or other NGOs'. After the target beneficiaries had been identified, Junko participated in UNDP's activities in the field, including conflict analysis training for government officials and peacebuilding workshops for women.

One of the greatest challenges Junko faced was how to be fair and impartial in determining target beneficiaries and then managing their expectations about the benefits of the project for them: 'The budget for this project was small compared to the number of ex-combatants in this country, and of course everyone wanted to be beneficiaries of the project'. She found that clear communication about the project and its expected benefits to the participants and the wider community were key to a smooth start to the project's implementation phase.

WHO BENEFITED?

- **EX-COMBATANTS** IN TWO PROVINCES AND HONIARA
- **PEOPLE** IN COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY ETHNIC CONFLICT
- **COUNTERPARTS** IN GOVERNMENT AND PARTNER NGOS

'THE BUDGET FOR THIS PROJECT WAS SMALL COMPARED TO THE NUMBER OF EX-COMBATANTS IN THIS COUNTRY, AND OF COURSE EVERYONE WANTED TO BE BENEFICIARIES OF THE PROJECT'

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The two main UN host agencies for HRD Programme assignments within the UNV priority area of **humanitarian assistance** were IOM and UNHCR, with all five assignments dealing with displaced populations: asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons, including rural-to-urban migrants.

The urgent humanitarian needs of the beneficiaries ranged from the most basic of assistance – the provision of clothes, other non-food items and shelter – to ensuring access to safe water, preventing disease outbreaks and developing capacity of local authorities to provide appropriate legal protection for refugees and returnees.

The added value of the HRD Programme in these contexts was the particular focus of the volunteers on the inclusion of marginalized groups, the promotion of local ownership of UN interventions and the sustainability of the humanitarian response wherever possible. As one of the HRD Volunteers noted, 'Many volunteers operate in emergency contexts, including local, national and international volunteers. It is important that you explain to people that you are volunteering as you can really inspire people and show them through your example and commitment that anyone can volunteer to make people's lives better.'

Triza Awino, a community volunteer is assessing the needs of Michael Egadwa who lost his home to a fire in Kibera Slum, Nairobi, Kenya. (Photo: Harald Franzen)



VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTIONS TO HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE STRENGTHENED AND RECOGNIZED

JUNKO NOMURA

UNV Associate Reintegration Officer

Served with UNHCR in Rwanda on a programme to ensure the sustainable return and reintegration of Rwandan returnees



Refugee children wearing donated secondhand clothes, Kigeme refugee camp.

In November 2012, the Government of Rwanda and One UN Rwanda commenced a two-year joint programme to ensure sustainable return and reintegration opportunities for Rwandan returnees, with returnee numbers expected to peak in 2013 and continue on through 2014. Junko was assigned to coordinate UNHCR's component of the programme, including planning and preparations for an event to mark its launch. With a positive attitude and a proactive approach, Junko met budget challenges head-on by writing proposals and preparing UNHCR's inputs carefully.

An influx of refugees fleeing insecurity in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) during 2012 saw the return and reintegration programme's start date delayed, but Junko's flexibility and responsiveness meant she quickly involved herself in responding to the urgent humanitarian needs for new arrivals. She organized the donation of secondhand clothes for refugees who found themselves living in refugee camps in Rwanda without basic belongings, and in October 2012 more than 93,000 pieces of clothing were distributed in camps and transit centres. She also wrote proposals for the emergency response to new refugees and the registration of new arrivals from DRC.

'As a volunteer, any new ideas can be introduced for beneficiaries...As long as I am a volunteer, I think I can work flexibly and creatively and bring new ideas to an institution,' reflected Junko. Improved communication skills, a better understanding of refugee protection and an overview of the budget planning and fundraising activities of different UN agencies were among the professional insights that Junko took away from her time as a UN Volunteer in Rwanda.

WHO BENEFITED?

- **15,000** REFUGEES IN A TRANSIT CENTRE AND NEWLY ESTABLISHED CAMP
- **10,000** RWANDAN RETURNÉES

'AS LONG AS I AM A VOLUNTEER, I THINK I CAN WORK FLEXIBLY AND CREATIVELY AND BRING NEW IDEAS TO AN INSTITUTION'

LOCAL HUMANITARIAN AND
EARLY RECOVERY RESPONSE
COORDINATION AND
MANAGEMENT CAPACITY
STRENGTHENED

NAOFUMI IKEDA

UNV Associate Protection Officer

Served with UNHCR in South Sudan to provide protection for refugees, returnees and IDPs

WHO BENEFITED?

- **5,000** URBAN REFUGEES
- **12,000** RETURNEES AT TEMPORARY RETURNEE SITE
- **20,000** REFUGEES IN JAMAM REFUGEE CAMP

Naofumi's role as UNV associate protection officer with UNHCR centred around providing effective and timely protection for refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) – including urban refugees – and stateless people. He served as UNHCR protection focal point at a temporary returnee site, and supported and improved rapid protection needs assessments conducted by the protection cluster in the field.

