

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

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 strategy to help foster lasting peace worldwide is the Programme on Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding.

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 peace building efforts.

Working alongside national counterparts, they help empower women, young people and marginalized groups. They also contribute to building trust among ordinary people involved in some of the world's most fragile peace processes. Some Volunteers also work at regional and national levels to improve UN coordination, as well as programmes dealing with nutrition and health.

Promoting volunteerism in peace and development activities is a key aspect of the long-term role that Volunteers under the Programme play. In conflict affected areas volunteerism can be a powerful contributor to peace and development. Evidence shows that the chance to volunteer is also the chance to move from being passive recipients to becoming engaged in peace, reconciliation and development processes. Processes that genuinely involve people - especially those on the margins of society - have a more lasting impact.

UN Volunteer Tomoya Soejima holds a discussion with youth leaders in Dadaab, Kenya, on community participation and action in emergency situations.

Photo by: Tomoya Soejima ©2011 UNV



Programme objectives

Enhancing knowledge and skills through university training with international institutes

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

Building practical experience with the United Nations

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is responsible for the volunteer management component of the programme. Following an extensive matching process, HPC participants are assigned with UN agencies and are typically working on the front-lines directly with vulnerable groups, such as refugees, women, children and others affected by conflicts. Their role usually involves bringing excluded groups into peace and development processes, protecting and supporting those at risk, and strengthening the skills of authorities so that vulnerable peoples' basic needs are met.

As HPC/UNV Programme Associates, they 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, disaster and those excluded from development opportunities

By the end of 2012, a total of 82 HPC/UNV Programme Associates from 13 Asian countries will have completed their UNV assignments. They will have supported the UN and its counterparts in providing humanitarian assistance and improving basic services to vulnerable people. They will have contributed to projects that helped people to protect their environment, especially in the face of climate change. In some of the world's most troubled places, they will have assisted in crisis prevention and recovery efforts, and served with UN missions to boost their operational capacity or to build the skills of national counterparts.

For more information, please visit: www.peacebuilderscenter.jp

Crisis prevention and recovery

The focus of HPC/ UNV Associates serving in crisis prevention and recovery was on supporting national counterparts to strengthen their skills. From border management in South Sudan to child protection in Timor-Leste, Associates helped introduce new systems and procedures. They also trained officials and non-government organization staff. Meanwhile, several Associates supported influential advocacy efforts, which raised awareness about issues such as corruption and violence against women.

Often working directly with national counterparts and based outside UN offices, HPC/UNV Associates faced many challenges. These included differing cultural perspectives, language barriers, and sometimes a sense of isolation. But, the experience has been exceptionally rewarding for many and some reported that their assignments tested their abilities and gave them a chance to make tangible differences.

The HPC/UNV Associates joined thousands of UN Volunteers around the world working on crisis prevention and recovery efforts. They worked with governments and communities to reduce the risk of disasters; they supported crisis recovery work, which often includes revitalizing peoples' livelihoods; and they worked with communities to prevent and recover from conflict. Often their role involved bringing marginalized groups such as young people and women into decision-making or development processes.

HPC/UNV Associate Yoko Mizutani works with border officials in South Sudan to help bring its border and migration management system up to international standards.

