

2014-2015 REPORT

# THE PROGRAM FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT FOR PEACEBUILDING

Joint Programme of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme and the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center, funded by the Government of Japan





# ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Peacebuilding is a complex process that aims to resolve violent conflict and establish lasting peace. The foundations of peacebuilding are the restoration of justice, healing of trauma, reconciliation, development action and effective leadership. With violent conflict never far from headlines around the globe, one of the central parts of the Government of Japan's strategy to help foster lasting peace worldwide is the Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding.

Funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, this program demonstrates the power of volunteerism in peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities through the fielding of skilled, trained and committed citizens from Japan and other Asian countries to countries experiencing conflict or post-conflict situations.


United Nations Volunteers deployed under the program bring new skills and qualities that expand the reach of peacebuilding efforts. Working alongside national counterparts, UNV's Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding volunteers (UNV HRD Volunteers) contribute their skills, experience and enthusiasm to projects that range from humanitarian coordination within emergencies and protracted displacement situations to crisis prevention and post-conflict recovery efforts. A number of assignments also support and strengthen the delivery of basic services so that local governance and civil society can be stabilized and strengthened for the long haul. 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 in communities.

Promoting volunteerism is a key aspect of the sustainable contribution that these volunteers make around the world. They show others how volunteering propels one from being a passive recipient to becoming a driver of peace, reconciliation and development processes.

When beneficiaries are actively engaged as volunteers – especially those on the margins of society – the impact is longer lasting. The UNV HRD volunteers are encouraged to promote volunteerism in communities and to involve women, youth, people with disabilities and marginalized groups. They often become role models themselves and serve as an inspiration to the people with whom they work.

## HOW THE PROGRAMME WORKS

The Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding has been operating since 2007 as a joint partnership between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, the Hiroshima Peacebuilders



Center and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme. Participants in the program begin by attending a five week classroom-based training at the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center. They work through problem-solving exercises, discussions and lectures before taking up their assignments as UN Volunteers.

The next step is to build practical experience by deploying the volunteers to work in countries facing peacebuilding-related challenges around the world. The volunteer assignments are managed by UNV, which undertakes an extensive matching process so that the volunteers are assigned to peacebuilding-related projects implemented by United Nations partner agencies.

The volunteers typically work directly in support to vulnerable groups, such as refugees, women, children and others affected by conflict. Through their roles, they aim to bring excluded groups into peace and development processes, protecting and supporting those at risk, and strengthening the skills and capabilities of authorities and civil society so that the basic needs of vulnerable people can be met.

These volunteers find themselves living and working in challenging conditions. They deal with long hours, limited infrastructure, unfamiliar languages and cultures, and sometimes volatile security situations. Despite this, most volunteers report drawing as much from their postings as they give.

Volunteers develop new skills, gain experiences that cannot be learned in a classroom and boost confidence in their abilities. They are also able to make significant contributions towards improving the lives of people affected by crises. Between 2007 and 2015, a total of 132 UNV HRD volunteers completed UN Volunteer assignments. They provided support to more than 16 United Nations agencies and partner organizations, delivering humanitarian assistance and improving basic services for vulnerable people in 43 countries.

In some of the world's most troubled places, these volunteers have assisted in crisis prevention and recovery efforts and served with United Nations missions to boost their operational capacity and enhance the skills of their national counterparts. Across the breadth of circumstances in which these 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.



*Participant in the Youth Volunteer summer camp held through the Arab Youth Volunteering for a Better Future programme in Jordan. The camp aimed at strengthening youth volunteering capacities and providing opportunities for learning and exchange among youth volunteers. (WupY-PS, 2013)*

# WHAT IS A UN VOLUNTEER'S ADDED VALUE?

- › **INNOVATION**
- › **STRONG COMMITMENT**
- › **WILLINGNESS TO LEARN**
- › **PROFESSIONALISM**
- › **BRINGS SKILLS THAT FIT HOST AGENCY NEEDS**
- › **SERVICE-ORIENTED PROFESSIONALS**
- › **HELPS WITH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL COUNTERPARTS**

# THE VOLUNTEERS AT WORK

In line with its Strategic Framework 2014-2017, UNV is concentrating its efforts in five priority areas in which volunteerism has a transformational and cumulative impact on the lives of people: 1) securing access to basic social services; 2) peacebuilding; 3) community resilience for environment and disaster risk reduction 4) youth; and 5) national capacity development through volunteer infrastructures. UNV also focuses on building a credible body of knowledge and enhancing innovation.

The Program for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding showcases Japan's commitment to volunteerism, peacebuilding and South-South cooperation. This year, the UNV HRD Volunteer assignments were aligned under UNV's five priority areas, with many of them cutting across several areas.

UNV-supported development efforts take a human rights-based approach to programming. The organization has a strong commitment to gender equality, with recognition of the role that women play as a driving force in peace and development efforts and their importance in societal transformation across all areas of programme delivery. UNV strives for gender balance in all its operational engagements, including among UN Volunteers deployed.

**SECURING ACCESS TO BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES**

**PEACEBUILDING**

**COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

**YOUTH**

**NATIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH VOLUNTEER INFRASTRUCTURES**





# SECURING ACCESS TO BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES

Securing access to basic social services is at the heart of many United Nations entity mandates and activities and the Millennium Development Goals. UN Volunteers contribute to enhancing access to social services, including primary health care, HIV and AIDS services, and education. UNV supports local governance initiatives that promote inclusive participation and bolsters community engagement in planning, implementing and monitoring of local development projects. UNV involvement amplifies the efficiency and

outreach, as well as ownership and sustainability, of social service and governance programmes.

Over time, UNV has developed solid knowledge and learned lessons about the role and application of volunteerism in service delivery and local governance. UNV has been particularly active in the context of consultative processes to identify community needs and local capacity development and the strengthening of community voice to ensure accountability.



*In 2013, in the framework of the project support to the implementation of a National Volunteer Programme in Cape Verde (SVF funded), the National Volunteer Corps launched a call of proposals to select projects from local VIO that would receive grants up to 100.000 CVE to implement activities aimed at fostering volunteerism for development. 23 Projects from different Island were selected. Among the selected projects three initiatives in São Vicente, a project from Centro de Intervenção Comunitária Ribeira Bote, aimed at providing psychological and educational support for children; a project to train volunteer surf lifesavers, and an initiative from an Association of people with disabilities where students of physiotherapy and other health related subjects provide assistance to people with disabilities. (Omar Camilo, 2013)*

# LEIKA ARUGA

UNV Programme Specialist, UN Women  
Viet Nam



*In May 2015, Leika led a group of ambassadors and heads of agencies to a border area in relation to the human trafficking situation there. (Leika)*



*Leika (3rd from right) Participated in the UNV retreat in Quang Ninh, Viet Nam. (Jakub Zak, UNV Communications Officer. 24 June 2014)*

Leika Aruga was assigned as a UNV Programme Specialist and Gender and HIV Focal Point for the UN Women Viet Nam country office. She arrived in Viet Nam at a critical moment for women's rights: the government was scheduled to be reviewed by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee in 2015; a five-year National Programme on Gender Equality was about to be developed; it was the final year to fulfil commitments under the Millennium Development Goals; and the 20-year implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action was coming under review. These pivotal processes generated exciting opportunities for engaging with government and civil society and advocating for gender rights and responsiveness.

UN Women, at the time, was focusing on strengthening legal frameworks and building institutional capacity with a view to changing national laws, policies and practices to better safeguard women's human rights in Viet Nam, increasing women's access to justice and helping raise women's voices to protect these rights. UN Women was also helping to systematically implement, monitor and report on CEDAW progress.

Leika provided technical and managerial support for UN Women projects and activities in this thematic area. Her routine work involved helping partners design and plan activities and monitoring and reviewing their implementation. She promoted inter-agency collaboration through participation in working groups and she drafted donor reports, corporate progress reports and project briefs. Leika fed into the organization's knowledge base by collecting and disseminating best practices, success stories and lessons learned.

Among numerous significant tasks she undertook, Leika prepared for and attended the 61<sup>st</sup> CEDAW session in Geneva where she supported the Viet Nam government delegation and NGO representatives. To get ready for this event, she helped organize a mock CEDAW session in Viet Nam with a sitting CEDAW Committee member and supported civil society organization networks to develop a shadow report.

To mainstream gender concerns into the laws and policies of Viet Nam, UN Women worked with the Ministry of Justice to conduct reviews and draft laws based on CEDAW. Leika helped the process get off the ground by preparing a Letter of Agreement and managing the recruitment of consultants. During the legal review of key laws, Leika consulted and coordinated with other United Nations agencies to prepare joint United Nations recommendation statements that advocated for gender-responsive revision of laws. She organized training



and thematic workshops for core Ministry of Justice staff to impart knowledge and skills on CEDAW and women's human rights standards to be applied in law making. Leika also coordinated civil society training that took place under the project. She contracted the trainer and together with the trainer developed the agenda and training materials through consultation with stakeholders, then oversaw the training organization and follow-up.

Leika facilitated a number of research activities, including a study on domestic violence survivors' access to justice. For this study, she consolidated and responded to feedback from stakeholders and provided editing services. Leika assisted a project that used a gender lens to review the training curricula, teaching materials and methods of the Judicial Academy, with the goal of institutionalizing gender training in the criminal justice system, particularly with reference to violence against women. She contracted the international consultant and helped prepare a detailed work plan. "This project," Leika observed, "will contribute towards the transformation of the patriarchal justice system which has been hindering women's access to justice."

Participating in meetings on HIV-related activities, Leika learned about the growing number of women in Viet Nam living with HIV resulting from intimate partner transmission. Thus, Leika proposed a UN Women project that would offer technical assistance for the Ministry of Health to collect sex-disaggregated data and to conduct gender analysis on information related to efforts to address the HIV epidemic. "Allocation of necessary resources and improved coordination, coherence and accountability for gender across all areas of government is critical," said Leika, "for the effective implementation of laws and policies that result in positive, measurable change in the lives of women and girls."

With Leika's help, UN Women made inroads with the government and civil society in Viet Nam in deepening the awareness and knowledge of CEDAW and moving forward with implementation of CEDAW via laws, policies and programmes. This included training and supporting justice system actors to ensure better access to justice for women. Accountability mechanisms and monitoring and reporting systems for gender equality were also strengthened.

