

INSPIRING YOUTH



Annual Report | 2010



UN
Volunteers

inspiration in action

Cover photo: The Hida brothers, Ramazan (top) and Mateo (bottom), have participated in project activities to improve the integration of Roma and Egyptian minorities in Tirana, Albania. Ramazan has volunteered in awareness campaigns related to health, family planning and the prevention of HIV/AIDS and sexually-transmitted infections. (Gavin White, 2011)



The difference the **United Nations Volunteers (UNV)** programme makes is by demonstrating peace and development results and impact through volunteerism. UNV's comparative advantage is the ability and knowledge to bring about transformational change through volunteerism, community voluntary action and civic engagement through active partnerships with civil society, volunteer involving organizations, UN agencies and Governments.

This is inspiration in action.

ABOUT US

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

www.unvolunteers.org



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

*A local community in
Rwanda thanks a youth
camp for their help in
fighting erosion in the fields.
The youth camp encourages
young people to take part in
community work.
(Annoncée Manirarora,
2010)*

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Foreword



UNDP Administrator Helen Clark is greeted by young Tahiti Sitapai in Papua New Guinea during a visit to the Friends Foundation Breakthrough Initiative for Leadership Development Programme on HIV/AIDS. (UNDP, 2010)

Volunteerism fosters empowerment and broad-based ownership. Through voluntary action, people can contribute to the stability and cohesion of their communities and societies. Volunteerism is both a manifestation and a driver of social capital and civic participation, involving people in the decisions which affect their lives. In particular, it helps disadvantaged populations move from being passive recipients to becoming engaged actors in their own development.

At the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), our work each day aims to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. UNDP is increasingly focused on helping countries build strategic systems, capacities, and policies for transformational change. We want people at the grassroots level involved in achieving progress. That is why the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is so important to our work.

Although volunteers come from all age groups, young people have always played a special role within the volunteer sector because of their idealism and readiness to contribute to large-scale volunteer efforts. The positive impact of volunteering on their attitudes and world view develops individuals with a strong sense of civic engagement and solidarity who contribute positively to their societies.

Preface

Our UNV Annual Report 2010, 'Inspiring Youth', shows the powerful force of youth volunteerism. Often a large part of the population, youth represent a valuable resource to respond to peace and development challenges within their communities. In 1976, the UN expanded the mandate of UNV to include advancing the role of youth in contributing to economic and social progress and development. UNV has created opportunities for youth to become engaged and to build their skills through volunteer action.

Given the chance, youth bring enthusiastic insight and energy to the challenges of development. As volunteers, young adults are engaged actors in their own development and agents of change within their communities. Young people are helping to broaden public awareness of volunteering, and helping to shape the direction of volunteer policies and interventions.

I am always inspired by the good will, talent and idealism of the young people I meet across the world. They are making important contributions to development objectives to eradicate poverty, contain the spread of disease, combat climate change, contribute to sustainable societies and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

On 5 December 2010, I was fortunate to visit San Carlos, Colombia, and met community volunteers and UN Volunteers. As part of the celebrations to mark International Volunteer Day (IVD), I experienced the ANIMARTE project firsthand. UNV and UNDP partnered in this project to mobilize 17 community volunteers to contribute to the community reintegration of ex-combatants through voluntary activities involving theatre, dance, art and sports, for example. As a result, youth are reconsidering their social attitudes and seeing themselves as part of the community, which minimizes the risk of conflict re-occurring and promotes sustainable and lasting peace.

This is a clear example of the impact of volunteering, which is relevant not only for IVD, but also for the start of the celebrations marking the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers throughout 2011.

Today's challenging social and economic environment warrants a special focus on youth. This year, we mark the International Year of Youth under the theme of 'Dialogue and Mutual Understanding'. In this UNV Annual Report 2010, you will find examples of how youth are using their energy, imagination, talent and initiative to tackle development challenges. You will read about young people working with communities and fostering dialogue and mutual understanding.

The tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV+10), overlapping with the International Year of Youth, provides an opportunity to recognize, excite and encourage volunteers to take a stand and make progress on causes they feel passionately about.

Every year, around 8,000 UN Volunteers contribute to the work and achievements of UNDP, the UN and development partners. These volunteers work and live within the communities they serve, often in remote areas and under difficult conditions. We are deeply saddened to have lost UN Volunteers in the line of duty again this year. We honour them, and value the contributions they made.

At UNDP and UNV, we are proud of the skilled volunteers who are at the forefront of our development efforts. Their achievements give development momentum, help ensure dignity and build social trust. Together, we are working for a better world.

Helen Clark

*Administrator, United Nations Development Programme
New York, May 2011*

More than just a virtual link, online volunteering can be an empowering experience, offering young people above the age of 18 – from developing and developed countries – the opportunity to engage in development activities, work in international teams, use their expertise to support a cause, develop existing skills, and assume new roles and responsibilities. With 80 per cent of online volunteers aged between 18 and 35, the service directly increases the participation of youth in development activities.

Coming from 158 countries, close to 8,000 UN Volunteers contributed their invaluable skills last year. They did so despite the reality that volunteering often puts them in situations of hardship, and at times even of risk. Tragically, we again lost dedicated UN Volunteers in 2010. For this dedication and sacrifice, the world is most grateful.

Volunteering is one of the highest expressions of our common humanity. It has bound societies together since the beginning of time. It gives people of all ages the chance to engage in their own development and to express solidarity by sharing their skills with others. Volunteers around the world are building bridges, unleashing potential and taking action. This is inspiration in action.

Flavia Pansieri

*Executive Coordinator, United Nations Volunteers
Bonn, May 2011*



UNV Executive Coordinator Flavia Pansieri (top right) observes an ANIMARTE volunteer engage with internally displaced children in activities to raise awareness of the MDGs during IVD in Colombia. (Adriana Serdan/UNV, 2010)

Introduction

“A young person is an individual worthy of respect. Despite the challenges she or he may face, that person is a human being, who wants to enjoy life, to take part in society and to make a contribution. During my two years as a volunteer, I wanted to show society that every young person has dreams, and is launching into the future with a goal to accomplish. Do not look at us youth with pity, but with pride. Make space for us to take on responsibility. Support us, guide us and respect us, for we are change.”

Sandra Fayad (24 years old), Lebanon

The mandate of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme has significantly evolved since its establishment in 1970. Initially, our role was to recruit, place and administer the services of qualified volunteers, who provided professional support to United Nations agencies, funds, programmes and governments in various countries.

In 1976, UN General Assembly resolution 31/131 broadened the UNV mandate to promote the advancement of the role of youth in development. In 2001, the International Year of Volunteers (IYV), the UN General Assembly further expanded UNV's role as the UN focal point for raising awareness of volunteerism and providing technical cooperation to developing countries to harness the potential of volunteerism as a resource for achieving the MDGs.

This gradual evolution of our mandate has had a catalysing effect on UNV. As IYV put the spotlight on recognition, facilitation, promotion and networking for volunteerism for development, the organization adopted new and innovative approaches. Recognizing that youth are a powerful resource for national development, we engage them in promoting proactive participation and personal autonomy.

In 1995, and again in 2007, the World Programme of Action for Youth

reaffirmed that “the capacity for progress of our societies is based, among other elements, on their capacity to incorporate the contribution and responsibility of youth in the building and designing of the future. In addition to their intellectual contribution and their ability to mobilize support, they bring unique perspectives that need to be taken into account”.

Youth volunteerism is a strategy for engaging young men and women in a range of activities that improve their participation and positively harness their energy and vigour to contribute to the realization of national and global development goals. Involving youth through volunteerism generates stronger ownership of development and peace processes and outcomes. It also results in stronger social cohesion, greater collaboration between communities and governments and increased employability.

There are an estimated 1.8 billion adolescents and youth in the world today, accounting for nearly one-third of the world's population of almost seven billion people. Differences continue to exist in the way youth is defined and measured in countries around the world, ranging anywhere from 10-39 years of age. In this annual report, we adhere to the UN definition of youth as the age group of 15-24

years. By this count, close to 90 per cent of youth are living in developing countries, and global youth unemployment is at 13 per cent (International Labour Organization (ILO), 2010).

In this report, Inspiring Youth, we present the achievements of youth and youth volunteers who are transforming their development realities. In chapter I, Building Bridges, we focus on how youth build social capital and strengthen solidarity through voluntary engagement. We feature youth volunteers taking advantage of opportunities to realize their cultural and creative potential, and growing together in the process. Chapter II, Unleashing Potential, shows how committed youth are improving their skills and enhancing their employability and income, in order to then be able to engage in the political, social and economic life of their communities. Finally, in chapter III, Taking Action, we highlight youth volunteers working with communities to address development challenges, enhance rights awareness and build community response capacities.

During 2010, UNV deployed 7,765 UN Volunteers from 158 countries who served in 132 countries. Of these, 40 per cent worked on crisis prevention and recovery, 30 per cent on poverty eradication and MDG achievement and 27 per cent on democratic governance.



A local volunteer (left) discusses HIV/AIDS with a community member in Abeche, Chad during the 'Soyez Prudents' campaign. (Germán Robles Osuna/UNV, 2010)



Local volunteer Joshi Chakma meets with youth in Abinash Para, Bangladesh. Joshi participates in a community empowerment project in the remote Chittagong Hills Tract. (Amiya Kanti Chakma, 2011)

South-South cooperation continues to be a strong element of UNV engagement, with 80 per cent of UN Volunteers coming from developing countries themselves. Another 10,127 volunteers contributed to development through the UNV Online Volunteering service. About 62 per cent of these online volunteers were from developing countries, and 80 per cent were young people aged 18-35 years.

The younger generation has often promoted change and embraced innovation. In our rapidly changing world, youth are utilizing the Internet to learn more about the world around them and embracing social media to network and share. They are participating in development discourse, fuelling response measures and priority setting, breaking down barriers to social inclusion, and volunteering to achieve all of the above.

In empowering young people, who are at the core of our mandate, UNV invests in their energy, dynamism and innovative spirit. UNV respects the strong engagement of youth, and recognizes the fact that youth are in transition to personal independence, and have the right to be supported,

guided, nurtured and given opportunities.

The Hong Dan Dan Education and Cultural Exchange Center in China is dedicated to edu-culture training of people with disabilities. Volunteers have enhanced their employability and encouraged their participation in social life.

In January 2010, Mrs Ban Soon-Taek, wife of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, visited the centre and was impressed by the spirit and impact of these voluntary efforts. She said, "We emphasize that volunteerism should be viewed as a renewable and sustainable resource, which if encouraged and harnessed, can play a major role in creating a harmonious society."

UNV works with partners to increase the efficiency and outreach, as well as ownership and sustainability, of development interventions at the local level. UN Volunteers engage people at the grassroots level as active players in genuine community development, encouraging and respecting their collective wisdom, knowledge, experience and skills. They demonstrate how UNV, through volunteerism,

strategically bridges the development priorities of UN entities, other partners and people at the grassroots level.

UN Youth Champion, American actor Monique Coleman, encouraged youth engagement in voluntary and community service activities in a recent visit to Indonesia. Addressing more than 500 students, Monique emphasized the impact of long-term involvement and volunteering and called on more young people to get involved. "Volunteering is one of the most inspiring experiences," Monique said. "This year, we mark the International Year of Youth and the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers. This is a unique chance for us to recognize the work of young volunteers and to get involved." IYY and IYV+10 give us the opportunity to reflect upon the economic and social contributions of youth volunteerism towards advancing the peace and development agenda and achieving the MDGs.

