

2013-2014 REPORT

# HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT FOR PEACEBUILDING PROGRAMME

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



**UN**  
**Volunteers**

inspiration in action





# INTRODUCTION

Volunteerism is one of the most basic expressions of solidarity and societal cohesion, often arising out of long-established traditions of sharing and reciprocal exchanges. When the values of volunteerism are structurally integrated into global efforts to eradicate poverty and sustain development and peace, volunteerism becomes a powerful means of engaging people in these challenges. Volunteerism helps transform the pace and nature of development and consolidates peacebuilding.

In countries or regions severely falling short of the threshold of peace and inclusive social and economic development, it has been proven time and time again that volunteerism plays a key role. Volunteerism facilitates a strong transition between emergency relief and rebuilding productive lives. Volunteerism leverages and strengthens capacities in communities faced with situations of chronic vulnerability.

The Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre and the United Nations Volunteers programme have joined forces to take volunteering to a global level by building a human resource base for the region that can promote volunteerism at home and abroad, while at the same time equipping young professionals for richer careers and leadership positions in a more interconnected world. This is the Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding Programme.

The programme has been operating annually since 2007 under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan with a goal

of strengthening the civilian capacity of Japan and other countries in the field of peacebuilding by developing professional civilian peacebuilders. The Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre is commissioned by the Ministry to implement the programme in collaboration with the United Nations Volunteers programme.

During 2013-2014, the Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding Programme fielded 17 volunteers to 12 countries on three continents. The volunteers were assigned to 11 different United Nations agencies. All the volunteers, except one from the Philippines, came from Japan. The gender balance was seven females and nine males.

With each year that this programme operates, the cadre of peacebuilders and professionals in Asia with a deeper, first-hand understanding of complicated development and peace issues continues to grow.

The United Nations Volunteer programme is extraordinarily proud of the contributions that the Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding Programme volunteers make to development and peace action in some of the most difficult settings in the world. These young men and women in early stages of their careers bring valuable experience and enthusiasm to their assignments. And, as is often heard in this line of work, what they take back home with them is even greater – the invaluable experience of having lived and worked side by side with people of other cultures and countries to improve the lives of others.

For more information, visit: [www.peacebuilderscenter.jp](http://www.peacebuilderscenter.jp)



# 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, a central part of the Government of Japan's strategy to help foster lasting peace worldwide is the Programme for Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding.

Funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this programme demonstrates the power of volunteerism in peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities by fielding skilled, trained and committed citizens from Japan and other Asian countries to countries experiencing conflict or post-conflict situations. Volunteers deployed under the programme bring new skills and qualities that expand the reach of peacebuilding efforts.

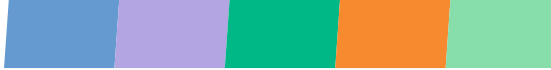
Working alongside national counterparts, Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding volunteers contribute their skills, experience and enthusiasm to projects that range from humanitarian coordination within emergencies and protracted displacement situations to crisis prevention and post-conflict recovery efforts. There are also a number of assignments that 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. Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding volunteers are encouraged to promote volunteerism in communities and to involve women, youth, the disabled and other marginalized groups. The Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding volunteers often become role models themselves and serve as an inspiration to the people with whom they work.

## HOW THE PROGRAMME WORKS

Hosted by the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre at the Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding Programme has been operating since 2007 under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.



Participants in the programme begin by attending five to six weeks of classroom-based training at the Peacebuilders Centre. Participants 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 dispatching the volunteers to work in countries facing peacebuilding-related challenges around the world. The volunteer assignments are managed by the United Nations Volunteers Programme, which undertakes an extensive matching process so that the volunteers are attached to suitable projects in United Nations agencies.

The volunteers typically work directly with vulnerable groups, such as refugees, women, children and others affected by conflict. Their roles 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. They 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.

By the end of 2013, a total of 116 HRD volunteers from 15 Asian countries had completed their UNV assignments. They have supported more than 15 United Nations agencies and partner organizations to deliver humanitarian assistance and improve basic services for vulnerable people.

In some of the world's most troubled places, they have assisted in crisis prevention and recovery efforts and served with 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.

# UN VOLUNTEERS ADD VALUE

While UN Volunteers are treated and viewed within and outside of their host organizations like any other professional staff, the difference lies in the distinct added value that volunteers can bring to projects and programmes.

To begin with, UN Volunteers approach assignments with high levels of energy and enthusiasm. "I was passionate about what I was doing," says Patrick Asinero, Programme Officer working for UNESCO in Kenya. "Whatever I was contributing, big or small, I felt that it was valuable."

Volunteers tend to be less encumbered, as they are assigned to specific tasks within a fixed timeframe. This allows them to be flexible and to take on shifting responsibilities and challenges. According to Sahr Abraham Grass-Sessay, supervisor of Takuya Koimaru, an Associate Field Liaison Officer serving with UNDP in Côte d'Ivoire: "Takuya demonstrated the ethos of volunteerism by taking on additional tasks when requested."

UNICEF Project Officer in Côte d'Ivoire, Maki Komura, parlayed her flexibility to prove useful to the project team. Supervisor Thomas Munyuzangabo found:

"Maki's capacity to adapt and adjust quickly to work in a new environment in a team of more experienced medical doctors was appreciated. In addition to the duties described in her plan, she was always willing to support her colleagues' work or to volunteer for any other task requiring urgency."

Volunteers have an approachability that is appreciated by beneficiaries. Mayu Sakota, a Communications Officer for UNOPS in South Sudan, explains: "When I visited a primary school in Rumbek and interviewed community members who were voluntarily engaged in school management works and farming, after I explained I am also a volunteer,



*UNV Maki Komura's ability to work with experienced medical staff impressed her supervisor. Here she discusses project work with Togba Christina, an HIV/AIDS counsellor at the general hospital in Duékoué, Montagnes region, Côte d'Ivoire. (UNICEF/Koné Kiwabien/22 August 2013)*



*Mayu Sakota, Communications Officer with UNOPS in South Sudan, made trips to project sites to interview beneficiaries, take photos and help tell their stories. Here she is at a primary school in Rumbek, Lakes State, where UNOPS runs a project funded by the Italian government. Mayu's video clips were uploaded to the UNOPS website as part of the organization's She Builds campaign that encourages girls to get an education. (UNOPS/2013)*

I was received on an equal footing with them. In turn, they were open and I was able to hear their real voices.”

Takeshi Kageyama, who worked in Tajikistan as an Assistant Programme Officer with UNHCR, feels that his volunteer status was one of the reasons he was assigned tasks dealing directly with refugees and the local Tajik population. Takuya Koimaru had a similar experience. “There are approximately 19,000 ex-combatants in Abidjan,” explained Takuya while on his assignment in Côte d’Ivoire, “and I can have conversations with them. I think other staff cannot act like me because of their overburdened schedules or they may be in highly-qualified posts. I have more freedom to be in contact with the people targeted by the project.”

Yoko Maruta, a Gender Rights Advocacy and Women’s Empowerment Specialist assigned to Kyrgyzstan, notes that her host agency, UN Women, works closely with youth volunteers and that her ability to tell beneficiaries that she also was a volunteer encouraged other young people to persevere with volunteer work.

Tomoko Ishihara, likewise, found that her UN Volunteer status added a special touch to her work on UNICEF youth projects in Kyrgyzstan. She regularly monitored a network of youth centres in the southern region of the country. Each of these centres formed its own outreach group and volunteer group. “I encouraged and supported these volunteers,” says Tomoko, “by telling them how volunteerism can contribute to their communities and quality of life. By being a volunteer, I had the privilege of being close to communities and I believe it made my relationship between myself and the youth volunteers more intimate. Young volunteers openly spoke to me about their experiences and challenges.”





# THE VOLUNTEERS AT WORK

Currently, 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.

The Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding volunteers have been an important part of UNV's volunteer deployments over that past years and this year their assignments fell under the above five priority areas, many of them crossing over several areas.

UNV-supported development efforts take a human rights-based approach to programming. There is a 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 itself 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 and protection are at the heart of many United Nations entity mandates and activities. Over time, UNV has developed solid knowledge and has 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 2012, 10 percent (US \$860,000) of UNV-administered funds were spent on projects in basic social services and 28 percent (1,934) of UN Volunteers worked in this priority area.



*Mayu Sakota, South Sudan/UNOPS, 2014*

# MAKI KOMURA

*Project Officer, HIV/AIDS and Adolescents, UNICEF, Côte d'Ivoire*  
Strengthening HIV and AIDS projects



*Maki Komura on a field monitoring mission to a rural health centre in Biankouma, Montagnes region, Côte d'Ivoire. Pictured with her are a midwife (right), a nurse (back, left) and his family. (UNICEF/Dr. Koné Moriba/23 August 2013)*

Maki Komura was posted to a country with one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in West Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, and tasked with assisting UNICEF to coordinate with national partners on its HIV and AIDS response. Her specific duties as Project Officer included analysis of reports from UNICEF's consultants in the field and non-governmental organizations, contributing to quality assurance of project implementation and assistance in project planning.

Côte d'Ivoire is struggling with HIV spreading among adolescents and youth and what is being called the 'feminization' of the epidemic, in which infection rates are higher for the female population. The country has a high number of pregnant women living with HIV and hundreds of thousands of orphaned children due to AIDS deaths.

UNICEF supports the government to tackle the situation by adopting a strategy that targets prevention of mother to child HIV transmission, provision of paediatric care and protection, care and support for orphans and vulnerable children and prevention among adolescents and youth.

With a well-defined work plan and a supervisor willing and available to answer questions and make adjustments, Maki Komura produced an impressive amount of products during her one year tenure as a UN Volunteer.

She provided inputs for the UNICEF 2013 annual report, wrote human interest stories, took meeting minutes, gave inputs to UNICEF's 2014-2015 workplan and developed a project proposal on prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission. Maki prepared quarterly donor reports for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria project. Part of this work involved conducted field visits to project sites for monitoring and evaluation.

Maki also made presentations to and helped coordinate with stakeholders. At coordination meetings, she presented progress made and shared constraints faced so that stakeholders could formulate responses. For a project that optimized access to HIV treatment for pregnant women, she established

baseline data and monitored progress and assisted in organizing meetings with local government health officials and implementing partners so that they could develop operational plans, review monitoring indicators and also monitor progress.

During an annual review of an HIV/AIDS and adolescents programme, Maki facilitated group work sessions with government counterparts, United Nations agencies and implementing partners to analyse bottlenecks and formulate strategic responses.