"Work remains to decentralize the understanding of CEDAW and women's rights, reaching local and commune levels," Leika adds, "so that all Vietnamese women can one day claim and enjoy their human rights."

**VALUE ADDED:** "In Viet Nam, UN Women's partner civil society organizations highly value volunteerism and promote it through their project implementation. The fact that I am also a volunteer brought us closer and encouraged young people to take part in our activities. In particular, the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, which I helped organize, drew together young professionals and students as volunteers to plan an event calling for a society free of gender-based violence," said Leika.



**THIS PROJECT WILL CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE PATRIARCHAL JUSTICE SYSTEM WHICH HAS BEEN HINDERING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE.**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **293** LEGAL AND GENDER OFFICERS FROM THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, INVALIDS AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS WHO ATTENDED TRAINING AND WORKSHOPS AT WHICH THEY BECAME BETTER EQUIPPED WITH CEDAW KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF LEGAL NORMATIVE STANDARDS AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES IN ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.
- **222** PEOPLE, INCLUDING DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORT AND TOURISM, SENIOR OFFICERS OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND VIET NAM WOMEN'S UNION, MEMBERS OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, WHO GAINED BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND WOMEN'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE PLURAL JUSTICE SYSTEM, BASED ON RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY OF HO CHI MINH ACADEMY OF POLITICS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.
- **100** YOUNG PEOPLE (83 WOMEN, 17 MEN) WHO ATTENDED FOUR WORKSHOPS THAT STRENGTHENED CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORKS AND SUPPORTED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CEDAW SHADOW REPORT, AS WELL AS MONITORING OF CEDAW IMPLEMENTATION. (THIS INCLUDED 25 LEADERS OF GROUPS OF WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV WHO LEARNED TO KNOW AND CLAIM THEIR RIGHTS). THE WORKSHOP FACILITATED COLLABORATION AMONG THE THREE MAJOR NGO NETWORKS PROMOTING WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV NETWORK AND LED TO UN WOMEN SUPPORTING THE NEW PARTNERSHIP THROUGH FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES.

# KEITA KUBOYAMA

UNV Associate Programme Officer, UNHCR  
Egypt



*As an UNV Associate Programme Officer for UNHCR in Egypt, Keita Kuboyama was put in charge of a monthly cash assistance programme for Syrian refugees.*

“The lives of Syrian refugees are in danger even after they arrive in Egypt. Most of them have depleted almost all of their savings, leaving them severely vulnerable and having made sacrifices that are hard for us to even imagine. In order to ease the suffering of tens of thousands of people, cash assistance provides refugees with a dignified opportunity to meet their basic human needs.”

Many Syrians who have escaped the devastating conflict in their own country have found refuge in Egypt, most of whom are dispersed within residential neighbourhoods in the cities of Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta. As refugees, these Syrians face daunting challenges trying to earn enough money to pay for rent, food, education, health care and other basic needs. Whatever savings they brought with them have dwindled and limited opportunities for jobs have given rise to negative coping mechanisms. Some families are taking children out of school, living in unacceptable housing, reducing the quantity and quality of food, going without basic items and trying to earn additional cash through begging, child labour and early marriage.

From the onset of the Syrian refugee crisis, UNHCR and its national and international partners have given monthly stipends to the most vulnerable Syrian refugees so they can meet minimum requirements for housing and essential items. UNHCR has run cash assistance programmes for poor urban refugees from Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq and other parts of the world since 1993. The cash infusion modality has proven to be the most effective assistance for urban-based refugee caseloads, as in Egypt’s cities goods are readily available. Cash enables families to meet their basic human needs, while at the same time supporting the local market.

*Meeting with Head of Community Service Unit in order to revise vulnerability criteria of cash assistance to Syrian refugees. Location: UNHCR Cairo Office. (Robert Attala, 2015)*



As the chief coordinator of this cash assistance programme, Keita managed a direct implementation programme that delivered monthly cash assistance to 32,000 of the most needy Syrian refugees, representing 25 per cent of the total registered Syrian refugee population in Egypt in 2015. Because it is essential that a cash-based programme is conducted transparently and accountably, a string of formalities and documentation were required, which Keita oversaw. Keita also drafted donor reports and, through his own initiative, created a Standard Operating Procedure manual for better internal and external coordination.

An internal United Nations audit was conducted of the programme while Keita was at the helm of coordination. The auditors reviewed all financial and operational documents for 2014 and 2015 and visited Alexandria and Damietta to discuss operational procedures with implementing partners. The

conclusion was that the monthly cash assistance programme was adequately accountable and implementation was transparent; the auditors even went as far as to conclude that this programme was one of the best practices of UNHCR.

Through his UN Volunteer assignment, Keita gained practical programmatic management skills and a deeper understanding of refugee issues. "Through the cash assistance programme, we have been contributing to peacebuilding in Syrian communities, as well as in the Egyptian host communities in which they live," noted Keita. "I understand much better refugee issues and the importance of host country acceptance of refugees and UNHCR's central role."

Keita found that working with supervisors and colleagues that he admired and respected raised his own level of professionalism. He was impressed with the clarity and focus of the UNHCR mandate. "We are working *for* the refugees," he explained. "We need to save their lives, to hear their voices and learn their needs to be able to assist them and make sure they feel that being here is safe."

Keita was so impressed, in fact, that he said he wants to work with UNHCR for the foreseeable future. And the feeling was mutual; UNHCR found funding for him to continue working on the cash assistance programme for an additional year as an international UN Volunteer. "I did my best to manage the direct implementation of cash assistance with timely cash disbursements; and I saw huge impacts," said Keita.



*Meeting with Head of Livelihood Unit in order to review the mid-term planning documents programming and monitoring in 2015. Location: UNHCR Cairo Office. (Marihame Jessica, 2015)*

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**WE NEED TO SAVE THEIR LIVES, TO HEAR THEIR VOICES AND LEARN THEIR NEEDS TO BE ABLE TO ASSIST THEM AND MAKE SURE THEY FEEL THAT BEING HERE IS SAFE.**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **32,000 SYRIAN REFUGEES IN EGYPT WERE ABLE TO MEET THEIR BASIC HUMAN NEEDS DUE TO THE CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR WHICH KEITA WAS THE CHIEF COORDINATOR.**



# MOEKO TSUJII

*UNV Associate Community Services Officer, UNHCR  
Senegal*

When Moeko Tsujii arrived in Senegal to work as an UNV Associate Community Services Officer in the UNHCR Regional Office for West Africa, the population of concern for UNHCR in the West Africa region was 267,751 refugees and 8,856 asylum seekers. About 43,500 of these were living in urban areas.

The community services team of the UNHCR regional office supports country offices to empower urban refugees and facilitate local integration. The community services team also helps offices to ascertain durable solutions for refugees, ensure that persons with special needs are identified and encourage refugees to participate in programmes that affect their own situation.

To help UNHCR implement its policy of promoting refugee self-reliance, the regional office needed to establish a methodology that could assess the resilience and coping mechanisms of urban refugees in West Africa. Moeko was assigned to design ways to profile the situation to help better understand the status of urban refugees. Under the supervision of the Deputy Director of the regional office and the Senior Community Services Officer, Moeko created a model framework for urban profiling. The framework included ways to assess refugee self-reliance and to gather information about their coping mechanisms.

Moeko contributed to pilot research in urban refugee profiling in the capital city, Dakar, with plans that the methodology could be adapted by other countries in the region. Taking part in both the



*Moeko (in the foreground) took part in a UNV retreat with other UN Volunteers at an eco-village in Senegal. (UNV, 2015)*

quantitative and qualitative research, Moeko created research tools and collected data in collaboration with relevant UNHCR units, partner organizations, refugees and asylum seekers. The research focused on four population groups, each with a particular profile.

As part of this task, Moeko talked face to face with refugees and asylum seekers to understand their needs and gather their opinions on what could be done to foster greater self-reliance and sustainable solutions. She mapped out existing and potential service providers for refugees and asylum seekers in Dakar. The results of the mapping were shared with UNHCR's protection unit, which then used this information to better guide refugees and asylum seekers to services. The data also helped the Senegal Country Office coordinate more effectively with service providers and improve their referral system.

One of Moeko's favourite activities during the year was representing the UNV programme at the Francophone Summit in Dakar. She and fellow UN Volunteers from Senegal staffed a UNV booth; they explained UNV's work to local and international visitors and encouraged others to volunteer.

Through her UNV assignment, Moeko gained experience and knowledge in conducting social research and plans to further hone her skills in community services so that she might continue to contribute in this field. While the length of her assignment meant that Moeko did not see the research through to its final stages, her successor carried on the project, and Moeko has high hopes that the project will contribute to bettering the plight of refugees and asylum seekers in Senegal and the West Africa region.



*Moeko plants a tree with fellow volunteers as part of a teambuilding exercise. (UNV, 2015)*



**BY BUILDING A STRATEGY OF A RESEARCH WHICH HAS NEVER BEEN MADE, I GAINED A LOT OF KNOWLEDGE ON CONDUCTING RESEARCH, AND EVALUATION OF PROJECTS.**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- PEOPLE REACHED BY THE PROJECTS ON WHICH MOEKO WORKED:  
**43,500** URBAN REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN WEST AFRICA



# NANA OTA

UNV Programme Analyst, UN Women  
Ecuador



*Nana attended the United Nations Economic and Social Council FORUM on the post-2015 development agenda in New York in June 2014. (A fellow youth participant, 2014)*

As a UNV Programme Analyst for UN Women in Quito, Ecuador, Nana Ota provided technical assistance to a number of projects that promoted women's leadership and participation in politics and others that worked toward eliminating violence against women and girls.

In Ecuador, gender-based violence is widespread and ingrained in society. According to WFP (Nine Facts about Women in Ecuador), six out of every 10 women have experienced some sort of gender-based violence. One of four has been a victim of sexual violence. Nearly 70 per cent of the time, this violence is perpetrated by partners or former partners. Women who marry young record the highest levels of violence, and nine out of 10 divorced women report some sort of gender violence. More than 15 per cent of girls between the ages of 10 and 15 have been victims of sexual violence, leading to high rates of adolescent pregnancy and extremely high maternal mortality rates. Despite the seriousness of this situation, no public policy on gender violence has been implemented.

One way UN Women addressed the problem during Nana's tenure as a UN Volunteer was a women's leadership project that enhanced and strengthened dialogue mechanisms between civil society and political parties.