Photo ©2011 UNV

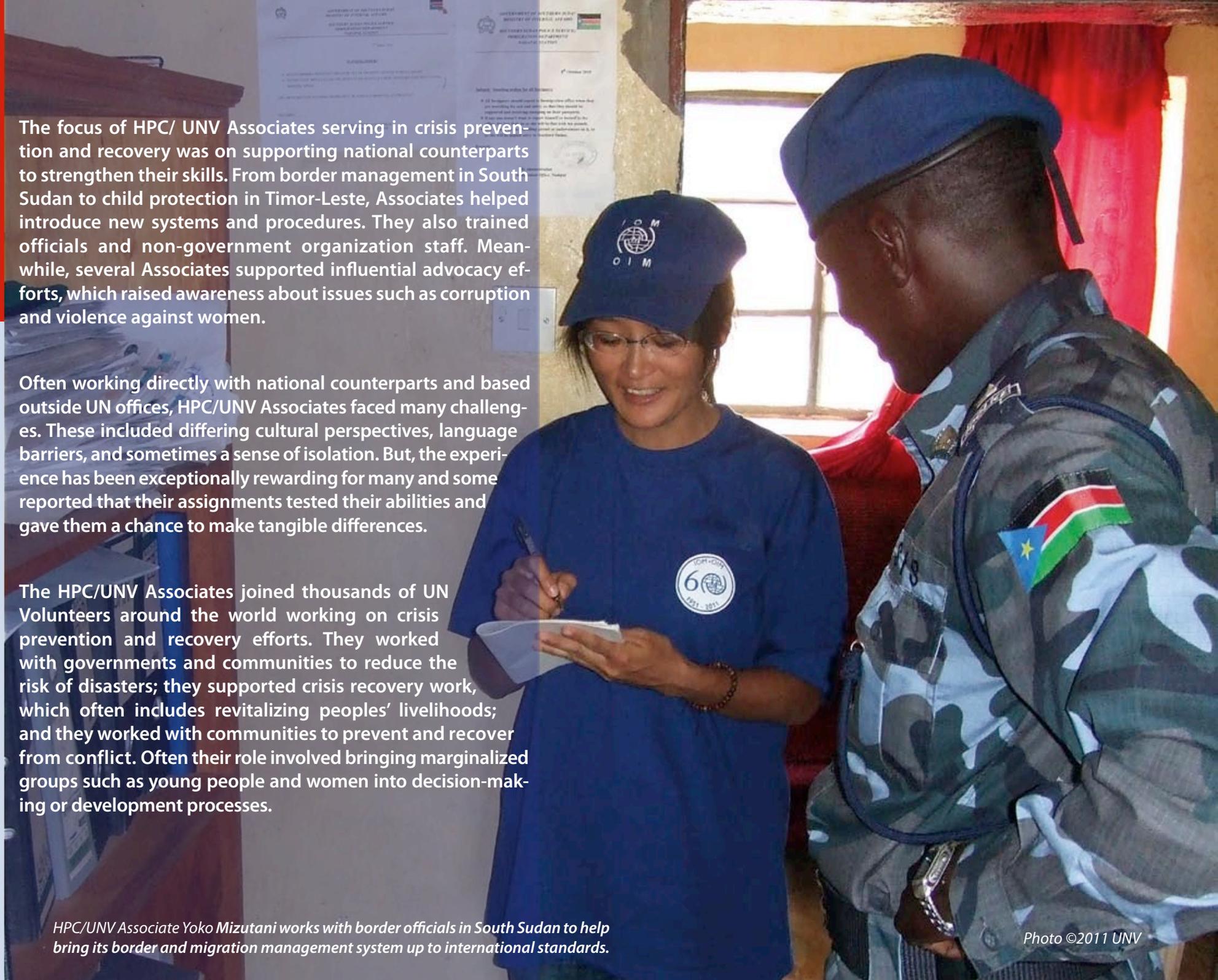


Photo ©2011 UNV



Through her discussions with community members, Shoko Fujita realized the need for an awareness campaign about violence against children.

Shoko Fujita

UNV Child Protection Officer.

Serving in Timor-Leste with UNICEF helping as part of the Child Protection Team

As part of the UNICEF Child Protection Team, Shoko Fujita is working on creating better coordination among authorities and others involved with child protection. For the moment this involves re-classifying crimes against children in line with the national penal code; and developing common data collection tools. This work will provide authorities with a template to uniformly report crimes and to set-up a case tracking system for the first time.

“When I was conducting interviews with rural members of the child protection network, they insisted on the need to raise general awareness about what child abuse is and how to combat it,” she said. Now Shoko is also leading a nationwide campaign that includes a big advocacy event, workshops and consultation meetings to raise such awareness. “The advocacy event can be seen as a catalyst for UNICEF’s strengthened partnership with religious communities and faith-based organizations for preventing violence against children,” Shoko’s supervisor, Antonia Luedeke, said.

Yuiko Watamoto

UNV Violence Reduction Community Advisor

Serving in Haiti with a UN inter-agency programme to help displaced communities reduce violence

More than half a million Haitians are still living in makeshift camps set-up to house those displaced by the 2010 earthquake. With few income opportunities, recreational outlets, or basic services, frustration and stress are boiling over and violence, especially against women, is on the rise. Yuiko Watamoto is serving with a UN inter-agency programme that aims to stem violence in some of the most badly affected communities.

The focus is on improving the ability of local and national institutions to gather and analyse relevant data; to raise public awareness about non-violent options; to increase income opportunities; and to improve the capabilities of non-governmental organizations, especially those supporting women.

Yuiko’s role involves researching and analysing violence data. She also helps staff at local non-governmental organizations to strengthen their skills in budgeting and planning. Most recently her role has expanded to include coordinating efforts between civil society and the Government to rehabilitate sport facilities in the community of Leogane, the worst earthquake hit area.

Photo ©2011 UNV



Yuiko Watamoto works with earthquake-affected communities in Haiti to help stem increasing violence, especially against women.

Hiroko Oda

UNV Programme Analyst

Serving in Kosovo with UNDP to support the implementation of governance projects

Experts believe that a major problem hindering development in Kosovo is corruption. Serving with UNDP under the Governance programme, Hiroko Oda recently worked with the Association of Professional Journalists and the Kosovo Anti-Corruption Agency to organize the 2011 Anti-Corruption Journalism Award. And, for the first time, she introduced a social media category. "The whole effort truly encouraged journalists to continue their valuable work," she said.

Next on the agenda for Hiroko is establishing a web-based platform with civil society organizations that will allow anyone in Kosovo to post corruption reports and their opinions about the issue. "This is a rewarding experience for me," she said about her assignment. "The government is still young here and needs the support of the international community and I am glad to be part of this support," she said.

Photo by: Driton Pacarada ©2011 UNV



Anti-corruption Journalism Award ceremony: Hiroko Oda says the Awards she helped organize in 2011 encouraged journalists to continue their 'valuable work.'

Photo Junsuke Suzuki ©2011



Junsuke Suzuki

UNV Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

Serving in Uzbekistan with UNDP to support better programme management

UNDP is currently managing more than 30 projects across Uzbekistan and Junsuke Suzuki is tasked with improving the monitoring and evaluation of these initiatives so that better results can be achieved in the long run. In the past Junsuke has seen change processes such as these fail because of poor personal relationships, so from the outset he took time to get to know his colleagues: their challenges as well as the systems and procedures that they work with.

Armed with good background knowledge, Junsuke is introducing new systems and guidelines for project reporting, and coordinating staff training. The biggest challenge then will be to make the changes stick. "Anything I introduce has to be useful and user friendly," he said. "But most importantly the colleagues I am working with need to recognize the problems and solutions for themselves," he said.

"Those who have benefited from the support provided by Junsuke are principally the Country Office, its staff and its projects. Ultimately, however, the support he has provided in formulating the 2012 Annual Work Plans will have positive impacts on the beneficiaries of UNDP projects," said Junsuke's supervisor, Stefan Liller, Assistant Resident Representative.

