



United Nations Pavilion
EXPO 2005 AICHI JAPAN

Press Release

Expo 2005: UNV highlights volunteers' role in achieving MDGs

BONN, 01 September 2005 -- The various ways volunteers are helping to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is the focus of the UN Volunteers (UNV) programme's exhibit at the first World Exposition in Aichi, Japan. Running since March, the Expo 2005 to date has seen participation of some 40 UN agencies and 121 countries.

The UNV exhibit – on display from 4 to 25 September at the UN Pavilion – highlights the critical role that volunteers play in building global networks and organizing international campaigns in support of the MDGs – a set of development objectives which include halving poverty, providing primary education to all, promoting gender equality and reversing HIV/AIDS, by 2015.

“Tragically, every day hundreds of millions of people struggle to overcome the daily grind of hunger, disease, and ignorance. But there is also a wealth of good will and solidarity, knowledge and social networks, to be tapped in local communities all over the globe, with support from outside. This is all about the capacity to cooperate – to get things done,” says Ad de Raad, Executive Coordinator of UNV.

Volunteers, for example, have been promoting education by addressing related issues such as low literacy and enrollment rates. They help develop innovative learning curricula – adapted to local realities and needs – and encourage local groups to provide literacy courses and practical training for children who cannot attend school.

In promoting gender equality, volunteer activists form the backbone of international women's movements, raising their voices on policies that negatively impact women. They also help develop networks and training programmes for women decision-makers and assist development institutions map and collect data on gender disparities.

“Time and again, volunteers reach far beyond our expectations and help us take major steps forward in development. No doubt, trying to achieve the MDGs is highly ambitious. But so are volunteers,” adds Mr. de

Raad.

At the Expo 2005, UNV is jointly exhibiting with the United Nations Development Programme's Equator Initiative, a programme that focuses on the region between 23.5 degrees north and 23.5 degrees south of the Equator, promoting a global movement to reduce poverty and conserve biodiversity.

Billed as the "exposition of global harmony", the Expo 2005 aims to create a global society, plan global networks and showcase the best of environmental and technological innovations to the rest of the world.

- [About 2005 World Exposition.](#)
- [The UN Pavilion at Expo 2005.](#)
- [About UNDP' s Equator Initiative.](#)

UNV is the UN organization that supports the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals through the promotion of volunteerism, including the mobilization of volunteers. To this end, UNV provides the opportunity each year for more than 7,000 women and men - 75 per cent coming from developing countries - to support peace, relief and development initiatives in some 140 countries. In addition, it engages thousands of other individuals in the work of the United Nations through www.onlinevolunteering.org, and manages the WorldVolunteerWeb.org, a portal that serves as a knowledge resource base on volunteerism worldwide.

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