Capacity building and training targeted government officials to raise awareness and enhance their understanding of gender issues. The project was executed in collaboration with stakeholders – civil society, local governments and political parties – in several local communities and Nana was an enthusiastic liaison with partners. Dialogue on gender issues was organized so that public policy might better reflect voices of women and other citizens. More than 100 women from local communities expressed the need for eradicating violence against women, women's right to access justice, reproductive health and rights, sexual education and women's mental health.

At the same time, Nana was tasked with interfacing with the Japanese government regarding financial assistance for a project to help women victims of violence. The project was designed in collaboration with the local government so that victims of gender-based violence could access justice in their communities.



**MY SUPERVISOR WAS  
EXTREMELY  
SUPPORTIVE AND SHE  
WAS PASSIONATE  
ABOUT PROVIDING ME  
WITH LEARNING  
OPPORTUNITIES.**

Nana supported the Ecuador office to organize various events and activities for UN Women global campaigns. She helped analyse and compare South American gender equality data for the Union of South American Nations meeting in March 2015. She expanded the reach of international campaigns, such as Orange YOUR Neighbourhood, whose objective is the elimination of violence against women, and she conducted HeForShe campaigns in several places, including San Francisco University in Quito and private companies. As a result, more than 1,000 Ecuadorian men were engaged in the fight for gender equality.



Nana organized and taught yoga classes at a women's shelter in Quito, Ecuador. (Mónica Leiton, 2015)

"My supervisor was extremely supportive and she was passionate about providing me with learning opportunities," said Nana. Among these opportunities were a training programme on the application of Beijing 20 and one on the situation of violence against women in Ecuador. Nana also attended the United Nations Economic and Social Council Forum in New York on the post-2015 development agenda.

"These experiences gave me an opportunity to reflect on what we can do from the individual level to the social level for gender equality and ending violence against women. I have a considerably deeper understanding of gender aspects, as well as a wide range of basic theories and empirically-grounded research," she explained. "Any public policy will fail without integrating gender issues."

**VALUE ADDED:** Nana had the enviable opportunity of creating a volunteer activity at a women's shelter. At the shelter, a refuge for Ecuadorian and Colombian women victims of sexual violence, Nana organized twice weekly yoga classes and conducted research and a survey. Nana found this to be a powerful experience for understanding at the individual level what can be done to create communities without violence.

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **1,000 ECUADORIAN MEN INVOLVED IN THE FIGHT FOR GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH THE HEFORSHE CAMPAIGN.**
- **TWO MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN ECUADOR COMMITTED TO WORK FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND TO FIGHT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.**
- **MORE THAN 300 WOMEN PARTICIPATED IN TRAINING ON GENDER EQUALITY.**

# RUI NOMOTO

UNV Child Protection Officer, UNICEF  
Lao PDR



*Seven representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Lao PDR government travelled to the Philippines for a study tour on child registration systems as part of the UNICEF project that Rui Nomoto worked on as a Child Protection Officer. (CRVS Lao PDR, January 2015)*

As a UNV Child Protection Officer assigned to UNICEF in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Rui Nomoto took part in the daunting task of supporting the introduction of a new concept to the country – civil birth registration and vital statistics documentation.

In Lao PDR, issuance of birth certificates has not been standardized. According to UNICEF, among children under the age of five, 75 per cent are reported to be registered with the government, but of these registered children only 33 per cent have had a birth certificate issued. Of this 33 per cent, only 17 per cent are actually able to show a birth certificate.

UNICEF, through its implementing partner Plan International, has been supporting the Government of Lao PDR financially and technically to establish an efficient and well-functioning civil registration and vital statistics system.

Working side by side with Plan International, Rui helped in the early stages of developing this programme by supporting programming processes and monitoring results. Rui was a member of a working group that included the International Organization for Migration, UNFPA, UNICEF, the World Health Organization and Plan International.

Officially recording a child's birth lays the foundation for safeguarding many of that person's civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. "An unregistered child in many respects is an invisible child," explained Rui. "This is in contradiction of Article 7 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which specifies that every child has the right to be registered at birth without any discrimination."

In addition to ensuring access to basic services, such as health and education, birth registration is a tool in the arsenal for child protection. A birth certificate is documentary proof that registration has taken place and secures the child's right to origin, to a nationality and enables them to claim these rights. It can help prevent child labour by enforcing minimum employment laws, prevent

children in conflict with the law from being treated as adults, help counter child marriage and protect against forced conscription in armed forces, illegal migration and human trafficking. “Hopefully, this programme will improve the overall child protection mechanism in Lao PDR,” noted Rui.

By obtaining accurate data on people’s major life events, such as marriage and child birth, the government will also be able to better understand the situation of women in the country. For example, the data will show figures on child marriages and the age of mothers who gave their first birth. These data are essential for protecting women’s rights and health.

Birth and civil registration is also an important component of a comprehensive peacebuilding and reconstruction strategy, as it gives all groups access to basic social services, which can help heal ethnic divisions, re-establish fair political institutions and ultimately revitalize the economy.

“It is an exciting opportunity to work in a new field like birth registration,” said Rui. “I had previously thought of birth registration as a health issue, but now I realize its importance for child protection.”

The project was starting to take concrete shape as Rui was completing her assignment. The long-term feasibility of the project depends on factors such as budget and human resources. “Civil registration and birth registration is a pretty new topic in Lao PDR,” said Rui. “It may take time to let the government and people know about its importance; to change behaviours will be even more difficult.”

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**IT IS AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY TO WORK IN A NEW FIELD LIKE BIRTH REGISTRATION. I HAD PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT OF BIRTH REGISTRATION AS A HEALTH ISSUE, BUT NOW I REALIZE ITS IMPORTANCE FOR CHILD PROTECTION.**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- RUI ASSISTED THE STAFF OF PLAN INTERNATIONAL, A UNICEF PARTNER, TO HELP THE GOVERNMENT OF LAO PDR INTRODUCE CIVIL BIRTH REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS DOCUMENTATION - A PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT ENDEAVOR FOR CHILDREN OF POOR HOUSEHOLDS, ETHNIC MINORITIES AND STATELESS GROUPS.



# TAKAHIRO UTSUMI

*UNV Programme Officer, WFP*  
Egypt



*Takahiro and a colleague attend the WFP Regional Country Directors Meeting. (WFP, 2014)*

Takahiro Utsumi was assigned to Cairo, Egypt, to work as a UNV Programme Officer in WFP's Regional Bureau for the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe. He helped support overall programme coordination and management. As the regional office's purview is a vast one – Algeria, Armenia, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the State of Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine and Yemen – this meant tracking 32 emergency and protracted relief and recovery programmes and 19 public institution capacity development programmes.

Takahiro reviewed new programme documentation and budget revisions and made sure that capacity building of public services was adequately outlined in programme plans. Takahiro also reviewed internal and external reports from country offices, including emergency reports, which required liaising with a dozen country and operational offices throughout the region to gather pertinent information.

The operating environment in the region made Takahiro's job more demanding than anticipated. One year prior to his assignment, the WFP regional office had planned for 14.5 million beneficiaries (apart from Syria) whose assistance would have required US \$1.5 billion for commodities and cash and voucher transfers. But crises escalated in 2014 in Iraq, Libya, the State of Palestine, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen, and the resources available could not stretch to cover the skyrocketing needs of the region. With planned operations only about 67 per cent funded, the situation called for new tactics and serious strategic rethinking.

WFP was supporting governments in the region to increase food security for vulnerable populations, stabilize the food supply chain, reform and scale up safety nets, promote good health and nutrition while minimizing food wasted during production and processing. WFP was also helping refugees and displaced people in Iraq, Libya, the State of Palestine, Ukraine and Syria. In Yemen, nearly 45 per cent of the population (around 10 million people) were food insecure. In 2013, Sudan, one of WFP's most complex operations, joined the Regional Bureau and new emergencies were unfolding there. School



feeding capacity building programmes were being rolled out in five mostly middle income countries.

Reports passing through Takahiro's purview were essential for the organization's decision-makers to stay cognizant of events on the ground in these crisis-affected and rapidly changing environments. External reporting kept fundraisers and donors apprised of WFP's responses and operations.



*Takahiro (centre) and colleagues during a monitoring visit to the Azrak refugee camp, home to 50,000 Syrian refugees, in October. (WFP, 2014)*

As explained by Takahiro, "The programme review process is one of the most important processes in our business for launching new programmes or changing strategy of existing programmes so that we can cover as many food insecure people as possible."

During programme formulation and review processes, Takahiro double checked that gender-related technical inputs were incorporated in programme documents, verifying that every WFP programme in the region had a gender perspective. He ensured that WFP gender targets were reflected, including at least 50 per cent women beneficiaries in leadership positions of project management committees, with 60 per cent of these female committee members slated to receive training on food, cash and voucher distribution modalities.

Takahiro is proud to have been part of a team whose goals are to save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies and to help rebuild livelihoods following crises. Takahiro's work contributed to WFP's strategic objectives in the region: helping people meet their own food and nutrition needs, reducing undernutrition and breaking intergenerational cycles of hunger.

**VALUE ADDED:** Due to the overwhelming emergency nature of WFP operations in the region, many of Takahiro's colleagues were short-term consultants, while Takahiro's one-year volunteer contract provided continuity in business processes during this eventful period.

## WHO BENEFITED?

- TAKAHIRO HELPED IMPROVE PROGRAMMING FOR WFP'S REGIONAL OPERATIONS.

**WFP WAS ASSISTING 24.7 MILLION FOOD-INSECURE PEOPLE ACROSS THE REGION, INCLUDING REFUGEES, DISPLACED PERSONS, RETURNEES, FOOD INSECURE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY MANMADE AND NATURAL DISASTERS AND THOSE WHO ARE EXTREMELY IMPOVERISHED.**

# MIHO YOSHIKAWA

*UNV Child Protection Officer, UNICEF*  
India



*Miho poses proudly in front of the UNICEF logo. (UNICEF India, 2015)*

India is home to the largest number of children in the world. And that is where Miho Yoshikawa was sent to work with UNICEF, an organization dedicated to helping protect children from violence, exploitation and abuse. As a UNV Child Protection Officer in UNICEF's Delhi office, Miho was tasked with programme monitoring, assistance to the organization's state offices and documentation and research, among other responsibilities.