Junsuke Suzuki taking time out to see the sights in his duty station in Uzbekistan.

Photo ©2011 UNV



Friend and mentor: Yoko Mizutani has been instrumental in introducing new systems and training officials for the management of the world's newest international border, which stretches 2,100 kilometres around South Sudan.

Yoko Mizutani

*UNV Migration and Border Management Officer
Serving in South Sudan with IOM to improve border management*

When South Sudan became the world's newest country last year, it also gained charge of the world's newest international border, which stretches 2,100 kilometres across a region troubled by insecurity. IOM is assisting the country to bring its border and migration management system up to international standards by improving infrastructure and the abilities of authorities. Yoko Mizutani led IOM's efforts for five months before a more senior official arrived. Her role involved drafting procedures, deploying equipment, but most importantly, organizing and conducting training for immigration officials.

Many had had no training before and they keenly absorbed information especially on the new Personal Identification and Registration System (PIRS). "Yoko has contributed strongly to the installation of a national warning system, the PIRS, for border police," her supervisor, Tom Attwood said.

On a personal note, Yoko's biggest challenge was finding an equal professional footing with some of her counterparts. "Being a young woman can be a major disadvantage here," she said. But, Yoko won over sceptical senior officials by emphasising her experience with the Japanese Immigration Bureau and her specialisation in Migration Studies. "I have been amazed at the way operational staff on the border treat her as a friend and mentor," Tom Attwood said.

Yukako Niimi

*UNV Child Protection Officer
Serving in Sri Lanka with UNICEF to promote organizational learning on child protection responses*

Restoring and strengthening child protection services in conflict-affected parts of Sri Lanka is a key UNICEF focus. Yukako Niimi's role is to capture lessons learnt through activities under the child protection programme. These lessons are important for improving future programming as well as government policies and practices.

So far, Yukako has helped develop an appropriate project monitoring system and helped create systems for sharing knowledge with partners and colleagues. This has allowed her to gain a deeper understanding of child protection concerns and to develop her monitoring and evaluation skills.

"The fact that I am a volunteer has also helped my work because through the UNV office here I was able to gather information about volunteer organizations in Sri Lanka to support our advocacy work," she said. "We are currently working to scale up the project and replicate it in three other places in Sri Lanka," she said.

In recent years, nearly half of UN Volunteer assignments under this programme were in support of partners involved in emergency and extended humanitarian assistance. 2011/12 deployments were no exception with HPC/ UNV Associates assigned to serve with projects responding to the urgent needs of refugees and internally displaced people fleeing war or famine and those on the margins of societies facing food and other insecurities.

Typically HPC/ UNV Associates lived and worked directly with crisis-affected communities, especially women and young people. Their roles involved information gathering, coordination, protection, logistics and helping to provide essentials such as shelter. Their efforts contributed towards marginalized groups being more involved in decision-making processes, stronger local ownership and sustainability of UN humanitarian and early recovery programmes.



HPC/UNV Associates served in some of the world's most crisis-affected places - where government services are often overwhelmed and people struggle to find adequate food and shelter. They reported that the greatest skill in working under these conditions was an ability to be flexible and innovative in response to rapidly evolving situations.

Meanwhile, supervisors said HPC/UNV Associates rose to significant challenges, such as unexpectedly and successfully managing complex programmes, or strengthening systems and procedures, and supporting life-saving awareness on issues such as water and sanitation.



Keiko Kaneda visits local school children who are among the shelter beneficiaries.

Keiko Kaneda

UNV Associate Programme Officer

Serving in South Sudan with UNHCR to assist returnees, internally displaced people and refugees

Serving with UNHCR, Keiko Kaneda is an architect by training and is now helping to provide temporary shelters for thousands of returnees to the world's newest country, South Sudan. "It's challenging. During the rainy season our movement is restricted, so we can only build shelters half the year." Keiko also has to contend with wildly fluctuating building material costs and the complex land ownership laws of a new country emerging from crisis.

"The project's goal is to promote a peaceful co-existence between those that are coming back and existing communities," she said. To achieve this, the project also helps whole communities with livelihood opportunities and basic infrastructure development. "We build schools, drill boreholes and provide vocational trainings. This creates a win-win situation for both returnees and local communities," Keiko said.

Over the past five months Keiko has gained many professional, personal and cultural insights. "I've had to adapt the way I communicate, for example, because the style in Africa is very different to what I know. Professionally I've also realized how difficult it is to promote the idea of peacebuilding after decades of fighting," she said.

Tomoya Soejima

UNV Inter-community Youth Relationships Officer

Serving in Kenya with UNHCR to empower youth at the world's largest refugee camp

Almost half a million people, mainly from neighbouring Somalia, are taking shelter at any one time at the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. This is a protracted refugee situation, where thousands of people from the same nationality find themselves in a state of limbo for years. Therefore, UNHCR is keen to involve the community in camp management and service delivery. This is where Tomoya Soejima helps by coordinating 117 youth groups that reach out to 2,000 young leaders who in turn empower some 152,000 refugee youth. The aim is to bring young people into camp decision-making processes, service delivery, and into activities that raise awareness about issues such as hygiene and health.

"In a protracted refugee situation, people need to get a sense of responsibility, that they also have some control over their lives, and being a community volunteer can do that. As a volunteer myself I can convincingly promote these values," he said.

The recent Somalia drought crisis saw the camp population surge drastically, with 150,000 more arrivals. Youth groups played a critical role in monitoring protection and service gaps. Then political tensions within the region sparked a second crisis at the camp. The security situation deteriorated and aid workers were often unable to access the camp. "Involving community volunteers, like those in the youth groups, was considered a non-life saving activity, but when the security situation in the camp deteriorated, aid groups came to rely on the community volunteers and their structures at Dadaab are now more highly valued," Tomoya said.