Naofumi's experience of volunteerism in South Sudan was extremely positive, with the spirit of community engagement well integrated into the humanitarian response to the needs of displaced populations: 'UNHCR is always mobilizing refugees, returnees and local people as volunteers. We encourage those volunteers to work for their own community and promote their mutual understanding among refugees, returnees and host communities. I mobilized and trained about 10 young South Sudanese volunteers to conduct vulnerability assessments for all the households at the returnee site. They were very hardworking, conducting the interviews with each household and supporting data entry to create a vulnerability database.'

Naofumi was grateful for the number of field missions he was able to participate in. So positive was Naofumi's experience as a UN Volunteer with UNHCR South Sudan that he happily reported: 'I extended my contract here for another year!'

'As I am now in charge of the urban refugee programme, I am working very closely with urban refugee leaders who are working for their own community on a volunteer basis. I listen to the community's needs as identified by them and then we work together for the community.'

Naofumi with the returnees' chiefs at the temporary returnee site.



LOCAL HUMANITARIAN AND
EARLY RECOVERY RESPONSE
COORDINATION AND
MANAGEMENT CAPACITY
STRENGTHENED

TAKANOBU NAKAHARA

UNV Non-Food Items and Emergency Shelter Field Officer

Served with IOM in South Sudan assisting communities displaced by natural disasters and conflict



Distributing NFIs for flood-affected people in Bor, Jonglei. (Photo: South Sudan Red Cross)

'I BELIEVE THAT BETTER COORDINATION MECHANISMS WHICH I HELPED TO ESTABLISH DURING MY TENURE WILL KEEP ENSURING BETTER NFI RESPONSE IN THE COUNTRY'

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) leads the shelter and non-food items (NFIs) cluster in South Sudan, which is tasked with ensuring that internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in emergency shelter have access to basic living requirements such as plastic sheets, sleeping mats, blankets, mosquito nets, cooking sets and soap.

Takanobu hit the ground running, involving himself in the immediate task at hand – distributing NFIs and shelter from Juba to locations throughout South Sudan. He also participated in data collection, needs assessments, registration of beneficiaries and post-distribution monitoring, all of which contributed towards improved coordination of the humanitarian response among partners on the ground.

With such immediate humanitarian needs and so many returnees and IDPs requiring assistance, coordination takes on critical, life-saving importance. Takanobu reflected: 'I see more and more organizations are now working under the cluster mechanism, which is very promising. I believe that better coordination mechanisms which I helped to establish during my tenure will keep ensuring better NFI response in the country.'

On a personal level, Takanobu recognized that he had learnt a great many things, including what the cluster system is, how to coordinate humanitarian action on the ground, challenges for fieldwork and the importance of data collection. He said, 'I am much more confident in my coordination skills, which I consider one of my strengths and would like to hone as my lifetime specialty'.

WHO BENEFITED?

• **250,000**

**INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES,
INCLUDING RETURNEES AND
IDPS**

LOCAL HUMANITARIAN
RESPONSE COORDINATION AND
MANAGEMENT CAPACITY
STRENGTHENED

HIDEFUMI OKAWA

UNV Associate Protection Officer

Served with UNHCR in Kosovo on capacity-building around refugee status determination

WHO BENEFITED?

- **ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN KOSOVO**
- **STAFF OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNER NGOS**

‘IF WE CAN INTRODUCE EUROPEAN UNION AND UNHCR STANDARDS THROUGH THIS PROJECT, THE KOSOVAN AUTHORITIES AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS CAN IMPROVE THEIR SKILLS’

Since 2010, forced returns of Kosovan refugees from Western Europe have greatly outnumbered voluntary returns to Kosovo. This trend is likely to continue in 2013, raising major concerns about practical protection issues as well as Kosovo’s capacity to facilitate the successful reintegration of returnees.

UNHCR works with the authorities and other partners to support legal reform in the areas of asylum, civil status and civil registration and to develop a law and policy framework for returns and reintegration in Kosovo. There is a particular need to increase the capacity of the authorities involved in refugee status determination (RSD), which is the main area in which Hidefumi, as UNV Associate Protection Officer, worked during his assignment with UNHCR.

With five years’ experience as a refugee protection lawyer in Japan, Hidefumi added much professional value to the hosting of workshops, training sessions and study tours for police officers, border officials and lawyers in order to increase their capacity in RSD and their understanding of international refugee protection laws and standards. He explained: ‘If we can introduce European Union and UNHCR standards through this project, the Kosovan authorities and implementing partners can improve their skills, and improvements in RSD are crucial for Kosovo to be able to join the European Union and the UN.’

In one particular refugee case that Hidefumi devoted himself to working on in collaboration with a local NGO, the status of ‘subsidiary protection’ was granted to an asylum-seeker: ‘It was the very first subsidiary protection status granted among 550 applications since the Kosovo government began RSD in 2009,’ Hidefumi was proud to report.

UNVs and local NGO staff perform a friendship dance.