In recent years, India has made major investments in legislation, schemes and flagship programmes for child protection, such as the Juvenile Justice Act, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 and the Integrated Child Protection Scheme. While these initiatives saw child protection move up higher on the priority list of policymakers and implementing agencies, the sheer scale and diversity of India, the low numbers of child protection personnel, limited role of civil society in programme implementation and absence of robust accountability mechanisms hinders progress on the ground.

UNICEF supports the government's Integrated Child Protection Scheme and other child welfare programmes that create a protective environment for children through the improvement and expansion of services for children in need of care and protection. UNICEF focuses their work in India on child labour, child marriage, child sexual exploitation and violence against children through mobilizing education, health, social protection and communication actors to contribute their resources, knowledge and expertise to prevent and protect children from violence, exploitation and abuse.

Miho's role during her year as an international UN Volunteer was to boost knowledge management capacities of the organization. She updated the child protection section of the UNICEF India intranet, maintained a database of child protection programmes and supported child protection officers at the state level through regular communication and information sharing.

Miho documented child protection initiatives on violence against children, justice for children and child labour. Her timely and accurate updates on these child protection initiatives were shared with 20 child protection officers and 23 education officers in UNICEF's offices in Delhi and 14 states. The repository of information and resources on child protection issues and initiatives that she prepared was readily available to state offices and continually updated. Miho also helped UNICEF's communication officers to select information on child protection for dissemination on local, national and international levels.

In addition to these tasks, Miho helped the child protection section to organize meetings and training sessions. She assisted in preparation of

programme reports, donor reports and project status reports and helped with the planning and reviewing of the child protection annual work plan and other strategic documents, including briefing notes, evaluation reports and funding proposals.

One area Miho documented was violence in schools. To encourage inter-gender dialogue on violence among adolescent girls and boys, she drafted an episode of Meena - a cartoon character popular in South Asia - on child protection and violence against children. Meena is a spirited nine-year old girl who braves such important social topics as the girl child's right to education and the stigma of HIV/AIDS. The Meena character is a successful advocacy and teaching tool for girls' and children's rights. UNICEF developed the Meena Communication Initiative as a mass communication project that can change perceptions and behaviour that hamper the survival, protection and development of girls in South Asia.

Miho worked with the Centre for Child and the Law at the National Law School of India University in Bangalore to organize a regional conference in Guwahati in Assam State to promote implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act in India's Northeast States and Sikkim State. During the conference, she mobilized 30 student volunteers from the law school, briefed them on the initiative and guided them to support conference logistics and organization. 120 people participated in the conference, including judges from the Supreme Court of India and the High Courts of the states and personnel from institutions and organizations working on child protection and juvenile justice at the community level. The conference gave practitioners a chance to network and become more actively involved in discussing effective implementation of the Act. As the Northeast States and Sikkim State had not had many chances to discuss the issue because of a lack of infrastructure, participants found the conference to be a significant opportunity to share their practices and constraints and to discuss ways forward.

To prepare for a smooth transition after her departure, Miho wrote a plan for UNICEF's continued effective use of the knowledge management tools she developed and maintained. Miho noted that documentation of violence against children, justice for children and child labour and the recording of best practices are essential tools for policy design and programming.

As the first international UN Volunteer assigned to UNICEF India, Miho's successful assignment contributed to the promotion of the value of volunteerism in the organization and among its partners. With Miho's help, UNICEF India staff were better able to share information and knowledge on child protection in a timely manner, which contributed to more effective and collaborative implementation of projects at the state level. This also helped UNICEF with appropriate programming at the central level and enhanced the organization's working knowledge of the issues.

Miho gained as well. "I have improved my personal and communication skills through working in a multicultural environment," she said. "And I have a better understanding of approaches to child protection systems and to social change promotion as well as UNICEF and government programmatic goals, visions, positions, policies and strategies."



**I HAVE IMPROVED MY PERSONAL AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS THROUGH WORKING IN A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT, AND I HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF APPROACHES TO CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS AND TO SOCIAL CHANGE PROMOTION AS WELL AS UNICEF AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMATIC GOALS, VISIONS, POSITIONS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES.**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- MIHO CONTRIBUTED TO PROJECTS UNDER THE "INTEGRATED CHILD PROTECTION SCHEME" THAT IS BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA. SO FAR, THIS FLAGSHIP SCHEME HAS REACHED 170,000 OUT OF THE 40 MILLION CHILDREN IN THE COUNTRY.





# PEACEBUILDING

Since the early 1990's, UNV has played a vital role in supporting Security Council-mandated peacekeeping and special political missions in war-torn and post-conflict areas. The 2009 Secretary-General's *Report on Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict* encouraged UNV to continue supporting special political and peacebuilding initiatives, with particular attention given to strengthening national civilian capacities to impact the sustainability of peacebuilding initiatives.

UN Volunteers advance peace in some of the most challenging contexts imaginable. At the end of 2014, UN Volunteers were present in a total of 19 missions (for the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs and one

emergency health mission). To date, more than 14,000 UN Volunteers have served in over 40 different peacekeeping and political and peacebuilding operations.

UN Volunteers serve in implementation and capacity-building roles in areas such as human rights monitoring, local institutional capacity support, democratic governance and operational technical support. UN Volunteers help United Nations entities to expand their reach by further engaging communities within the context of United Nations peacekeeping, peacebuilding and political missions. This engagement helps build both local and national capacities and strengthens mutual trust between citizens and the state.



*Dennis Martinez, UNV COE Inspector with MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo, during a COE inspection of MONUSCO field base in Rutshuru area. (Jonathan Lorillard/MONUSCO/UNV, 2014)*



# MARI MASUOKA

*UNV Logistics Officer, WFP  
Myanmar*



*Mari in discussions with the procurement team in the WFP Country Office in Yangon, Myanmar. (WFP/PoeiZar Kyaw, 2015)*

It didn't take long for Mari Masuoka, who served as a UNV Logistics Officer for WFP in Myanmar, to clearly see the link between her technical job and the peacekeeping gains being made in this rapidly changing country.

Myanmar is the largest country in Southeast Asia with a diverse population of 57.5 million people. The country is rife with economic possibilities, and indeed is enjoying rapid economic growth and political change. Yet it remains one of the world's least-developed states, falling near the bottom of human development rankings. According to the 2012 UNDP Human Development Index, 26 per cent of the population live below the poverty line. Accessing enough food is a problem for the poorest segments of the population, especially those living in remote, rural border areas. Access to basic education and health services is also a challenge. Close to three million people in the country are considered food poor, and 35 per cent of children under 5 are stunted, pointing to a high burden of public health problems. Long-lasting localized conflicts have displaced nearly 600,000 people in eastern and south-eastern Myanmar, according to UNHCR. In addition, the country is prone to recurrent natural disasters, including tropical cyclones, floods and drought.

WFP in Myanmar addresses deep-rooted food security issues through conducting a variety of food-related activities to support the country's transition. WFP provides food for displaced populations, runs nutrition programmes for malnourished children and pregnant and lactating mothers and for HIV/TB patients, operates school feeding programmes and supports asset creation. In times of crisis, WFP delivers emergency food assistance to victims, such as those affected by tropical cyclone Nargis in 2008 and the Kokang conflict in 2015.

As a UNV Logistics Officer, it was Mari's job to keep the WFP food pipeline operational and healthy from the point of receiving contributions from donors until the food was delivered to the beneficiaries. To do this, Mari not only ensured that procurement was completed, stocks were managed and food was delivered in a timely manner to operational areas, but she also coordinated with other units and sub-offices to gather the information needed to make this all go like clockwork. An interlocutor between units, she worked with the supply chain management unit, programme unit, donor relations unit and sub-offices. She shared information on a daily-basis and saw

that her work made inter-organization coordination smoother and that stronger bonds were created between units.

Mari says her UN Volunteer status made her more willing to extend her job responsibilities whenever possible to gain more experience. She engaged in strategizing and prioritizing, particularly when resources fell short, and made recommendations to management on the way forward in tough times. One such time occurred in 2014 when WFP Myanmar had to suspend school feeding activities due to funding shortages. Mari conducted a cost-analysis of modalities. She found that if WFP changed to using biscuits instead of the usual rice distributions they could save about 50 per cent on costs. This led to a shift in WFP's school feeding strategy in the country.

Mari found her learning experience in Myanmar to be tremendous. Not only did she become conversant in the works of WFP and local procurement, but she also gained a deep understanding of the importance of food assistance to local populations. Mari saw first-hand how international organizations providing life-saving assistance in complicated political situations could contribute to stabilizing politically-sensitive regions of a country, as well as those affected by communal violence.

"Through reducing food insecurity, WFP contributes to peacebuilding," noted Mari. "And the impact is vital, particularly in emergency operations." She also found that when school feeding was expanded and scaled up, it clearly contributed to improving the nutritional status of children and helped increase student attendance.

Mari was impressed with the professionalism and leadership of her co-workers, and felt their support pushed her to excel and to improve her professional skills. She gained institutional knowledge, language skills and an appreciation of working for change. "They were excellent role models," said Mari. "I am proud to have been part of the WFP team."

Not that all was smooth sailing: the visa process took longer than expected and housing in the capital city was expensive and not easy to find. The job being situated in the head office in Yangon also required her to figure out quickly the complicated and extensive supply chain needs of sub-offices in remote locations. However, the job of monitoring the food pipeline from start to finish gave Mari the rare opportunity to see WFP's labours in their entirety. "I was always impressed how WFP strongly drove the activity, but at the same time remained flexible in its strategy, according to the situation," she noted. "I learned that having organizational flexibility is a powerful asset for emergency assistance organizations in order to operate and do the best for the beneficiaries in a rapidly-changing country."

**VALUE ADDED:** According to Mari's supervisor, UNV offers much needed human resources for programmes. A strength of the UNV HRD programme is that it gives young professionals the opportunity to become experienced and skilled humanitarian workers.



*On a field trip, Mari visited rice suppliers in Sittwe, Rakhine State, Myanmar. (WFP, 2015)*

**“ I LEARNED THAT HAVING ORGANIZATIONAL FLEXIBILITY IS A POWERFUL ASSET FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATIONS IN ORDER TO OPERATE AND DO THE BEST FOR THE BENEFICIARIES IN A RAPIDLY-CHANGING COUNTRY. ”**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **200 COLLEAGUES IN WFP OFFICES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY BENEFITED FROM MARI'S LOGISTICS SUPPORT.**

# HIROSHI KUWATA

*UNV Programme Officer for Decentralization and Peacebuilding,  
UNDP  
Bangladesh*



*Hiroshi with the six national UN Volunteers who helped organize the workshop. (Aye Aye Maung, 2015)*

In southeast Bangladesh, bordering India and Myanmar, there is a region with rugged terrain known as the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Comprising three districts, the area is home to a dozen ethnic groups, each with their own distinctive language, culture and tradition, including Bengali, the majority ethnic group in Bangladesh. With a land area about the size of Puerto Rico and an estimated population of 1.3 million, the area has relatively low population density. A combination of the steep terrain and dense bamboo forests, remoteness of villages and political issues associated with a protracted conflict have seriously impeded the economic development of the region.

