

# Be a UN Volunteer, be inspiration in action

## // How can a **UN Volunteer** complement the work of the United Nations?

Volunteerism is one of the most vital delivery mechanisms for social, environmental and economic transformation, ensuring a lasting impact with its ability to change people's mindsets, attitudes and behaviours. People become actors of change and equal partners in the attainment of local, national and international progress towards sustainable human development and global peace.

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme recognizes the shared universal values underpinning volunteerism – free will, commitment, equity, engagement, solidarity, compassion, empathy and respect for others. Since its establishment in 1970, UNV has enabled thousands of volunteers around the globe to contribute to advancing human development and fostering progress towards a better world.

## // Humanitarian assistance and emergency relief

Supporting the operations of various UN agencies in **humanitarian assistance and emergency relief**, UN Volunteers engage in a wide range of assignments with the ultimate aim to save and protect the lives of people such as refugees and internally displaced persons, to alleviate suffering and to maintain human dignity.

In the area of humanitarian assistance and emergency relief, UNV's partners have requested volunteers knowledgeable and experienced in: protection, resettlement/reintegration/repatriation, refugee status determination, community services, food distribution, programme implementation, debris management, early recovery, field office coordination, information management, logistics, warehouse management, transport coordination and radio communication, disaster risk reduction, emergency response, relief operations etc.



*UN Volunteers advance humanitarian action, peacebuilding, state-building and recovery in some of the most challenging and dangerous situations in the world. In Egypt, a team of 50 national and international UN Volunteers are supporting refugees through UNHCR. They conduct registrations, determine refugee status, offer counselling and child protection and work with partners to provide legal assistance to vulnerable refugees from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan and Syria, among other nations.*

*Nada Rawash (right), a UN Volunteer Reception Coordinator with UNHCR, is one of 40 Egyptian national UN Volunteers. Here, she is helping an asylum seeker fill out paperwork to become registered as a refugee with UNHCR in Egypt. (Photo: G-Tech, 2014)*

## // Why become an **international UN Volunteer**?

Becoming a UN Volunteer is a unique opportunity to enrich personal and professional experiences, and it benefits both the individual volunteer and the society at large.

In 2017, some 6,500 UN Volunteers in over 100 different professions served with 35 United Nations entities in 131 countries. Of these UN Volunteers, 59 per cent served on international and 41 per cent on national assignments, 83 per cent were from the global South and 47 per cent were women. Additionally, close to 18,500 UN Online Volunteers contributed to development through the UN Online Volunteering service.

International UN Volunteers serve in countries other than their own, and are highly-skilled individuals who work actively with development partners and within communities, responding to development priorities and needs in countries faced with poverty and socio-economic challenges, humanitarian crises, conflict and post-conflict challenges and situations of fragile peace.

International UN Volunteer assignments can be an initial contract of 6 to 12 months, generally with a possibility to extend for one to two years. Short-term assignments of three months or less are also required from time to time by UNV's partners.

## // What are the minimum requirements to serve in a **humanitarian assistance and emergency relief** assignment?

- A higher technical diploma, university or Master's degree (credentials will be requested);
- A minimum of two years of relevant working experience in your professional field;
- 25 years or older (there is no upper age limit);
- Good working knowledge in **at least** one of the three UNV working languages: English, French and Spanish (Portuguese or Arabic an asset for some countries);
- Strong commitment to the values and principles of volunteering;
- Respect for diversity and a willingness to work in a multi-cultural environment;
- The ability to adjust to changing and at times difficult living and working conditions.

## // What **support is provided** to international UN Volunteers during their assignment?

- Settling-in-Grant calculated on the duration of assignment, which is paid at the beginning of the assignment;
- Volunteer Living Allowance (not a salary) intended to cover basic living expenses, which is paid each month;
- Travel to duty station on appointment and return/repatriation at the end of assignment as applicable;
- Life, health and permanent disability insurance;
- Annual leave;
- Resettlement allowance calculated based on the duration of assignment, which is paid upon satisfactory completion of the assignment.

## // What **opportunities to volunteer** does UNV offer?

**International UN Volunteers** serve in countries other than their own, and are highly-skilled individuals who work actively with development partners and within communities, responding to national priorities and needs. UNV maintains a database which is a dynamic pool of talent fed by over 50,000 registrations annually and tailored to meet the needs of our partners. The majority of assignments are filled from UNV's database, however, difficult, highly specialized or high volume assignments are advertised on the UNV website, through professional associations and on social media/networks.

To create your UNV profile, visit our website at:  
<http://www.unv.org/how-to-volunteer.html>.

**National UN Volunteers** serve in their own country and combine their professional expertise with in-depth knowledge of local conditions. For further information, contact your local UNDP/UNV office.

A **UN Youth Volunteer** programme was launched in 2014 for the placement of UN Youth Volunteers aged 18 to 29. For further information and assignments, visit [www.unv.org/become-un-youth-volunteer](http://www.unv.org/become-un-youth-volunteer).

The **UNV Online Volunteering service** puts volunteers into contact with organizations worldwide to work together for peace and development – over the Internet. [www.onlinevolunteering.org](http://www.onlinevolunteering.org).