BUILDING

BRIDGES



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

PEAS

“Many youth around the world volunteer in their communities, thereby making tangible contributions to peace and development. Civic engagement is central to building cohesive communities and to promoting young people’s integration into society. Greater efforts should thus be made to guarantee that young women and men have the opportunity to participate in these types of activities.”

Joint Statement by Heads of UN entities for the launch of the International Year of Youth, 2010

Youth volunteering fosters social integration. UNV engages youth in promoting diversity, encouraging greater citizen participation, improving respect for equality and fostering social cohesion. Through close interaction with youth and communities, UN Volunteers gain a better understanding of their needs, visions and cultures, and build bridges between people at the grassroots and development partners.

Youth volunteer engagement in their communities generates strong social capital, which builds trust, enhances social cohesion and solidarity and revs up the economy. Increased involvement and participation of youth in building bridges within communities enhances their social responsibility and promotes the sustainability of development efforts of UN and other partners.

In **Bolivia**, 70 UN Volunteers – 90 per cent of them under the age of 30 – advance local development by strengthening the capacity of municipalities and raising awareness about the MDGs through volunteering. The definition of youth in the country covers the age range 15-30 years. Through the UNDP-UNV project ‘UN Volunteers for the MDGs’, the volunteers designed around 60 projects that benefited

more than 100 communities. These focused on the achievement of development targets in the areas of health, education and water and sanitation, and also on activities such as the improvement of food production, development of community tourism and promotion of the MDGs.

“Volunteering allows the United Nations system’s cooperation to be brought to the community level; it gives our cooperation a human face,” says Yoriko Yasukawa, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bolivia. “And the understanding and knowledge that UN Volunteers have of the communities help us to better adjust our cooperation programmes to the reality of their needs.”

UNV and UNDP forged strategic alliances with the governments of 65 municipalities, five universities and other partners with field presence in five of Bolivia’s departments: La Paz, Oruro, Chuquisaca, Tarija and Cochabamba.

In the Department of Oruro, the UN Volunteers were local youth with a deep knowledge of the indigenous cultures and of the region’s socio-political context. Accordingly, they were able to adapt MDG messaging to the indigenous life





Case Study | Albania

Enhancing the participation of marginalized people

Around 70 per cent of the population of **Albania** is under 30 years of age, and youth comprise a large number of the Roma and Egyptian minority communities. Roma youth are raised under challenging socio-economic conditions, and take on responsibility for a family at an early age. Compared to other ethnic groups and the broader Albanian society, Roma women are the youngest to marry – at an average age of 15.5 years – and have many children. The average marriage age for the Egyptian minority (17.2 years for women, and 19.4 years for men) is far lower than the national level (22.6 for women and 27.2 for men). Opportunities for these young people are limited, and difficulties persist with social integration.

“The integration of the Roma through education and vocational training is considered one of the principal measures that will increase

employment and alleviate poverty in the Roma community,” says Mirjeta Ramizi. Mirjeta is a UNV Local Community Development Officer in the project ‘Empowering Vulnerable Communities’ (EVC).

UNV launched the EVC project to contribute to the social integration of vulnerable Roma and Egyptian communities, working with UNDP, Tirana Legal Aid Service, Terres des Hommes, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Technical Secretariat for Roma of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and local governments. The project improved access to social services, supported community participation in decision making, developed capacity and employable skills and mobilized community volunteer health, education and child protection mediators. Most of the project participants were UN

Volunteers from within the minority groups themselves, which had a positive impact on the engagement of local communities and identification and prioritization of local needs.

“Volunteerism has contributed to the social integration of vulnerable communities in the Selite and Laprake region, where 23 young Roma have graduated from training courses, including on the use of solar energy panels,” Mirjeta says.

When the two-year EVC project came to an end in June 2010, a new project was launched under the Delivering as One UN initiative in the country. In the new ‘Empowering Vulnerable Local Communities’ project, UNV and its UN partners are relying on indigenous volunteers to improve the access of Roma and Egyptians to services and socio-economic opportunities, and enhance their civic rights and human security.

philosophy and culture. In the local languages (mainly Aymara and Quechua), these UN Volunteers are referred to as *Yanapiris*, which means 'people who help others'.

One such *Yanapiri* is UN Volunteer Javier Maraza Ayca, who worked in the Qaqachaca Municipality. Javier worked with the local community to establish a community tourist centre and programme activities and tourist routes, as a means of diversifying income sources. The community appreciated his cultural sensitivity and guiding hand. One community member said, "Thanks to the support of our brother Javier, we have been able to improve opportunities for our community, developing a kind of tourism which benefits all of us and which respects our *Pachamama* (mother earth)."

UNV's strategic alliance resulted in the creation of university volunteer networks. Some of the partner universities and municipalities have strengthened their commitment to the project by co-funding several UN Volunteers' assignments and continuing to support the volunteer networks that were created.

"Youth are the present and the future of humanity; their great potential and capacity for change makes them vital actors of development.

This was the vision behind the project at hand," says José María González (Spain), UNV Programme Officer in Bolivia. "The participation of youth through volunteering is essential in order to overcome poverty and social exclusion, and helps advance human development and progress towards the MDGs."

Volunteering empowers individuals and communities to work on the reality they wish to transform. It increases their autonomy, capacity and commitment to changing and improving their own lives. In **Rwanda**, youth have great potential to reconstruct the social capital destroyed by war and genocide. However, they face challenges that hinder their growth and well-being and affect the country's development.

To support the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture in empowering young women and men to live free of poverty, discrimination and violence, UNV engaged in the joint programme 'Delivering as One to Meet the Development Needs and Rights of Rwandan Adolescents', together with UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-HABITAT) and ILO.

Eduart Koci (right), a national UNV Community Exchange worker, meets with a youth association in the village of Driza in Fier, Albania. (Gavin White, 2011)

These young men in Rwanda are presidents of local youth cooperatives. The Joint Youth Programme organized a youth camp that included entrepreneurship training in which each cooperative received a goat as a gift. (Annoncée Manirarora, 2010)



The Joint Youth Programme increases the participation of youth through volunteerism and enables access to services in an environment conducive to the psychosocial, emotional and physical development of adolescents and youth. Two international and 11 national UN Volunteers serve with the programme within the Ministry of Youth and in 15 districts of the country. The UN Volunteers helped build the capacity of the Ministry to rehabilitate the infrastructure for sports and games in youth centres, which are run by volunteers.

More than 13,000 youth attended the youth centres on a regular basis in Karongi District between January and December 2010. The breakdown of this figure shows how the project is reaching young people, particularly young women: of the total, there were 3,905 girls and 3,191 boys aged 10-19 years; 1,790 young women and 1,984 young men aged 20-24 years; 876 young women and 1,007 young men aged 25-35 years; and 110 young women and 120 young men above 35 years old.

In each district of the provinces, over 1,000 youth volunteers engaged in workshops and discussions on volunteerism, human rights and environmental issues. Around 60 of these youth volunteers are peer educators and carry out sensitization campaigns on reproductive health, environmental protection, civic education and the promotion of

volunteering. About 300 youth also took part in training on entrepreneurship, HIV/AIDS and reproductive health.

“These achievements are being sustained by the youth volunteer clubs that were established, 35 in the Rusizi District alone, which are working closely to initiate lasting community development projects,” says Jean de Dieu Sibomana from the Rusizi youth centre team. “The Joint Youth Programme became a bridge to pass the volunteerism spirit on to youth and the entire community.”

Local community members in Mali volunteer online. (Jean-Baptiste Avril, 2005)

“ Youth are the present and the future of humanity; their great potential and capacity for change makes them vital actors for development. This was the vision behind the project at hand. ”

Engaging communities in volunteerism is also possible through new avenues of communication and participation. In Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) and Jordan, UNV has launched community radio services to enable communities to share information, voice concerns and determine possible response measures. The radio projects – firsts in both communities – reach people who have limited opportunities for participation.



Nouan Anong, a volunteer radio DJ with Thateng Ethnic Community Radio station in Lao PDR, delivers the morning news. (Philippe Pernet, 2011)

In Thateng town, Sekong Province, 800 km south of the capital of **Lao PDR**, 19-year-old Nouan Anong is in the local radio studio fitting her headphones for the morning news. Nouan is a volunteer radio anchor with the Thatheng Ethnic Community Radio for Development station and presents the show in her local Ta-oi language.

“This is a unique opportunity to volunteer and represent my Ta-oi ethnic group. I can communicate in my own language so the community understands what is happening around them,” said Nouan. For Leasone Bernthinchung, the UNDP Public Information Officer for Thateng District, the radio station provides vital support to his work. “We have limited knowledge of ethnic languages and capacity to share information to the wider Thateng district. It’s a lot better now since we have this ethnic radio station,” he said.

The radio station was launched in April 2010 as part of the Citizen Information Programme under the Governance and Public Administration Reform project supported by UNDP, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and UNV. This project helps disseminate information to the remote multi-ethnic communities of Sekong Province through two community radio stations, speakerphones, information boards and the quarterly Sekong magazine.

Radio programmes cover health issues, agriculture and information for youth to better understand their ethnic history and other relevant topics. Strong community ownership means that volunteers, particularly young people, act as links between the citizens and the administration by gathering village statistics and socio-economic data. The community is involved in every aspect of the radio, from school children cleaning the grounds to youth reporters volunteering to produce the content.

According to the district authority, the volunteer-run radio has helped 200 farmers to learn new agricultural techniques and increase their production, while 115 mothers have benefited from information about vaccinations and healthy nutrition for their children.

A legacy of volunteers remains across the 20 villages in the district. Soulivanh, from Kamkok village, is one of seven volunteers who updates their information board and staffs the speakerphone booth. “In the past, the village



Case Study | Online volunteering

Youth empowerment through online volunteering

Online volunteering can be an empowering experience, offering young people above the age of 18 – from developing and developed countries – the opportunity to engage in development activities, work in international teams, use their expertise to support a cause, develop existing skills, and assume new roles and responsibilities. With 80 per cent of online volunteers aged 18-35 years, the service directly increases the participation of youth in development activities.

More than just a virtual link between volunteers and empowerment, the UNV Online Volunteering service promotes youth development worldwide. In 2010, 233 opportunities (out of 1,343) were posted on the online volunteering site that supported youth initiatives, resulting in 4,246 assignments (out of 15,109).

In India, a group of online volunteers created an Indian edition of the Youth Leader magazine. They developed the content of the magazine and mobilized a stable network of online volunteers: young professionals who contribute as writers, editors, designers, photographers, programmers and coordinators. The magazine is hosted by Positive Nett-Works e.V. Association in Germany, a site which offers information on change initiatives and tools for addressing development issues.

Through this initiative, Indian youth have been inspired to get involved in local volunteering. Samarpita Mukherjee (India), one of the volunteers, says, “Writing about change makers has motivated me to get involved with other organizations as well.” She adds, “Along with some other volunteers, I am recording school text books into audio recordings for young girls who cannot see and are too poor to afford to learn Braille. The volunteering experience with Youth Leader has turned me into a change maker, too!”

Eric Schneider, Director of Positive Nett-Works, says, “Today, Youth Leader India is a fully-fledged online magazine that offers opportunities for participation. The magazine has just started a photo and essay-writing contest about youth participation within the framework of the International Year of Youth”.

To volunteer online or for more information, please visit onlinevolunteering.org.



A young woman who performed traditional folk dances paints a banner in Siguatepeque, Comayagua, Honduras. An artistic fair, 'Celebrating our culture of volunteerism', was organized with the region's cultural volunteers. (Julia Raudales/UNV, 2010)

head would have to go from house to house to share information," he says. "Now, we can make a public announcement and get everyone's attention. The participation among the community is better because of this."