As HIV/AIDS and gender issues are intertwined, the projects on which Maki worked required paying attention to raising awareness and behaviour change. "As a team, we ensured that our project considered gender aspects during all stages - designing, planning and implementation," explains Maki. "Personally, whenever I visited the field, I always tried to approach men, listen to their thoughts, and encourage them to think of gender equity."

Maki learned to appreciate the complexities of working in a large organization like UNICEF. She was able to participate in work that varied from grassroots projects, to national programmes, to global policy advocacy.

Following the one year term, Maki feels more familiar with the UNICEF context and says her knowledge of HIV/AIDS issues and responses by national actors and international communities has significantly deepened. Maki honed her proposal writing skills and fundraising strategizing abilities. As an added bonus, working in a French-speaking country helped refine her French language skills.

Maki contributed to projects that reached more than 60,000 youth with HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness messages, allowed more than 6,000 among them to be tested for HIV, and referred nearly 8,000 pregnant women to the programme to prevent their newborns from being affected by HIV. During her time in Côte d'Ivoire, UNICEF projects also helped over 3,400 people living with HIV and orphans and vulnerable children by ensuring they received direct care and support through community structures. This is something Maki takes away from just one year of hard work with the utmost pride.

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**AS A TEAM, WE ENSURED THAT OUR PROJECT CONSIDERED GENDER ASPECTS DURING ALL STAGES - DESIGNING, PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION,” EXPLAINS MAKI.**

**“PERSONALLY, WHENEVER I VISITED THE FIELD, I ALWAYS TRIED TO APPROACH MEN, LISTEN TO THEIR THOUGHTS, AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO THINK OF GENDER EQUITY.**



*Maki Komura meets with peer educators on HIV/AIDS at a gathering of people living with HIV and AIDS in Danané, Montagnes region, Côte d'Ivoire. (UNICEF/ Koné Kiwabien/20 August 2013)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **MORE THAN 60,000 ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH REACHED WITH HIV/AIDS PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MESSAGES**
- **MORE THAN 6,000 ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH TESTED FOR HIV**
- **8,000 PREGNANT WOMEN REFERRED TO THE PROGRAMME TO PREVENT THEIR NEWBORNS FROM BEING AFFECTED BY HIV**
- **3,400 PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV AND ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN RECEIVED DIRECT CARE AND SUPPORT THROUGH COMMUNITY STRUCTURES**

# MAMIKO YANO

Human Rights Officer, OHCHR, Kyrgyzstan  
Promoting housing, land and property rights



Mamiko Yano (far right) and other OHCHR staff members take part in United Nations Day by helping city residents to clean the Botanical Garden in Bishkek. Mamiko helped organize the event, dubbed 'Green City!' (OHCHR/19 October 2014)

**“THE LACK OF ENJOYMENT OF HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS IS BOTH CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE OF THE CONFLICT IN CENTRAL ASIA, PARTICULARLY SO IN KYRGYZSTAN. LAND DISPUTES IN AND AROUND URBAN CENTRES DUE TO INFLUXES OF MIGRANTS HAVE BEEN A CAUSE OF TENSION IN SOCIETY AND MAY BE A POTENT TRIGGER OF CONFLICT IN FUTURE. THE PROJECT TAKES THIS INTO ACCOUNT AND ADVOCATES FOR BETTER PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING.”**

When she arrived in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to serve as a Human Rights Officer for the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Mamiko dove right into her series of research and writing tasks on the promotion of human rights, including those related to housing, land and property.

Access to adequate housing has been a critical issue in Central Asian countries, particularly following the collapse of the Soviet system. Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan all have shifted from state-driven to open market policies, resulting in less or limited involvement of the state in provision of housing. As a consequence, the right to adequate housing has become a serious problem for vulnerable populations in Central Asia. Those most affected are people with low-incomes, migrants, ethnic minorities, women, children, persons with disabilities and the homeless.

The introduction of a free market economy cut a range of social benefits, including social housing, leaving many families to compromise their choices and living standards. A rapidly growing urban population, lack of land for housing, uneven development of private property, privatization of apartments and buildings through corrupt practices, lack of jobs and decreasing earnings of individuals and families are further exacerbating the housing problems. The number of informal settlements is growing around the periphery of cities, leaving vulnerable people under threat of forced eviction without appropriate procedure and compensation.

OHCHR is helping the Government of Kyrgyzstan (as well as Kazakhstan and Tajikistan) to enhance legislation and national policies and practices in support of human rights, such as the right to adequate housing, through the incorporation of international standards.

Mamiko participated in field monitoring of informal settlements around Bishkek, bearing witness to the physical and social conditions of people living in these makeshift communities. The results of monitoring trips help uncover pertinent information that informs the agency's research on the right to adequate housing and is incorporated in assistance activities.

Mamiko assessed and reviewed a research paper prepared by an external consultant titled *Assessment of the housing, land and property rights in south of Kyrgyzstan, Osh and Jalal-Abad in particular after June 2010 events*. She

facilitated further inclusion of gender perspectives in the research by incorporating her analysis of the housing situation of widows and single mothers after the June 2010 events and greater detail on legal tenure and property ownership of women in Kyrgyzstan.

She drafted three leaflets on the right to adequate housing in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. These leaflets help raise awareness about the right to adequate housing and inform citizens about access to basic public services related to housing.

Gender issues are also being tackled in this context. Mamiko observed that OHCHR was putting forth a concerted effort in gender mainstreaming. Each project, explains Mamiko, actively facilitated gender-balanced participation in its activities and raised issues related to women's rights. The participation rate of women in all activities implemented by OHCHR, she notes, was 43.3%, with 223 out of 551 project participants being women. She also was impressed that OHCHR had employed gender-balanced consultants and trainers to even further increase gender perspectives in their activities.

Mamiko herself forwarded the gender equity agenda, and drafted guidelines for gender mainstreaming at OHCHR. For this to happen, she collected gender disaggregated data of all activities implemented by the organization. She assessed the degree to which gender mainstreaming was taking place and recommended points for further improvement.

Mamiko created a 36-page visual presentation on OHCHR's activities and the human rights situation in Central Asia. She updated and edited a compendium of 'Kyrgyzstan's Compliance with Human Rights Obligations: Recommendations, Concluding Observations and Decisions of the U.N. Human Rights Council, Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Special Procedures, and Treaty Bodies.' She researched and updated fact sheets on United Nations human rights mechanisms. Mamiko also organized and facilitated a 'leadership dialogue' as part of an internal compliance seminar to discuss the ethics of international civil servants.

Mamiko believes the work that is being done in Kyrgyzstan can be longlasting. "The idea of human rights is conceptual and universal," says Mamiko. "The results of OHCHR's work can continue without physical financial support once the idea is rooted in society and the government and the idea of human rights is perpetuated through legislation and policies."



**THE IDEA OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS CONCEPTUAL AND UNIVERSAL," SAYS MAMIKO. "THE RESULTS OF OHCHR'S WORK CAN CONTINUE WITHOUT PHYSICAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT ONCE THE IDEA IS ROOTED IN SOCIETY AND THE GOVERNMENT AND THE IDEA OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS PERPETUATED THROUGH LEGISLATION AND POLICIES.**



*Mamiko Yano participating in field monitoring at an informal settlement called Ak-Bosogo in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Located near the Dordoi bazaar – the largest public market in Central Asia - Ak-Bosogo is one of the most populated and poorest of the informal settlements in and around the capital city. OHCHR promotes the right to adequate housing. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), there are 47 informal settlements (called novostroikis) in and around Bishkek as of 2010, and the right of adequate housing of residents in these areas is not fully secured. (OHCHR/11 October 2013)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- RESIDENTS OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN KYRGYSZTAN GAIN UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS
- WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN OHCHR PROJECT DESIGN RELATED TO ADEQUATE HOUSING
- **551** PEOPLE DIRECTLY PARTICIPATED IN OHCHR PROJECTS

# MAYU SAKOTA

Communications Officer, UNOPS, South Sudan

Pioneering communications for UNOPS in a newly independent country



Mayu Sakota organized UNOPS participation in the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence' campaign in South Sudan. (UNOPS/2013)

South Sudan - the newest country in the world - became independent in July 2011 after decades of conflict. The long years of conflict in an already large, rural and severely underdeveloped region left few public infrastructures in place. Only two percent of roads are paved, and 60 percent are inaccessible during the rainy season. Electricity is scarce (available to only one percent of the population). South Sudan also has some of the world's lowest social indicators. Over 50 percent of the population is living below the national poverty line of less than a dollar per day. Less than half of children are enrolled in primary school and only 27 percent of adults over 15 years are literate. Less than 10 percent of children who do go to school have access to permanent classrooms. Less than 40 percent of the population has access to any form of health care and the under-five child mortality rate is over 10 percent. Almost half the population - 4.1 million people - are food insecure.

The UNOPS South Sudan Operation Centre (SSOC) is committed to supporting the government to become a viable and stable state. And this is where Mayu Sakota comes in. For her UNV assignment, Mayu was placed in the UNOPS South Sudan offices as their first Communications Officer.

UNOPS collaborates with local and international partners to improve the lives of the South Sudanese people by implementing infrastructure projects, providing procurement services and clearing land mines. UNOPS projects span a wide range of infrastructure needs, including roads, bridges, airstrips, schools, hospitals, government offices, police and justice facilities. UNOPS projects take into consideration gender equity, sustainability and local capacity development.

Mayu took charge of communicating UNOPS aims and goals and successes both internally and to the outside world by creating social media content, contributing to websites and writing factsheets and press releases. She responded to daily information requests about UNOPS work. Mayu traveled to project sites to gather the material needed – she conducted interviews with beneficiaries and staff and took photos and video clips. She actively participated in key events, such as United Nations Day, International Woman's Day and the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign.

In an important donor relations-strengthening move, Mayu supported the UNOPS SSOC Country Director to attend the Tokyo International Conference on African Development V (TICAD V) held in Japan. From her base in South

**“THROUGH WORKING ON A WIDE RANGE OF PROJECTS RANGING FROM EMERGENCY TO DEVELOPMENT, I HAVE NOW COME TO UNDERSTAND A BIGGER PICTURE OF THE PROCESS OF NATION BUILDING IN THE WORLD'S NEWEST COUNTRY.”**



Sudan, and in collaboration with a Japanese colleague in the South Africa regional office, she did much of the preparatory work. Mayu helped plan, design and organize the UNOPS booth for the conference, prepared meeting materials and assisted with the Country Director's visit to a school, which was covered by local media in Japan.

Through her work, Mayu forged strong connections with national and international media and helped SSOC management and project staff to enhance their relationships with current and potential donors. She created communication strategies, further strengthening the internal communications of the SSOC. And like other information officers serving in United Nations agencies, she became a member of the United Nations Communication Group to promote an integrated and unified United Nations communications agenda.