LOCAL HUMANITARIAN AND EARLY RECOVERY RESPONSE COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT CAPACITY STRENGTHENED

MUJAHID HUSSAIN

UNV Emergency/Post-Crisis Officer

Served with IOM in Kenya on broad-based programmes to assist displaced populations



Mujahid and the children of Naka IDP camp. (Photo: Babu Shah)

Kenya currently hosts approximately 600,000 refugees, the majority of whom have fled violent conflict in Somalia. Within its own borders, Kenya faces rapid urbanization, and cities such as Nairobi and Mombasa attract many young rural migrants who are seeking education and livelihood opportunities but for whom the first point of entry into an urban area is most likely a slum with harsh living conditions.

As one of only two non-Japanese HRD Volunteers in 2012, Mujahid's role with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) centred around supporting IOM's programmes to address the challenges of irregular migration and mitigate the impact of natural disasters and other crises on internally displaced persons, host communities and returnees. This involved contributing to strategy documents, information management, supporting project staff in programme planning and implementation, and preparing rapid needs assessment guidelines.

One particular project to which Mujahid contributed was election contingency planning for Kenya's presidential election of March 2013. To this end, he produced humanitarian hub management guidelines for the Eldoret hub and established a county-level general coordination structure to encourage all humanitarian partners to be part of the hub. With the support of ACAPS (Assessment Capacities Project) and OCHA (Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), he also organized training on coordinated joint needs assessment processes and tools for all relevant government and humanitarian partners.

'I improved my skills in coordinated needs assessment processes, and I had the opportunity to lead a humanitarian coordination project at hub level,' Mujahid said of his broad achievements during his assignment with IOM Kenya.

WHO BENEFITED?

- PARTNERS IN GOVERNMENT, HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES AND NGOS ASSISTED WITH PREPAREDNESS, NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND COORDINATION
- PREPAREDNESS AND COORDINATION FOR ELDORET HUB COVERED A POPULATION OF **5 MILLION**

'I IMPROVED MY SKILLS IN COORDINATED NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESSES, AND I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD A HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION PROJECT AT HUB LEVEL'

YOUTH, WOMEN AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS

All aspects of the work in which the HRD Volunteers were engaged during their 2012 assignments featured the important social inclusion pillars of **youth, women and marginalized groups**. These cross-cutting issues informed UNV's choice of assignments for the volunteers, the priorities of the programming with which they were involved and the focus of the individuals' interactions during their field work.

At both the community and institutional levels, articulating these target groups as priorities for social inclusion is intended to ensure that sustainable

assistance reaches those traditionally less likely to be the beneficiaries of all that volunteerism has to offer. Through specific projects engaging the voluntary participation of marginalized groups in Nepal, Rwanda and South Sudan – whether they be refugees, returnees or ex-combatants reintegrating into civil society, with equal access for women and youth actively promoted – the HRD Programme continued to demonstrate how volunteerism can be a driving force behind social inclusion for peace and development.

Participants in a community reintegration project for women associated with armed forces, South Sudan. (Photo: Women Union)



EMBED PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF MARGINALIZED GROUPS IN ALL UNV INITIATIVES

ASEL MYRZABEKOVA

UNV Project Development, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer

Served with IOM in Rwanda assisting the resettlement of Rwandan returnees



A Rwandan returnee is given a goat as part of a livestock assistance project, Gicumbi District. (Photo: Berthine Gakire)

‘THE FACT THAT I WAS INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER UN VOLUNTEERS FROM DIFFERENT HOST AGENCIES PROVIDED GOOD NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES’

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Rwanda is currently running a comprehensive four-phase reintegration programme for returnees and other vulnerable groups, including unemployed youth, which provides assistance such as vocational training, small business start-up funding, livestock and shelter.

Asel, one of the two non-Japanese HRD Volunteers in 2012, put her expertise in monitoring and evaluation to use in developing IOM-specific progress monitoring tools for new projects, including results frameworks and monitoring and evaluation plans. Having worked for the UN before, her familiarity with these tools helped her hit the ground running at IOM. Asel also found much to do as part of IOM’s resource mobilization strategy: ‘I worked on the improvement of public information from IOM Rwanda, developed information packages and promotional materials, wrote articles for newsletters and produced the first IOM Rwanda newsletter.’

In Rwanda there is a word for community volunteerism – *umuganda* – and in all of the proposals that Asel worked on, the mobilization of local volunteers formed a core element, whether the provision of shelter or disaster mitigation. Being a UN Volunteer in Rwanda also had its advantages for Asel’s professional endeavours: ‘The fact that I was involved in activities with other UN Volunteers from different host agencies provided good networking opportunities.’ Asel was in a unique position to exchange information with and engage UN Volunteers from partner agencies such as OHCHR and UNDP in joint project efforts.

WHO BENEFITED?

- **REINTEGRATION PROGRAMME:**
5000 RWANDAN RETURNES AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS
- **25,000** INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES (FAMILIES OF BENEFICIARIES AND HOST COMMUNITIES)

EMBED PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF MARGINALIZED GROUPS IN ALL UNV INITIATIVES

SUZUKA KOBAYAKAWA

UNV Reporting Officer

Served with UNDP in Nepal on reintegration and capacity-building of ex-combatants

WHO BENEFITED?