A similar community radio project in **Jordan** is helping marginalized people take to the airwaves of a local radio station. There, they not only found their voices, but the ears of their families, the wider community and local decision makers.

In 2010, UNV and UNDP launched this project, coordinated by the Government, which uses community radio stations to empower disadvantaged local communities in Zarqa. The project established four thematic community development committees to address the MDGs, women, youth and people with disabilities. Each convened periodic roundtable and public dialogues to identify and communicate development challenges and jointly formulate plans to tackle them.

Two of the four committees established through the project specifically focused on youth, and facilitators experienced in working with young people ensured effective dialogue and participation. The community development committee on children and youth underwent training on public safety and discussed the dangers of issues like drugs and bullying with local municipality members. National partners engaged through this project partnership, like the Department of Labour and 'We are all Jordan

Youth Commission', provided vocational training opportunities for youth volunteers and persons with disabilities.

Dina Alaadin, the Community Radio Project Manager, shares, "After capacity building, we brought in eight volunteer radio reporters to assist in developing the radio messages." The messages were broadcast across the Zarqa and Amman governorates on the Farah Al Nas radio station through programs such as 'Takalam', which is the local name for the community radio project. "Takalam means 'speak out', and the shows concentrate on messages the local community develops to address their challenges and problems," Dina says. "We also open the line to invite people's comments and even give decision makers a chance to respond to our messages." In total, Dina and her team mobilized 100 community volunteers in the various aspects of the community radio project.

The project also has a strong focus on gender empowerment and mainstreaming. Nihad Jariri, of Farah Al Nas Radio, outlines, "We focus on marginalized people. We are known as the radio station of women in particular. We make sure that we address women as a powerful component of society." Sultan Ali Khalel Al-Dab'at is an Architectural Draftsman and member of the Committee for Women. He says, "It is very good that through your local community, you observe the challenge and try to solve it. Participation removes many misunderstandings. We uncovered problems that exist in our society – and that were buried under the name of shame and taboo – in order to address them."

Safeh Sa'adh Abh, a housewife and member of the Committee for Women was happy to find the linkage between the concerned community members and the responsible authorities. She explains, "We talked with the Directorates of Employment and Development and the municipality. We had proposals and wanted to know how they could help in the future. We didn't want promises and words, we wanted action. And we can feel that some changes have happened."

Youth volunteers in **Honduras** are developing cultural activities that help spread a message of peace and peaceful co-existence. Aged 19 to 35, so-called 'cultural' volunteers bring youth together to participate in activities with shared goals that foster a sense of belonging. They

believe that art and culture have the power to prevent violence in the streets.

Crime rates in Honduras have increased alarmingly over the last few years. According to a report by the National Commissioner for Human Rights, from 2005 to 2009 the annual murder rate increased from 37 to 66.8 per 100,000 inhabitants. Youth are by far the most vulnerable and at risk of getting involved in this spiral of violence. Gangs, drug trafficking, high levels of unemployment and lack of purposeful activities for youth are the factors identified as the cause of this great increase in criminality.

The 'Creativity and Cultural Identity for Local Development' programme promotes culture and creativity as a means of fostering social cohesion and economic development, and is implemented by the Honduras Ministry of Culture, Art and Sport, UNV, UNDP, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and ILO.

UNV supported the decentralization of cultural activities to regional government Culture Councils that would adapt their activities to local settings. One international UN Volunteer coordinates the programme, and eight national UN Volunteers serve as promoters, providing technical and logistical support to eight of the country's regions to set up information, management and communication centres. They have mobilized 317 local volunteers through eight cultural volunteer networks.

These cultural volunteers contribute to the development of cultural agendas in the different municipalities, helping organize local festivals, artistic and gastronomic fairs, folk concerts and dance, and identify local artisans, painters and artists who can contribute their talent to the initiatives. These activities have led to increased awareness, for example through environmental fairs organized on World Environment Day 2010 or a street film festival held to generate debate about gender issues.

In this way, the cultural volunteers encourage others to join the networks and actively participate in the development of cultural activities in their communities. Artists, volunteers and council and community members get involved in different events that motivate youth to participate by contributing their artistic talent or by enjoying other people's talent.

In La Ceiba, three of the cultural volunteers participating in the programme's activities come from communities where the rate of violence is high and where gangs and drug trafficking have taken over public spaces and are directly impacting on peoples' lives. "These cultural activities are a reminder to society that art has no borders, no preferences, no bounds; art is a free expression of the spirit of each human being," says cultural volunteer Coni Lustenberger. "Art and culture brought us all together, paving the way for hope and life."

Community volunteers in **Colombia** are working with children and youth, using culture, art and sports to strengthen social cohesion and promote the reintegration of ex-combatants in the communities. In the Municipality of San Carlos in the Department of Antioquia, UNV and UNDP have partnered to mobilize 17 community volunteers through the ANIMARTE project. This is part of the UNDP Programme for the Promotion of Coexistence, a joint effort between the international community and the Colombian Government, which aims to advance justice, reconciliation and truth processes in order to

During the ANIMARTE project in Colombia on IVD, youth get involved in one of the activities to contribute to the community reintegration of ex-combatants through culture and sport. (Luis Sanmiguel/UNV, 2010)



Tomoko Yasunaga (front), a UNV Peacebuilding Officer with UNHCR, helps ease tensions in a refugee camp in Kenya in a festival that involved 'a tug-of-peace rope'. (UNV, 2010)

build sustainable peace in the country. Colombia has one of the largest numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the world. The Department of Antioquia has a high concentration of IDPs, high levels of poverty and is affected by land-restitution processes, all of which challenge peaceful coexistence.

The community volunteers work with around 260 youth and 540 children, promoting participation and community involvement through activities such as theatre, dance, painting, music, reading, and team sports. These help transform the youth's social attitudes, as well as their collective and individual values, minimizing the risk of conflict re-occurring and establishing the conditions necessary for sustainable peace.

Through these activities, members of the community meet people who are reintegrating into society – such as former members of armed groups. This helps re-build the trust that was broken through the conflict.

Mario swapped weapons for art when he joined ANIMARTE as a community volunteer. Today, he promotes hip-hop as a way to build peace and promote co-existence. "Hip-hop has helped us speak about certain values which need to be the basis for building peace. The results are positive: the integration of children and youth from different boroughs of the municipality, along with more trust, perseverance, tolerance and team work."

The community volunteers are familiar with the political and socio-cultural context of their region, and understand the needs of the communities, which is a key pre-requisite for their participation in this project. UNV supported the selection of the community volunteers, and provided them with induction training on volunteering and their role as volunteers.

The Mayor of San Carlos, Francisco Javier Álvarez, acknowledges the contributions of volunteers, highlighting, "Volunteering has not only enabled discussions about peace, it has actually helped to advance peace; and it helps re-build the social fabric through actions that contribute to human development."

Youth volunteers in **China** are protecting and promoting the rights of young migrants. Tianjin is an important economic centre in Northern China and home to an increasing number of migrant workers. Due to economic strains and poor academic performance, most of the youth in this demographic have failed to continue with a high school education.

To address this trend, UNV and the China Young Volunteers Association have piloted a volunteer tutoring and mentoring programme to support learning and social development of in-school migrant youth, with assistance from China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges and Tianjin Young Volunteers

Volunteer Guan Liwei (right) participates in 'Volunteer Mentoring for Migrant Youth', a branch of the MDG Achievement Fund Joint Programme on Protecting and Promoting the Rights of China's Vulnerable Young Migrants. (Li Miao, 2010)



Association. The pilot started in February 2009 and runs until 2012. In 2010, project partners trained teams of volunteers from local universities to facilitate after-school tutoring for migrant students in two schools in Tianjin. The 122 university volunteers focused on improving the academic skills and social inclusion of the migrant youth.

The volunteers worked in rotating teams with the same groups of students over a one-year period. The students received close attention, with each volunteer mentoring no more than five students. For each course, volunteers prepared content and lesson plans, and assessed the performance of the students.

According to each group's needs, university volunteers assisted graduating students in preparing for entrance exams and exploring skills and interests. As a practical and cultural extension to their classes, volunteers organized visits to universities, businesses and museums to inspire and motivate the youth migrants.

"Year-long tutoring and mentoring activities have finished, and the time [the volunteers] spent with us was so unforgettable," says Xia Qing, a student at Nankai District Huixiang Vocational School. "Throughout these two semesters, we have learnt a lot of valuable things that enriched our knowledge and broadened our vision greatly."

At the same time, project partners provided the volunteers with training and support. Counselling services were available to teachers as a high percentage of migrant students struggled with mental health issues. With this resource, the teachers had more of an understanding and context of their students' challenges. Likewise, the teachers benefited from asking their own questions or addressing mentoring issues with counsellors.

The commitment and support the volunteers provided have been a source of inspiration. "The programme has been very helpful to me. I'm looking forward to helping others as a young volunteer as well," says Meng Qi, a student.

Because they work and live within the communities, the volunteers encourage people to cooperate and strengthen solidarity. This experience strengthens the civic consciousness of youth, fosters their participation as active citizens and enhances their individual and professional development.



Case Study | Peacebuilders

Meet volunteers building peace

It is essential for the international community to support sustainable peace in post-conflict states by providing emergency humanitarian relief, promoting political processes and maintaining public safety for reconstruction and development. Since 2007, a joint programme between the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre and UNV has contributed to peacebuilding efforts by recruiting and fielding skilled volunteers.

After six weeks of training in Japan, UNV deploys volunteers to post-crisis countries to engage in activities to build and consolidate peace, based on their skills. The Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre conducts the training with Canadian, Swedish and other international institutes. Learning by doing has been the focus, and volunteers are engaged in problem-solving activities, discussions and lectures.

"A Sudanese colleague said to me that my presence as a volunteer gives a morale boost, gives encouragement and hope for the people," says Tomohiro Yamanaka, a UNV Humanitarian Affairs Officer with UNDP in Southern Sudan.

Since 2007, about 60 per cent of the UN Volunteers in the programme served in countries where efforts to achieving peace and stability were underway. They worked in tandem with national counterparts to improve services to marginalized groups and engage refugees, youth and women. UN Volunteers established trust amongst people in some of the world's most fragile peace processes. At regional and national levels, volunteers have also strengthened programmes in nutrition and health.

By the end of 2010, UNV had deployed 69 volunteers to foster peacebuilding, also using new technologies. For example, using social media such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, volunteers enabled youth in Africa and the Middle East to engage in discussions about issues that affected and really mattered to them.

Yoko Kuroiwa, a UNV Inter-Community Youth Relationships Officer with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), assisted young Somali refugees in Dadaab, Kenya, in initiating dialogue on issues of concern in their community. The youth organized a festival that brought people together to reflect and share views on issues ranging from HIV/AIDS to corruption. About 200 participants engaged in drama, dance and speaking contests. They also took on the responsibility of raising revenue for the event and managing the programme. "The result was a huge success with thousands of spectators in attendance," Yoko says. "The refugee camp had never seen anything like it."

UNLEASHING

POWERS



Local volunteer Nona Chakma (far left) speaks with young women of the CHTDF in Rangapani Village, Bangladesh. The UNDP-initiated partnership with the Government, communities and NGOs empowers women through skills training and development. (Amiya Kanti Chakma, 2011)

UNTALK

“We want our young to grow up healthy and strong; to have more choices. We also want them to have a stronger voice. They are the future. They should have a better life.”