Mayu proudly takes on the mantle of UNOPS when she lists the successful activities that took place while she was a UN Volunteer. She highlights UNOPS help with the construction of the National Archives which will be presented to the people of South Sudan as a gift from Norway. The building of 14 schools with the Ministry of Education, supported by the Italian Development Cooperation, and its adjunct activities that include establishing girls' clubs, workshops, vegetable gardens, production and distribution of sanitary napkins and the establishment of Parent-Teacher Associations. She points out the airstrips and roads that allow access to tens of thousands of refugees in remote locations that previously had weak supply lines and were completely inaccessible during the rainy season.

Mayu's time spent effectively communicating about these projects and others was essential to increase internal and external understanding of the work of UNOPS in South Sudan. Mayu's information materials promoted UNOPS in a positive light, helped the organization gain greater visibility, and facilitated the acquisition of new projects.

As the first Communications Officer at SSOC, Mayu had to initiate many of the communications procedures and documents from scratch with no precedent. At the same time, this afforded her the opportunity to gain a great amount of experience and many skills in a short time. "This makes me confident that I could work in any international organization in any country in the future," she said. "It has been a great experience to be a pioneer."

Mayu is happy that her role as a Communications Officer allowed her to be an integral part of an operation that is helping to improve the lives of tens of thousands of refugees, children, women and community members in South Sudan. And her personal growth has been dramatic. "I feel braver to go out into the world after life in South Sudan," she says. "It has been an exponential learning process from both my desk work and faces I have connected with, voices I have heard and changes I have witnessed."

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**THIS MAKES ME CONFIDENT THAT I COULD WORK IN ANY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION IN ANY COUNTRY IN THE FUTURE," SHE SAID. "IT HAS BEEN A GREAT EXPERIENCE TO BE A PIONEER.**



Mayu Sakota organized a booth for UNOPS for United Nations Day celebrations. The booth attracted over 400 people within one and a half hours and was featured on local radio and TV stations. (UNOPS/2013)

## WHO BENEFITED?

- UNOPS AS THE HOST AGENCY, THROUGH INCREASED VISIBILITY OF ITS PROJECTS IN SOUTH SUDAN FOCUSED ON SCHOOLS BUILDING AND ROADS CONSTRUCTION

# TAKESHI KAGEYAMA

*Assistant Programme Officer, UNHCR, Tajikistan*

Building capacities of local non-governmental partners



*Takeshi Kageyama during a monitoring visit to a non-governmental organization partner project in Dushanbe. (Keiichi Sato/July 2013)*

It may be a buzzword, but the role that Takeshi Kageyama played in identifying “social capitals” in beneficiary communities for UNHCR in Tajikistan was a pivotal one to helping build the capability of local non-governmental organizations to more successfully do their work and for communities to head down the path of durable solutions.

Tajikistan hosts several thousand refugees and asylum seekers, mainly from Afghanistan, but also there are some Kyrgyz, Iranians and Iraqis. In recent years, Tajikistan has received on average 15 Afghan families per month and as the situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate, this trend is expected to continue. Over 90 percent of all Afghan refugees in Tajikistan are ethnic Tajiks, and the remainder are Hazara, Pashtun and Turkmen people. However, its national asylum system does not fully conform to international standards and, in practice, authorities systematically give precedence to national provisions over international law.

As a post-conflict state, Tajikistan has limited infrastructure, a poorly functioning social welfare system, and reduced institutional and government structures. High unemployment rates, widespread poverty and limited livelihood opportunities affect both refugee and host communities in the country. Potable water is limited and rent costs are high. Gas and electricity shortages are common. Unofficial extra costs may be levied for access to health care or primary education. Many refugee children require special adjustment courses in Cyrillic script and some are unable to complete school due to the imperative of finding employment. The restrictions on settlement in urban centres have important and negative implications for the ability of refugees to access employment, healthcare and other services.

Due to these difficult conditions, UNHCR provides material and financial support to refugees and asylum-seekers and host populations. And with its partners, UNHCR also helps refugee populations with vocational training and to gain access to a recently established micro-loan scheme that promotes self-employment and small business initiatives. An important part of this work is assessing the capacities and resources of these beneficiaries to manage their own communities.

The project to which Takeshi was assigned was a capacity-building project in the health sector. Takeshi helped partner NGOs to improve their abilities in accounting and finance. He executed auditor recommendations for partner NGOs in asset management, procurement, monthly reporting systems and budget monitoring.

Takeshi was also involved in field assessments, inter-agency coordination and relationship building with donors. With colleagues from partner NGOs, Takeshi visited refugee and asylum-seeker homes in urban areas in Tajikistan. Takeshi liaised with these NGOs to ensure that projects were being implemented using their maximum ability.

Takeshi was called upon to analyse the factors that led to successful or unsuccessful community projects and management. Then, in collaboration with the communities, partner organizations and other stakeholders, he helped formulate strategic plans for community development, taking a beneficiary-oriented approach that could lead to long-lasting solutions.

In addition, Takeshi drafted a report titled UNHCR 20 Years in Tajikistan and coordinated a conference for World Refugee Day. He helped review contingency planning for a potential influx of Afghan refugees and coordination with the Inter-Ministerial working group of Tajikistan. The implementation report of the UNHCR Urban Refugee Policy in Tajikistan was also reviewed with his assistance.

UNHCR work is intimately involved with the beneficiaries. But because very few Tajik people speak English, finding (and funding) a translator became a challenge. Nonetheless, through his assignment, Takeshi gained a better understanding of refugee issues and problems, enhanced his communication skills and learned the ins and outs of working with humanitarian agencies and refugee populations.

Takeshi finds that the work of UNHCR in Tajikistan should be sustainable, in that UNHCR activities are implemented through local non-governmental partners. "As most of my assignments were capacity-building activities for partner NGOs, local clinics and Persons of Concern," Takeshi says, "even if the external funding is stopped, the results of this project will be maintained." But he notes, with a deepened understanding of development issues: "They need to improve their management and business process skill."



*Takeshi Kageyama and colleagues visit Afghan refugee households in Vafdat. (Keiichi Sato/July 2013)*

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**AS MOST OF MY ASSIGNMENTS WERE CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES FOR PARTNER NGOS, LOCAL CLINICS AND PERSONS OF CONCERN,” TAKESHI SAYS, “EVEN IF THE EXTERNAL FUNDING IS STOPPED, THE RESULTS OF THIS PROJECT WILL BE MAINTAINED.**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS IN TAJIKISTAN RECEIVE IMPROVED HEALTH CARE SERVICES
- LOCAL NGOS IMPROVE THEIR MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS IN THE HEALTH SECTOR

# NORIKO KITAMURA

*Public Health Specialist, WHO, Sierra Leone*

Helping a nation improve their surveillance of disease



*Noriko Kitamura joins a national surveillance officer (left) and community health officer (right) in a supportive supervision visit to the Kontoloo Community Health Center. (WHO/2014)*



*Noriko Kitamura worked alongside national medical staff. (WHO/2014)*

Noriko Kitamura may have been a short-term volunteer, but her impact on the way in which Sierra Leone deals with pernicious diseases, such as cholera, will be long lasting. A paediatrician, Noriko was assigned to work in the World Health Organization (WHO) as a Public Health Specialist in Sierra Leone.

In a bid for sustainable health care and systems, WHO provides technical support to pertinent government bodies, particularly ministries of health and sanitation.

Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR) is a strategy of the WHO Regional Office for Africa for improving epidemiologic surveillance and response in the region. This strategy not only tackles communicable diseases - long the leading cause of illness, death and disability in African countries - but also emerging non-communicable diseases, such as hypertension and diabetes, that are threatening the well-being of African communities. Other conditions and events, such as malnutrition and maternal deaths, are also part of the IDSR system as it shoots for addressing all public health conditions in a holistic way. In addition, IDSR tries to strengthen national core capacities for surveillance and response across all health systems.

IDSR was introduced in Sierra Leone in 2004. However, implementation of surveillance in the country is currently weak. The big challenges for IDSR in Sierra Leone are: 1) inadequate capacity of surveillance staff (especially for monitoring of disease trends, case investigation and detection of epidemics); 2) delays in specimen collection, storage and transportation; 3) weak laboratory feedback with surveillance; and 4) lack of supportive supervision from the national to district levels and from districts to health facilities.

Noriko Kitamura was tasked to assist the Directorate of Disease Prevention and Control in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to conduct the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) and surveillance activities and to help develop a multi-year, multi-sectoral cholera preparedness and response plan.

She worked alongside national surveillance officers in the Disease Prevention and Control unit of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. With the Government and WHO jointly providing supportive supervision, the capacity of surveillance staff, feedback from laboratories to districts and related activities are being bolstered.

Noriko was given the tall tasks of strengthening the detection and reporting of priority diseases, conditions and events, building national and district capabilities to conduct case investigation and enhancing their aptitude for data collection, collation, analysis, interpretation and use.

In the course of her assignment, she supported the functionality of the Central Public Health Reference Laboratory (CPHRL) and other regional laboratories for disease surveillance. She helped reinforce the government's preparedness and response to epidemic disease outbreaks. And she supported the provision of regular feedback on integrated disease surveillance and response performance and the monitoring and evaluation of the same.

While Noriko was in the country, there was an outbreak of cholera. She was called upon to assist with the investigation of the outbreak and to support cholera task force meetings. She offered supportive supervision on surveillance and conducted a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice (KAP) survey in government hospitals in the Western Area District.

Noriko found that health care workers were willing to contribute to the concept of better national public health. With that in mind, Noriko sensitized health care workers on the importance of disease surveillance activities.

Even though Noriko was already a trained professional medical worker, she gained prized experience through her volunteer assignment. She learned to communicate more effectively with medical and other staff, including those from different cultures. And she deepened her technical background on national immunization campaigns and disease surveillance programmes.

With Noriko's support, surveillance and capacity building in Sierra Leone was boosted, leading to better collection and dissemination of health information, which ultimately aids the country in its ability to detect public health events and take timely action to respond to them.



*Noriko Kitamura on a polio surveillance mission with a national surveillance officer (to her left) and a mother holding a child with polio. (WHO/2014)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- NATIONAL HEALTH WORKERS STRENGTHEN THEIR CAPACITIES IN THE FIELD OF DISEASE SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE
- APPROX. **800,000** CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 5 ARE LESS VULNERABLE TO COMMUNICABLE DISEASES SUCH AS CHOLERA

# SHINICHI SAKUMA

*Civil Society Development Associate, UNDP, Ukraine*

Opening up space for Ukrainian citizens to dialogue with authorities for public services



*Shinichi Sakuma (far right) takes part in a teambuilding workshop for UN Volunteers working with United Nations agencies in Ukraine. (UNV/Ivan Dekhtiar/October 2013)*

Providing administrative services that are accessible, convenient and of high quality is critically important for democratic governance and decentralization. However, as of 2013, 65 percent of the citizens of Ukraine reported being mostly or fully unsatisfied with the quality of services provided by local governments.