The majority of people here live in chronic poverty, face under-employment and illiteracy and lack proper functioning social services. While agriculture is the predominant form of livelihood, cultivation is extremely difficult, barring the flat valley bottoms. Communities are scattered and road infrastructure is poor or non-existent. Almost all women living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts live below the absolute poverty line. Well over half of the respondents of baseline surveys reported children dropping out of school before completing primary level due to economic, safety and other reasons.

It was in this setting that Hiroshi Kuwata was assigned to UNDP as a UNV Programme Officer for Decentralization and Peacebuilding. Through its Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility, UNDP was supporting the Government of Bangladesh and a variety of local councils, NGOs and other stakeholders to develop and build confidence in the region. Accelerated, sustainable socio-economic development and regional poverty reduction were the end goals using principles of self-reliance, local participation and decentralized development.

Hiroshi served as the monitoring and evaluation focal point for the project's Capacity Development and Service Delivery cluster. In this role, Hiroshi oversaw the monitoring and evaluation, reporting and financial management of the cluster's interventions, namely in capacity development of local government institutions, education and health. Among other tasks, he organized regular monitoring and evaluation workshops with district teams, managed and updated comprehensive data on cluster activities, prepared



project reports, recruited and supervised national project consultants and led the preparation of an annual work-plan and monitoring and evaluation plan for the Capacity Development Component.

Keeping a constant eye on fair participation and gender balance, Hiroshi carefully monitored the number of beneficiaries by gender and used the data to ensure equal opportunities for all marginalized groups in capacity building activities, such as training, and in decision-making and consultation processes.

Hiroshi was charged with making sure the capacity building elements of the project were carried out effectively and in a well coordination manner. To achieve this, Hiroshi led an evaluation of ongoing Hill Track projects that supported MDG acceleration. He supported local government institutions to design and implement a development planning framework and process in line with the post-2015 development agenda.

The project drew heavily on volunteerism for its staffing; Hiroshi was joined by one other international UN Volunteer and four national UN Volunteers. Hiroshi likewise mobilized the power of volunteering for his specific tasks: he contracted online volunteers to improve several knowledge products related to capacity development and he mobilized six national UN Volunteers to help organize a well-received national workshop called “Towards Harmonization of Chittagong Hill Tracts Laws.”

Being stationed in a field office in a relatively unstable area brought along with it security issues and restricted staff movement. Nonetheless, Hiroshi found that the helpfulness of his host agency and the UNV Field Unit allowed him to complete his assignment without any serious stumbling blocks.

Through his UNV assignment, Hiroshi helped ensure that the rights of marginalized communities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts were promoted and that communities could participate fairly in decisions related to government service delivery. It was clear to Hiroshi that due to the UNDP project, articulation of demands for services were improving among the target population.



*Crops yields have increased in parts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, thanks to MDG acceleration activities. (UNV/Hiroshi Kuwata, 2015)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **263 STAFF AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS AND GOVERNMENT ASSEMBLIES BENEFITED FROM CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.**
- **20,000 HOUSEHOLDS IN THREE DISTRICTS (RANGAMATI, KHAGRACHARI AND BANDARBAN) IN THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS BENEFITED FROM THE MDG ACCELERATION INTERVENTION.**

# MOE MASHIKO

UNV Peacebuilding Officer, UNDP  
Zimbabwe



*UN Volunteer Moe Mashiko participating in a SHIFT event organized by UNDP with national partners, colleagues and external experts on a variety of topics such as gamification, crowdfunding, design thinking, hackathons, storytelling and open data, among others. (UNDP Zimbabwe, 2014)*

Peace and reconciliation are indispensable for socio-economic development. Laying a foundation for a peaceful future in Zimbabwe, the government established a National Peace and Reconciliation Commission. UNDP in Zimbabwe has been supporting operationalization of this commission by offering strategic policy, technical and advisory support services to partners and stakeholders who are strengthening the national peace architecture.

As a UNV Peacebuilding Officer for UNDP in Zimbabwe, Moe Mashiko provided capacity support to this end goal. Moe and another international UN Volunteer, working under UNDP's governance thematic area, were assigned to a project called "Support for Peace Building, Social Cohesion and Increased Access to Sustainable Livelihoods in Zimbabwe."

Under the coordination and oversight of the Office of the President and the Cabinet, the project is a collaborative initiative with its many components carried out by different parties. The project strengthens social cohesion and resilience in communities by sensitization and capacity building of peacebuilding and conflict resolution mechanisms.

Moe and her colleague analysed political, social and economic trends; they helped formulate programme and project briefs, strategies, concept notes and other relevant knowledge products. The volunteers assisted local partners to achieve goals as per their annual work plans, such as establishing conflict resolution mechanisms (one being Local Peace Committees) and income-generating activities in rural communities.

This project was an important part of UNDP's strategy in Zimbabwe and supported a range of national and community mechanisms and capacities for



peacebuilding, dialogue, and prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. Project interventions specifically targeted women and youth and helped communities create the skills needed to prepare for, cope with and recover from disasters.

“Peacebuilding is not a stand-alone project,” Moe noted, “but rather a complex interplay of economic development, democratic government architecture, reconciliation of the past and political struggles, and the establishment of community resilience, among many other factors.”

Moe is satisfied with the experiences she gained, her peacebuilding assignment and the technical support and mentorship she received from her team and supervisor. Like other UNV HRD Volunteers, Moe recognized personal growth too. “My communication skills have been enhanced through being exposed to culturally- and politically-sensitive issues and working in a very diverse team,” she said.



*UN Volunteer Moe Mashiko, UNV Peacebuilding Officer with UNDP Zimbabwe, supported capacity building efforts under the project “Support for Peace Building, Social Cohesion and Increased Access to Sustainable Livelihoods in Zimbabwe.” (2015)*



**PEACEBUILDING IS NOT A STAND-ALONE PROJECT, BUT RATHER A COMPLEX INTERPLAY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT ARCHITECTURE, RECONCILIATION OF THE PAST AND POLITICAL STRUGGLES, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY RESILIENCE, AMONG MANY OTHER FACTORS.**

# HIROTAKA KAWAKAMI

UNV Peacebuilding Officer, UNDP  
Philippines



*Hiro Kawakami (left) with the UN Resident Coordinator's (Dr. Luiza Carvalho; pictured middle). On the far right is Hiro's colleague Laura Arana, a Spanish Youth Volunteer. The Hon. Arsenio M. Balisacan, Secretary of Economic Planning and the Director-General of the National Development Economic Authority (pictured second from the right)*

Hirota (Hiro) Kawakami arrived in the Philippines for his UNV assignment at a historically pivotal time. After seventeen years of negotiations, the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front finally reached a comprehensive peace agreement in March 2014 for conflict-affected areas in Mindanao, the country's southernmost large island region.

Nevertheless, the region's security situation remained fragile and its economic status lagged behind the rest of the country. To tackle security concerns and bolster recovery and economic progress in the region, a comprehensive development blueprint was being crafted, the *Bangsamoro Development Plan (2014-2019)*. Bangsamoro leaders called on development partners, including the

United Nations, to assist them to formulate this expert-driven roadmap for the way forward in the short and medium term. The leaders also drew wisdom from their own people by reaching out to local communities to hear their perspectives on development challenges and aspirations.

The United Nations Coordination Office, under the supervision of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, facilitated and coordinated communication among the various stakeholders to enhance the quality of this development plan. As direct inputs, the United Nations prepared thematic reports and UNDP drafted the plan's chapter on Environment and Natural Resources.

Hiro – as a UNV Peacebuilding Officer for the United Nations Coordination Office – was tasked to help coordinate inputs to the plan and to interface between United Nations agencies, the government and development partners, particularly the World Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency. This was a hands-on daily task, which meant communicating with

over 30 focal points and consultants from seven different United Nations organizations and externally communicating with development partners and government agencies.

In a liaison role, Hiro attended meetings with partners and the government as a United Nations representative and informed partners of the status of United Nations contributions and possible interventions. He relayed meeting outcomes and discussions back to the United Nations Resident Coordinator and Country Team. Toward completion of the plan formulation process, Hiro worked with the United Nations focal points and consultants to review and refine the draft and consolidate their inputs. Hiro also helped with recruitment of technical experts for the *Bangsamoro Development Plan* formulation process, including the peer reviewer, and drafted their Terms of Reference.



UN Volunteer Hirotaka Kawakami, with UNDP Philippines, seen here with colleagues at the UN Coordination Office that provides coordination and advisory support services to the UN Resident Coordinator and the UNCT.

The *Bangsamoro Development Plan* tackles drivers of injustice and insecurity deeply-rooted in the region and promotes development in different sectors to promote smooth political and security transitions in the coming years. In the short run, the plan focuses on stabilization and strengthening the legitimacy of the new autonomous government. The medium term goal is to build stronger institutions that can deliver better services, more effective justice and generate jobs. The institutional transition will take place in 2016.

“I was truly fortunate to serve the Bangsamoro and its people during the transition period soon after the comprehensive peace agreement,” said Hiro. “Without a doubt, I have been privileged to have a chance to contribute to the formulation of the *Bangsamoro Development Plan* and the opportunity to develop myself as well.”

Hiro believes that honing his communication and coordination skills, representing United Nations agencies and learning in-depth about a wide range of peacebuilding and development issues is a sure asset for working on peacebuilding assignments in the future.



**WITHOUT A DOUBT, I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO HAVE A CHANCE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FORMULATION OF THE *BANGSAMORO DEVELOPMENT PLAN* AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP MYSELF AS WELL**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- THE DEVELOPMENT BLUEPRINT ON WHICH HIRO WORKED AIMED TO BETTER THE LIVES OF THREE MILLION PEOPLE IN THE BANGSAMORO REGION.





# COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

UNV's experience shows that community resilience for environment and disaster risk reduction can be greatly enhanced through volunteerism. The 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action explicitly recognized the added value and contribution of volunteerism to disaster risk management, community resilience and environmental protection.

UNV assists community adaptation to climate change through people-centred approaches and by developing,

with its partners, innovative disaster risk reduction strategies that harness the power of volunteerism. UN Volunteers are well placed to strengthen capacities for inclusive and coherent natural disaster prevention, preparedness and risk reduction. This includes ensuring support to those rebuilding productive lives within their communities and addressing chronic vulnerabilities.



*UN Volunteers María Celia Sahuanay Calsin and Roberto Carlos Loaiza Dueñas talk with a beneficiary of the solid waste management project, part of the Poverty Environment Initiative in Arequipa, Peru. (Red Circle Films, 2014)*

# NAOAKI NAKANISHI

*UNV Programme Officer, Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping, WFP Sudan*



*Naoaki was stationed in the WFP country office in Khartoum, Sudan. (WFP, 2015)*

Naoaki Nakanishi arrived in Khartoum, Sudan, just as a new food assistance project of the World Food Programme was gathering steam. The project was titled “Food Assistance to Vulnerable Populations Affected by Conflict and Natural Disasters” and from the time of the project’s approval at the end of 2013, the operating environment within Sudan had become increasingly volatile. Streams of refugees were arriving from neighbouring South Sudan fleeing violence between the South Sudanese government and rebels. At the same time, a much higher number of people than originally anticipated were being displaced from their homes by inter-tribal conflicts and fighting in Darfur, a vast region in the west of Sudan.

The heady combination of insecurity due to these conflicts, restricted access to affected areas, large-scale and long-term population displacements and chronic poverty makes Sudan one of the most complex countries in which WFP operates. Skilled in the use of analytical tools and statistical methodology, Naoaki contributed to WFP operations in Sudan by providing research and analysis on food security and introducing new technologies for monitoring and analysis. As a Vulnerability and Assessment Mapping (VAM) Officer, he collected, analysed and justified the results of technical surveys needed by WFP and its partners for evidence-based programming. These outputs were not only used to inform current projects, but were important contributions to policymaking, strategizing and planning.

Naoaki collaborated with WFP’s Rome Headquarters and a Darfur field office to brainstorm about food insecurity and the lack of access problem in Darfur and a solution took shape. He and his colleagues figured: cell phone access is widespread in Sudan, why not collect data from displaced persons using cell phones? That way statistical data could be collected not only from the usual sentinel sites, but from insecure locales as well where peoples’ voices are seldom heard. The use of mobile phones would let organizations gather real-time data that would help immensely in understanding the needs of marginalized groups so that WFP and partners could improve services. The project team envisioned mobile phone surveys used throughout the country to reach as many vulnerable people as possible, and eventually being run under the stewardship of the government.

Naoaki and his colleagues wrote a concept note on this idea and ran the pilot project. The use of mobile phones for food consumption surveys was a first for WFP in Sudan, and plans were underway for both a mobile phone survey and face to face survey to take place during the year.

The team realized there needed to be a gender balance in beneficiaries surveyed, but preliminary questionnaires found that women – especially in camp settings – were considerably less likely to participate than men. Another

limiting factor they encountered in the camp settings was the use of a variety of local languages that demanded hiring translators for each enumerator. Faced with these stumbling blocks, the team moved forward by finding alternative ways to widen and deepen the methodology so that the use of mobile technology could fetch timely and effective results.

After a pilot survey, the team concluded there was enough justification to continue the project, especially in places where insecurity hinders access for data collection. The widespread use of mobile phone technology in Sudan meant the possibilities for replication and scaling up the method within the country were high.

During his assignment, Naoaki made a point of drawing on the expertise of other international and national staff. "When gender issues were raised," explained Naoaki, "I collaborated with a gender consultant and when we needed to talk about humanitarian aspects, we talked with a humanitarian specialist. What is more, when we needed to discuss local settings, we collaborated with national staff to understand the real condition of area offices."

While much of Naoaki's work was done independently, he also collaborated with colleagues and partners – the Ministry of Agriculture, non-profit organizations and other United Nations agencies – who supplied enumerators for data collection, technical resources and helped implement projects. He regularly represented WFP in government meetings on a planned national survey for household food consumption and nutrition intake. Naoaki coordinated and collaborated between WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture as a prelude to the country's first national agricultural season survey and gave technical advice and suggestions for planning the survey and provided baseline data.

In addition, Naoaki was instrumental in improving planning and analysis through his involvement in a number of WFP activities. Among them, Naoaki collaborated on a Comprehensive Food Security Assessment by providing statistical methodologies, creating a database and helping train enumerators to collect data in the field and data entry clerks to input the data. To help WFP conduct better market analysis, he re-organized a network of WFP staff to collect market price data in Sudan and guided WFP staff on how to estimate market drivers. Once data was collected, he did market price research and reported on price trends and market drivers of the price of sorghum, goats and groundnuts.

A highlight of his UN Volunteer experience was being selected to represent WFP in Sudan at a Cost of Diet workshop in Rome. At this workshop participants were introduced to theoretical concepts related to a minimum diet and trained on how to use Cost of Diet software. Naoaki brought back what he learned to the WFP Country Office in Sudan, sharing the innovative materials and concepts with colleagues in the nutrition and VAM units.

"Naoaki's contribution to the mobile phone survey project was very important," said Eric Kenefick, head of programme at WFP Sudan. "I think he learned a lot about himself, and developed more skills in working with people from different backgrounds. Of course, he also learned about WFP as an agency and in particular about WFP Sudan operations."

Naoaki found his assignment in Sudan to be a fruitful year and he expects to parlay his expanded knowledge and skills on statistics and his experiences adapting in challenging environments to new assignments in other parts of the world.



*A highlight of Naoaki's UNV experience was conducting a training mission in Zalingei in central Darfur. Here he shares a meal with colleagues in the Zalingei field office. (WFP, 2015)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **OVER FOUR MILLION DISPLACED PERSONS IN SUDAN IN 2014 RECEIVED FOOD ASSISTANCE FROM WFP UNDER THE PROJECT ON WHICH NAOAKI WORKED.**
- **NAOAKI TRAINED THREE NATIONAL FIELD STAFF ON DATABASE USE FOR A MOBILE PHONE SURVEY PROJECT AND RELAYED 'COST OF DIET' CONCEPTS TO VAM AND NUTRITION STAFF IN THE KHARTOUM OFFICE.**
- **HE TRAINED 15 WFP DATA ENTRY CLERKS WORKING ON FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENTS AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT MONITORING.**



# MICHIHIRO TANABE

*UNV Disaster Risk Management Specialist, UNDP  
Timor-Leste*

Sharing the large island of Timor in the Indonesian archipelago, Timor-Leste is exposed to a variety of natural hazards. The island has steep slopes and suffers widespread deforestation and land degradation, meaning that when heavy monsoonal rains arrive, the result can be devastating. Flash flooding and landslides have destroyed buildings and infrastructures, disrupted livelihoods, caused erosion and left people without homes.

Thus, the UNDP project that Michihiro Tanabe was assigned to as a UNV Disaster Risk Management Specialist was of utmost importance to the country. The project worked with the Ministry of Social Solidarity's National Disaster Management Directorate to build their internal capacities to prepare for, respond to and manage disasters and to bolster sub-national capacities down to the community level.

*The national staff of UNDP organized a field trip for 30 international and national staff to Mount Ramelau, at 2,986 metres the highest mountain on Timor Island. Tree harvesting, animal grazing and unsustainable agricultural practices have changed the mountain cover from predominantly old growth montane forest in the early 1980s to mostly new growth eucalyptus on the upper slopes today. (UNDP, 2015)*



UNDP project staff worked with government counterparts to support the establishment of institutional and legal instruments for disaster risk management. They also worked with communities to reduce their vulnerability to disasters, to prepare effective response mechanisms and to make sure individual families are likewise prepared and resilient.

One of Michihiro's tasks under the project was to select community leaders from each district to serve as disaster risk management focal points. In line with the project's gender mainstreaming goals, he made sure that 50 per cent of these focal points were women. The project designers firmly entrenched gender into the project by putting gender considerations in baselines, targets, indicator and activities, as well as setting aside 15 per cent of the budget specifically for gender mainstreaming.

Michihiro contracted an international finance consultant to work with the



government to gain a better understanding of the real costs for responding to and managing natural disasters. He helped coordinate with the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the National Police, the Secretary of State for Security and the Fire Department to form a committee to draft a new Disaster Law. He set up an information portal to disseminate news and information related to disasters. And to introduce the project to a Japanese-language audience, Michihiro penned an article for the UNDP Tokyo website.

Understaffing of UNDP at times, while creating challenges, at the same time presented opportunities for Michihiro as he took on greater responsibilities and wore two hats (he served as a UNV Programme Officer too), which meant he was able to work directly with the Ministry of Social Solidarity and the Country Director for UNDP in Timor-Leste. In collaboration with UNDP's Regional Advisor in Bangkok, Michihiro supported the design and writing of a disaster risk management project for the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery.

"Disaster Risk Management is a relatively new area in the field of international development," explained Michihiro, "so methods and approaches are still developing and leave room for discussion, which is quite exciting."

While Michihiro helped the staff of the National Disaster Management Directorate bolster their disaster management skills, Michihiro was all the while improving his own. He gained a greater understanding of United Nations approaches to disaster risk management, learned to operate the organization's internal financial system (ATLAS) and boosted his abilities to coordinate projects with donors and counterparts.

In a separate action, Michihiro wrote a proposal for a new UNV scheme for Timor-Leste, prior to a project launch in 2015. The proposed project planned to emulate ICRC's volunteer scheme in the country, using 12 national volunteers to disseminate knowledge on disaster risk management.

"Timor-Leste faces a huge gap between the capital city and smaller cities," observed Michihiro. "That makes the capacity building of local people and improvement of communication systems to reach smaller communities an indispensable part of disaster risk management in this country."



*Michihiro and colleagues at UNDP.  
(UNV-UNDP/JunHong Lee, 2015)*



**TIMOR-LESTE FACES A HUGE GAP BETWEEN THE CAPITAL CITY AND SMALLER CITIES, THAT MAKES THE CAPACITY BUILDING OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND IMPROVEMENT OF COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS TO REACH SMALLER COMMUNITIES AN INDISPENSABLE PART OF DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT IN THIS COUNTRY.**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- THE PROJECT DIRECTLY REACHED 20 STAFF OF THE NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE WITH CAPACITY BUILDING. BETTER DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT AND PREPAREDNESS AT THE NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL SCALE INDIRECTLY BENEFITS ALL PEOPLE OF TIMOR-LESTE.