Laxmi Suwal, 27 years old, Nepal



Youth volunteering builds knowledge and capacities that can facilitate access to employment. UNV increases the participation of youth in development activities, assisting young people to play constructive roles in the development of their societies. Through training programmes, UN Volunteers enable youth to gain professional skills and engage in income-generating activities to alleviate poverty and unleash their potential to help themselves and others through volunteering. UNV also engages youth as volunteers within their communities, creating a generation of young leaders who take responsibility and support their communities with much needed development progress and services.

Equipping women with skills and knowledge empowers them to proactively change their own situation and engage as development actors in the advancement of their communities. For decades, the remote Chittagong Hill Tracts region of south-eastern **Bangladesh** has been the setting for high-level development programmes, yet the area has experienced slow progress in achieving real change.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) is a UNDP-initiated partnership with the Government, communities and non-governmental organizations promoting the development of the indigenous groups in the region. In 2008, a report on the CHTDF project identified a serious dearth of qualified women working in development. For development endeavours to succeed in the area, it was clear that women had to be empowered through

innovative approaches that provided opportunities for skills training and development. Rather than just adding programmes for women, changes were required in mainstreaming policies and resource allocation to reflect the interests and views of women.

In 2009, UNV launched a capacity-building project to engage women as volunteers for development, in order to enhance their capacity, build their confidence and skills and increase their employability. In partnership with the CHTDF, UNV developed a curriculum and organized a one-month training course on community-based development and leadership. In the pilot phase, 15 national UN Volunteers and 35 local volunteers were trained. Selected based on their education, most of the participants were younger women.

Local women involved in the training have since assumed leadership roles in their communities, and have developed a stronger voice, financial autonomy and a higher level of confidence. They now convene, rather than just attend, meetings, and collect data, write reports and manage records.

Kushiray Tripura is the CHTDF District Manager in the Bhandarban District Office. He says, “The volunteers are having a huge impact on increasing women’s participation in age-old traditional practices, such as the annual revenue collection, which dates back to the 1800s. For the first time in its history, women became involved, and as a result other women in the community are now looking for opportunities to



Case Study | Sierra Leone

Cultivating young entrepreneurs

Due to the post-conflict political context in **Sierra Leone** and the high number of youth ex-combatants, absorbing youth into the labour market is important to maintain peace and stability. An estimated 60 per cent of people aged 15-35 years are unemployed, under-employed or working in the country's informal economy.

Natsuko Kaneyama (Japan) works with UNDP as the UNV Programme Manager for Youth and Peacebuilding. She supports the implementation of projects aimed at helping Sierra Leone's youth get out of poverty and into the economy.

"Working with 26 partners, we implemented projects on skills training, agriculture and enterprise development that provided youth nationwide with better literacy, vocational and business development skills," Natsuko explains. "This helps them sustain and expand their own businesses even after the project ends."

About 8,500 youth took part in training provided through the employability projects implemented by 17 international and national non-

governmental organizations and nine technical and vocational training centres. Now, 3,926 young people are in paid employment, 971 have started their own business enterprises, 100 have micro-franchise businesses and 1,001 are engaged in agriculture production and agri-business for income generation and local food security.

Most of the youth involved in the training are members of local volunteer-involving organizations. They participate in volunteer activities in their communities, including those organized by the Volunteer Involving Organizations Network. To be able to participate actively in society as volunteers, these young people need to first secure a reliable source of income. To be able to give, they must first have.

Moses B. Jalloh, a former street beggar in Makeni, took part in a training programme on shoe making with other vulnerable youth. Moses is disabled, having suffered polio as a child. Despite this, he now has the skills to repair shoes and make new shoes for small children. Moses can afford three square meals a day, decent clothes to wear and a decent

place to sleep. "The same people who used to shout at me when I begged in the street are now my main customers," Moses says. "I repair their footwear and they pay me five hundred Leones instead of fifty Leones."

UNV has also been involved in a United Nations Peacebuilding Fund project engaging political party youth leaders in conflict prevention. The 36 youth leaders participated in a joint leadership workshop, and then established four inter-party youth groups. These groups conducted district outreach activities to promote non-violence and peacebuilding in 14 districts, with the participation of around 7,000 youth.

One youth executive from a political party reported on how relationship dynamics between opposing parties evolved in the process. "We are opponents for the election, but we have to work together after the election. We can prove that this is possible. After participating in this workshop, we have learned that we can work together for the common target to develop our country."

participate in community development projects and traditional activities. With their skills, the women have also fully put to use computers and printers that were underutilized before."

Happy Chakma facilitates gender-awareness training and community mobilization on gender issues, and enhanced her computer skills during her placement with CHTDF. She says, "Community people are really enthusiastic to know about all things, but don't easily accept new ideas because of traditional rules and regulations. It's really fulfilling that so much information can be accessed easily by searching the Internet, which helps me in the really challenging work I do." Happy continues, "I am very proud of my work as a volunteer because I have found a new identity in supporting gender-related decision making in the community."

UNV Programme Officer Ngozi Otti (Canada) observed firsthand the difference the project has made. "The transformation that has taken place among the women is simply amazing," Ngozi says. "They have grown more assertive: they stand up for their needs and are now self-confident and proactive change agents in the community."

Youth can contribute considerable economic value and respond to peace challenges within their communities. In integrating youth into initiatives for income generation, coupled with on-the-job training and volunteer opportunities, UN Volunteers open doors to enable them to be change agents in society.

'Creating Opportunities for Youth Employment' is a programme jointly supported by the UN in the **Sudan** to develop the skills of youth aged 15-30 years. Through it, UNV and partners are addressing the needs and post-conflict conditions of youth and vulnerable groups, including ex-combatants and mine victims, as well as women and children associated with armed forces and groups.

UNV is working in partnership with Dellenj University, which is the main implementing partner and selects the graduates for the programme, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports as well as 11 UN and UN-affiliated organizations and their relevant counterparts. The project engages unemployed university graduates in transforming realities in their communities, also improving their employability.

In the first stage of the project, UNV recruited 50 graduate volunteers, 28 of them women. Nidal Balandea is a national UN Volunteer who works as a UNV Project Training Coordinator. She develops training programmes in volunteerism for development, gender issues, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, as well as food production, business start-up and marketing. The training is then provided by partners in accordance with their specialization and the needs identified together with the concerned communities.

The graduate volunteers gained technical and facilitation skills from December 2010 to March 2011, and access to microcredit through the Central Bank of Khartoum. They then provided basic business training to marginalized youth and women, supporting them with entrepreneurial skills, writing business proposals and access to microfinance grants. Training also included health, gender and life skills.

Nidal says, "We were not making maximum use of available skilled cadres. Through training and empowerment, we now have highly motivated university volunteers who have reached 700 beneficiaries." She continues, "Our volunteers are in high demand, because partners have seen that communities accept them and feel that they genuinely care. This is positive advocacy for the United Nations presence in Sudan."

The project has received many requests from the 15 communities for more training sessions. UN partners, such as ILO and UNESCO, engage the

Youth in Makeni town learn about crafting leather at the Youth Resource Center through the support of UNV, the Youth Employment Secretariat and the UNDP Youth Empowerment Programme in Sierra Leone. (Natsuko Kaneyama/UNV, 2010)

Graduate volunteers from Dellenj University and a local community celebrate the completion of a Hafir project in South Kordofan, Sudan. Hafir are reservoirs constructed to store run-off water. (Ayman Hussein, 2011)



INSPIRING YOUTH TO PURSUE

Youth play a vital role in bringing peace and development to their communities. With the support of UNV, young people are inspired to work not only towards the United Nation's priority areas of development, peace and human rights, but also towards the MDGs. Here, we highlight the UN Volunteers who have supported, engaged and influenced youth to participate in the development of their communities, motivating them to take action and empowering them to be part of the decision-making processes in their countries.

Empowering young women to vote

Atsuko Hirakawa (Japan), former UNV Provincial Electoral Advisor (2009) and Regional Operations Advisor (2010) in Afghanistan

Atsuko assisted the UNDP project 'Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow' in planning and implementing electoral operations, logistics and public outreach in Parwan province. Atsuko visited schools where the Civic Educators she supervised conducted information sessions for youth and she spoke with principals and teachers about civic education activities.

Atsuko raised the awareness of counterparts in the provincial office, 50 per cent of whom were youth, of the importance of their ownership of the electoral process. In particular, Atsuko's outreach efforts were directed at young women. "I worked closely with female national counterparts and encouraged their participation, also in outreach activities for female voters," she says. "I also inspired the female staff to serve the electoral process as capable actors, despite the challenges they faced." Atsuko explains, "In a context where culture and tradition severely restricted women taking public roles in Afghanistan, women faced more risks in taking on positions with the Independent Electoral Commission at the national, provincial or local level."

Atsuko experienced a sense of belonging and accomplishment through her voluntary engagement. "I felt that I was being accepted by the Afghan people – I showed my passion to help, sat down with them and shared meals, and learned a little Dari (the local language)."

Mentoring young health personnel

Dr Jason Rayos and Dr Stefanie Guiang-Rayos (Philippines), UNV Doctors in South Africa

Tshilidzini hospital in Limpopo, South Africa, is challenged by the lack of doctors in this region. Dr Jason Rayos and Dr Stefanie Guiang-Rayos, a married couple from the Philippines, have been addressing this issue by developing capacity. Both provide their medical expertise and mentor young medical students and interns. They gain medical and surgical skills, are exposed to different cases, and become familiar with patient management and treatment.

Some of Jason's patients include young adults with HIV and teenage rape victims from the hospital's trauma centre. Jason explains, "In my department, family medicine, I make sure my students and interns interact and gain practical experience with my patients. Our group discussions refresh their theoretical skills and enhance their decision making." Stefanie adds, "In my dermatology clinic, we also integrate them in our weekly lectures and conferences, helping them link their training to practical care."

Through the mentoring and instruction of Jason and Stefanie, young students and interns have been empowered with medical expertise and have been increasing the hospital's workforce. "Over the past five years, we have trained about five students per month," Stephanie shares. "This gives us a great sense of fulfilment in our 'home away from home.'"

Engaging youth in HIV/AIDS prevention

Germán Robles Osuna (Mexico) Former UNV Project & Advocacy Officer in Chad

Germán and his colleagues worked on 'Soyez Prudents' (Be Cautious), an HIV/AIDS awareness campaign conducted in Abeche. The campaign slogan was carefully chosen with local partners as the people in the area are generally conservative.

Germán and community volunteers reached out to youth living in underprivileged neighbourhoods to enhance their awareness of HIV/AIDS and protection. They shared information in six neighbourhoods through street shows, radio spots and a parade passing through the busiest market. "Such empowered youth volunteers!" Germán says. "You could see on their faces that they were so happy to be in the streets taking the lead in talking about HIV/AIDS."

Volunteers distributed calendars and flyers, each with information on preventive measures. Condoms were handed out discreetly within the neighbourhoods.

Germán shares, "I knew this campaign was going to be different because of the unique social and religious nature of Abeche. As UN Volunteers, we are in the community to promote dialogue and empower people to take action in a culturally-appropriate manner."



PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT



Enhancing youth opportunities online

Nan Zhang (China) and Sumit Singh (India), online volunteers

A youth-organized NGO based in Ghana, Young People We Care (YPWC), collaborated with two IT professionals to create an online portal that facilitates youth access to information on opportunities for self-development. After the website's launch, Nan Zhang and Sumit Singh continued to add new features and increased the portal's presence on social networking sites. Currently, the website has 10,000 visitors per month and receives positive user feedback.

YPWC is a youth-led and youth-focused organization that provides youth with information on global issues (i.e. MDGs and HIV/AIDS) and inspires them to participate. Through their assistance in designing programs, YPWC empowers and guides youth on how to implement projects effectively. Thanks to the contributions of online volunteers, YPWC Internet presence has grown to include a portal with opportunities for scholarships, training, jobs and engagement for youth worldwide. To help sustain the website, the online volunteers have provided online training to YPWC staff on how to manage it.