Citizen engagement in national and local decision-making processes is vital to guarantee service delivery, including to the most vulnerable populations, and is a prerequisite for effective governance. In Ukraine, though, decades of top-down power structures have entrenched a complacent citizenry and allowed corruption to dig deep roots. Public monitoring and proper mechanisms to obtain citizen feedback and transparent follow-up procedures are lacking.

Civil society organizations are a good channel for mounting citizen involvement. But, only 10 percent of the 90,000 registered civil society organizations in Ukraine are active and only some six percent of the population engages in these organizations. Consequently, citizen trust toward civil society organizations is extremely low and citizens do not perceive these organizations to be viable tools for protecting their rights, nor do they believe in their efficiency.

Shinichi Sakuma, as a Civil Society Development Associate at UNDP in Ukraine, aimed to change this situation and set out to expand the role and status of UNDP's main partner civil society organization. The organization's name Samopomich means "self-help." Shinichi helped raise the organization's profile at the international level by registering it with global non-governmental organization websites and databases. He drafted news articles about the organization and a project progress report and posted updates on the real-time reporting platform of the project as well as on the UNDP Ukraine website.

Shinichi created an e-library of nearly 100 documents with practical information on public monitoring of administrative service provision so that Samopomich can better serve as a reference centre for other civil society organizations in the country. He also wrote a paper and PowerPoint presentation covering the best practices of similar resource centres around the world. To do this, he reviewed existing, efficient global resource centres and examined their roles, conditions, issues and success factors and made a list of recommendations for other organizations that might be interested in becoming a resource centre.

Through this, Shinichi helped transfer knowledge and expertise on local service provision, citing best European and global practices, including those on participatory planning and decision making, government transparency and accountability. He also highlighted innovative projects using mass media engagement and other innovative models of citizen engagement in local decision-making.

Shinichi further helped civil society actors by undertaking a donor mapping exercise for the Ukraine, including providing key information about donor agencies working in the country, such as their web-sites, contacts, focus areas and open grant competitions.

Volunteerism plays an important role in this project, as volunteers are a key resource for civil society organizations. Volunteers are involved in monitoring of the quality of administrative service provision. Samopomich has more than 60 permanent volunteers that take part in its major activities.

Shinichi also found time during his assignment to assist with the UNDP-Japan Partnership Fund. Following discussions with the UNDP Senior Programme Manager and the Embassy of Japan in Ukraine, he drafted a concept note to prepare for the fund application process that included an analysis of 13 Japanese civil society organizations, private firms and foundations engaged in e-governance. As Japan is still dealing with post-nuclear disaster issues following the Great East Japan Earthquake that resulted in damage to the Fukushima power plant, Shinichi saw the potential for Japan to learn from Ukraine's post-nuclear disaster management experiences following the Chernobyl disaster of 1986.

On 30 June 2013, Shinichi participated in celebrating the Day of Youth and Children Organizations under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine in Kiev's Independence Square. More than 100,000 people gathered for the event. Organizations working with and for children and youth had an opportunity to share with colleagues their experiences and exchange information. Performances of several well-known Ukrainian bands, sports competitions and interactive presentations of NGO activities were all part of the day's festivities. UNDP and UN Volunteers likewise participated in the Youth Day activities, sharing information about volunteer work and activities for youth within the United Nations. UN Volunteers organizing a quiz for young people on HIV/AIDS knowledge and disseminating thematic information materials.

During his time in Ukraine, not only did Shinichi gain a better understanding of participatory decision-making, transparency and accountability in the field of democratic governance, but he also was exposed to the latest practices in e-government and e-governance. "I see the potential for e-governance not only for better governance and anti-corruption," noted Shinichi, "but also in peacebuilding and prevention of conflicts."

Shinichi is excited about the ability to use technology, like personal computers, smart phones and web platforms, for early warning and monitoring and for cross-national education initiatives. "I actually believe the number of victims of serious social problems - such as illegal trade in weapons and drugs, human trafficking and violations of human rights - can decrease."



**I ACTUALLY BELIEVE THE NUMBER OF VICTIMS OF SERIOUS SOCIAL PROBLEMS - SUCH AS ILLEGAL TRADE IN WEAPONS AND DRUGS, HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS - CAN DECREASE.**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **SAMOPOMICH ORGANIZATION, WITH ITS MORE THAN 60 PERMANENT VOLUNTEERS, AS WELL AS 15 OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS THAT CARRIED OUT PROJECTS**
- **UP TO NINE PEOPLE MOBILIZED TO BE VOLUNTEERS, THE MAJORITY OF THEM YOUNG WOMEN FROM URBAN AREAS**





# PEACEBUILDING

Since the early 1990's, UNV has played an integral part in supporting the implementation of Security Council-mandated peacekeeping and special political mission mandates, including support to peacebuilding offices. 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 the particular aim of strengthening national civilian capacities to impact the sustainability of peacebuilding.

UN Volunteers have been deployed in key implementation and capacity-building roles within the context of, for example, human rights monitoring, local institutional capacity support, democratic governance, and operational technical support.

In 2012, UN Volunteers constituted over 30 percent of the international civilian capacity within the 18 peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions in which UNV was engaged. This represented over 40 percent of UN Volunteer assignments globally.

UN Volunteers help UN entities to expand their roles to further engage communities within the context of United Nations peacekeeping, peace building and political missions. They help build both local and national capacities. They help strengthen the compact between states and its citizens and the rebuilding of trust between its citizens. Whenever possible, UN volunteers build on the community-based focus and presence in a politically and socially non-threatening manner.



*Yoshiyuki Sagara on a field mission to Zamzam IDP camp with a UNAMID peacekeeper in North Darfur, Sudan. (IOM/April 2014)*

# TAKUNORI MATSUMURA

*Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, UNOPS, South Sudan*  
Gauging the results of vital projects in South Sudan



*Takunori Matsumura interviewing a teacher and a parent at a primary school in Rumbek, South Sudan. (UNOPS-UNV/Mayu Sakota/November 2013)*

An important aspect of humanitarian work is ensuring that projects are reviewed, progress is documented and that the results are shared with project management teams, funders and the wider public. This is done primarily through monitoring and evaluation. As a monitoring and evaluation specialist, Takunori Matsumura was charged with this task for eight projects that the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) implemented in South Sudan.

Takunori oversaw the monitoring and evaluation of projects of the two UNOPS teams: 1) the United Nations Team; and 2) the Emergency

Response Unit. The United Nations Team projects are those which are funded by United Nations agencies and bilateral donors to help stabilize the new country at state level. The main project, the South Sudan Recovery Fund (SSRF), delivers on peace dividends through high-impact infrastructure projects and by supporting livelihoods in all ten states of the country. Infrastructure works included road construction and rehabilitation in remote areas, borehole installation, and construction of police stations and prisons.

The United Nations Team, through Italian government funding, also supported a primary school education project, for which Takunori was called

upon to conduct the field survey. World Bank statistics show that the literacy rate for girls and women in South Sudan (2009) is only 16 percent compared to 40 percent for boys and men. To address this discrepancy, the project also sponsors workshops for parents and communities to raise awareness of the importance of educating girls and the right to education for all children.

Takunori's work with the Emergency Response Unit was crucial, as South Sudan is facing a number of humanitarian emergencies, including an influx of refugees fleeing neighbouring Sudan to escape conflict between the government and rebel groups. South Sudan is a huge country, nearly the size of Texas, with few paved roads and inadequate means for the upkeep of roads and airstrips, making getting aid to those in need by land significantly restricted and often impossible during the many rainy season months. The Emergency Response Unit addresses these logistical challenges by rehabilitation and building roads and airstrips that allow United Nations and aid agencies to gain access to refugees and other populations who have fled their homes.

Takunori's work brought him close to project management teams, as well as to local communities, authorities and partner organizations. As a key player on the monitoring and evaluation team, Takunori took part in all steps in monitoring and evaluation processes: determining methodology, outlining frameworks and indicators, negotiating budgets and organizing the logistics to carry out the tasks. He reviewed project documentation, collected data in the field and interviewed stakeholders.

As with other aid workers in South Sudan, Takunori had to face extremely tough living and working conditions, considerably different than he was used to at home. Lack of hot water, no electricity during the day and generators roaring at night were a tough adjustment. The cost of living in one of the world's most remote capital cities is high as everything must be imported and security is a constant consideration. Takunori also had to negotiate the challenges of all monitoring and evaluation officers: that this task often is seen as taking away from the 'real' work of already overburdened management and project staff.

In just eight months, Takunori designed, planned and conducted monitoring and evaluation of eight critical UNOPS projects and produced one baseline survey and four evaluations. His work substantially contributed to both designing and assessing UNOPS projects and helped inform project management teams and other concerned parties about these results.

Takunori is rightly proud of his UNV assignment and felt that his reports helped to increase UNOPS accountability toward donors. Takunori takes away hands-on experience in managing project monitoring and evaluation from start to finish and tailoring formulaic guidelines for the real challenges of field situations. He undertook the streamlining of gender issues in his monitoring, and was pleased to learn that UNOPS tried to hire as many women as possible from local communities for their projects, so that both genders have an opportunity to earn income. He also gained constructive communication and negotiation skills, which he would like to further hone.



*South Sudan is about the size of Texas with only a few paved roads, meaning that United Nations staff members and other aid workers, like Takunori Matsumura, often travel in the back of transport aircraft. (UNOPS-UNV/Mayu Sakota/November 2013)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- A WIDE RANGE OF UNOPS PROJECTS IN ALL TEN STATES OF SOUTH SUDAN WHICH HELP IMPROVE THE LIVES OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF SOUTHERN SUDANESE

# TAKUYA KOIMARU

*Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Specialist, UNDP, Côte d'Ivoire*  
On the ground floor of planning, monitoring and evaluating projects for ex-combatants



*Takuya Koimaru talks with ex-combatants outside the office of Côte d'Ivoire's National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. (Touré Obétan/29 October 2013)*

In post-conflict settings, the non-integration of ex-combatants is a major threat to community security if no preventative measures are taken. Côte d'Ivoire has suffered from political crises since 1999, which peaked with a post-electoral civil war in 2011. Recently, the country has restored order and society is relatively stable. During this critical post-conflict phase, efforts are being made to further stabilize the country and ensure a lasting peace. Security and disarmament activities - essential for peace to grow roots - are being planned and executed, for which UNDP is a part. Major initiatives include the Security Sector Reform project, the Disarmament,

Demobilization and Reintegration programme and Project for the Fight against Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Takuya Koimaru arrived in Côte d'Ivoire with an underlying understanding of the international aid field, having previously volunteered for his country's aid arm, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency. With this background, Takuya was appointed as the UNDP liaison to the country's national Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) organization.