# YOUTH

The UN Youth Volunteer Programme, established by UNV in 2013, was designed to engage youth in global advocacy and partnerships for youth volunteering and to develop the capacity of national and regional youth schemes. May 2014 saw the launch of the UN Youth Volunteer modality.

Volunteering is a two-way street that enriches learning, skills development and personal growth in youth volunteers, and demonstrates the power of individuals to change the world.

In 2014, UNV deployed 249 UN Youth Volunteers, 65 per cent of them female. In the same year, UNV mobilized a total of 1,170 UN Volunteers aged 29 years or younger, successfully tapping into the boundless energy and enthusiasm of youth.



*Dominican UN Youth Volunteers and other volunteers from Dominican non-governmental organizations met with United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to talk about engaging people in the post-2015 agenda. (Michelle Rivas/UNDP, 2014)*

# CHIZURU IWATA

*UNV Adolescent Participation Officer, UNICEF  
State of Palestine*



*Chizuru worked with teenage girls on a media initiative in East Jerusalem. (UNICEF, 2015)*

Chizuru Iwata bore witness to a deadly period for State of Palestine during her UN Volunteer assignment. A 51-day Israeli military operation in July and August 2014, according to United Nations reports, left several thousand people dead, many of whom were children, and over 10,000 injured. It destroyed and damaged homes, leaving tens of thousands homeless.

Prior to this, State of Palestine was already in a severe humanitarian crisis due to a long-standing siege and embargo imposed on the Gaza Strip and a fragile economic situation, with an unemployment rate of 40 per cent at the end of 2013. Well over half the population had become dependent on food aid from international agencies. Electricity outages lasted up to 18 hours a day across Gaza and few localities were receiving adequate water. United Nations agencies estimated the reconstruction of Gaza would take over a decade. This most recent conflict deepened gaps and discrepancies among Palestinians.

It was within this context that Chizuru embarked on her assignment as a UNV Adolescent Participation Officer for UNICEF, supporting projects targeting adolescents in the State of Palestine (West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza). These projects aimed to build the resilience of young people and cultivate positive outlooks.

Targeting the youth of the State of Palestine is indispensable for reconstruction and a peaceful future: nearly half of the country's 4.4 million people are below the age of 18. These children have lived their whole lives under a chronic emergency situation and occupation. Adolescents in the State of Palestine (10-18 years) are considered among the most vulnerable groups of children as they are exposed to violence, child labour, substance abuse, high dropout rates from school and early marriage. Adolescents live in an environment marked by poverty, violence, conflict and a lack of safe play areas, significant particularly for girls.

Working in UNICEF's Adolescent Development and Participation section, Chizuru supported implementation and monitoring and a variety of the section's activities that were building the capacities of national partners and community-based organizations to promote civic engagement, participation, knowledge sharing and skills acquisition among adolescents. These projects were helping Palestinian adolescents make a positive transition from



**UNICEF TRAINING PROJECTS OFFER ADOLESCENTS SKILLS AND OPPORTUNITIES NEEDED TO SOLVE SOME OF THEIR OWN PROBLEMS. THE PROJECTS HELP ADOLESCENTS GAIN A FEELING OF SELF-WORTH AND AN UNDERSTANDING THEY HAVE THE POWER TO TRANSFORM SOCIETY USING POSITIVE MEANS.**



childhood to adulthood and fostering greater social cohesion and a culture of non-violence through peacebuilding education.

The UNICEF projects which Chizuru supported included skills training, media and community initiatives, job preparedness and volunteer work. To strengthen UNICEF and partners' knowledge management in the area of adolescents, Chizuru collected and analysed background information on the situation of adolescents in the State of Palestine and prepared documentation on good practices in programming. Chizuru also outlined a framework for monitoring youth activities and assisted with the drafting of a youth volunteer framework.

While working and living under the conditions of occupation were restrictive and Chizuru found project implementation sometimes difficult, she nonetheless contributed successfully to project monitoring and helped with the effective implementation of the section's Adolescent Development and Participation programme.

"Adolescents can be powerful agents of change in communities," said Chizuru. "UNICEF training projects offer adolescents skills and opportunities needed to solve some of their own problems. The projects help adolescents gain a feeling of self-worth and an understanding they have the power to transform society using positive means."

Palestinian girls often face barriers to taking part in afterschool activities and skills training. The UNICEF adolescent project took special care to create opportunities so that teenage girls could freely participate in community activities. For example, both male and female volunteers were recruited, as some parents would not allow their daughters to attend project sessions facilitated by male volunteers.

"Through my assignment, I got to know Palestinian society and its people. Living in the State of Palestine, I learned about both the difficulties surrounding peacebuilding and the importance of it," said Chizuru. "I also experienced the flow of emergency response activities and UNICEF project cycles."

"As our section is trying to establish a volunteer network and create a culture of volunteerism in the State of Palestine," explained Chizuru, "my presence as a UN volunteer added value in this respect."

**VALUE ADDED:** Aware that the financial sustainability of their adolescent-targeting projects was a concern, UNICEF specifically worked with national volunteers and communities and collaborated with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and teachers to push for incorporating the projects into school curricula.

Many of the projects Chizuru supported were facilitated by youth volunteers. For instance, the social cohesion project and entrepreneurship project trained around 80 youth, mainly university students, as youth facilitators and provided skills training to adolescents. Many youth volunteers were needed in each community, as the communities are separated by walls and access to them was limited.



*Chizuru – pictured here with participants at a school in Gaza – supported adolescent training projects in schools. (UNICEF, 2015)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **CHIZURU WORKED WITH UNICEF ON PROJECTS THAT TARGETED 101,000 ADOLESCENTS AND CHILDREN FOR RECREATIONAL AND PSYCHOSOCIAL ACTIVITIES AS PART OF UNICEF'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN GAZA.**
- **19,390 ADOLESCENTS WERE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN UNICEF-SUPPORTED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN 2014 THROUGH 500 ADOLESCENT-LED INITIATIVES THAT ADDRESSED WORK PREPAREDNESS AND SOCIAL COHESION.**

# HARUKA NAKAYAMA

UNV Specialist in Youth, Governance and Citizen Participation, UNDP  
Rwanda



Haruka during a site visit to one of the organizations supported under UNDP's civil society strengthening programme. (UNDP Rwanda/Ryohei Ogawa, 2015)

Haruka Nakayama's primary role during her assignment as a UNV Specialist in Youth, Governance and Citizen Participation in Rwanda was to support a joint government and United Nations five-year project called "Strengthening Civil Society Organizations for Responsive and Accountable Governance in Rwanda." The project boosts the capabilities of local civil society organizations so that more citizens can participate in their own governance, safeguard their rights and demand greater accountability from both the private and public sectors in the country.

Many civil society groups in Rwanda – particularly those in rural areas – face challenges, such as capacity shortages, limited diversity of membership and low numbers of citizens engaging in volunteer and charity work. This prevents the groups from being effective agents of socio-economic growth and change and a real voice for the people, and makes it difficult for the groups to access resources. As the role of civil society is not always clearly understood at the local level, effective engagement with local government is at times also problematic.

Placed within UNDP, Haruka supported the main government implementing partner for this project, the Rwanda Governance Board. She helped the board implement the project by doing analysis, research and financial and programme management. Haruka coordinated meetings with partners and civil society organizations and undertook project monitoring, including site visits. She was in charge of financial reporting on the programme. She also trained civil society partners on financial reporting and how to improve the way they communicate their activities and achievements.

Despite her formal training, Haruka had to learn how to use UNDP's financial system, ATLAS, in order to manage the programme's finances. "I quickly gained a better understanding of how UNDP works," said Haruka, "and the issues related to civil society in Rwanda, as well as governance issues."



**I QUICKLY GAINED A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW UNDP WORKS, AND THE ISSUES RELATED TO CIVIL SOCIETY IN RWANDA, AS WELL AS GOVERNANCE ISSUES.**

During Haruka's tenure, 26 local civil society organizations received grants under the programme, following a highly competitive application process. The organizations that were selected address human rights, gender, advocacy, social protection, citizen engagement, cultural promotion and youth employment, among other issues. The end beneficiaries are those who receive services from these organizations, and society in general, with a move toward more responsive governance and the enhancement of human rights, gender equality and social justice. As an example of the services offered, one of the civil society organizations teaches sign language to deaf people to help improve their access to public services and help uphold their human rights.

Haruka was the inspiration behind a short video of the programme and the creation of an infographic, completed in February 2015, to raise visibility, not only of the programme and its achievements but also of those civil society organizations being supported. Haruka wrote articles covering programme events and shared them via social media.

The joint nature of the programme, with the United Nations and government working closely together and the government being the main implementing partner, inherently puts it on track for national ownership. The built-in capacity building elements likewise make it a good bet for lasting beyond the five-year programme span. In fact, DFID is starting a similar project in 2015, and information is being exchanged with them to ensure effective collaboration and to prevent overlap.

Haruka's volunteer experience was broadened well beyond the primary project assignment by her involvement in a number of innovative and exciting events. As a One UN pilot country, programmatic harmonization is organized under thematic results groups; Haruka provided secretariat services to the One UN Rwanda Development Results Group 2: Accountable Governance, with a membership of five United Nations agencies. She organized the group's meetings and helped with coordination among the agencies. Haruka was impressed with the group's strategizing and the exchanges of information between United Nations agencies that prevented overlaps and made collaboration more effective.

Haruka also played a key role in a successful Mobile App Competition for Public Service Delivery. Funded by the UNDP Innovation Facility, and conducted in collaboration with the Rwanda Governance Board, the Ministry of Youth and ICT and a mobile telecommunication company called TIGO, this ad-hoc competition challenged young, tech-savvy Rwandans to create an application for mobile phones that would give citizens easier access to public information and could help improve access to public services. Haruka drafted the concept note and TORs, organized events, processed procurement and financial reports, communicated with partners (including government agencies and private companies), and prepared related communication materials.

