



# Youth Volunteering India

JULY- SEPTEMBER 2017

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## Message by the Joint Secretary



Dear Reader, welcome to the fifth edition of 'Youth Volunteering India!'. Among this month's line-up stories, we will highlight achievements in the world of youth volunteering, some simple and innovative initiatives to develop skills, news updates and voices from youth volunteers.

The two main highlights of this series include the release of the 'State of Youth Volunteering Report 2017', and the launch of the India Online Volunteering Platform to cater to the needs of the civil society

organizations as well as connect them with the pool of volunteers in the country.

The newsletter is brought to you once every three months and is an initiative under the project on 'Strengthening Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and National Service Scheme (NSS). Within almost three years, the project can be defined by the healthy changes brought by its 29 UN Volunteers-District Youth Coordinators (UNV-DYC) who are based across all 29 States in India (one district in each State), along with 3 UN Volunteer Management Associates based in the Headquarters in New Delhi.

*By Shri. Asit Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports*

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## UN Volunteers Celebrates International Youth Day

**New Delhi:** To commemorate International Youth Day on 12<sup>th</sup> August, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS) in collaboration with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organized a National Consultation on 'Youth Building Peace' in New Delhi. The consultation was aimed at understanding the perception of youth and their role in peace building process.

Discussions were held in multiple fora, including a plenary on youth building peace. The session gave insight to the perspectives, challenges and priorities of youth, and looked for answers to support the active participation of youth, in local and national peacebuilding.

The event was attended by Secretary (Youth Affairs), MoYAS, Government of India, A.K. Dubey, along with Joint Secretary, MoYAS, Government of India, L.K. Gupta, and Deputy Country Director, UNDP, Marina Walter, 27 UNV-District Youth Coordinators and

members of civil society organizations and youth groups.

With almost half of the global population under the age of 25 years, youth leadership has become a critical factor in creating sustainable peaceful societies, in providing a safe space for dialogue and in bringing the voices of young people to policy makers, at regional and global level through active participation. In this regard, the

consultation played a significant role in increasing awareness about the role of youth among the stakeholders.

The International Youth Day (IYD), was established by the United Nations in 2000 as a means of raising awareness of issues affecting young people around the world. It also provides a platform for youth to celebrate and increase the awareness about their contributions towards the peacebuilding process.

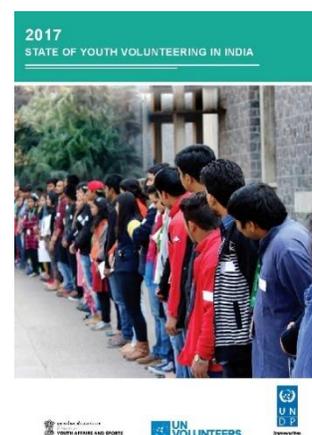


*From the left: Secretary (Youth Affairs), MoYAS, Government of India, A.K. Dubey, Joint Secretary, MoYAS, Government of India, L.K. Gupta, Deputy Country Director, UNDP, Marina Walter, and Programme Office, Arun Sahedo*

## Release of the “State of Youth Volunteering Report in India-2017”

**New Delhi:** As part of the National Consultation held on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2017, UN Volunteers released the first of its kind report on youth volunteering, the State of Volunteerism and Impact of Current Volunteering Initiatives in India. The report provides an evidence base and a well-documented study on the impact of youth volunteerism and volunteering initiatives in India. It highlights the contribution of youth volunteering to achieve the developmental goals in India and provides insights into the motivations and the challenges faced by volunteers across the country.

The report calls for a better common understanding about what constitutes volunteerism and how volunteerism can help to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals within local and national contexts. It notes the need for avenues for the millions of youths, who are due to join India's workforce by 2030, to take part in the process of nation-building, while giving them opportunities to develop their skills, and it also recommends measures to promote volunteering. Since the United Nation's "International Year of Volunteers (IYV) in 2001, there have been strong efforts to define and map



volunteer movements and the impacts of volunteerism across the world. This report on the “State of Youth Volunteering in India” is one such effort in India.

## Launch of India's First Dedicated Online Volunteering Platform

**New Delhi:** The United Nations Volunteers, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and United Nations Development Programme together launched a dedicated online volunteering platform which is first of its kind in India and for UNV. The platform serves as a marketplace for non-profit organizations and volunteers to connect, allowing youth networks, volunteer involving organizations, civil society organizations, public institutions and State governments to get support from online volunteers completely free of charge.