The national DDR programme aims to reduce the potential for continued armed violence and insecurity by helping former combatants (including female ex-combatants) to secure opportunities for income generation and supports community rehabilitation, reconciliation and community development. The programme's goal is to reintegrate 65,000 former fighters by 2015.

Takuya was instrumental during the planning stages of UNDP support to the DDR programme. He delved into coordination, resource mobilization and strategy development. His past experience working with non-governmental organizations made it easier for him to give input when UNDP began selecting implementing partners for the programme. One particular success for Takuya was to secure financial support from the Japanese government for a DDR activity that began while he was in the country.

Takuya coordinated among UNDP, the national committee, the Japanese embassy and other stakeholders. He collected data on the country's DDR progress and helped with programme planning. It was challenging to uncover information on DDR activities, other than the little that was publicly available, due to the sensitive nature of the process. But many visits to project sites in the capital proved helpful to Takuya. His efforts allowed stakeholders, including the national committee, to make informed decisions and adopt well-conceived strategies.

Takuya was a key player in the monitoring and evaluation of DDR activities. He made the extra effort to execute the planned monitoring and evaluation activities and budget effectively and in a timely manner. "In retrospect," explains Takuya, "coordinating closely with other stakeholders and establishing relationships of trust among my colleagues was crucial. At the same time, I received support from my supervisor and colleagues that filled in the gaps where I lacked experience with the programme."

Takuya was impressed by his supervisor's ability to grasp the big picture of the array of post-conflict projects and programmes, and how he could anticipate what to prepare in advance and how to address problems. Takuya understands that such acumen is the result of decades of work on peace and community security projects and hopes that at least a fraction of his supervisor's skills have rubbed off on him. "That kind of experience," notes Takuya, "is not available through any academic training."

**"COORDINATING CLOSELY WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS AND ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS OF TRUST AMONG MY COLLEAGUES WAS CRUCIAL."**

“

**I RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM MY SUPERVISOR AND COLLEAGUES THAT FILLED IN THE GAPS WHERE I LACKED EXPERIENCE WITH THE PROGRAMME," EXPLAINS TAKUYA.**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **800** EX-COMBATANTS REINTEGRATED THROUGH THE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION/RECOVERY AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMME

# YOSHIYUKI SAGARA

Associate Project Development Officer, IOM, Sudan  
Emergency response and breaking the cycle of dependency  
of conflict-affected populations



*Yoshiyuki Sagara participated in a mission to the State Ministry of Education in Nyala, South Darfur, Sudan, to discuss an IOM programme that aims to break the cycle of dependency of persons in protracted displacement situations in Darfur, and which is funded under Japan's Supplementary Budget. (IOM/April 2014)*

The northeast African desert country of Sudan faces one of the most intractable humanitarian challenges in the world. Well over six million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. The Darfur region is facing a severe deterioration of its security and humanitarian situations. Intensified conflicts in 2013 among the government, rebel forces and tribes displaced approximately

400,000 people, on top of the 1.7 million people in protracted displaced situations. Many of these internally-displaced persons had escaped from their communities that were looted or burned. In South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, over a million people have been displaced or severely affected by war. Add to that about 40,000 South Sudanese stranded in the capital city of Khartoum, waiting to return home to South Sudan. Furthermore, the conflict in South Sudan that broke out in December 2013 has led to an estimated 90,271 people crossing the border into Sudan.

With such a background, it is understandable that Yoshiyuki Sagara held adverse views of the country to which he was being dispatched as a UN Volunteer. But these notions quickly changed. "Once I arrived in Sudan, I immediately realized the friendliness of the Sudanese people," he said, "and am developing firm friendships with many Sudanese."

Yoshiyuki was assigned to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to further the mission's goals of emergency response to conflict-affected populations, helping (re)integrate vulnerable populations and stabilizing communities in conflict, such as sedentary and pastoralist tribes in Darfur.

Yoshiyuki held two distinct jobs with IOM. First he served as an Electoral Officer working on projects that promoted democratization processes in the country. Yoshiyuki assisted with the coordination and implementation of capacity building workshops on legal frameworks and electoral system administration. The workshops enhanced the professionalism and competence of Sudan's National Elections Commission and other key authorities so that they can more effectively conduct democratic elections.

Yoshiyuki was next assigned as an Associate Project Development Officer working in the IOM Chief of Mission's office and began preparing project proposals and reports. He collaborated closely with Sudanese government officials, donors, such as Japan and the European Union, and relevant departments in IOM headquarters to develop proposals for projects that would bring much-needed help to people who had recently fled the intense conflicts in Darfur and several other states. The proposed projects fell under both humanitarian and development umbrellas, and in particular they called for peacebuilding and social cohesion activities.

Yoshiyuki helped the IOM mission with their process of building a humanitarian strategy for 2014 and to create the Humanitarian Work Plan of the joint Humanitarian Country Team in Sudan.

Even with eight years of experience under his belt working in private companies and for his country's aid arm – Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) - Yoshiyuki still absorbed a great deal of new skills and learning from his UNV assignment. He has a better understanding of project development processes and project management within an international organization. The UNV stint also broadened his perspective about conflict-affected communities and opened his eyes to their complexities.



**ONCE I ARRIVED IN SUDAN, I IMMEDIATELY REALIZED THE FRIENDLINESS OF THE SUDANESE PEOPLE," HE SAID, "AND AM DEVELOPING FIRM FRIENDSHIPS WITH MANY SUDANESE.**



*Yoshiyuki Sagara takes part in a mission to monitor the humanitarian situation of people who had recently fled fighting and arrived at the Otash IDP camp in South Darfur, Sudan. (IOM/April 2014)*



*Yoshiyuki Sagara (far right) takes part in a capacity-building workshop for the National Elections Commission (NEC) of Sudan and election-related government officers, as well as members of civil society. (IOM/July 2013)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **MORE THAN 250 INDIVIDUALS FROM THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS COMMISSION, OFFICIALS, LAWMAKERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, POLICE, JUDGES, LAWYERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY**
- **A TOTAL OF 375,573 IDPS AND CONFLICTED-AFFECTED POPULATIONS WERE REGISTERED FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND RECEIVED BASIC SERVICES, SUCH AS WATER, HYGIENE AND SANITATION SERVICES, EMERGENCY SHELTER, NON-FOOD ITEMS AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE**
- **150 PEOPLE IN PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT SITUATIONS AND URBAN YOUTH RECEIVED VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN DARFUR TO DIVERSIFY THEIR LIVELIHOODS**

# YUSUKE HARA

Associate Protection Officer, UNHCR in Kosovo<sup>1</sup>  
Helping refugees return home safely



Yusuke Hara joins colleagues at the office during staff training for the Protection Unit at UNHCR in Serbia. (UNHCR/August 2013)

As an Associate Protection Officer for UNHCR in Kosovo, Yusuke Hara tackled efforts that could help Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian minorities who fled war in 1998-1999 to return home to Kosovo from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro in a safe and dignified manner.

UNHCR in Kosovo is acting upon a specific mandate of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC 1244, 1999) to assure the “safe and unimpeded return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes in Kosovo.”

The UNHCR project on which Yusuke worked targets these three minority communities returning to Kosovo during the years 2013-2015. The project, co-funded by the Ministry for Communities and Returns and the European Commission, aims to enable a sustainable voluntary return and reintegration of up to 60 ethnic minority families. Returning families are helped to secure required civil documents, housing and tailored socio-economic support. The sustainability of their return is also enhanced by the facilitation of dialogue between the returning and the receiving communities.

More than 200,000 internally displaced people, of whom about 80,000 are ethnic Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian, remain in need of durable solutions throughout the Balkan region. In Kosovo, UNHCR estimates some 17,000 individuals are still displaced. Bringing these families home and resettling them becomes complicated in a context of high unemployment, inadequate housing and lack of civil documentation and property records.

<sup>1</sup> Hereafter referred to in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).





*Yusuke Hara and other volunteers attend a UNV-UNDP event on disaster management at the library of Pristina University. The project 'REMEMBER 3/11' screened a film about the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011 and held discussions on lessons learned from this tragedy in disaster management. (UNHCR/26 March 2014)*

Yusuke investigated current legal and policy frameworks on related issues - land allocation, displaced persons centres and co-existence activities - to help local colleagues approach their tasks in appropriate and effective ways. He drafted a guidance note on co-existence activities to augment the design of tools for creating co-existence activities.

Yusuke also liaised with the International Migration Organization (IOM) to strengthen relations between the two agencies to ensure successful implement of their joint community development project that promoted inter-ethnic dialogue, community advancement and reconciliation.

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **18 ETHNIC MINORITY FAMILIES RETURNED HOME SAFELY, RECEIVED THEIR CIVIL DOCUMENTS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUPPORT AND HOUSING WAS SECURED**



# COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

UNV's experience shows that community resilience for environment and disaster risk reduction can be enhanced through volunteerism. The Hyogo Framework for Action explicitly recognized the added value and contribution of volunteerism to disaster risk management. In particular, volunteerism helps bolster the capacity and resilience of communities to respond to and prevent disasters. Closely linked to disaster risk reduction is the environment, with a number of factors underpinning UNV initiatives, including the global recognition of volunteerism's role in the environmental protection movement.

UNV has significant experience in this area, with 21 percent (US \$1,880,000) of UNV-administered funds in 2012 spent on community resilience for environment and disaster risk reduction.

UNV adopts people-centred approaches to climate change adaptation work. UNV and its partners develop innovative approaches to disaster risk reduction by harnessing the power of volunteerism to build community resilience for inclusive and coherent national disaster prevention, preparedness and risk reduction strategies.



Nicaragua, UNV/2014

# KEN MATSUEDA

Communication Officer, IOM, Nepal  
Communicating migration issues in Nepal



## TOPICS

### Youth migration and development

In today's increasingly globalized and interconnected world in which more people migrate than ever before in human history, young migrants have become powerful agents of positive change and development.

Every year, August 12th is celebrated as the International Youth Day. This year, the world highlights the importance of engaging, enabling and empowering youth to fulfill their development potential, focusing on 'Youth Migration and Development'. Young migrants, alone or accompanied by family members, leave their home for different reasons, for example in search of employment or fleeing from discrimination.