Nan says, "Every time I read the feedback from our subscribers saying that they found jobs thanks to our posts or learned useful skills from the training resources we introduced, I know my daily work is worthy."

Sumit adds, "It is a great feeling to know that I was able to make a difference in this world by contributing to solve its problems. It generates a sense of achievement to be able to work on global assignments without being physically present."

Advocating youth volunteerism

**Karla Koutkova (Czech Republic)
Former UNV Civil
Society/Volunteerism Specialist in
Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Working with UNDP in 2009, Karla sparked a debate about volunteerism and the creation of a legally enabling environment for youth engagement. She convened a series of

volunteerism roundtables in which young people debated the pros and cons of volunteerism and discussed how to get involved in development locally and internationally.

Only 4.5 per cent of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina has had any volunteer experience, according to the National Human Development Report 2009 'The Ties that Bind, Social Capital in

Bosnia and Herzegovina'. "Volunteering does not enjoy the best reputation among young and elderly generations in the country," Karla says. "People usually connect volunteerism with unpaid labour that would qualify them for access to the paid labour market. Any efforts to demystify volunteerism and make it more accessible can have a big impact," she adds.

"Overall, the reactions of youth at the roundtables were positive. They asked detailed questions about how to volunteer with UNV or other volunteer-involving organizations," she says. Additionally, Karla was able to gather information on volunteerism in the country, which has been invaluable in helping UNV strategize its efforts to increase youth engagement.

Including women in climate change adaptation

Saadia Ihihi (Morocco), community volunteer

Saadia has participated in the production of a community video on climate change and adaptation called Tiwizi (traditional solidarity). Saadia works with the Community-Based Adaptation project, run by UNDP with support from UNV and the Global Environment Facility/Small Grants Programme. The project improves the capacity of the community of about 700 people, who rely mostly on livestock and subsistence farming, to adapt to reduced water resources and soil degradation. The 19-year-old from the Iguiaz community has promoted the inclusion of youth and women in activities to strengthen the resilience of the Iguiaz oasis ecosystem to the impacts of climate change.

Saadia says, "By participating in the documentary workshops, I learned a lot about my region from the elders and from discussions with the villagers. It also helped me understand the value of solidarity and collective work." She adds, "I appreciate meeting people and partners who are supporting local development in the oasis. I am a permanent participant in all adaptation and other activities, and I want to help more and more towards better conditions in the village."

Saadia and fellow community volunteers have been contributing their ideas, knowledge, mentoring and leadership to train and mobilize girls and women. They facilitated workshops, and also engaged women during gatherings around traditional activities, such as preparing couscous, singing local songs and dancing. Saadia's involvement was crucial in collecting the testimonials of women, and the participatory video was a first step to enhance active outreach and inclusion, particularly of women and youth.

These volunteers have inspired youth. From top: Sumit Singh (Ankit Mishra, 2010), Saadia Ihihi (Baptiste de Ville d'Avray/UNDP CBA, 2010), Karla Koutkova (Stephanie Roels/UNV, 2008), Atsuko Hirakawa (Hugo Salamanca, 2009) and Germán Robles Osuna (Chris Walsh, 2010).

“ Youth unemployment breeds disappointment, hopelessness and despair. These can lead to youth engaging in risky or destructive behaviour, which has consequences for the youth themselves, but also impacts on their families and communities. Enabling youth to engage in meaningful, secure income-generating work reduces their vulnerability. ”

Yentaguima Djangba helps with the construction of the Multifunctional Platform shelter of Naki Centre in Togo. She is one of 40 youth beneficiaries that participated in the 'Vocational training: a new start for youth' project that empowers youth with hands-on skills. (URGP/PCM Togo, 2010)

Josefa Lè assists a customer in her hair salon in Guinea Bissau. Through the Employment and Vocational Training for Youth Project, Josefa created six jobs in less than two years. (Mirella Domenich/UNV, 2011)

volunteers to train further trainers in the communities. All involved have benefited from the provision of services, social engagement and integration. Additional training is improving the situation of youth, for example, through vocational training and computer courses organized in cooperation with UNESCO. Literacy classes are also accessible to communities around Dellenj, made possible by a government adult literacy programme, village youth and graduate volunteers.

UNV is helping Dellenj University develop its own volunteer strategy in order to maintain the project's sustainability. In the second phase of the project, another 50 university graduates will

be engaged in similar community capacity development activities.

Youth often face difficulties in entering the local job market because they lack the requisite professional experience prospective employers seek. Youth unemployment breeds disappointment, hopelessness and despair. These can lead to youth engaging in risky or destructive behaviour, which has consequences for the youth themselves, but also impacts on their families and communities. Enabling youth to engage in meaningful, secure income-generating work reduces their vulnerability to risky behaviour. Young people, involved in constructive activities, have the motivation and enthusiasm not only to improve their family situations but also to positively influence development in their communities.

In **Lesotho**, the preliminary results of the Continuous Household Survey in 2009 put total unemployment at 29.4 per cent, with youth unemployment at about 45 per cent for youth aged 15-24 years and 33 per cent for young people aged 25-29 years.

In April 2010, the Prime Minister of Lesotho launched a National Volunteer Corps (NVC) for young graduates, which places them in public and private sector institutions where they can directly support the country's development efforts as volunteers. The volunteer corps was established through a UNV project carried out in partnership with UNDP and the Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation. It includes two national UN Volunteers with competencies in monitoring, evaluation, database management and training, as well as one UN Volunteer working as a UNV Management Specialist.

To qualify, the volunteers had to be no more than 35 years of age, graduates of universities or technical training institutions and interested in volunteering their services, also through community development work. The NVC is allowing unemployed youth to contribute to development while acquiring valuable and much appreciated hands-on experience. "The National Volunteer Corps contributed a lot to my career development," says Nts'olo Mochekele, an economics graduate who was placed with the Lesotho Institute of Public Administration and Management, "because after all those years of study, I was able to witness the practical application of my discipline and even debut my newly acquired skills as a working economist."



In its first year, the programme engaged 172 volunteers, exceeding the project's target of 55 by over 200 per cent. As of January 2011, two-thirds of the volunteers were women. To date, 69 of the 172 volunteers recruited – or 40 per cent – have found regular employment.

The programme has assigned volunteers in all ten districts of Lesotho. Given that there were over 1,600 applications for the 125 volunteer assignments in 2011, there is room to scale up the programme and provide college and tertiary institution graduates with solid professional and volunteer experience and better future prospects.

Youth are a valuable resource to respond to development challenges within their communities. UN Volunteers create an enabling environment for youth to become engaged productive citizens and to build their capacities by volunteering.

Fifty youth representing the constituencies of the **Solomon Islands** took their seats in a National Youth Parliament in November 2009 to debate issues affecting young people. The initiative was part of a project to strengthen capacities for peacebuilding and enhance the political awareness of youth. It was a joint effort of the Government, including the National Parliament Office, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNV, as well as NGOs and private sector partners.

Fifty students aged 14-29 years, half of them young women, were selected by the Ministry of Education and project partners to become a part of this programme as youth Members of Parliament (MPs). One teacher accompanied each student as a mentor. In a preparatory workshop, the participants gained skills in lobbying, negotiation and committee meeting proceedings. Then the National Youth Parliament convened and the MPs elected a Youth Prime Minister, Speaker and Opposition Leader. The youth proceeded to organize debates on topics ranging from the role of youth in peacebuilding to youth participation. For example, the 50 youth MPs debated a bill that proposed reducing the voting age from 18 to 16 years, discussing the benefits of earlier youth empowerment versus the maturity of a 16-year-old to make sound political judgements.

Although youth represent 60 per cent of the population of the Solomon Islands, many young people live in rural areas with few opportunities



Case Study | Togo

Giving youth a hand up rather than a handout

Youth in **Togo** are facing growing unemployment, estimated at over 30 per cent in a country where 61.7 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, according to World Bank data. A decline in public funding has hit the educational sector, leaving youth with few opportunities for training to enable them to access even temporary employment opportunities.

Inspired by the concept of 'Millennium Villages', UNV worked with UNDP, the Government and UN entities under the UN common country programme 'Vocational training: a new start for youth'. Three UN Volunteers developed assessment tools and conducted the process to select the 40 youth beneficiaries of the project in two villages.

For the first time, women trained as masons, electricians and hydraulic technicians offered communities much-needed services. This improved their financial stability, while at the same time promoting their social responsibility and professional integration. For example, the two young women trained in the maintenance of hydraulic equipment contributed to the rehabilitation of several boreholes in the villages of the project. One of them, Bagreta Baragouna, reports, "Before, I thought this job was reserved for men, but after training, I realized that women can do the same work as men."

Through the vocational training, the youth were able to improve their employability and autonomy. Boussoune Bousa, a 33-year-old electrician in Djambengou, says, "I worked as a farmer in the village of Naki Centre, but I was interested in electrical technology. The project gave me an opportunity to train as an electrical technician and it has been an ideal way to develop my skills. Now I understand the electrical power system better and can repair and maintain generators, the only source of electric energy in the villages."

Empowered through volunteerism, youth also committed to share their knowledge and to volunteer their new skills to make the infrastructure sustainable, by keeping generators and milling equipment going and maintaining schools, workshops and roads in their community.

to voice concerns or get involved in development. The innovative trait of the National Youth Parliament was that it worked against cultural influences that disempower the young, particularly women, and paved the way for increased participation. "There are no female members currently in Solomon Islands national parliament; for advancing women's status and achieving gender equality in the Solomon Islands, there is a great need for increased participation and representation of women in politics and other decision-making bodies." (Source: Country Gender Profile: Solomon Islands Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2010)

"The National Youth Parliament initiated a process where young people were able to express their views," says Samuel Rogers (Sierra Leone), UNV Youth Project Manager for the Solomon Islands. "Young people felt confident to address issues that concerned them, such as HIV/AIDS, climate change and violence against women, even going on national radio to raise their concerns."

Their voluntary participation contributed to a heightened understanding among the youth of the forces which shape governments and society, leading to greater transparency, accountability and improved governance. In turn, students created a network of national youth leaders to share information on democratic processes. The Youth Parliament will convene every three years so that every government that takes office has the opportunity to engage with youth in the Solomon Islands.

One session of the Youth Parliament was dedicated to reviewing information contained in the National Youth Policy. The youth parliamentarians recommended enhancing participation by setting up provincial Youth Councils and training members so that they can engage with provincial governments on the implementation of youth policies. Subsequently, UNV worked with UNDP, the Government and non-governmental and civil society organizations, helping to coordinate a national consultation. The outcome was a revised National Youth Policy, which was approved by the Government in April 2010.

Betaf Elementary School students learn proper hand washing from Nelson Semriyanto Dudung, a university volunteer in Papua, Indonesia. (Alexandru Buftic, 2010)

Youth Parliamentarians after the first session of the Solomon Islands Youth Parliament. Participants gained skills in lobbying and negotiating and discussed issues currently affecting youth. (Samuel Rogers/UNV, 2009)





Case Study | Indonesia

Engaging indigenous volunteers in community development

In **Indonesia**, the region of Papua and West Papua has had the highest level of poverty: 41.8 per cent of the population has been living below the poverty line. Income disparities, limited access to and poor quality of basic services have affected native Papuans who make up about 66 per cent of the population of Papua and West Papua. Educated young men and women have also been affected, as low youth employability has continued to be an issue.