Some 30 youth leaders discuss their work. During the recent Somalia drought crisis, which saw more than 150,000 extra refugees arrive, youth leaders like these became vital monitors of service and protection gaps.

Katsunori Koike

UNV Peacebuilding Officer

Serving in Kenya with UNHCR to maintain peace in an ethnically-diverse refugee camp

The Kakuma refugee camp hosts more than 80,000 people from ten different nations, which, under the trying conditions, can be a tinderbox for tribal and ethnic tensions.

Koike Katsunori serves with UNHCR to manage specific cases of conflict and to monitor the peace education activities being undertaken by the UNHCR implementing partner for peacebuilding, the Lutheran World Federation.

“One of the main aims is to strengthen refugee communities’ ability to solve problems themselves. We do this through training and by providing advice,” he said. Through his assignment, Katsunori feels he has gained a better understanding of how the UN works and the refugee situation globally. “The experience has been rewarding,” he said.

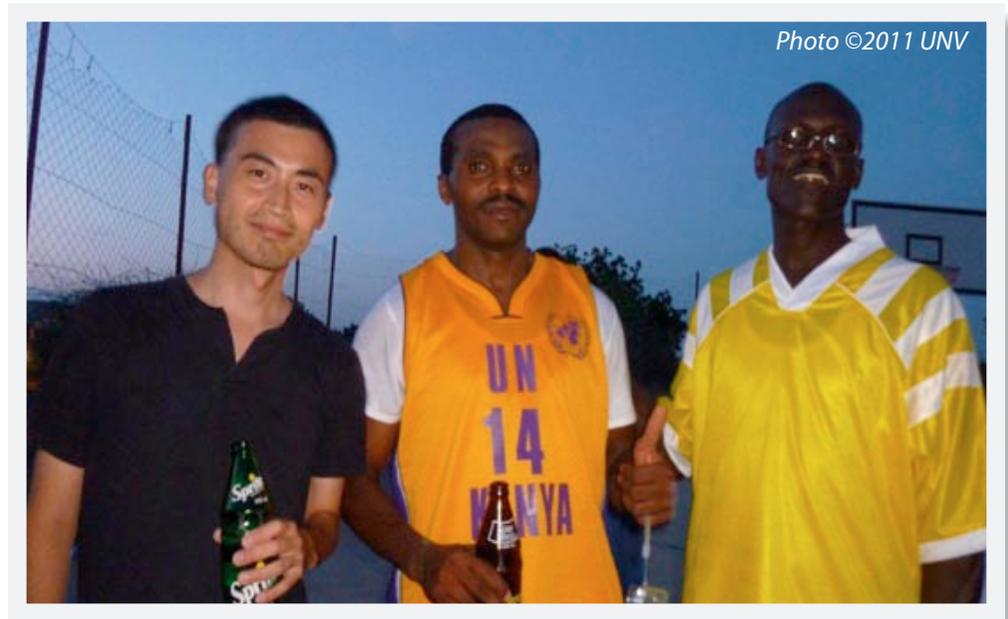


Photo ©2011 UNV

Katsunori Koike sharing off duty time in the evening with colleagues, he finds it is a great way to build strong networks.

Yuko Doi

UNV Associate Protection Officer

Serving in Kosovo with UNHCR to help forced returnees re-establish themselves

The number of forced returnees from Western Europe to Kosovo has increased in recent years. Yuko Doi is part of the UNHCR Protection unit that is, among other activities, monitoring the impact that readmission has on the rights of individuals. Their findings are used to identify needed interventions on behalf of individual returnees; to advocate for their rights to authorities; and to advise on related policies. Recently, for example, their work enabled newly returned Roma children to enrol in local schools despite having lost their school certificates in transit.

Yuko visits and conducts interviews with readmitted people to identify protection issues and produces human rights monitoring reports every quarter. These include detailed recommendations for both Kosovo authorities and sending countries. The findings have influenced the policy of authorities, and recently German authorities have decided to introduce a winter-ban on the deportation of minorities to Kosovo as a result.

In addition to serving with UNHCR, Yuko also volunteers on weekends with minority children. “This helps me better understand the communities that I work with. I believe this also adds a significant value to the returnee monitoring project,” she said.



Photo ©2011 UNV

Yuko Doi laughs along with local friends in the community in Kosovo.

Rommel G. Dela Rosa

UNV Programme Officer

Serving in Nepal with WFP to help provide food aid to 1.2 million people

The Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation is the largest WFP effort in Nepal. It targets 1.2 million beneficiaries in food insecure districts of the country.

Rommel Dela Rosa has been based in far-flung Dadeldhura, Far-Western Nepal, serving in one of three WFP field offices. He has been instrumental in setting-up programme monitoring tools, providing feedback on reports and coaching partners on developing case studies and lessons learnt to improve the overall function of the programme.

Rommel said he appreciated the experience because he gained valuable cultural insights, while also having the chance to share his knowledge. "He brought new experiences, new ideas and creativity," said Rommel's supervisor, Kiran Pal.



Rommel Dela Rosa from the Philippines was based in the far-flung Nepalese district of Dadeldhura assisting food insecure communities.



Photo by: June kashio ©2011 UNV

Volunteers can play a huge role in helping returnees to resettle.