An estimated 400,000 young

people enter the labour market each year in Nepal and, in the absence of decent employment opportunities within the country, particularly in rural areas, migration to India and overseas for employment has become an increasingly attractive option as well as a last resort for many youth. The Department of Foreign Employment estimates that around 1,500 young Nepalese leave for employment to countries other than India each day. The total that have received formal approval to leave numbers 2.08 million. The Ministry of Labour and Employment also estimates that a similar number have gone overseas for employment through informal channels. As youth migration has

risen through both regular and irregular channels, safe and regular migration needs to be promoted in order to reduce the risks of exploitation and abuse. Sharing information on migration options is essential in this endeavor as it increases awareness and enables youth to make well-informed decisions.

It is crucial that youth are aware of the risks and opportunities of migration, that their voices are heard throughout all parts of society, and that they are empowered to influence their own lives and shape their futures – wherever it may be. Viable and safe alternatives to migration such as local livelihood opportunities, financial literacy initiatives and entrepreneurship

need to be developed.

Engaging and including youth in migration debates and policies is essential in the enhancement of development. In today's increasingly globalized and interconnected world, youth represent the most interconnected generation of all. Young migrants need to be given opportunities to participate, to express themselves, to be listened to and to have their needs and interests taken into account. Social inclusion of migrant youth helps shape positive attitudes among migrants and native youth alike and brings down social barriers of xenophobia, marginalization and discrimination.

*(Prepared by the United Nations Country Team in Nepal)*

Ken wrote press releases and op-eds, like the one above, for media outlets. *(The Himalayan Times, Nepal/2014)*

Ken Matsueda's UNV assignment involved handling a wide range of communication tasks for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Nepal, all in a bid to raise the visibility of and build trust in IOM's work. He worked closely with project teams that dealt with all manner of migration-related issues in the country: labour migration, human trafficking, Bhutanese refugee resettlement, migration health, land issues, psychosocial counselling and support services and disaster risk reduction.

About 10 percent of the population of Nepal – over two million Nepalese men and women – are migrant workers who face

risks of abuse and exploitation and unsafe working environments. Working with the government and other organizations, IOM aims to help protect Nepalese migrant workers from human trafficking and forced labour and to create decent employment for migrant workers by enhancing the self-regulation and functioning of private employment agencies in Nepal. The capacity of employers' and workers' organizations are strengthened and the government of Nepal is supported to ensure effective enforcement of legislation and to raise awareness among potential migrants of the risks of human trafficking and how to avoid them.

Ken made information about IOM's public services and access to services more widely available. He managed and updated the organization's Nepal website, as well as the Nepal pages on the United Nations Information Platform on the internet. He monitored IOM Nepal's official social media pages (Facebook and Twitter) on a daily basis, drafted press releases and op-eds and handled media and public relations. Also, Ken took photographs to document IOM activities and added them to the Facebook page and a blog.

"One of the most difficult challenges that I'm now facing," Ken wrote in an IOM blog during his assignment, "is to localize IOM's values and messages

disseminated globally, and reversely to contextualize local news in the global and/or regional trends, like connecting dots to draw a big picture.” Layer on top of this the challenge of much of his daily life playing out in a foreign language.

As a member of the United Nations Communication Group, he was part of an effort to raise public awareness about safe labour migration for current and potential Nepalese migrants inside and outside the country. As part of International Youth Day celebrations in Kathmandu in 2013, Ken orchestrated a series of photos of Nepalese who attended the event. He and a colleague asked each person to select a cue card with one word that best represented migration to them and to raise the card in front of themselves. The result was a set of captivating photos, and the word ‘future’ appeared as the most popular selection.

Ken also planned and carried out an IOM-European Union photo competition on migration, called Think Move Change, which was open to entrants worldwide to submit their best photographs reflecting human rights and the well-being of Nepalese migrants and their families. The contest was a way of advocating for safe migration for current and potential migrants through visual representation. The winning photo was exhibited, along with other highly commended entries, at the museum in Kathmandu as part of International Migrants’ Day celebrations in December 2013.

From his assignment in Nepal, Ken took away professional skills that include a much more intimate understanding of strategic communications and advocacy in the context of development. He gained a better understanding of peacebuilding issues and challenges in a post-conflict state. And as a member of the United Nations Communication Group, he experienced firsthand the working mechanisms and value of the United Nations move toward an integrated delivery approach, known as the ‘One UN.’



**ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT CHALLENGES THAT I’M NOW FACING,” KEN WROTE IN AN IOM BLOG DURING HIS ASSIGNMENT, “IS TO LOCALIZE IOM’S VALUES AND MESSAGES DISSEMINATED GLOBALLY, AND REVERSELY TO CONTEXTUALIZE LOCAL NEWS IN THE GLOBAL AND/OR REGIONAL TRENDS, LIKE CONNECTING DOTS TO DRAW A BIG PICTURE.**



*Ken (standing at the podium) takes part in a public event for International Migrants Day, along with the Foreign Minister of Nepal, European Union Ambassador to Nepal, United Nations Resident Coordinator, IOM Chief of Mission and others. (IOM, Nepal/2014)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- NEPALESE MIGRANT WORKERS ARE BETTER PROTECTED AGAINST RISKS OF ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION AND UNSAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENTS
- MORE PEOPLE IN NEPAL ARE AWARE OF THE POTENTIAL RISKS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

# SHIGEYUKI ITO

*Drug Control and Crime Prevention Specialist, UNODC, Lao PDR*  
Using legal means and justice systems to counter human trafficking, corruption and terrorism



*Shigeyuki co-chaired and spoke at the International Anti-Corruption Day event held in Vientiane, Lao PDR. (UNODC, Lao PDR/2014)*

Human trafficking, corruption and counter-terrorism are issues that obstruct the development of countries in the southeast Asian region and threaten the wellbeing of citizens. Lao PDR, a landlocked country that shares long, porous borders with five neighbouring countries, has been effected by transnational threats from organized criminal groups. Criminal activity threatens Lao citizens and is undermining the rule of law.

Shigeyuki Ito, a United States-qualified lawyer, was assigned to assist the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with their projects that address these issues. UNODC projects aim to boost the capacity of government entities for law enforcement and criminal justice responses and strengthen regional cooperation. Shigeyuki began his posting by supporting the UNODC Crime Prevention Expert with specific tasks, particularly technical input on legal aspects of projects.

Shigeyuki and his colleagues worked closely with the country's Ministry of Justice and the prosecutor's office to address human trafficking. Through UNODC projects, district and provincial officials received training on human trafficking. Shigeyuki worked on the development of a manual on collection and use of evidence for prosecutors and other law enforcement authorities.

Since many victims of human trafficking in Southeast Asia are young women, Shigeyuki worked with the Lao Women's Union to raise awareness on human

trafficking. Dispelling myths about high wages and better lifestyles in foreign countries is one part of the strategy to stem the trade. To this end, a radio programme was created targeting women to increase their understanding of the realities of human trafficking.

Shigeyuki was quick to take on additional responsibility. He was frequently called upon to represent UNODC at public events and donor meetings. Shigeyuki actively advocated for activities related to a Clinical Legal Education Programme which dispatches university students to communities to educate villagers on human trafficking and engages the Lao Bar Association in pro bono work.

At seven months into his assignment, Shigeyuki was appointed Project Coordinator for UNODC’s human trafficking project. This project strengthened criminal justice responses to human trafficking in the country and increased awareness of human trafficking among the population. As Project Coordinator, Shigeyuki oversaw implementation, drafted reports for internal use and for donors and maintained relationships with government counterparts and other stakeholders.

He also served as the contact person for UNODC Laos for related regional and global actions. One such activity is UNODC’s legal technical assistance to Member States for the ratification, legislative incorporation and implementation of international legal instruments against terrorism. In particular, Shigeyuki supported regional colleagues to assist governments with respect to the Extradition Law and Anti-Money Laundering Law.

Shigeyuki worked with the State Inspection Authority, the primary anti-corruption body in Lao PDR, to implement the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. Each year, International Anti-Corruption Day is an opportunity for the international community to present a unified front in the fight against corruption and celebrate the considerable and important progress made over the previous year. Shigeyuki co-chaired the International Anti-Corruption Day event in Lao PDR. A few months later, he helped organize a three-day conference on implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

While direct beneficiaries of these projects are government bodies, ultimately, the entire Lao society and its neighbours benefit when national and regional legal infrastructures are augmented and laws are better enforced.



*Shigeyuki Ito (with computer) helped to organize and provide technical advice at a workshop on the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in Lao PR. (UNODC, Lao PDR/2014)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

**THE POPULATION OF LAO PDR AT LARGE THROUGH:**

- INCREASED AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND ITS CONSEQUENCES
- STRENGTHENED JUSTICE RESPONSE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING





# YOUTH

UNV is supporting many national youth programmes and schemes (13 in 2012). This includes support to regional programmes in the Arab States and Africa and deploying thousands of young international UN Volunteers through university and intern initiatives. Youth volunteer schemes not only advance peace and development goals, but also offer the young volunteers opportunities for growth and development.

Recognizing the enormous potential of young people to contribute positively to their societies, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, in his Five-Year Action Agenda (2012-2016), announced a specific measure to “create a UN youth volunteers programme under the umbrella of UN Volunteers.” In response, in 2012 UNV launched a new Youth Volunteering Strategy and a UNDP/UNV Youth Trust Fund to further engage in global advocacy and partnerships for youth volunteerism and strengthen the capacity of nationally- and regionally-owned youth volunteer schemes.



*Be the change is the message young volunteers in Tunisia want to convey. This mural painting was one of the activities organized during a two week volunteering caravan across Tunisia. (Lofti Ghariani, 2013)*

# PATRICK ASINERO

*Programme Officer, Youth Programming, UNESCO, Kenya*  
Bringing youth into the fold for a better future



**COUNTRIES CANNOT ACHIEVE SUCH TRANSFORMATION,” FINDS PATRICK, “IF THEIR DEVELOPMENT IS NOT INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE. IT MUST INCLUDE THE MOST DISADVANTAGED SECTORS, LIKE YOUTH AND WOMEN.**

Youth bulge is an emerging peace and development issue in most eastern African countries, and addressing youth concerns and development is one of the foundations for lasting peace and progress.

Much of the recent conflict and violence in the region have involved young people. In Kenya, for example, post-election violence in 2007 and 2008 proved that not addressing youth issues – particularly those related to youth employment and education – can morph into conflict and violence. In neighbouring Somalia, young people lacking education and economic opportunities are more susceptible to be recruited by terrorist and piracy groups, such as Al-Shaabab, or other negative activities.

Recognizing youth as an important factor in peace-related matters means that youth, like gender, is becoming integrated into development action as a major cross-cutting topic in most, if not all, United Nations agencies operating in the region. In UNESCO, youth programming is mainstreamed and cuts across the agency's sectoral mandates: education, natural science, social sciences (including gender, HIV and AIDS and peacebuilding), culture and communication.