- **2231** VMLRS ENROLLED IN TRAINING
- **1758** VMLRS GRADUATED FROM TRAINING
- **38%** OF TRAINING GRADUATES ARE WOMEN
- **70%** OF TRAINING GRADUATES ARE EMPLOYED OR RUNNING A BUSINESS

‘NOW, THANKS TO THE PROGRAMME, I FEEL I AM PREPARED TO WORK IN ANY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION IN ANY COUNTRY’

Suzuka interviewing beneficiary of the socio-economic rehabilitation into civilian life programme under the United Nations Interagency Programme (UNIRP)

To facilitate the rehabilitation and reintegration into civilian life of discharged Maoist combatants in Nepal following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) in 2006, the UN Interagency Programme was launched by UNDP, UNICEF, ILO and UNFPA in close collaboration with the government of Nepal. The programme’s target group is VMLRs, or Verified Minors and Late Recruits (those who were recruited after the CPA).

As UNV reporting officer, Suzuka’s responsibilities focused on strengthening the programme’s reporting system, including enhancing interagency communication and collaboration, drafting newsletters, reports, success stories, lessons learned and other documents, and cross-checking data on the progress of the programme. As at March 2013, 90 per cent of the 3040 VMLRs in Nepal had contacted the programme, with 81 per cent subsequently signing up for rehabilitation packages. Over 2300 VMLRs had enrolled in training or education, and among 1758 training graduates around 70 per cent were employed or self-employed.

Suzuka’s status as a UN Volunteer put her in a good position to advocate for the concept of volunteerism in UNDP’s programme, and indeed the peacebuilding activities of the programme engaged the voluntary participation of local community members, particularly youth.

‘Before I joined the HRD Programme, I had no experience or practical knowledge of the UN as I am from the business field in the private sector in Japan. Now, thanks to the programme, I feel I am prepared to work in any international organization in any country,’ said Suzuka at the conclusion of her successful assignment with UNDP.



EMBED PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF MARGINALIZED GROUPS IN ALL UNV INITIATIVES

AYUMI NAKAMORI

UNV Gender Specialist – Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
Served in South Sudan as UNDP's representative to the Gender Unit of the South Sudan DDR Commission



As a UNV gender specialist, Ayumi represented UNDP in the Gender Unit of the South Sudan DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) Commission, and was responsible for reviewing the three-year phase of the DDR programme from 2009–2012 and planning for a reintegration programme specifically for women associated with the armed forces (WAAF), scheduled to begin in 2013.

Ayumi noted: 'In the DDR programme phase that ended in December 2012, promoting equal access to the DDR process for men and women was one of the main concerns, and in fact about 51 per cent of the targeted caseload was female excombatants and WAAF. The Gender Unit initiated a number of pilot projects for community-based WAAF reintegration, and this community-based approach will be applied to all beneficiaries of the next DDR programme phase, set to specifically target 100,000 WAAF.'

Ayumi reflected that her prior work experience meant that professionally she was on an equal footing with her colleagues, reinforcing the added value of the HRD Programme by contributing professional capacity to UN activities: 'The deployment of a gender specialist had quite an impact on the monitoring of activities and raising awareness of gender sensitivity and mainstreaming among the Commission and UNDP.' She was also very positive about all she learned during her time in South Sudan, saying, 'The assignment is exactly where I would like to work and contribute my professional skills. I felt I was part of the team by contributing my knowledge and I also had a lot of opportunities to improve my knowledge and experience.'

WHO BENEFITED?

. 100,000

WOMEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE ARMED FORCES

Ayumi travels by road to evaluate the situation of women affected by war in Wau, Western Bahr el Ghazal. (Photo: UNDP South Sudan)

On a personal note of much happiness, Ayumi Nakamori and Yoshinori Ikeda, who both served as UN Volunteers in South Sudan in 2012, got married during their assignments!

'We have gained massive experiences and learned from the people of South Sudan, and we are truly proud of serving as UN Volunteers for UNDP in the newest country in the world through the HRD Programme led by our government.'

We are also grateful to the HRD Programme for providing the opportunity for both of us to come to a decision to spend the rest of our lives together.'

HRD VOLUNTEERS' REFLECTIONS

INTEGRATING VOLUNTEERISM INTO PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

In 2012, many of the HRD Volunteers produced tangible outcomes in terms of promoting the spirit of volunteerism in their peacebuilding work at the community level. They particularly focused on community mobilization through voluntary action and strengthening local capacity and engagement.

'We encouraged refugee leadership and community focal points to work for their community voluntarily, and we also provided some self-reliance projects through our implementing partners.'

Naofumi Ikeda, UNV Associate Protection Officer, South Sudan

'It is important to explain to people that you are volunteering as you can really inspire people and show them through your example and commitment that anyone can volunteer to make people's lives better...I am certain that among IDPs and our counterparts such values can inspire them to engage themselves and become empowered.'