Improved basic services

Improved access to basic services can cause positive ripples across many aspects of people's lives, including their overall health, education and wellbeing. For this reason UNV focuses on supporting UN agencies, funds and programmes to improve service delivery. HPC/UNV Programme Associates were among the hundreds of UN Volunteer experts worldwide that helped to build the skills of local and national authorities to deliver services in a more accountable and effective way. They also supported local people, especially women, to become involved in shaping and monitoring services in their areas.

In communities affected by conflict, the chance for all members to become more actively involved with shaping their own futures and to have their concerns heard, eases tensions and often becomes an important part of the peacebuilding process. For this reason, UNV promotes community involvement through volunteerism. Experience has shown that when community volunteers are part of a service delivery programme its reach and sustainability become stronger.

HPC/UNV Programme Associates' assignments often involved a special focus on mobilizing young people, women and marginalized groups in peace and development activities. This approach ultimately helps forge stronger communities that are more resilient against crisis and conflict.



Returnees, many of whom have spent their lives in refugee camps in Zambia, attend language and 'catch-up' classes to help reintegration.

Haruka Ishii

UNV Gender Based Violence Prevention Specialist

Serving in Cambodia to assist the Government in preventing and educating about gender-based violence nationwide

Photo ©2011 UNV



Working with local authorities in rural Cambodia.

Empowering Cambodian women is the aim of a UNDP-supported effort that Haruka Ishii has volunteered with since June 2011. Based at the Ministry of Women's Affairs, her role involves helping to set-up a One Stop Service Centre for victims of gender-based violence. "It's difficult for people to get seamless help here because different services are housed in different places and many services for victims are unavailable in most rural areas," she said.

The idea behind the Centre is to bring all relevant services under one roof. Together with her colleagues, Haruka supported the Ministry to design and conduct a feasibility study for the Centre. Key to the study, were consultations to capture the views and ideas of those who will use the service and those who will provide it.

"The process helped improve government authorities' understanding of the gaps, and enabled them to decide on effective policy and approaches for setting up the Centre," she said. "The study recommendations will be included in the Ministry's action plan for an improved service and this will benefit thousands of victims eventually." In 2012, Haruka will focus on supporting the Ministry to train local authorities. They are considered the best sources of help for victims, but often lack the skills and knowledge to respond.

Eijiro Murakoshi

UNV Health Care Finance Officer

Serving in Indonesia with WHO to support universal health insurance for 240 million people by 2014

The Government of Indonesia is committed to achieving universal health insurance for all of its 240 million citizens by 2014. Eijiro Murakoshi is serving with WHO, in the Ministry of Health, as an advisor helping to design the new universal health insurance system.

His role involves assisting policy makers in their efforts to understand their health system and to improve its performance by preparing plans of action and budgetary systems.

Being able to provide tailor made systems that respond to local demands is a career milestone for Eijiro. He values the chance to work in close collaboration with his colleagues on this effort and to learn from each other and to share his own knowledge and experience.

Photo by: UNICEF Indonesia ©2011



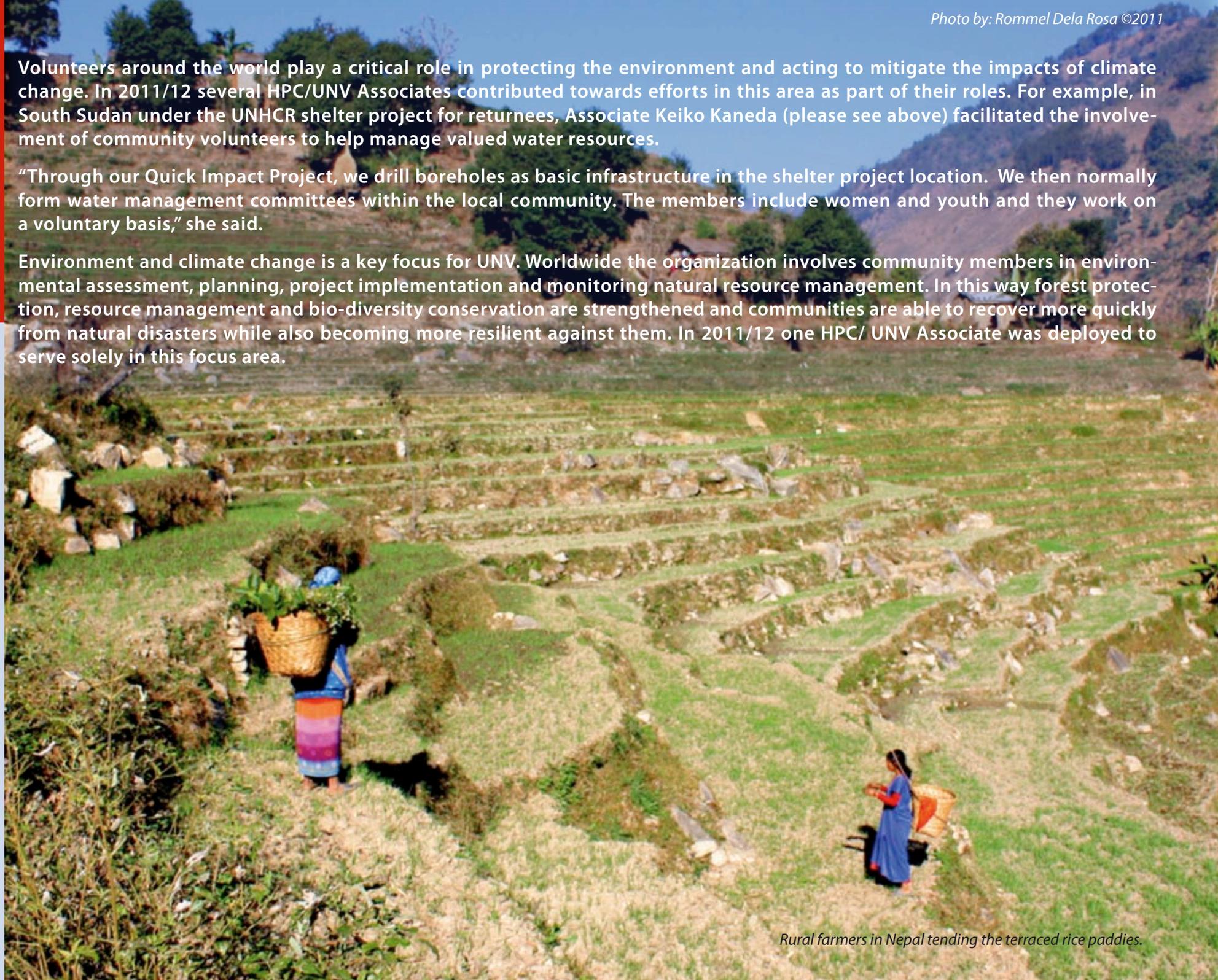
Eijiro and colleague during the "Flagship Course on Equity and Health Systems" in Indonesia 2011.