India recognizes the importance of engaging young people and opening avenues for their participation in development initiatives that affect their communities and their country. With the second largest population in the world, India's youth (15-29 years of age) account for 27.5 per cent of its more than 1.3 billion population. To harness this demographic divide, State authorities across India are finding ways to involve youth. This new online volunteering platform is the latest approach to their

involvement in sustainable development. In addition, it allows India to automatically measure and report its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Customized according to India's requirements, the platform allows youth networks, volunteer involving organizations, civil society organizations, public institutions and state governments to get free support from volunteers who can develop their skills and take on new roles that their professional life may not necessarily provide. In addition, it allows India to automatically measure and report its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals and allows organizations and volunteers to team up to address sustainable development



challenges – anywhere in the world, from any device.

The initiative is a part of the project “Strengthening Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and National Service Scheme (NSS)”, a joint project in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Volunteers (UNV).

## Project Management and Skills Upgradation Training

**New Delhi:** To enhance the management, leadership, and communications skills of 29 UNV-DYCs working in 29 States, the UN Volunteers in association with NYKS and NSS organized a three-day training on Project Management and



Skills Upgradation from 7th- 11th August 2017 in New Delhi. The three-day curriculum highlighted the key aspects of project management, focusing on the tools and techniques



to manage projects and workloads, understanding objectives, mapping project deliverables, resources, overcoming challenges, and adjusting durations to achieve the stated goals in the most efficient way. The programme was also aimed towards improving communications among team members and improving reporting requirements at various levels, for successful implementation of the project. The training was provided by the representatives of

PM Soft, a Pune based firm specializing in Portfolio, Programme and Project Management serving in domains like Social sector, IT, Shipping, Engineering and Pharmaceutical industries for the past 15 years.



## Building Resilience through Disaster Risk Reduction Training

**Kerala and Uttrakhand:** A five-day training session on 'Disaster Risk Reduction for the Capacity Building of Adolescent and Youth Volunteers' was organized in Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand and Ernakulam district of Kerala. The training was organized from 27<sup>th</sup> June to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 in Uttarakhand and 25<sup>th</sup> July to 29<sup>th</sup> July 2017 in Ernakulam. The objective of the training was to develop the skills and knowledge of youths and adolescents on pre-disaster risk assessment, prevention and mitigation, for effective

implementation of disaster risk reduction and response to disasters. The activities were supported by United Nations Volunteers (UNV), Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and District Administration as part of its Regional Project, under the 'United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience in South-East Asia and Pacific'.

The two programmes were designed as a pilot to deliver specialized training programmes in regions that are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. The Himalayan district of Uttarakashi is inherently vulnerable to natural disasters such as cloudbursts, landslides, flash floods, glacial lake outbursts and earthquakes. Whereas, Ernakulam, a coastal district which is the industrial capital of Kerala is prone to urban floods, tsunami, cyclone, landslide, lightning and chemical (industrial) disasters amongst others. The training was attended by 113 volunteers from NYK Youth Clubs and National Youth Volunteers with an aim to mainstream DRR into development



planning and programmes of the Government.

The training identified four DRR Champions, who will work as an interface between the Government, development agencies and the community. These DRR Champions will be trained by NYKS and UNV teams in developing resilient communities through awareness and public meetings.



## Thematic Debates with Young People on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)

As part of the project of "Strengthening NYKS and NSS", thematic debates with young people on the sustainable development was organized across all the 27 districts of India. The activity was undertaken in the month of September and October wherein it successfully engaged with 3000 youth volunteers at district level.



Thematic debates gave youths opportunities to discuss, in an informal setting, central concepts of the SDGs and to relate them to their

vision of achieving the SDGs through volunteering. Each state picked one SDG goal relevant to their region and integrated it with NYKS and NSS



activities using creative ideas to broaden the awareness and common understanding about the goals. Participants shared their views and captured essential elements and current challenges in implementing the sustainable development goals. The outcomes of the thematic debate helped in preparing the ground for

the UNV-DYCs to plan their engagements with the youth around the selected SDGs over the coming months.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by world leaders in September 2015. The 17 goals mirror much of India's development agenda and young people are at the forefront to ensure the achievement of the goals for the nation.