Wataru Kashino, UNV Migration Health Physician, Kenya

INSIGHT INTO THE WORK OF UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES IN THE FIELD

In 2012, HRD Volunteers were deployed in equal numbers to UNDP and IOM. The other two UN agencies to which HRD Volunteers were assigned were UNICEF and UNHCR, reflecting the nature of the peacebuilding efforts in which they were involved: post-conflict/crisis environments and situations featuring significant displaced populations. While UNV fulfils its mandate to mobilize appropriate civilian expertise to support UN agencies in the field on both substantive and technical matters, the volunteers themselves stand to gain unparalleled insight into how such agencies operate on the frontline.

'I HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE REFUGEE PROTECTION ACTIVITIES OF UNHCR AND A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF FUNDRAISING AND BUDGETING OF UN AGENCIES.'

Junko Nomura, UNV Associate Reintegration Officer, Rwanda



Junko Nomura distributes secondhand clothes for refugee mothers and children, Kigeme refugee camp, Rwanda.



Naka IDP camp, Kenya. (Photo: Mujahid Hussain)

'I GAINED A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF PEACEBUILDING AND REHABILITATION CONTEXTS AND POLITICAL ISSUES. ALSO, THROUGH INTERACTION AND COMMUNICATION WITH UN AGENCIES (UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO) AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS DIVISIONS IN UNDP, I HAVE A CLEARER KNOWLEDGE OF EACH ORGANIZATION'S CHARACTER AND ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES.'

Suzuka Kobayakawa, UNV Reporting Officer, Nepal

CONTRIBUTING TO GENDER EQUALITY

All 2012 HRD Volunteers were cognisant of the need to mainstream gender sensitivity into all aspects of the programming in which they were involved. Women were actively encouraged to take part in community-level capacity-building and assistance initiatives and, where possible, gender disaggregated progress data was collected for an accurate picture of how gender mainstreaming in programming was unfolding on the ground.

'We always encouraged female representatives to join meetings and activities, and we listened to their specific concerns. I facilitated protection monitoring, vulnerability assessments and protection needs assessments, including focus groups for women.'

Naofumi Ikeda, UNV Associate Protection Officer, South Sudan

'Staff were sensitized on taking an inclusive approach, and women were provided an opportunity to be part of the management structure of each intervention and community project. Also, the project focused on women's livelihoods improvement projects to facilitate and improve their capacity to earn.'

Mujahid Hussain, UNV Emergency/Post-Crisis Officer, Kenya

'I conducted a survey to find out if male government staff and female government staff received equal opportunities for training (abroad and in-country) from the government as well as international agencies.'

Aimkorita Sakuma, UNV Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, Timor-Leste

OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK IN THE FIELD

Across the board, the HRD Volunteers of 2012 reported that the opportunity to work in the field was a highlight of their assignments, providing experiences and insights that can only come from being present on the frontline itself and seeing firsthand the challenges and rewards that such work entails.

‘THESE RICH FIELD EXPERIENCES HAVE TRULY DEVELOPED MY PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AS A HUMANITARIAN WORKER AND GIVEN ME A REAL UNDERSTANDING AND SENSE OF WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING AND THE CHALLENGES IN THE FIELD.’

Naofumi Ikeda, UNV Peace and Community Security Officer, South Sudan

‘I enhanced my knowledge and skills in public health project management, emergency disaster response, supervision of national staff and interpersonal skills as well as developing an understanding of the reality of the extremely difficult living conditions faced by the IDPs.’

Yuki Yoshida, UNV Health Project Officer, Haiti

‘I had the opportunity to lead humanitarian coordination and to improve my skills in coordinated needs assessment processes.’

Mujahid Hussain, UNV Emergency/Post-Crisis Officer, Kenya

‘The Somalia context enabled me to learn how we deal with dire humanitarian situations – both human and natural disasters.’

Koji Kumamaru, UNV Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Specialist, Somalia

‘Working closely with returnees and IDPs made me think of how difficult and important it is to make sure we do not raise expectations unnecessarily.’

Takanobu Nakahara, UNV NFI and Emergency Shelter Field Officer, South Sudan

EXPOSURE TO INTERNATIONAL WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

Cross-cultural awareness and a deeper appreciation of qualities such as tolerance and respect for diversity in the workplace were also commonly noted as the major benefits of the HRD Volunteers’ assignments in-country.

‘I’ve gained lots of experience and skills through my activities for six months in Liberia, and it has brought changes in my perspective of working in an international environment and in a post-conflict country.’

Atsushi Iijima, UNV Programme Officer, Liberia

CHALLENGES

Often the challenges were of the most practical nature – setting up an office without access to up-to-date technology and support, lack of staff, logistical movement of NFIs and shelter, limited budgets and so on – but in the face of such problems there was always an opportunity for the HRD Volunteers to demonstrate initiative, ingenuity and commitment to the task at hand.

‘This was a joint project of UNDP, UNICEF and ILO; however, it took more than 10 months for all three agencies to arrive in the field to implement the project. In addition, it took more than 10 months to recruit the Project Coordinator. Thus, I needed to play the role of both Project Coordinator and Programme Specialist at the same time for 10 months.’