Propelled by these factors, the University Volunteer Scheme for Youth Empowerment and Development of Papua was created to assist with participatory community development processes in Papua. It also increases the employability of young graduates and expands their opportunities to serve indigenous communities through the provision of basic services.

"This project has a great impact on our fresh graduates. They gain practical experience by working in the field and assisting our communities," says Samuel J. Renyaan, Deputy Project Manager at Cenderawasih University (UNCEN) in Papua. "With this experience, they can one day take leading roles in other community development programmes. Here, at the university, we see the

potential of this project in helping both our fresh graduates and the communities."

Working in partnership with UNCEN University and the State University of Papua in West Papua, UNV mobilized six national UN Volunteers and 25 Community Development Volunteers from these universities in 2010. Recruited and trained, volunteers are deployed to communities where they gain further practical skills in participatory community development. This has led to increased youth employability by supplementing theoretical training with field experience. Volunteer placement in communities has also helped the indigenous population. Recent graduates have transferred their knowledge to communities, provided basic services and encouraged marginalized people to participate in local planning and decision making.

"I have learned about the needs of our communities and how these can be addressed," says Community Development Volunteer Diane Martinje Kambuaya. "I've come to believe that our work is very important when it comes to identifying the needs of our communities and bringing them to the government's attention."

Elkies Tabuni, head of Napua village, in the Jayawijaya District of Papua, agrees. "We used to take the *ojek* (motor bike) to go to the town," he recalled. "It is very expensive, and we could hardly afford it." When university volunteer Yoseph Tatogo learned about the transportation problem his host community was facing, he discussed this issue with the Department of Transportation, Information and Communication in Jayawija District. As a result of his efforts, the Government provided Napua village with a bus. "We are really happy to have a bus now," says Tabuni. "We can bring our harvest and livestock to the town market and sell it, and our children have safe transport to go to the town school."

This collaborative endeavour also involved UNDP, UNICEF, ILO and local governments. The volunteers and partners have worked towards building the capacities of both universities to create and manage their own volunteer schemes.

Volunteering is a vehicle for youth to acquire technical and life skills. Helping them start to volunteer at a young age is giving them a chance to continue to do so throughout their lives and sustain their effective integration in society.

TAKING

ACT



Young women in Pakistan mobilize during training of rapid response volunteers in Athara Hazari. UNV supported the District Disaster Management Authority in response to the floods. (Omer Zaman Malik/UNV, 2010)

YOUTH

“We identified problems affecting our community, then we mobilized the community to address the deficits. We offered study circles where skills can be gained and activities planned in HIV/AIDS awareness, conservation farming, livestock rearing and marketing. We are proud to say we have been successful and are open to the world to come and learn from us.”

Youth Group leader Joseph Banda, Zambia

Youth are fully capable of contributing to development. Given the chance, they bring enthusiastic insights and energy to the challenges of development. Development partners should recognize the key role young people can play in determining needs and priorities and finding solutions. UNV provides youth with opportunities that build their capacities and prepare them for community leadership roles and responsibilities. UN Volunteers facilitate access to information and services. As a result, youth feel empowered to assert their rights and take action to address development challenges.

Pakistan is a case at hand. Floods driven by unprecedented monsoon rain in August 2010 have been rated as the greatest humanitarian crisis in recent history by the United Nations. The floods directly affected about 20 million people, which is more than the entire population hit by the combined disasters of the Indian Ocean tsunami and Kashmir earthquake in 2005, the 2007 Cyclone Nargis and the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. UNDP Pakistan estimated that close to 22 percent of Pakistanis impacted by the floods were youth. In his visit to Pakistan, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, “I saw determination, resilience and hope in the people – hope and the expectation that they are not alone in their darkest hour of need.”

UNV supported the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) of Jhang District

in responding to the crisis. Working with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNV trained 90 youth in essential emergency response and life-saving skills. From May to June 2010, these youth volunteers gained skills in hazard mapping, early warning, evacuation, rapid assessment, camp management, relief activities, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

When the floods struck in August of the same year, the youth volunteers were at the frontlines of the response. They effectively carried out voluntary search and rescue operations in flood-affected areas, saving 1,800 people, as well as belongings and cattle. Before and during the 2010 floods, the youth pioneered early warning through SMS, texting their community members with information provided by the DDMA.

Shahid Abbas is a youth volunteer who served as Secretary of the Disaster Risk Management Forum in Rashidpur. He explains, “Floods have often destroyed our district, but this was the first time the community took action themselves in an organized way. During past floods, we were unaware of the coming danger and didn’t have the capacity to save our lives and belongings.” Shahid continues, “No doubt the floods were a catastrophe, but by participating in rescue operations, we unleashed our strength to minimize the devastating effects. This has given us confidence and enthusiasm to face the challenges ahead.”





Case Study | Nepal

Breaking the silence on menstruation

Young girls in **Nepal** lack critical guidance on the changes happening in their bodies as they grow into young women. Education about puberty and menstruation in schools is inadequate or non-existent, with many teachers themselves having limited understanding of related health issues. During their monthly cycle, many girls feel discomfort and are self-conscious, and end up missing school. This contributes to the gender gap in education, and can result in disempowerment and poverty.

“After my period started, my studying suffered. Like what if there is a lot of bleeding and the blood stains my school dress and the boys saw that,” explains a pupil at Sitalbox School in Kapilbastu district. “I could not concentrate in class.”

Maya Devi, a teacher at Sitalbox School, has seen the effects firsthand. “If girls cannot attend school for one week out of four, their education will suffer,” Maya says. “To ensure equality and safeguard their right to education,

resources must be put into what might seem like an issue of minor significance.”

Anna-Maria Guiney (Ireland), a UNV Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Project Officer with UNICEF, and 300 pupils, community health volunteers and NGOs organized an awareness-raising campaign about menstrual hygiene. Empowered with knowledge, students and teachers marched through the village in a rare public show of concern about an issue culturally considered taboo. They distributed booklets in Nepali produced by UNV and UNICEF that dispel harmful myths about menstruation, for example, “the concept that menstruating girls and women pollute their surroundings and should be shunned during this period,” says Christian Simmelkjaer (Denmark), UNV Programme Officer for Nepal.

Anna shares, “The girls demanded better provisions. Now, schools in Kapilbastu district have purchased emergency sanitary pads and incinerators for the hygienic disposal of used pads. In Sunsari district, girls have

formed a club and are making sanitary napkins, otherwise unavailable, to sell in school at a minimal cost, using the funds from these sales to make more.”

Over 2,000 young women and girls empowered through this campaign are now teaching and mobilizing countless others, who are gaining useful knowledge on menstruation and hygiene management. The Departments of Education and Health Services are now addressing related issues in teacher training and development programmes.

Water, sanitation and hygiene are crucial to getting and keeping girls in school, as they bear the brunt of unhygienic or non-existent latrines. The lack of clean and separate sanitation facilities in schools discourages many girls from attending school full time and forces some of them to drop out altogether, particularly as they approach adolescence and the onset of menstruation. (Source UNICEF, 2001)

After the floodwater subsided, the youth volunteers proactively worked with the DDMA in relief and assessment. Because health care facilities had been destroyed and roads and railways washed away, communities lacked crucial medical care. The youth volunteers were instrumental in organizing medical teams to come to the communities. UNV mobilized a volunteer medical team from Jinnah Hospital in Lahore to serve in the flood-affected areas and prevent the outbreak of disease. The 14 physicians and 12 paramedics provided medical care to almost 2,600 community members in the district.

Omer Zaman Malik, a national UNV Disaster Risk Management Coordinator, trained the youth who took the lead in the flood response. "It was a daunting task to be involved in such an operation," Omer recalls, "I had to coordinate between Government authorities, UN agencies, NGOs and the youth. Time was tight and we needed to reach people, and I was inspired by the hard work and achievements of the young volunteers."

UNV successfully complements the development interventions of organizations like UNDP and UNFPA by involving youth, women and marginalized groups in the development of their communities. The Capacity Development for District Planning project (CDDP) in **India** is part of a joint UN and Government programme, involving UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNV. Through this project, UNDP and UNV are building the technical skills of District Planning Committees in addressing, for example, the MDGs, disaster risk management and climate change.

About 35 young national UN Volunteers, along with 30 District Facilitators working with UNICEF, actively support communities in enhancing development results through voluntary action. Their efforts ensure closer and more responsive working relationships with the community. Xavier Kerketta, Head of the Convergence Village Development Committee in Tilwari Village, describes the impact of these volunteers. "Through the project, UNDP developed information and communication technology centres in some villages to reach out to the communities. UN Volunteers then motivate youth to come and use the centres and develop their skills and knowledge in their vocation, for example agriculture. The youth take this

knowledge back to their communities and share it, and the community development catches on."

Amit Chourey, a national UNV District Support Officer in Khargon district, works closely with Jan Abhiyan Parishad, an NGO specialized in training and mobilizing people for social causes. Through the CDDP, Amit trained the NGO facilitators and continues to provide technical support. In the village of Ubdee, the NGO formed a youth *prashfuta* (spontaneous or voluntary group) to raise public awareness of environmental issues and promote ecological practices. To date, 20 young men aged 15-24 years have joined the group. "Gender inequalities and social exclusion have been reasons for low participation and uneven development of marginalized people, and we face this issue too," shares Ratnesh Vijyavagiya, who coordinates the youth activities. "We are encouraging young women to join the group, which is difficult in this traditional and conservative community." Ratnesh continues, "We now meet monthly to enhance our social awareness, learn about our rights and about the environment. We have developed a biogas plant together and earn a livelihood from this."

In 2010, the youth group mobilized the Ubdee community in a large-scale tree planting activity which involved thousands of young people. The youth raised public awareness about saving energy, sanitation and the use of watersheds. They also demonstrated to the community the

Student club members and teachers from Kapilbastu District in Nepal march through their village in order to raise awareness of menstrual hygiene amongst girls in schools. (Anna Maria Guiney/UNV, 2010)

UNV Communication Officer Bohdana Rambouskova (right) talks to Abdo Ahmed, a local fisherman in Amak, Yemen. Bohdana works on the Socotra Governance and Biodiversity Project to conserve globally important species of the archipelago. (UNV, 2010)



benefits of biogas toilets, compact fluorescent lamps and sandbag dikes. "Initially the *prafutan* youth group used these biogas toilets," Amit said. "When they found them useful, they went from house to house and held group discussions to make the community aware of the advantages." As a result, the number of households using biogas toilets nearly tripled from 47 to 140, out of 315 households in the village.

For Sumeeta Banerji, Head of Governance at UNDP, "The volunteers serve as a very vital link between the local government and communities and are the backbone of this programme."

A similar project is underway in **Nepal**, the Local Governance and Community Development Programme (LGCDP), implemented by the Ministry of Local Development, in cooperation with UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNV, UNCDF and UN Women – the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. UNV is promoting volunteerism as a way for community members to regularly take part and be included in local planning, implementation and oversight processes. UNV also works in close collaboration with the National Development Volunteer Service (NDVS). Two national UN Volunteers serve as Programme Coordinators and UNV has mobilized 100 NDVS volunteers to conduct social mobilization and provide technical assistance in 48 District Development Committees and 52 municipalities. These local volunteers are 27 years old on average in a country where youth is defined as people aged 16-40 years.

An example of this technical support is in the area of water and sanitation. According to UN-Water, the UN inter-agency mechanism on water-related issues, "The lack of adequate sanitation contaminates watercourses worldwide and is one of the most significant forms of water pollution. Unsafe water causes 4 billion cases of diarrhoea each year, and results in 2.2 million deaths, mostly of children under five." Diarrhoea kills more young children each year than HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined (UNICEF 2010).