Volunteers around the world play a critical role in protecting the environment and acting to mitigate the impacts of climate change. In 2011/12 several HPC/UNV Associates contributed towards efforts in this area as part of their roles. For example, in South Sudan under the UNHCR shelter project for returnees, Associate Keiko Kaneda (please see above) facilitated the involvement of community volunteers to help manage valued water resources.

“Through our Quick Impact Project, we drill boreholes as basic infrastructure in the shelter project location. We then normally form water management committees within the local community. The members include women and youth and they work on a voluntary basis,” she said.

Environment and climate change is a key focus for UNV. Worldwide the organization involves community members in environmental assessment, planning, project implementation and monitoring natural resource management. In this way forest protection, resource management and bio-diversity conservation are strengthened and communities are able to recover more quickly from natural disasters while also becoming more resilient against them. In 2011/12 one HPC/ UNV Associate was deployed to serve solely in this focus area.

Environment and climate change



Rural farmers in Nepal tending the terraced rice paddies.



Ayako Tsuyada visits the forest of Mondol kiri in Cambodia.

Ayako Tsuyada

UNV Programme Specialist

Serving in Cambodia on a joint UN effort to assist the country improve its forest management

Cambodia is blessed with one of the highest levels of forest cover in Southeast Asia, but rapid development is threatening this status. Ayako Tsuyada is working on a joint UN effort that aims to improve the governance of this valuable national heritage. The programme involves three agencies: FAO, UNDP, UNEP and two main government ministries, along with stakeholders from civil society and the private sector.

It is Ayako's role to facilitate communication and build understanding between these diverse groups. "The programme has just started but we hope that it will benefit many Cambodians, especially indigenous people whose livelihoods are tightly linked to healthy forests," she said.

A second element of Ayako's role involves collaborating with colleagues at the regional level on research into illegal logging. The goal is to come up with a common approach to tackling this challenge. As part of this work, Ayako conducted interviews with rangers and local administrators who are on the frontline of forest protection every day. "I try to understand their challenges and needs and then convey these to our regional level to reflect in policy," she said. "One of the things I value most about this assignment is the opportunity to think globally and to collaborate with neighbouring countries," she said.



In remote Pu Char, Ayako interviews a chief about how illegal logging affects his community.

UN Volunteers are an important part of the 22 UN missions currently underway around the world. They bring both substantive and technical support. They serve across the board in areas such as civil affairs, human rights, child protection, engineering, air operations and logistics.

Since the beginning of the HPC programme in 2007, several HPC/UNV Associates have served in UN missions. This year one HPC/UNV Associate joined the thousands of UN Volunteers who are serving with UN missions worldwide. UN Volunteers typically work alongside national counterparts. On a daily basis they transfer skills and often this is the added value which they bring to missions.

UN Volunteers generally work directly with communities in the field and are therefore seen as having a vital role in contributing towards social cohesion and community confidence.



Nao Iwamura

UNV Information Analyst

Serving in the Democratic Republic of Congo with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)

Nao Iwamura is part of a team that coordinates and supports more than 50 projects aimed at helping to stabilize the troubled Eastern regions of the Democratic Republic of Congo. For example, the team is supporting a major effort to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate (DDR) former combatants. Scores of government, UN and non-governmental organizations are involved with implementing the stabilization projects and it is Nao's role to help keep all partners and stakeholders informed of project developments.

This critical role requires Nao to travel to the project sites to help assess progress. She also supports her colleagues in preparing regular reports and situation analyses. Recently she also helped develop priority plans for future projects. These plans provided important baseline analyses and recommendations to policy makers on feasible targets over the next two years.

"This is the largest UN Peacekeeping Mission in the world and it's been incredible for me to be based in the area where the Mission is mobilizing most of its resources," she said. "The challenges we face here are absolutely daunting but it is immensely rewarding to be involved in daily efforts to bring peace to this place," she said. "For instance, in the DDR project, 4,900 combatants have been demobilized and 2,600 of them are now enrolled in community reintegration projects."



Residents of Silea in Darfur gather to hear Rodolphe Adada, African Union-United Nations Special Representative for Darfur and Head of UNAMID, explain the assistance they will receive.

Photo by: S. Hunter©2010

What associates reported about their roles

“For me the HPC programme opened up a whole new world of peacebuilding. The Programme is definitely unique and it should be expanded to allow more people to have this opportunity.” – Yuko Doi, UNHCR, Kosovo.