## Clear-Up Drive Post Rainfall Mayhem in Tamenglong

**Tamenglong, Manipur:** The lives of people came to a complete halt as rains and recurring landslides created havoc in several parts of Assam. The UNV DYV organized a major clean-up operation in the district of Tamenglong with the help of 20 Nehru Yuva Volunteers.

"Landslides had completely blocked the road, sections of the roads swept away, paralyzing normal life. The remoteness of our area added to the problem as villagers couldn't travel for their day to day activity affecting their work drastically. It wasn't easy to even get medical help during this period" said Victor Rongmei.

Focusing on the threat to the security of those travelling by the road, the volunteers picked the national highway 31 as a starting point.



*Clear-Up drive in Tamenglong, Manipur*

Volunteers had to carry spades, machetes, and other equipment on their shoulder in order to manually clear away the tons of mud, rocks, rubble, thicket, fallen trees, branches and debris. The volunteers cleared several parts of the national highway during the three-day activity.

"We received complete support from the villagers who gave all the required materials to implement this initiative and paved the way for district administration to construct the road. Villagers now believe that UNV DYV is doing something different for them from others" Victor Rongmei added.

## Volunteers Construct 1565 Toilets

**Karnataka:** In an extensive construction drive under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in Dharwad District, the NSS unit constructed 1565 toilets and partially completed 1250. Shri. M. Venkaiah Naidu, Hon'ble Vice President of India declared the village

Open Defecation Free during his visit to Konnur, a village of the Dharwad district in Karnataka.

A total of 1,588 volunteers and 36 NSS Programme Officers from 36 colleges participated in these programmes, stayed in the villages and volunteered to offer Shramdan. The toilets were constructed during September and October 2017, as part of a Special Camping Programme for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. The on-going campaign targets to construct 10,000 toilets under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.



*Construction of toilets in Dharwad District.*



The Zilla Panchayat provided the expertise and materials required for the construction. In addition to offering Shramdan, the volunteers sensitized people about the need for open defecation free villages.

## 2000 Volunteers Support Flood Relief Activities in Gujarat



**Gujarat:** Floods in Banaskantha District of Gujarat claimed several lives, leaving thousands of people homeless and without food needed to survive. During this time, the NSS volunteers provided food packets and water supplies in the remote and the most affected areas of Gujarat. More than 2000 Volunteers collaborated

with the State Government and helped in the relief operations.

59 Teams of 20 to 30 volunteers each were formed for the 50 affected villages in Banaskantha district in various talukas. Collection of groceries, medicines, clothes, utensils, etc. were carried out

throughout the state for the affected people. Apart from food distribution, volunteers were actively involved in running the community kitchen, cleaning and disinfecting the water sources, disposing carcasses of dead animals, and helping people to reconstruct their destroyed homes.

## Testimonials from the DYCs

*“Under the Skill Upgradation Training Programme, we have added three more programmes like making toys, bags and purses apart computer education and beautician training. We have now reached out to 35 boys and 125 girls. The female participation rate has significantly improved and youngsters have started coming back to the NYK centers for the quality training that we provide”.*

**- Naresh Sharma, UNV DYC,  
Nuapada**

*“We conducted a state level eight days training for National Yuva Kendra Volunteers in Dehradun which focused on key programmes of NYKS, where we trained them on leadership, communication skills, documentation, time management etc. More than 60 people participated in this training”.*

**- Shiv Semalty, UNV DYC Uttarkashi**

*“Taking forward the agenda of Swachh Bharat, we conducted a cleanliness drive in all the blocks of Meerut where in 1000 people participated and created awareness through seminars, rally, pledging, slogans and messages. Many dignitaries like Gram Panchayat members and Municipal Corporators extended their support and motivated people to continue such activity in the larger interest of the nation”.*

**- Ashu Gupta, UNV DYC, Meerut**



### FURTHER INFORMATION

**United Nations Volunteers (UNV) [www.in.undp.org/unv](http://www.in.undp.org/unv)**

*To provide feedback please contact: [unv.india@undp.org](mailto:unv.india@undp.org); [anshu.singh@undp.org](mailto:anshu.singh@undp.org)*