Junko Kawata, UNV Programme Specialist (Recovery and Reintegration), Solomon Islands

‘Since one of the challenges was a difficulty in spreading information and communicating with urban refugees as they were scattered through the city, I contributed to launch the new SMS communication service programme. I tested the service in the last registration exercise and officially started it from March – now it covers nearly 90 per cent of households.’

Naofumi Ikeda, UNV Peace and Community Security Officer, South Sudan



UN Volunteer Naofumi Ikeda on a 5-weeks field mission in Jamam refugee camp with national staff colleagues (1)

Faced with an initial lack of understanding of volunteerism among her national counterparts, one HRD Volunteer noted:

'The international UN Volunteers in Tajikistan have made their voice heard through hard work, professionalism and sincerity.'

Kazumi Homma, UNV Education Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, Tajikistan

At times some HRD Volunteers experienced the all-too-real sense of frustration and feeling of being overwhelmed by the enormity of the task at hand in assisting communities to achieve sustainable and long-lasting peace and development.

'I observed difficulties obtaining accurate data, difficulties in seeing long-term impact on the country's health development and limitations due to lack of funding.'

Yuki Yoshida, UNV Health Project Officer, Haiti

Security was also an ever-present hindrance to getting on with the job of assisting those in need – a problem that goes hand-in-hand with working in post-conflict or politically unstable environments. It is also a problem which, as future humanitarian professionals, the volunteers of 2012 needed to come to terms with and find ways to work within the security guidelines prescribed.

'Security was the most difficult challenge to tackle – this is inevitable in Somalia, especially Mogadishu.'

Koji Komamaru, UNV Emergency/Post-Crisis Officer, Somalia

SUPERVISOR TESTIMONIALS

SKILLS AND FLEXIBILITY

'Taka was central to a massive emergency operation in which our team provided shelter to 12,000 Kosti returnees who were rapidly flowing into Juba in May 2012, which began on the day of his arrival. Taka supported distribution, managed teams of labourers and took minutes for camp coordination meetings.'

Takanobu Nakahara's supervisor, IOM, South Sudan

IMPROVING THE PERFORMANCE OF KEY PROGRAMMES

'The project had achieved some results, but not all, as it was just starting up when Junko arrived. Junko was instrumental in initiating the project. She coordinated the delivery of project activities in close consultation and collaboration with government counterparts and project beneficiaries and stakeholders.'

'She gained a lot of experience as a UNV because it enabled her to work in a least developed country with very minimal services and many challenges in terms of logistics. Also she was able to experience another culture apart from her own, which is a great benefit of being a UNV.'

Junko Kawata's supervisor, UNDP, Solomon Islands

'Yuki's involvement in the mission was invaluable to IOM. She greatly contributed to the project reaching its objectives'

and successfully implementing its programmes for displaced populations.'

'She was able to gain experience in understanding the complexity of transitioning from emergency humanitarian assistance to development.'

Yuki Yoshida's supervisor, IOM, Haiti

NEW KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

'Naofumi was able to get involved in diverse activities in the International Protection Unit with the complex South Sudan operations – from the protection cluster to individual case management, registration, protection and assistance to urban refugees. He enhanced his knowledge of the practical aspects of implementing refugee protection in emergency and urban situations.'

Naofumi Ikeda's supervisor, UNHCR, South Sudan

'TAKA WAS SUCH A GREAT CONTRIBUTOR. WE APPLIED AGAIN TO THE HRD PROGRAMME THIS YEAR...WE WOULD BE VERY WILLING TO PARTICIPATE AGAIN.'

