The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is inspired by the conviction that volunteerism can transform the pace and nature of development and that everyone can contribute their time and energy towards peace and development.

With partners, UNV advocates for volunteerism, integrates volunteerism into development planning and mobilizes volunteers. The enormous potential of volunteerism is an inspiration to UNV and to volunteers around the world.

UNV helps countries to foster and develop volunteerism as a force for sustainable development. We provide strategic advice on the role and contribution of volunteerism and options for civic engagement in development programmes. We help countries to improve public inclusion and participation in social, economic and political development, and we support the growth of volunteerism within communities as a form of mutual self-help.

We partner with governments and UN, non-profit and private sector organizations in order to support development programmes. UNV delivers a prompt, efficient and value-adding service to identify and engage professionals who can deliver services and fulfill a wide range of specialised tasks.

UNV directly mobilizes more than 7,700 UN Volunteers every year nationally and internationally, with 80 percent coming from developing countries, and more than 30 percent volunteering within their own countries.

UN Volunteers help to organize and run local and national elections and support a large number of peacekeeping and humanitarian projects. UN Volunteers comprise one third of all international civilians working in UN peacekeeping operations.

UNV also operates the Online Volunteering service, which connects development organizations directly with thousands of online volunteers who can provide services and advice over the internet.

UNV Programme Priority Areas

Through its programme framework, UNV focuses on harnessing volunteering as a strategic asset and a powerful contributor to peace and development in the following five priority programme areas.

- Delivery of Basic Services
- Environment and Climate Change
- Crisis Prevention and Recovery
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Operational and Capacity Building Support to UN missions

UNV support in its priority areas is underpinned by the three cross-cutting themes of youth, women and marginalized persons. At community and institutional levels, social inclusion involves relevant target groups in all volunteerism and related institutional initiatives.