Patrick Asinero was assigned to cover the two countries of Kenya and Somalia as a Programme Officer in youth programming in the UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa.

These two countries, like others in the eastern Africa and Indian Ocean region, are in transition. Kenya has aspirations to move into middle-income country status in the next decade and Somalia is taking steps to end conflict and move to reconstruction and stability. “Countries cannot achieve such transformation,” finds Patrick, “if their development is not inclusive and sustainable. It must include the most disadvantaged sectors, like youth and women.”

Patrick was happy to be part of the critical support that the United Nations and other development partners are able to offer governments and people of the region.

UNESCO, through its Programme for Emergency Education and Reconstruction (PEER), has long been a player in rendering support to governments in post-conflict situations in Sub-Saharan Africa. And all of UNESCO's programmes and initiatives in the region integrate youth as a cross-cutting development theme.

This is where Patrick fit in. He assisted and supported UNESCO's youth and gender programming and operations in the two countries. Patrick prepared background papers, briefing documents and project reports. He led the drafting of three UNESCO project proposals that tackled youth issues: one on youth leadership and participation in governance in Somalia; another for

technical and vocational education and skills training for unemployed Kenyan youth in informal settlements; and, the last, an education project for out-of-school children in displaced camps in Somalia.

As Programme Officer, Patrick was part of the office's efforts to form and maintain partnerships with other United Nations agencies, government institutions, bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors and private sector and civil society actors. He analyzed and researched information on donors, prepared briefs on possible areas of cooperation, identified opportunities for initiation of new projects and actively contributed to the overall office effort in resource mobilization.

As UNESCO's focal point on youth responsibility, Patrick participated in United Nations youth forums and shared knowledge and information with UNESCO colleagues to assist in generating programme interventions in that thematic area.

Patrick took part in International Youth Day, which was celebrated for an entire week in Kenya. The celebrations brought together government bodies, United Nations agencies, civil society partners and many volunteers who raised awareness of youth and migration issues and advocated for youth development and safety. The event included exhibits, a street festival and youth forums.

As youth was a thematic issue highlighted in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) plan for 2014-2018 in Kenya, Patrick was called upon to help draft the document to safeguard that education and skills training, empowerment and inclusion, health, HIV/AIDS and employment and economic opportunities for youth were well represented in the plan. He and colleagues also ensured that volunteering was part of the strategy for youth participation and as a way to improve their leadership and professional skills.

Similarly, Patrick and his colleagues advocated for volunteerism in Kenya's National Youth Council Strategic Plan for 2013-2017, leading volunteerism to become one of the five strategic objectives of the plan.

As a member of the United Nations thematic group on gender, Patrick helped draft a United Nations Gender Strategy for Somalia that tackles gender-based violence and related issues. He attended the Somalia National Education Conference in Mogadishu, held in partnership with UNESCO and UNICEF, and aided in drafting a paper on non-formal education in Somalia. He and partners organized roundtable discussions with representatives of government, civil society and social enterprises to meet with the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ahmad Alhendawi, in Nairobi.

Patrick accrued a myriad of experiences that might have taken years to attain in other settings. He worked in programme design, planning and monitoring and evaluation. He learned about the United Nations Delivering as One model and results-based and human rights-based approaches. His communication and public speaking skills were honed.

In addition to these practical skills, Patrick says that he also gained priceless soft skills that include patience and respect and an ability to function in a diverse cultural environment and work place. "I also learned to be more diplomatic," he says, "and yet still reach the outputs and deliverables expected of me at the end of the day."

## WHO BENEFITED?

- YOUTH AND VOLUNTEERING ISSUES ARE RAISED ON THE NATIONAL AGENDA IN KENYA AND SOMALIA

# RISA FUJIMURA

*Participatory Governance Analyst, UNDP, occupied Palestinian territory*  
Parlaying South-South cooperation with effective public oversight

The occupied Palestinian territory is one of five participants in a regional project called 'Unleashing the Potential for South-South Cooperation in the Arab States Region,' implemented by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. As part of this regional venture, the occupied Palestinian territory and four states conducted stocktaking studies on South-South cooperation and drafted reports for presentation at regional and global south-south cooperation expos.

Risa Fujimura, as a Participatory Governance Analyst for UNDP, was called upon to lead the team to undertake the stocktaking exercise and manage the project in Palestine. The goal of the stocktaking was to achieve a deeper understanding of the practices, opportunities and challenges involved in promoting south-south cooperation. At the same time, the project promoted social accountability to lead to more effective public oversight over local governments, better service delivery and more accountable local officials.

Through the project, the role of civil society organizations and youth in local public oversight was reinforced, as were the concordant efforts of government, media, the private sector and other actors to support and respond to these actions. Palestinian youth took the lead in monitoring municipal performance in the pilot municipalities of Beit Fajjar, Jericho and Qalqilya in the West Bank and Nusseirat municipality in the Gaza Strip. Close partners in this task were the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development and the Ministry of Local Government, as well as civil society organizations.

Among her tasks as project manager, Risa organized consultative meetings, conducted surveys, prepared desk reviews of relevant documents and wrote the report. She supported a national civil society organization to implement the project in three locations in the West Bank and organized a Social Innovation Camp for public oversight.

Under Risa's management, the project conducted social accountability training for youth from the three municipalities and seven consultative workshops were held for the south-south cooperation mapping exercise, with the participation of 74 national and international organizations.



*Risa discusses governance issues with representatives from local youth councils at a workshop on Social Accountability in Qaliqilia, Beit Fajjar and Jericho. (Maha AbuSamra/ 25 October 2013)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- YOUTH FROM THREE MUNICIPALITIES WERE TRAINED IN SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
- **74** NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ATTENDED WORKSHOPS IN SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION



# 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 projects, UNV-assisted volunteerism schemes and networks – in collaboration with governments, civil society and the corporate private sector - hundreds of thousands of volunteers have engaged with communities.

Volunteerism is a strong strategy for building civic participation and addressing peace and development goals. Successful volunteer schemes require favourable policy and regulatory frameworks, recognition and promotion of volunteerism for peace and development,

and committed national leadership. Supporting the creation of and expansion of volunteer schemes constitutes an important platform for nationally-led and nationally-owned multi-sectoral development and peace programmatic interventions.

In 2012, 12 percent (US \$1,111,000) of UNV-administered funds were spent on national capacity development through volunteer schemes in eight countries. This experience has led to a growing demand from United Nations Member States for UNV to support the establishment of national volunteer schemes to address development challenges.



*Village de Todo, Togo, (Nicolas Robert, 2014)*

# TOMOKO ISHIHARA

*Peacebuilding and Youth Participation Advisor, UNICEF, Kyrgyzstan*  
 Harnessing the potential of youth through youth centres



*Assigned to UNICEF's youth and adolescent programme in Kyrgyzstan, UN Volunteer Tomoko Ishihara discusses the establishment of six youth centres in Bat-ken Province with female facilitators from the cities of Bat-ken, Uch-Korgon and Kulundu. A total of 23 youth centres have been established in the southern region of the country. (UNICEF, Kyrgyzstan/2013)*

The global numbers of young people are higher than ever before in history. Youth represent a large potential driving force for development processes and peacebuilding. But, unfortunately, often young people are not brought into the development of local communities and nation building processes.

According to a United Nations Population Fund report released in November 2014, "The emergence of a large youth population of unprecedented size can have a profound effect on any country. Whether that effect is positive or negative depends largely on how well governments respond to young people's needs and enable them to engage fully and meaningfully in civic and economic affairs."

In Kyrgyzstan, 28 percent of the populace are between the ages of 10-24. Tomoko Ishihara was assigned to help harness the power of young populations in Kyrgyzstan as UNICEF's Peacebuilding and Youth Participation Advisor. Tomoko understood the importance of her work: "With a country in the throes of major social-economic changes," she noted, "the weight of it will fall on young citizens' shoulders, and that is a heavy burden."

For several years, UNICEF and its partners had been addressing issues of Kyrgyzstan's youthful population by supporting the establishment of youth centres in the southern part of the country, in the provinces of Osh, Jalal-Abad and Bat-ken. These youth centres (23 currently) are funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund and the UK Department for International Development. The centres offer a space for young people to meet, gain life and technological skills, receive career counselling and learn foreign languages. They are available to youth for holding meetings and preparing projects. Within a multi-cultural atmosphere, youth at the centres are motivated to work in ways that promote respect for diversity, within a shared civic identity, and peaceful coexistence.

A UNICEF report of May 2013 noted that: "The key to make this system effective is to identify and clearly assign roles and responsibilities to volunteers and members, to ensure that every young person feels involved and valued."

As part of her routine as a Youth Participation Advisor to UNICEF, Tomoko visited the youth centres throughout southern Kyrgyzstan to monitor and evaluate their progress. Making a minimum of three monitoring trips per month, her visits were essential for identifying risks and challenges and to propose approaches for improvement to stakeholders.

In preparation for and to inform her tasks, Tomoko conducted extensive research, identifying international best practices on peacebuilding and youth work in post-conflict settings. She communicated and held meetings with



government ministries at the provincial level, other United Nations agencies and implementing partners in the field.

Each youth centre created a volunteer group and an outreach team. The outreach teams conduct youth-led research which they share with local authorities and the communities. This helps local authorities become aware of and address the concerns of youth. The surveys likewise help the youth centres themselves to better formulate their peacebuilding and volunteer activities.

Projects of the centres - undertaken with municipalities, schools, women's groups, elders and other groups - have included helping out-of-school children, forming support groups for young mothers and victims of early marriage and helping put together business plans and career services for unemployed youth in the community. Some youth centres and their research play a vital role in helping early warning networks to identify potential conflict and flash points and to reduce tensions or put a halt to it before it starts. Youth have also worked closely with local committees and groups, such as women's committees and teachers, to address sensitive issues like early marriage, bride-kidnapping and bullying at school.

The youth centre project targets a range of youth and adolescents at-risk: those from vulnerable families, the unemployed, those with disabilities and special needs, youth in remote and isolated communities and border villages, youth in conflict with the law, those without parental care, ethnic minorities which lack access to education and youth from mono-ethnic communities where intolerance and distrust towards other ethnic groups living in Kyrgyzstan exists. Since October 2012, more than 42,000 young people have benefited from the youth centres and participated in their activities. An impressive 30,000 youth have been trained on multi-ethnic education, civic education and life skills.

Tomoko also made a programmatic link with the International Organization for Migration in the country. Based on the results of a UNICEF survey that assessed local employability, the two organizations agreed to establish a joint project related to employment and migration, incorporating activities such as career counselling and vocational training for young people.