Another ad-hoc project realised with Haruka's help was the Rwanda foresightXchange workshop, also funded by the UNDP Innovation Facility and organized in collaboration with the UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence in Singapore and the Rwanda Governance Board. The workshop was attended by over 50 Rwandan senior government officials from national to district level to explore the use of strategic foresight techniques and practices. Haruka again drafted a concept note, communicated with the government counterpart, helped with procurement and preparation of communication materials (including the speech for the event, an article, a blog and social media postings).

**VALUE ADDED:** "There is definitely a lot of added value when a UN Volunteer comes in with a strong sense of dedication to work and brilliant initiatives," said Haruka's supervisor. "This helped the institution to move beyond business as usual and embrace innovation. Apart from the programmatic approach, Haruka improved our way of doing things, especially in terms of communication and event planning."



*Haruka was instrumental in the organization of meetings and workshops, such as the foresightXchange workshop attended by Rwanda government officials. (UNDP Rwanda/Ryohei Ogawa, 2015)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **52 STAFF OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVED TRAINING IN REPORTING AND COMMUNICATIONS.**
- **STAFF OF THE RWANDA GOVERNANCE BOARD WERE ASSISTED TO PREPARE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND GRANT PROPOSAL EVALUATION FORMS**





# NATIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH VOLUNTEER INFRASTRUCTURES

UNV has been, and continues to be, a catalyst and multiplier for volunteerism and sees national capacity development through volunteer schemes as a clear path forward. Through UNV efforts, UNV-assisted volunteerism schemes and networks – in collaboration with governments, civil society and the corporate private sector - hundreds of thousands of volunteers have engaged meaningfully with communities, whether at home or abroad, and brought about real development progress.

UNV strives to support the development of new national and subnational volunteer schemes and to enhance the capacity of local partners to deploy and manage volunteers more effectively. In 2014, more United Nations Member States requested UNV support for the establishment of national volunteer schemes.



*In 2013, The National Volunteer Corps assisted in the creation of three Volunteer Groups in Praia aimed at supporting the activities of local nursing homes. The Volunteers trained by the CNV and the Red Cross assessed the needs of three local nursing homes and now develop recreational and social activities, organize family visits, help with administrative work, provide psychological support and custodial care of the senior citizens. In the picture, Debora Oliveira da Costa, Volunteer at the Red Cross nursing home in Praia develops occupational therapy activities. (UNV, Cape Verde, 2013)*

# MICHELLE TEVITA SINGH

UNV Public Information Officer, OHCHR  
Kyrgyzstan

Michelle Agnes Tevita-Singh approached her job as the first dedicated UNV Public Information Officer in the OHCHR Regional Office for Central Asia with a winning combination of enthusiasm and determination. According to her supervisor, when Michelle arrived in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, to begin her work “the challenge was enormous.”

As the UNV Public Information Officer, Michelle created an impressive slew of guidance materials and public information documents. She developed the first communications strategy for the regional office. Laying a solid foundation for public information officers to follow, she prepared lists of journalists, printing companies, photographers and available materials and made checklists to help the administration of public information activities.

Michelle drafted public statements, wrote three web stories and a press release, prepared flyers and helped complete the mid-year review of the office. She represented the organization to the United Nations Central Asia Communications Group. Having a public information officer made it possible

for the office to take part in the Human Rights Festival in Kyrgyzstan and United Nations Day, raising OHCHR’s visibility locally and increasing awareness on human rights issues.

Even though her assignment was only six-months, in addition to the products and guidance Michelle created, she also built her own skills. She attended training sessions in economic, social and cultural rights, took an online gender course and participated in a UNV workshop. She found that her work was made smoother by the support received from public information officers of other United Nations agencies in Kyrgyzstan and from her organization’s communications team in Geneva.

Michelle’s attention to detail and planning and meticulous documenting of the tasks done was greatly appreciated by her supervisor. “I have rarely seen someone adapt so quickly and contribute so significantly in such a short time,” her supervisor said.



*Michelle built her professional skills while serving as a UN Volunteer, including attending a training course on economic, social and cultural rights. (OHCHR Kyrgyzstan, 2014)*



Michelle (third from left) represented OHCHR on the United Nations Central Asia Communications Group. (OHCHR Kyrgyzstan, 2014)

## WHO BENEFITED?

- PUBLIC INFORMATION MATERIALS WERE SHARED WITH OHCHR OFFICES IN KYRGYZSTAN, KAZAKHSTAN AND TAJIKISTAN WITH A GOAL OF REACHING MORE THAN 5,000 PEOPLE IN PERSON AND REACHING ADDITIONAL AUDIENCES THROUGH THE WEBSITE.

# VOLUNTEERING GLOBALLY

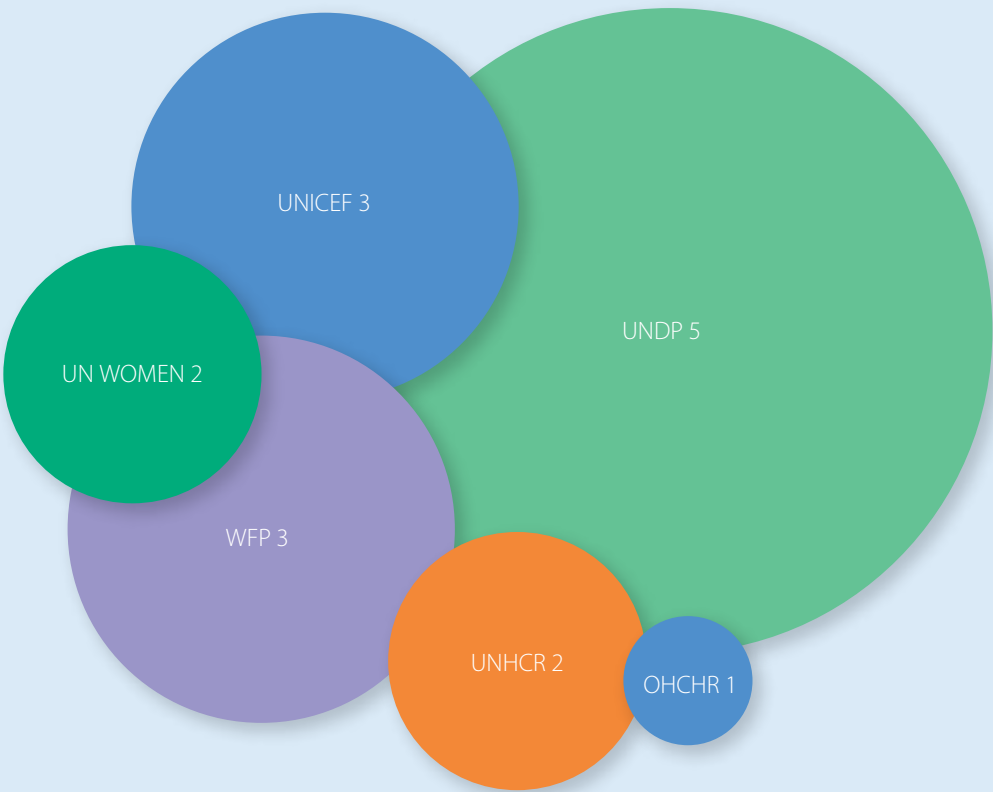
DEPLOYMENT OF UNV'S HRD VOLUNTEERS 2007-2015



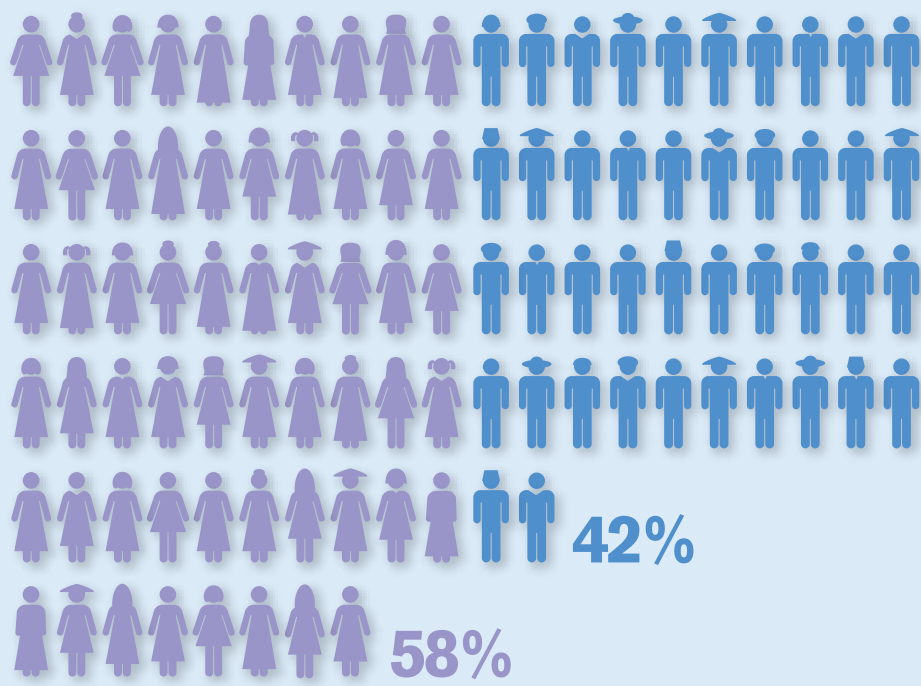




# DEPLOYMENT BY UNITED NATIONS AGENCY 2014-2015



# GENDER OF HDR VOLUNTEERS 2007-2015



# UNV'S HRD VOLUNTEERS IN 2014-2015



2014-2015 UNV HRD Volunteers (Opening Ceremony, 2014)

## United Nations Volunteers

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the United Nations 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

Cover photo:  
Chizuru Iwata, UNV Adolescent Participation Officer with UNICEF in the State of Palestine, worked with teenage girls on a media initiative in East Jerusalem. (UNICEF, 2015)

Back cover photo:  
UN Volunteer Leika Aruga (2nd bottom right), along with fellow volunteers and national counterparts, participated in an event to raise awareness against dating violence as it was recognized to be a major issue affecting the lives of young gender advocates. The group thereafter raised the issue to the CEDAW Committee who called upon the Vietnamese government to criminalize dating violence among other forms of violence. (Hoang Thao, UN Women, Vietnam, 2014)

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Julia Stewart

Design:  
Phoenix Design Aid, Denmark



**Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center**  
The HPC logo symbolizes a Phoenix of Hiroshima, which underwent a miraculous post-war reconstruction after WWII. This represents the spirit of HPC to train professional peacebuilders to assist war-torn societies in the world today.