Sabita Purkuti is from the village of Vendol in Dhulikhel Municipality, home to a marginalized so-called lower caste Dalit minority group. A few years ago, open defecation was customary here, due to a lack of sanitation facilities. Now, newly built toilets, bright red with shining metal doors, stand out among the village houses.

"People used the bush before," says 14-year-old Sabita. "You could be seen, you could step on it, and the smell and flies were bad. Now we have a clean place to go and have learned together about health and sickness and how flies spread germs. Truly we learned," Sabita says, pausing, "that 'shit' kills."

"Three years ago, the community demanded sanitation facilities to stop open defecation, but they were only offered materials to build them," says NDVS volunteer Assistant Municipal Facilitator Sharmila Kafle. "They could not do this, because they needed to earn money for food." Poor and underdeveloped, the Dalits "desperately seek access to services, information and opportunities, which are often systematically denied or deprived, making their lives even more difficult. And usually they are not in a position to demand or bargain," states a report produced by the National Planning Commission, UNDP and UNICEF (Voices of People in Development, 2006). Sharmila involved the Dalits in planning, provided

National UNV Human Rights Officer Chipasha Mulenga (left) provides feedback to a community in New Jerusalem village, Zambia, on the status of a legal case regarding a land dispute with their chief. (Sirak Gebrehiwot/UN, 2011)

National UNV Coordinator Indra Bhujel (second from left) and Sharmila Kafle of the National Development Volunteer Service (left) talk with Sabita and Saroj Purkuti of the Dalit community about the importance of water and sanitation. (Anna Marie Guiney/UNV, 2010)



technical guidance and helped them get access to resources. The members of the community carried out the actual labour, which, together with the materials, was financed by the LGCDP and the municipality. Today, 65 community members, 40 of them youth and children, have access to hygienic latrines.

Through their work, UN Volunteers advocate respect for human rights as essential to achieving and sustaining development. They empower youth, children and women to exercise their rights, and develop the capacity of those entrusted with safeguarding them.

In **Zambia**, UNV and UNDP are supporting the capacity development of the national Human Rights Commission (HRC) in a project spanning three years. Six UN Volunteers working with the HRC are enhancing capacities to promote and protect fundamental rights. The volunteers raise awareness of human rights obligations and relevant international conventions among institutions and the general public. They also collect data for the Annual State of Human Rights Report and for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

The UN Volunteers are at the receiving end of complaints submitted by the general public. They review the grievances brought to them and determine the need for further investigation, before recommending recourse measures to the HRC authorities for their action. During 2010, the UN Volunteers investigated human rights abuses and processed 129 complaints. Youth placed 19 complaints related to their right to education, mistreatment by school management, forced school transfers and early marriage.

Florence Kabwe, a 17-year-old double orphan, was about to be subjected to an arranged marriage by her guardians. By reaching out to the volunteers, she learned about her rights and took informed decisions. "I am very thankful to Grace Sibanda [a national UN Volunteer with HRC] for helping me return to school after the death of my mother by negotiating with my grandparents. When they couldn't afford to care for me anymore, Grace personally supported me with school fees, uniform and books and found me a place at a boarding school," Florence shares. "I now hope to achieve my dream of completing secondary school and studying to become a nurse or teacher. I have also raised a case to get my rightful inheritance, which is being claimed



Case Study | Zambia

Volunteering for youth rights

The Office of the Commissioner for Children's Rights (OCCR) was created by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) in **Zambia** to monitor the rights of children. National UNV Human Rights Officer Chipasha Mulenga conducts legal investigations for OCCR. In 2010, he was a member of the HRC team reviewing selected orphanages and correctional facilities to determine the extent to which the rights of children and youth were being respected. During one such visit, Chipasha met Josephine, a mother in her twenties accompanied in prison by her 11-month-old baby. Chipasha shares, "The baby was sickly and seemed to suffer from measles. Josephine reported that her baby had not been attended by a doctor since birth. We involved the social welfare personnel to ensure Josephine and her baby had access to appropriate medical care. When Josephine learned that she had the right to demand this, she was relieved that her baby would attend the under-five clinic."

In another inspection, Chipasha met David, a 13-year-old being held in custody for murder. David had unintentionally killed a man when playing with an unsecured gun. For Chipasha, "this case was very unfortunate, very touching, very moving. Looking at this boy who was quite innocent, so to speak, and so remorseful, being held in an adult facility. He told me, 'I didn't know the gun was loaded. I didn't want to hurt anyone. It just happened; and it's all so unfair.'" Chipasha liaised with authorities to expedite David's hearing by the high court, which would then result in him being sent to a youth correctional facility. "David was very encouraged when he understood his rights and the legal course his case should take," Chipasha says. "Working in such an environment one needs to have a heart. Being a human rights defender is a passion which starts with selflessness and compassion. Local law or practice may result in suspected human rights violations, and one has to go beyond and look at the international laws, norms and practice in order to change this. I volunteer because I have the knowledge and skills to assist less privileged people. My hope is that justice should always take its course."



Former UN Volunteer Filippo Busconi speaks to former fistula patient Madjibeye Felicité outside the Association for the Social Reintegration of Women Victims of Fistula in Chad. (Harald Franzen, 2009)

by my aunt, and Grace is pursuing it for me through her office.”

UN Volunteers conduct workshops to sensitize children and women and run awareness campaigns for the general public on critical issues of child abuse and neglect, as well as gender-based violence and women’s rights.

“Women and children are being empowered to report human rights violations such as child abuse and wife battery, which are quite common,” says Anock Kapira (Malawi), UNV Programme Officer. “Even the local chiefs came on board. They were involved in sensitization on the Bill of Rights, Rights of the Child and Women’s Rights in the context of customary law, the welfare of the people under their jurisdiction and the important role they can play to stem malpractices.”

In Kasama, the UN Volunteers created radio programmes on child rights that were broadcast throughout the district, reaching an estimated 100,000 people. They conducted school outreach programmes involving 500 children and youth. The UN Volunteers also held training workshops on child rights and the human rights-based approach to HIV/AIDS issues.

UNV Human Rights Officers with the HRC are working with communities that have been affected by pre-election tensions. In a news report, Inter-Press Service noted “growing fears

that women candidates and voters will not participate in the 2011 general elections in Zambia because of an upsurge in election-related violence” (August 2010). UN Volunteers supported the HRC in organizing a one-week sensitization campaign on electoral violence in the Kasama and Mpulungu Districts. The campaigns reached 3,800 participants, 570 of them youth. Subsequent by-elections were declared free and fair by independent observers and monitors.

In **Cambodia**, a National Youth Policy aims to provide youth with stronger support and volunteer opportunities to develop their skills and participate in civil society. Two national UNV Youth Volunteerism Specialists work with the General-Directorate for Youth in the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The UN Volunteers helped draft the policy, which highlights the role, contribution and potential of volunteerism for youth empowerment and participation. As part of the process, the volunteers also led three consultation workshops, each with approximately 200 participants from relevant ministries, UNDP, UNV, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNESCO, volunteer-involving organizations and youth groups.

“We benefited significantly from the support of the two national UN Volunteers,” said Chantha Heng, Director of Youth Centres/Volunteerism Unit, under the General-Directorate for Youth. “Being part of the working group that drafted the National Youth

Policy, they provided expert input on volunteerism and assisted the General-Directorate for Youth with the organization of awareness-raising and capacity building national workshops.”

A key partner, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, established a Department of Youth Centres, with a specialized unit on promoting volunteerism among Cambodian youth. The UN Volunteers helped develop the volunteerism framework and training curriculum. This was then field tested in 11 provinces through youth volunteer groups established by the UN Volunteers. The volunteers supported the establishment of a Youth Advisory Panel to enable youth to engage directly with the UN and strengthen the youth voice in the design and implementation of UN development programmes.

“I have built very strong links with the Youth Advisory Panel for UN, which is helping me in bringing youth voices into the decision-making process,” says Chamreoun Ly, a national UNV Youth Volunteerism Specialist. “This experience also helped me build a very good relationship with the Government civil servants in order to work together to help Cambodian youth.”

Food insecurity affects about 35 per cent of the population of **Madagascar**, while another 48 per

cent are vulnerable to food insecurity. Over the past 35 years, more than 11 million people have suffered the consequences of natural disasters, including cyclones, drought, epidemics, floods, famines and locust infestations. UNV is supporting efforts to address hunger under the United Nations country programme 2005-2011, working with partners including the World Food Programme (WFP), UNFPA and UNICEF, as well as local, national and international NGOs.

UN Volunteers promote the community management of school canteens and empower parents to take part. They have mobilized an estimated 2,600 volunteers. “In 2010, 190,000 children and youth in school, including 102,600 girls, were able to have lunch at school every day. Moreover, the number of children attending school has increased since the programme was implemented,” says Robert Guiradoumbaye, Head of the WFP Sub-Office in Tuléar. “School feeding helps to keep children in class in a region where boys are often withdrawn from school to tend cattle and girls to marry and manage households.”

UN Volunteers support the Ministry of Health, Family Planning and Social Protection in providing supplementary feeding for malnourished, orphaned and vulnerable

UN Volunteer Rasmané Balma (left) works with the World Food Programme on the school canteens project, which aims to increase school attendance in Madagascar. The children, teachers and cooks receive daily food rations; about 95 per cent of the beneficiaries are children. (Christian Ratsimbazafy/WFP, 2010)



The 'Say No to violence' bus travelled through six towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Youth volunteers engaged through the campaign raised awareness of gender-based violence. (©Alain Laferté, 2010)

children, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding women at mother-and-child clinics. Supplementary feeding is also provided for people living with HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis patients attending specialized centres.

The UN Volunteers conduct regular field assessments of affected villages and highly vulnerable people. They work with communities to identify environmental and other causes of food insecurity, and to improve their capacity to meet their basic food needs.

and deforestation also conspire with political and economic turmoil to make life even harder – and hungrier – for people already on the poverty line.”

Volunteers have played an important role since the start of the environmental movement. They recognized that individual and collective action was necessary to raise awareness about and engage others in environmental action. The UNV University Volunteer programme has been in place since 2002 thanks to an agreement with Madrid's Universidad Autónoma in Spain. It offers university students an opportunity to volunteer in development projects.

“ A number of environmental risks and hazards disproportionately affect young people, who have to live for an extended period with the deteriorating environment bequeathed to them by earlier generations. Young people will be compelled to engage in new forms of action and activism that will generate effective responses to ecological challenges. ”

In 2010, 45 Spanish university students volunteered in development projects in Latin America and the Arab States, mainly in the areas of youth, environment, governance, education, poverty reduction and the MDGs. Though they had different areas of expertise, they all aimed to include youth-related issues in their work.

Jean Micardo Merès of Terre des Jeunes speaks about environmental degradation with students of the Sanon Derac National School in Haiti after a joint tree-planting exercise with UNV. (Mario Rizzolio/UNV, 2011)

UN Volunteer Rasmané Balma (Burkina Faso) is a School Feeding Officer in Ambovombe. “In the south-western region of Madagascar, growing numbers of natural disasters make the population increasingly vulnerable,” he says. “Global warming

David Sánchez, a 26-year-old student of Environmental Sciences, served with UN-HABITAT in **Ecuador** for six months, assigned to a Joint Programme on Local Governance for Water and Sanitation.



David established alliances with local actors for the creation of an Ecological Youth Club in Manabí, a province with challenges in drinking water supply and sanitation. “The programme works with established development institutions and organizations, and I wanted to work more at the grassroots level and generate community action”, David explains.