Takanobu Nakahara's supervisor, IOM, South Sudan

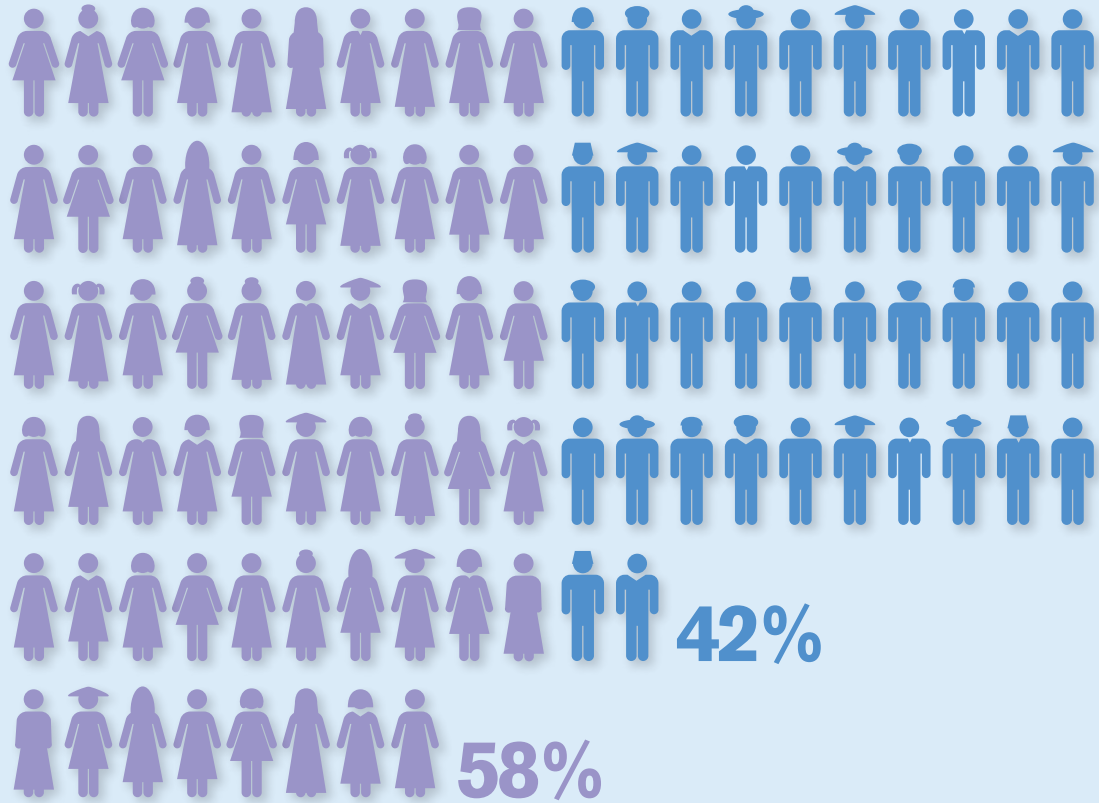
VOLUNTEERING GLOBALLY

DEPLOYMENT OF HRD VOLUNTEERS 2007-2013



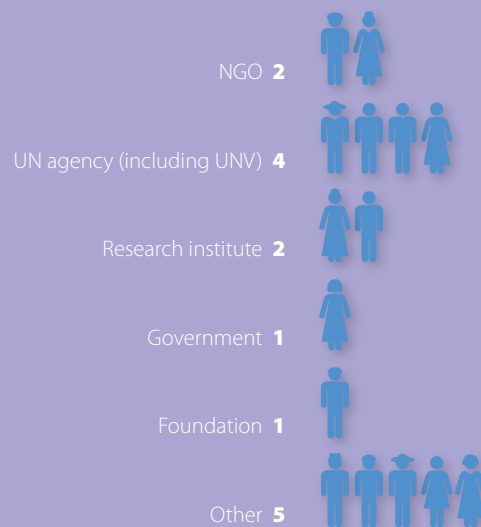


GENDER OF HRD VOLUNTEERS 2007-2013



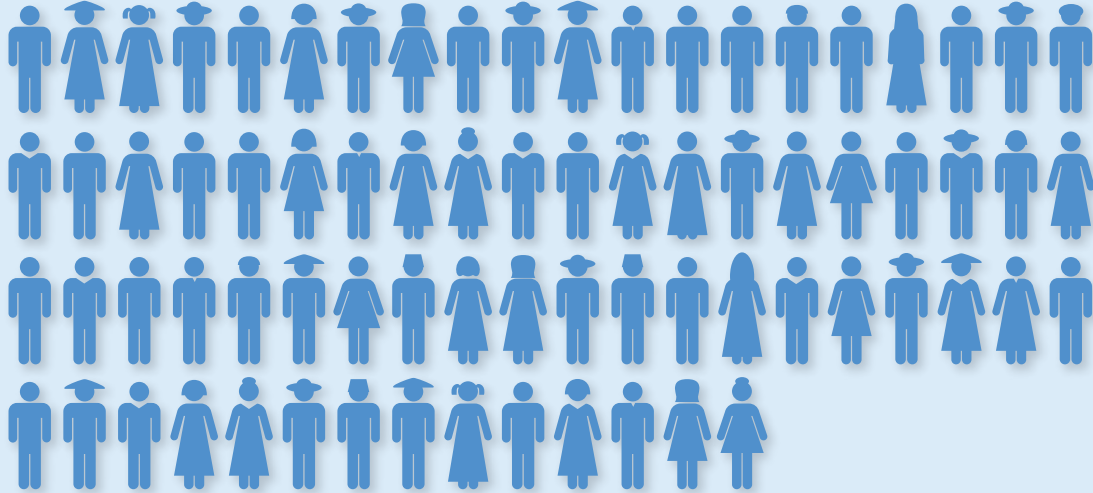
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

