

Young students in Jammu and Kashmir, India, discuss their priorities for development before voting through the MY World survey. UNV India mobilized hundreds of volunteers, collecting over 11,000 offline votes by engaging people across the country in thinking about what matters most for them and their families. MY World is the UN global survey asking people to choose their priorities for a better world. (The Peace Gong Bureau India, 2013)

ENGLISH

Overview

➔ UNV in Action: Advocating for volunteerism post-2015

The world is in the process of rethinking and reshaping a modern-era development agenda that will supersede the Millennium Development Goals targeted for 2015. This process – referred to as “post-2015” – offers an unprecedented opportunity for UNV to advocate for volunteerism and the values it stands for as an intrinsic component of any future global development framework.

UNV believes that to achieve and sustain real change, civic engagement, including volunteering, must be embedded in the holistic conceptualization of growth and development and be part of delivery mechanisms across thematic goal areas.

Volunteering, both on site and online, is a way of leveraging people as agents of change. This would be an asset especially in areas such as monitoring

“Can you imagine a world without volunteers? It would be a poorer world because... volunteering is about action and service, about active citizenship, social cohesion, partnership and relationships. Its impact on local, national and global development can be transformational.”

Dr Gill Greer, CEO, Volunteer Service Abroad (New Zealand)

and reporting on the new development framework at national and international levels, to ultimately strengthen its overall accountability.

UNV aims to increase recognition of volunteerism as a means of actively engaging people in addressing development challenges and to integrate this concept into the post-2015 agenda. Volunteerism offers vital entry points via local, South-South and triangular cooperation channels.



UN
Volunteers

inspiration in action



UN Volunteers engage people in Kazakhstan to vote their priorities through the MY World survey. MY World is the UN global survey asking people to choose their priorities for a better world. Results are shared with world leaders in setting the next global development agenda. (UNV/Josefine Ulbrich, 2013)

“In a post-conflict setting, volunteerism is not always well received due to lack of financial resources for pure survival. Also, the situation and role of youth [during the conflict] at times make advocacy for youth difficult as people mistrust or misjudge youth. I manage to overcome this by literally living “inspiration in action”: I work directly with youth organizations, volunteer-involving organizations. I show commitment to volunteer values – walk the talk – that way partners believe in the mandate of UNV and confide in us.”

Tharaka Sriram, UN Youth Volunteer, Côte d’Ivoire

UNV is fortifying the position of volunteerism in the post-2015 debate by:

- *Strengthening national level capacity to integrate volunteerism into discussions about development goals and to expand outreach and stakeholder engagement.*
- *Engaging with key constituencies, mechanisms and institutions at the national and global level that are involved in the development of the new framework, including supporting United Nations Development Group (UNDG)-led national consultations and the roll out of the MY World survey.*
- *Developing thematic inputs and papers outlining the contribution of volunteering to development issues and underlining its cross-cutting role as an enabling factor for sustainable outcomes.*

Dedicated national and international UN Volunteers have been supporting different post-2015 discussions, engaging people and civil society groups. They have been strengthening long-term capacity to bring

local initiatives closer to national level fora, and building momentum as intergovernmental negotiations for the new development agenda advance.

UNV Field Units, including UN Youth Volunteers, have also been promoting the inclusion of young voices as agents of change to ensure that the new development framework confers roles and spaces for young people to meaningfully engage in development and construct their future with confidence.

Some examples of work done to date are:

➤ National post-2015 discussions

UNV Field Units have supported and conducted several national level events and workshops on post-2015. Through these activities, stakeholders' voices are leveraged, good practices are shared and concrete opportunities are identified for volunteer-involving organizations to take action and strengthen capacity at country level. As a result, a number of key recommendations were integrated into national and global reports of the UNDG-led post-2015 consultations.

➤ Roll out of the MY World survey

UNV has contributed to the rollout of the MY World survey, working with UN Online Volunteers and community volunteers to increase the overall reach.

In Bangladesh, a UN Youth Volunteer combined the work of volunteers from numerous local organizations with UNV's online volunteer system to greatly extend the outreach of the survey. The volunteers on the ground went door-to-door and school-to-school talking to people about their development priorities and collecting data. Over 50 UN Online Volunteers translated the information and the ballot cards into Bangla, entered the votes gathered offline into the MY World partner site and analyzed the results.

➤ Facilitating the engagement of global stakeholders

In a continuing effort since the International Year of Volunteers+10 in 2011, UNV has strengthened its extensive and continuous dialogue on volunteering for sustainable development with international volunteer-involving organizations and youth organizations, reaching out to millions of people around the world.

➤ Evidence-base for volunteerism

To highlight the crucial role of volunteerism in achieving sustainable development, UNV has developed issue briefs demonstrating volunteerism's contribution across thematic areas. UNV also provides substantive inputs on volunteerism and participation in the post-2015 process to the UNDG's Millennium Development Goals Task Force and the UN Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda.

"The best thing I found about the survey is that our students have started thinking beyond cricket and mobile phones – about critical issues that affect them."

Laila Sein, founder of the Academy For Research and Communication, local volunteer engaged in MY World survey rollout in India



On-site consultations with the local indigenous community in Panambizinho, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil. UNV supported over 30 of the 88 UNDG-led national multi-stakeholder consultations, facilitating the participation of communities from remote areas and highlighting the contribution of volunteerism to sustainable development. (Gilmar Galache, 2013)



Young volunteer Kiya Tsegaye of Tena Kebena volunteer association and her fellow Ethiopian volunteers develop creative solutions for urban farming. By conducting youth-led demonstration workshops for the local community which present eco-solutions for family gardens, Tena Kebena involves and empowers young volunteers and transforms abandoned urban spaces from a social and environmental perspective. (UNV-UNEP / Nicola da Schio, 2013)

“The Inequalities discussions have also highlighted the important role of civic engagement and volunteering as a way for all people, and particularly the most vulnerable, to foster their sense of responsibility and self-worth, and provide opportunities for them to concretely impact their livelihoods and play a constructive role in their communities.”

United Nations Development Group, A Million Voices: The World We Want, 2013 p.35 (45)

The analysis of MDG achievements and gaps has revealed the need to pay more attention to cross-cutting issues and enabling factors that affect development. United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/67/138, adopted on 20 December 2012, calls for a plan of action in 2015 for the integration of volunteering in all relevant peace and development issues of the United Nations over the following decade and beyond.

This call presents a unique opportunity to position volunteering also in the context of the implementation phase of the post-2015 framework by valuing both its ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ contribution: advancing systemic change through a positive and durable change of mindsets and approaches to local development. Recognizing the importance of these factors will affect the success of the new framework, providing innovative ways to empower people to contribute their share while holding governments to account.

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.

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

For more information about UNV, please visit www.unv.org