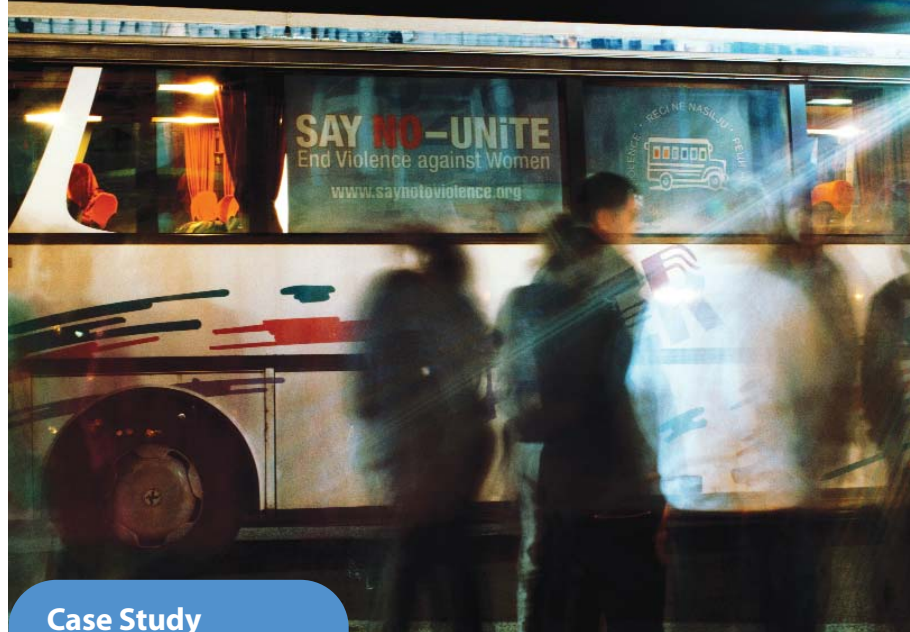
Although environmental issues are addressed in the education system, including a subject on environmental education, David thinks that what was lacking was the drive for youth to get involved.

“I think my main contribution has been empowering youth to act; helping them realize that they can do something”, David says. “They have realized that it is possible to go to the municipality, talk to the mayor, and demand certain services. They have realized that they are actually listened to and their demands taken into account – they are, after all, those who will lead the canton in the future.”

David started his work at a national school in the Rocafuerte canton, working with about 25 pupils aged 12-15 to form a youth group that would carry out environmental health education campaigns.

“The Ecological Club organized activities to sensitize the community about the adequate use of water in homes and schools. It also encouraged the community to take good care of water sources, identifying which are the most commonly polluting elements,” says Bruno Belletini, UNDP Coordinator of the Programme on Local Governance for Water and Sanitation in Manabí. “Those who benefited from David’s work were inspired by his creativity and enthusiasm and are keen to encourage the volunteering spirit in youth.”

The UN World Youth Report 2003 outlined the special concerns and responsibilities youth have in relation to the environment. “A number of environmental risks and hazards disproportionately affect young people, who have to live for an extended period with the deteriorating environment bequeathed to them by earlier generations. Young people will be compelled to engage in new forms of action and activism that will generate effective responses to ecological challenges.” Volunteerism gives them this opportunity.



Case Study

Saying 'No' to gender-based violence

<i>“There are times when a woman deserves to be slapped.”</i>	45% disagree
<i>“A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together.”</i>	70% disagree
<i>“The man decides when and how to have sex.”</i>	35% disagree
<i>“I have slapped a girlfriend or another young woman either ‘once or twice’ or ‘more than twice’ in the three months prior to the survey.”</i>	7% said yes

(Source: Survey conducted by the International Centre for Research and Women on behalf of CARE International in 2009. The survey polled 1,200 young men aged 15-18 from four different high schools in Sarajevo and Banja Luka.)

In a recent campaign in **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, youth took the lead in giving prominence to the issue of combating gender-based violence. Working with UN Women and local organizations, UNV mobilized young volunteers to advocate against gender-based violence in a ‘Say No to Violence’ bus campaign. “Focusing on educating young people is crucial in order to instil zero tolerance of violence against women and girls,” says UNV Programme Officer Elizabeth Siebenmann (Canada). “Youth were active as crucial participants in this campaign, and even young people from small towns spoke out on gender issues.”

During the annual 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women, the youth bus toured six towns of Brcko, Bijeljina, Gračanica, Laktaši, Banja Luka and Tuzla. As a result, twelve youth volunteers encouraged 120 young people to take a stand in challenging traditional gender stereotypes.

The youth discussed gender equality and screened the documentary ‘Be a Man, Don’t be Violent’. They also had an active exchange via social media which enabled more dialogue, and the reaction has been promising. “So many people, so many new ideas, such proactive young people in one place – that’s priceless,” said one campaign activist. One workshop participant sums it up optimistically: “We are young. We would like a change in our society for ourselves. Let’s act together towards the same goal.”

Celebrating International Volunteer Day 2010

On 5 December 2010, UNV engaged youth in marking International Volunteer Day (IVD), both online and on site. Across the globe, youth were encouraged to contribute their efforts towards promoting the achievement of the MDGs through discussions, projects, games and videos.

More than 20,300 active users, including almost 13,000 subscribers to the UNV Facebook page, contributed to the success of 'Share the Story'. This six-week campaign culminated in a 24-hour online film festival to celebrate IVD 2010. Using a combination of video stories created by volunteers, expert opinion presented through interviews and social media outreach, the campaign highlighted how volunteerism contributes to achieving the MDGs. During the film festival, over 60,000 people shared opinions, exchanged ideas, watched the films or read posts. Almost 400,000 views of the videos and messages were counted during this 24-hour period.

The IVD film festival, hosted on the UNV Facebook page, started on 4 December with a story about volunteer civic educators working to empower women in Fiji. From there, the festival made a 24-hour journey around the world, stopping in 12 time zones along the way to see how volunteer

action is helping to make the MDGs a reality. A new film was posted every two hours, each showing a different volunteering experience. These included stories from volunteers working with the UN, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and civil society organizations, like the UK-based Voluntary Services Overseas. Every two hours, the festival moved to a new time zone, encouraging viewers to comment on the films and take part in the global discussion.

The featured films were largely made by volunteers themselves. Film festival participants learned how volunteer peer educators in Vanuatu are teaching young people to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS; discovered how youth are raising awareness about the MDGs in the Philippines; and witnessed a Red Cross volunteer informing people how to protect themselves against the latest cholera outbreak in Haiti. They also discussed video stories about many other volunteers who, from streets, refugee camps, villages and towns, told their own stories about how they are working to foster peace and development around the world.

Since IVD, the number of subscribers to the UNV Facebook page (www.facebook.com/unvolunteers) has

increased significantly and today there are over 20,000 subscribers. The page invites volunteers, organizations, civil society, and interested people around the world to join a global discussion about how volunteerism can end poverty. The IVD films and others can be viewed on UNV's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/unv).

"We can end poverty, but it will require the engagement of millions of people through volunteer action," said UNV Executive Coordinator Flavia Pansieri. People are looking for ways to connect. Social media provides an opportunity for volunteers, particularly youth, to get involved.

NIGERIA

During IVD in **Nigeria**, youth and other volunteers gathered at the Millennium Villages Project in Ikaram. To demonstrate the spirit of volunteerism, community youth and UN Volunteers worked on clearing overgrown roads to reduce the risk of accidents.

With the Millennium Villages Project in Pampaida, UNV and youth volunteers improved the road that leads to the only health facility.

Youth in the community joined the initiative, volunteering for the repair and maintenance of the road.



LEBANON

On UN Day 2010, UNV and UNDP launched a campaign to raise awareness about the MDGs. The project encouraged youth in **Lebanon** to participate in development. It reached out to approximately 114,000 youth and engaged more than 9,000 of them. The campaign comprised so-called 'Teach-Ins' in schools and universities, which were aimed at raising awareness about the development challenges in Lebanon and engaging Lebanese youth from different schools in dynamic discussions and debates about the social, political and development work of the United Nations in Lebanon.

Additionally, an MDG photo competition titled 'A Snapshot for Development' was launched on 1 September 2010. Within 45 days, 387 photos had been submitted online. The website had received 13,000 hits when the competition closed. A jury of professional photographers selected photo winners for each of the eight MDGs and one overall winner. The results of the competition were announced at the UNESCO Palace at a UN Day event on 22 October 2010. A selection of photos, including the winning and highly-commended photos, was shown to the 800 youth from different regions of Lebanon who filled the theatre.

"As a graphic designer with an interest in photography, I feel I can reach people with my work and projects," says Nadine Khoury, the winner in the MDG 3 category (promote gender equality and empower women). "If I could use my passion and skills to affect my society or even just one person, that would be inspiration enough for me."

TIMOR-LESTE

In **Timor-Leste** UNV celebrated IVD on 4 and 5 December 2010 with youth in Dili, Baucau and Oecussi. Youth, communities and volunteers were involved in conversations about volunteerism and the MDGs.

More than 350 Timorese participated in the event facilitated by 150 volunteers from UNV, Red Cross Timor-Leste, Australia Volunteers International, Youth Parliament and national NGOs.

With 80 school children in Dili, 40 volunteers facilitated educational games about the MDGs. They engaged these students in a dialogue and shared views on volunteerism with 10 volunteers from the National Youth Parliament.

At Katilosa Foundation, a centre for children's rehabilitation in Baucau, 140 Timorese attended the event. UN Volunteers demonstrated the use of an environmentally-friendly stove, while Red Cross volunteers focused on natural disaster preparedness. Social Life Science, a local NGO, opened the dialogue on volunteerism with youth to inform them about the value of volunteering.

UN Volunteers organized rehearsals, songs and lyrics for an open concert promoting HIV/AIDS prevention in Oecussi. Around 150 people participated and young children and teenagers undertook an MDG hunt activity – looking for hidden clues to learn – while others participated in a theatrical production focusing on hygiene, nutrition, mother and child care and the use of a solar power cooking machine.

YEMEN

At Al-Rahma Foundation orphanage in Sana'a, **Yemen**, UN Volunteers and their colleagues played games and informed children about the MDGs and how volunteerism can help to achieve them.

Volunteers chose three MDGs to focus on that day.

MDG 2 (achieve universal primary education): UN Volunteers prepared a song in Arabic for the children to learn. Volunteers then asked the children why they were attending school and what they wanted to be in the future. Later, the children were asked to draw what they thought were Yemen's problems and explain how education could be used to solve these issues.

MDG 3 (promote gender equality and empower women): The children drew themselves in future careers. Volunteers talked with the children about how women could learn any profession they desired and contribute to society side by side with men.

MDG 7 (ensure environmental sustainability): UN Volunteers prepared a water game to inform the children about the current water situation in Yemen.

"Spending IVD among all those smiling children, explaining to them what a 'volunteer' is and listening to their opinions and feedback also reminded me of the essence of volunteerism and of my task in Yemen," says Guillaume Fardel (Switzerland), a UN Volunteer working with UNHCR.



Glossary

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IDP	Internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IVD	International Volunteer Day
IYV+10	Tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers
IYY	International Year of Youth
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
SMS	Short Message Service
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN-Water	UN inter-agency mechanism on water-related issues
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WFP	World Food Programme

Back cover photo: National UN Volunteer Roqaya Saydeh engages youth in Jordan in discussions about the MDGs, their needs and development priorities in their communities. Roqaya assists communities in Ghoeriya and Zarqa with roundtable discussions and helps formulate their messages for radio broadcasts through a community radio programme called *Takalam*, or speak out. (Mohammad Magyda, 2011)



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For more information about the UNV Online Volunteering service, please visit:
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