POST-ASSIGNMENT CAREER PATHS OF THE 2012-13 HRD VOLUNTEERS



NATIONALITIES OF HRD VOLUNTEERS 2007-2013

Japan **74**



Republic of Korea **3**



Sri Lanka **2**



Kyrgyzstan **1**



Malaysia **3**



Lao PDR **2**



Pakistan **1**



Philippines **3**



Cambodia **1**



Afghanistan **1**



India **2**



China **1**



Thailand **1**



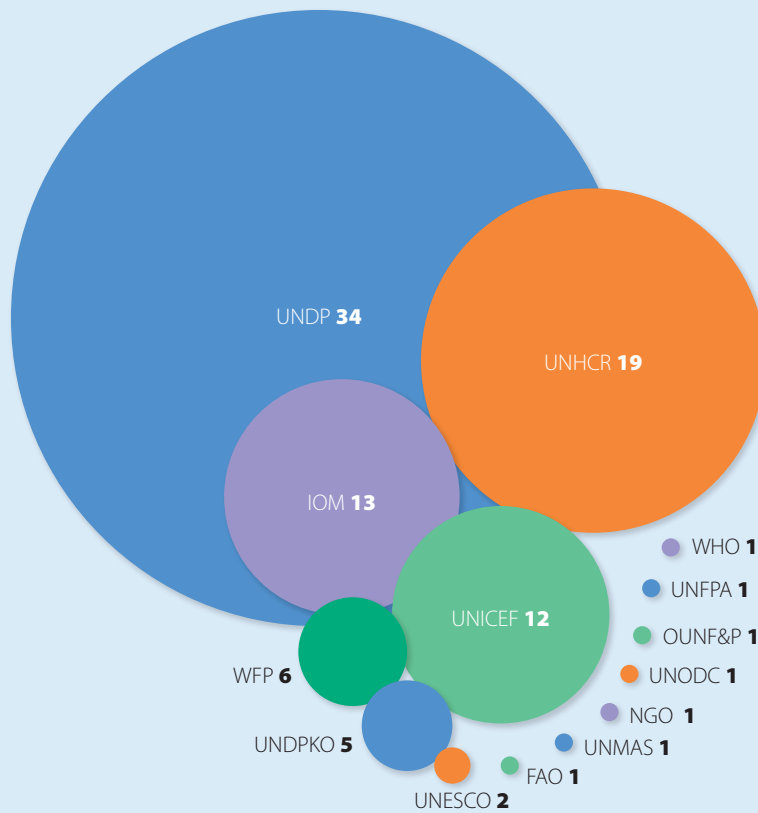
Nepal **2**



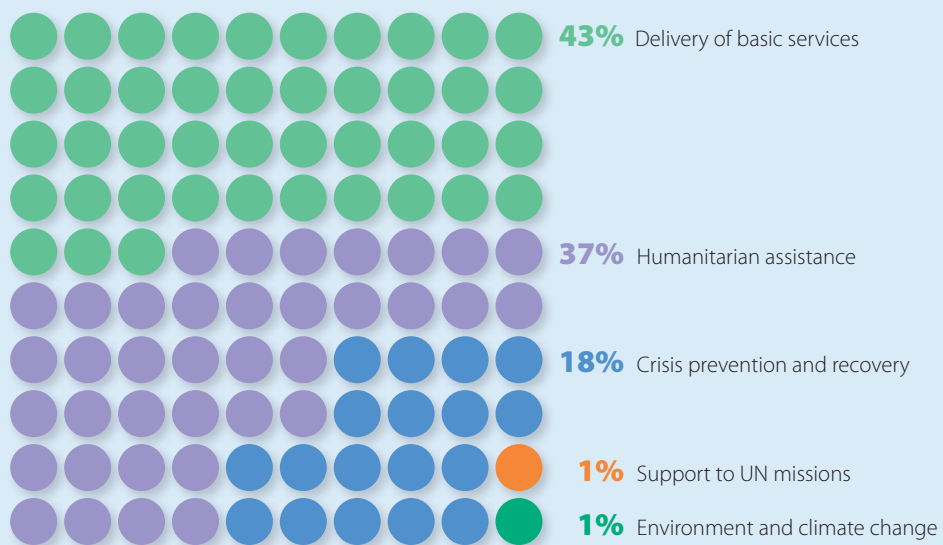
Timor Leste **1**



DEPLOYMENT BY UN AGENCY 2007-2013



MAIN THEMATIC AREA OF UNV ASSIGNMENTS 2007-2013



60% of HRD Volunteer assignments have addressed the cross-cutting social inclusion pillars of youth, women and marginalized groups.

THE 2012/13 HRD VOLUNTEERS



This photograph of the 2012 HRD Volunteers features: Kazumi Homma, Yumiko Horie, Mujahid Hussain, Atsushi Iijima, Naofumi Ikeda, Yoshinori Ikeda, Nomura Junko, Junko Kawata, Suzuka Kobayakawa, Koji Kumamaru, Asel Myrzabekova, Takanobu Nakahara, Ayumi Nakamori, Hidefumi Okawa, Aimkorita Sakuma, Kashino Wataru and Yukiko Yoshida.

United Nations Volunteers

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. Volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for recognition of volunteers, working with partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing an increasing number and diversity of volunteers, including experienced UNV volunteers, throughout the world. UNV embraces volunteerism as universal and inclusive, and recognizes volunteerism in its diversity, as well as the values that sustain it: free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity.

<http://www.unv.org> United Nations Volunteers,
UN Campus, PO Box 260 111, 53153 Bonn, Germany

Photo front cover: UN Volunteer Naofumi Ikeda interviewing chief of the host community that receives returnees.

Photo back cover: Conflict Transformation Training for traditional authorities in Upper Nile States, South Sudan (Photo: UNDP South Sudan)

*Content development, editing and design:
Phoenix Design Aid, Denmark*





UN
Volunteers

inspiration in action