Contributing towards empowering women – Because women are often those most affected by poverty, conflict or disaster, UNV seeks to empower them through its work. In 2010/11 and again in 2011/12, over 60% of HPC/ UNV Programme Associates reported that their roles contributed towards this goal. Associates collected data specific to women’s needs, encouraged women to participate more actively in peace and development activities, or carried out analysis that took account of women’s needs and perspectives.

Working directly with local level government and communities – UN Volunteers are often the face of the UN and HPC/UNV Programme Associates are no exception. The majority of Associates were fielded into assignments where most of their work was with national government counterparts or civil society organisations. In 2011/12 they worked directly with national counterparts to strengthen their planning and management skills. Associates were usually deployed to the local levels of government, where the people they worked with – civil society representatives, government officials – played a pivotal role in consolidating peace and development.

Enhancing capacity of governments and host agencies – A third of Associates reported that they felt their work enhanced the capacity of governments or host agencies to deliver basic services.

Integrating volunteerism into peace and development programmes – Nearly half the HPC/UNV Associates said they helped to strengthen or establish groups or institutions for mobilizing and managing volunteers. These included groups where the involvement of women and young people was actively encouraged; and groups that helped manage scarce resources or respond to crises.

What associates reported about their experiences

Volunteers’ list top three benefits of their assignments – Overall HPC/UNV Associates felt they gained a great deal from the experience. They rated opportunities to participate in a new culture, to learn from colleagues, and to do meaningful work as the top three benefits of their experiences.

New challenges build volunteers’ personal and professional confidence – Many found their assignments challenging which helped them to build their personal and professional confidence, while they were also able to contribute towards the successful delivery of UN assistance in some of the world’s most troubled places.

Security and infrastructure issues – HPC/UNV Associates reported that security concerns and the lack of infrastructure were the biggest obstacles to carrying out their work.

Feelings of isolation – A number of HPC/UNV Associates felt isolated at times as their assignments were often shorter and in non-permanent roles. Because of this, some felt their colleagues perceived them as outside the UN system or respective project.

What supervisors said

“The programme brings additional technical expertise ... and the volunteer brings impartial support, views and advice,” – Mohammad Shahjahan, Team Leader, Health Systems, WHO office, Indonesia.

New ideas and perspectives – Supervisors reported that HPC/UNV Associates brought fresh perspectives and new ideas to host agency programmes. In some cases this resulted in the introduction of new procedures or advocacy effort.

Building partnerships – Some HPC/UNV Associates proactively developed new partnerships that helped programmes to advance; or they helped secure much needed funding.

“One of the main strengths of the programme is that UNVs function as role models for increased volunteering in the host country.” – Antonia Luedeke, Head of Child Protection Section, UNICEF Timor-Leste.

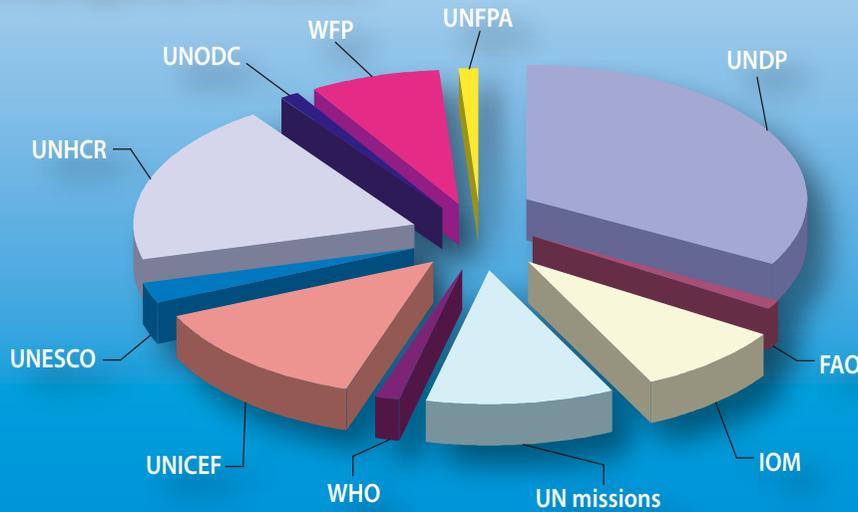
Skills and flexibility – Supervisors appreciated HPC/UNV Associates’ ability to rise to the challenge of unexpected developments such as natural disasters or staff shortages.

Improving the performance of key programmes – HPC/UNV Associates made significant contributions towards project planning and monitoring and evaluation processes, thereby improving the overall performance of key programme efforts.