Tomoko's is proud that her work contributed to the goals of the youth centres and of UNICEF in Kyrgyzstan. The projects she was a part of are helping to lessen ethnic tensions in conflict-affected areas, raise living standards, increase employment and education opportunities and reduce frustrations and alienation of youth and their families.

Safeguarding the continued existence of the youth centres requires multiple efforts. Tomoko drafted an exit strategy and consulted closely with municipal authorities and the Ministry of Youth, Labour and Migration to ensure long-term institutional integration and the sustainability of peacebuilding mechanisms and employment schemes at the youth centres. Tomoko also prepared funding proposals so that UNICEF's youth projects could continue. As in the exit strategy, UNICEF in partnership with GIZ (German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation), supported the youth centres to initiate income-generation projects to foster their financial self-reliance.

During Tomoko's tenure, she was also pleased to see that the centres formed and registered their own non-governmental organization, called the Network of Youth Centres, which gives them access to funding and training and other development opportunities and helps the centres bridge their relationship with government bodies and donors. These combined efforts should guarantee a long, productive future for the youth centres and go a long way toward helping youth in Kyrgyzstan to have a profoundly positive effect on their country's future.



**THE ADVANTAGE OF WORKING IN A SMALL FIELD OFFICE LIKE, IN OSH, IS THAT YOU HAVE MORE RESPONSIBILITIES AND GAIN A BROADER PERSPECTIVE OF THE PROGRAMME," TOMOKO NOTES. "THIS HELPED ME DEVELOP A STRUCTURED WAY OF THINKING, ESPECIALLY ON HOW BETTER PARTNERSHIPS AND CROSS-SECTORIAL APPROACHES CAN CREATE SYNERGIES TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES.**

## WHO BENEFITED?

- **MORE THAN 42,000 YOUTH USED THE YOUTH CENTRES AND PARTICIPATED IN THEIR ACTIVITIES**
- **MORE THAN 30,000 YOUTH RECEIVED TRAINING IN MULTI-ETHNIC EDUCATION, CIVIC EDUCATION AND LIFE SKILLS**

# YOKO MARUTA

*Gender Rights Advocacy and Women's Empowerment Specialist,  
UN Women, Kyrgyzstan*  
Promoting women's rights and raising awareness



*Yoko Maruta worked on women's rights and leadership development in remote, rural areas of the mountainous county of Kyrgyzstan. (UN Women, Kyrgyzstan/2014)*

Yoko Maruta took the bull by the horns when she was assigned to head the UN Women office in the ancient city of Osh, in the south of Kyrgyzstan. She began by recruiting six university student volunteers to support project operations.

She and the student volunteers immediately joined partner non-governmental organizations all over the country in a campaign to raise awareness about the need to stop violence against women and girls and achieve gender equality and to improve access to information on women's rights and the rights of survivors of sexual violence, as well as available services. The UN Women team developed CEDAW manuals and other information booklets on the matter. Dialogues were held with local organizations, the United Nations, communities and local administrations to share information on women's rights and push forward women's economic, political and social participation.

Violence against women is a major concern in Kyrgyzstan, with about 8,000 to 10,000 calls related to domestic violence recorded each year. It is estimated that an even greater majority of incidents of domestic violence go unreported and untreated. Nearly 11,800 bride kidnappings and 2,000 rapes are known to have occurred in 2010 alone. Among Kyrgyz women, 12.2 percent marry before reaching adulthood, while many Kyrgyz women are victims of human trafficking.

Most survivors of gender and domestic violence in Kyrgyzstan do not report the incident or receive adequate attention. This stems from psychological and social pressure, ingrained cultural practices and women and girls' lack of knowledge about their rights and entitled services, compounded by mistrust towards service providers.

The Osh UN Women team helped strengthen the roles of crisis centres so that they can provide appropriate and quality services, including prevention, protection and response measures to tackle sexual violence against women and girls. They supported provincial administrations (called Oblasts in

Kyrgyzstan) to build up systems that protect and empower women. And they advised youth organizations on how to effectively organize events.

The recruitment of the local students was part of a leadership development programme for the community. The volunteers were both male and female and were ethnically diverse, representing Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Russian and Tatar populations. Totally embracing the spirit of volunteering, Yoko spent her weekends coaching these young volunteers in their personal development; she offered language classes, showed them how to write CVs and helped with career planning.

Yoko and her team were part of UN Women’s effort in the country to support the government and communities to establish and reinforce laws protecting women and girls from bride kidnapping, early marriage, domestic violence and rape. They encouraged local authorities to turn private crisis centres into state-run organizations, in a bid to make them more sustainable. UN Women with its partners worked to empower women and girls economically, socially and politically by providing training on gender and human rights and organizing projects that gave women access to agricultural resources, such as land and seeds. In rural areas, women’s self-help groups were established and started projects, such as vegetable production. Training was also conducted to open up more opportunities for women to gain access to and control the management of drinking water in their villages.

As the office head, Yoko monitored and followed up on UN Women’s projects in the southern part of Kyrgyzstan. She collaborated closely with journalists and engaged with social media to disseminate UN Women messaging aimed at bringing an end to violence against women. She and the team networked with civil society, activists, communities, students, youth organizations, other United Nations agencies and international organizations and government officials in order to improve the lives of women and girls in Kyrgyzstan.

This work not only benefited women and girls, noted Yoko, but helped society as a whole to develop. Not the least of which was that the student volunteers and partner non-governmental organization staff enhanced their capacity to write project proposals and implement projects and strengthened their dialogue with communities.

“Despite the challenge of deeply-rooted gender stereotypes in Kyrgyzstan,” explained Yoko. “I will never give up, because I believe that when women and girls are educated, empowered and participate in society, that society will become more developed and peaceful.”



**DESPITE THE CHALLENGE OF DEEPLY-ROOTED GENDER STEREOTYPES IN KYRGYZSTAN,” EXPLAINED YOKO. “I WILL NEVER GIVE UP, BECAUSE I BELIEVE THAT WHEN WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE EDUCATED, EMPOWERED AND PARTICIPATE IN SOCIETY, THAT SOCIETY WILL BECOME MORE DEVELOPED AND PEACEFUL.**



*Yoko Maruta with leaders of women’s self-help groups in Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan. The groups were organized under a One UN project jointly implemented by UN Women, FAO and WFP. (UN Women, Kyrgyzstan/2014)*



*During a field monitoring mission, Yoko Maruta poses with beneficiaries of social justice projects in Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan. The social Justice projects improve access to public service delivery and address the rights of the most vulnerable groups of people, such as children, women and youth. (UN Women, Kyrgyzstan/2014)*

## WHO BENEFITED?

- LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS LEARNED ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN’S RIGHTS AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
- SIX UNIVERSITY STUDENTS GAINED INVALUABLE EXPERIENCE VOLUNTEERING TO HELP WITH THIS EFFORT

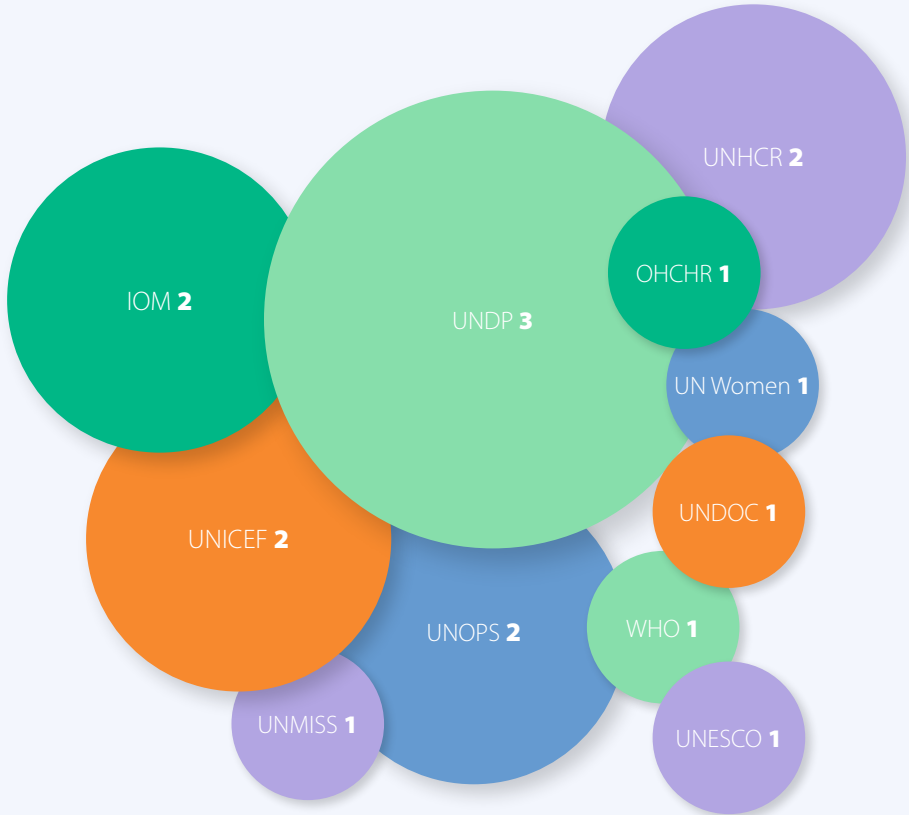
# VOLUNTEERING GLOBALLY

## DEPLOYMENT OF HRD VOLUNTEERS 2007-2014





# DEPLOYMENT BY UNITED NATIONS AGENCY 2013-2014



# GENDER OF HRD VOLUNTEERS 2007-2014



# THE 2013/14 HRD VOLUNTEERS



This photograph of the 2013-2014 HRD Volunteers features: Kensuke Matsueda, Noriko Kitamura, Yusuke Hara, Shigeyuki Ito, Risa Fujimura, Shinichi Sakuma, Takeshi Kageyama, Patrick Asinero, Yoshiyuki Sagara, Takunori Matsumura, Mayu Sakota, Tomoko Ishihara, Yoko Maruta, Mamiko Yano, Maki Komura, Takuya Koimaru and Swati Malik.

## 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:*  
Yoko Maruta with participants in southern Kyrgyzstan in the United Nations Secretary General's '16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence' campaign. Hundreds of students, teachers, activists and women's group members marched under the slogan "From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World" and staged a play that addressed bride kidnapping and domestic violence.

*Back cover photo:*  
UN Volunteer Takunori Matsumura interviewing a teacher and a parent at a primary school in Rumbek, South Sudan (Mayu Sakota, UNOPS-UNV/2013)

*Content development and editing:*  
Julia Stewart

*Design:*  
Phoenix Design Aid, Denmark



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

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