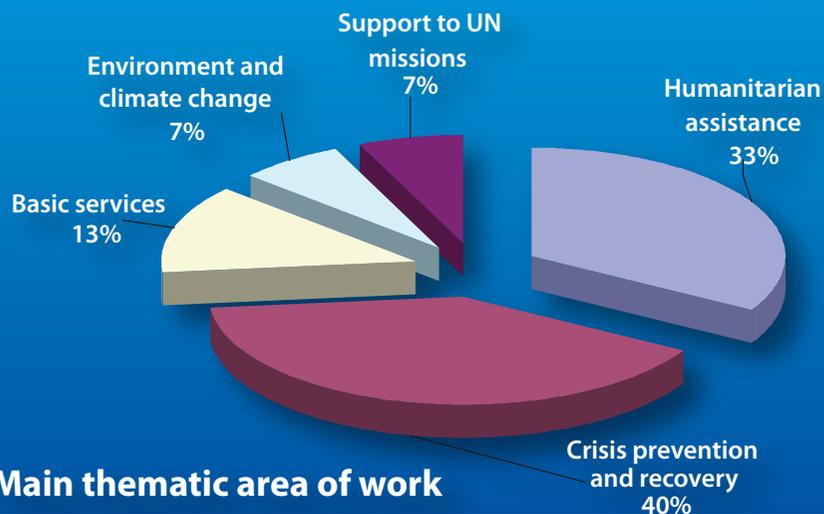
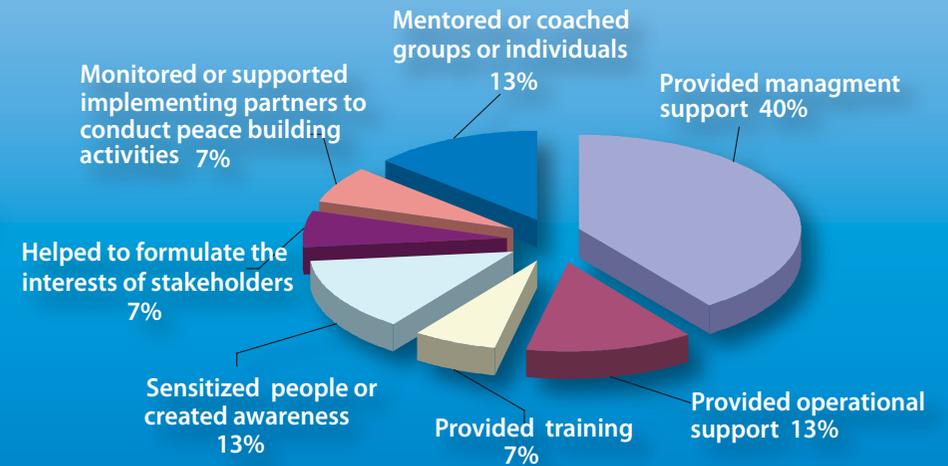
“The program permits our Country Office to get access to support and expertise provided by a volunteer, which in our case is helping to ensure the effective delivery as well as adequate monitoring and evaluation of the UNDP Country Program.” – Stefan Liller, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP Uzbekistan

Programme statistics at a glance

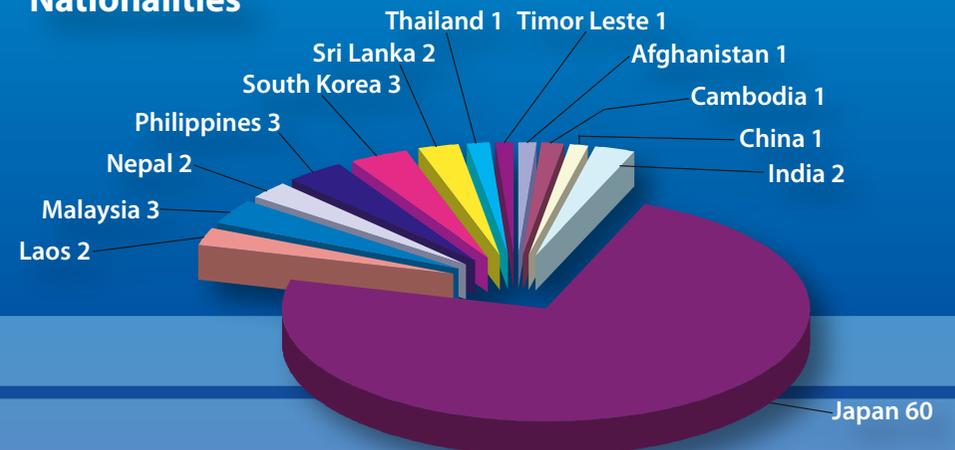
Deployment by agency or mission



The 15 Associates deployed in 2011/12 supported UN efforts in diverse ways, from providing training to officials and civil society to helping formulate the interests of stakeholders.



Nationalities



Main thematic area of work

During the course of the Programme, 82 UNV/HPC Programme Associates from 13 countries have been deployed to 29 countries/regions. See the coloured legend below for the yearly breakdown of their deployments and originating countries.

Azerbaijan	1	Ethiopia	1	Jordan	2	Liberia	1	Sierra Leone	1	Thailand	3
Cambodia	3	Guinea-Bissau	1	Kenya	5	Montenegro	1	Sudan	6	Timor Leste	12
Cape Verde	1	Haiti	1	Kosovo	7	Myanmar	1	South Sudan	4	Uganda	2
Cyprus	1	Indonesia	4	Laos	3	Nepal	5	Sri Lanka	6	Uzbekistan	2
Dem. Rep. Congo	1	oPt (East Jerusalem)	1	Lebanon	3	Philippines	2	Tanzania	1		

Working across 17 UN operations in 29 countries or regions, 90% of Associates felt they had an opportunity to learn from their counterparts as well as doing worthwhile work.





Acronyms

DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
HPC	Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre
IOM	International Organization for Migration
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNV	The United Nations Volunteers Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WFP	World Food Programme

The 2011/12 HPC/ UNV Associates

This picture of the programme associates includes: Shoko Fujita, Yuiko Watamoto, Hiroko Oda, Junsuke Suzuki, Yoko Mizutani, Yukako Niimi, Keiko Kaneda, Tomoya Soejima, Katsunori Koike, Yuko Doi, Rommel G. Dela Rosa, Haruka Ishii, Eijiro Murakoshi, Ayako Tsuyada, Nao Iwamura.



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.

Front cover: Rommel Dela Rosa from the Philippines was based in the far-flung Nepalese district of Dadelhdura assisting food insecure communities.

Back cover: Keiko Kaneda worked with youth groups to build demonstration shelters. During the process they were trained to produce mud blocks and are now selling this service locally.



UN

Volunteers

inspiration in action