



# UN

# Volunteers

inspiration in action

UNDP /UNV Information and Communication Centre

Officially launched in Kenya

**JUNE—JULY 2014 NEWSLETTER**

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Above photo @UNDP Administrator, Helen Clerk is joined by UNV Kenya Programme Officer, Mr. Dmitry Frischin , International UNV ( Gender Specialist), Hilde Sjobo and Ex UNV David Maina after a brief meeting on UNV Kenya Initiatives.

The UNDP/UNV Information and Communication Centre was officially opened and launched by **UNDP Kenya Country Director Ms. Maria-Threse Keating** on 23rd June 2014 .

In the same week, the first ever United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) in Nairobi took place at the UN Complex. During this time the **UNDP Administrator , Helen Clerk**

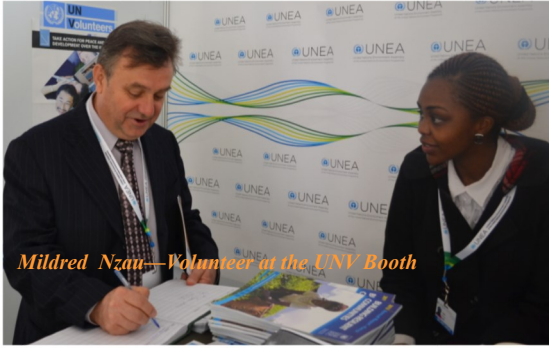
had a meeting with UNDP Kenya staff and team where she was briefed about the UNV Programme in Kenya and the new UNDP/UNV Information and Communication Center as an innovative facility to raise awareness about UNDP development initiatives and contribution of volunteerism to peace and development.

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VOLUNTEERING FOR CHANGE





*Mildred Nzau—Volunteer at the UNV Booth*



*UNEA Communication Volunteers at work*



*UNCTAD's Secretary General, Dr. Kituyi is briefed by Dmity on the UNV Programme in Kenya.*



*UNEA Delegates being addressed by UNON Director General*



*UNV Kenya Programme Officer right and Mr. Vincent Rapando extreme right meets with Victor G USOV (Left)— Executive Director and Vice president to the Russian National Committee for UNEP*



*UNEA Participants visit the UNV Exhibition booth*



*UNEA Delegates and participants in a session*



## *Gender Dimension in Climate Change Workshop*—Regional Service Centre of Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

On the right photos @ Hilde Sjobo in blue striped white top during the VIO Strategic Planning Workshop where she contributed and promoted gender mainstreaming in volunteerism matters.



Gender dimensions in climate change is a surprisingly understudied field. Climate change has been, and is still in many cases, perceived by many as a purely scientific or technical issue that requires technical solutions.

The effects of climate change are felt all over the world, and threatens sustainable human development. The human dimension of climate change has fortunately received more attention over the years. However, the integrating of a gender dimension to climate change-related work is only beginning to emerge. The problem regarding gender in the climate change debate has been the generalization of women as victims. The gender-related climate problems is often focusing on women's vulnerabilities and finding a mechanism of how to 'save the women'. In many cases, women are hit hardest. women are more exposed to consequences of climate change than men. *Women are often overrepresented amongst the poorest and most marginalized in societies, but other reasons such as caste, class, and ethnicity should be taken into consideration.*

At the workshop, it was highlighted that in order *to effectively deal with the challenges of climate change, gender-differentiated and socially constructed roles of women and men must be taken into account.* Women, like men, have specific socially conditioned vulnerabilities and capacities; these have developed through the socialization process and, therefore, must be dealt with accordingly.

Critical issues from the workshop were ;*that women's perspectives are equally represented in the climate change debate. There is a need to move away from the impact evidence and rather focus on the context analysis. Also, there is a need to look at the empirically grounded evidence rather than making politically motivated generalizations.*

While the link between gender and climate change has not always been obvious, progress has now been made, but more efforts are needed in addressing and understanding the gender dimensions of climate change. The efforts and capabilities of women in adapting to climate change also need further research.

Many women have significant knowledge and skills related to climate change that cannot be overlooked. Many women are active agents of change in coping with the negative effects related to climate change, and engagement with women should be flexible and take into account their roles, availability, and capacities. The concluding remarks from the workshop emphasized the need for better data gathering to capture the full story of women's contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation considering that many initiatives are on a small scale. For future reference, it is highly important that countries collect gender-disaggregated data on impacts of climate change and that the responses are gender sensitive. There is also a need for mainstreaming of gender issues and women's empowerment in national climate change strategies and development plans.

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The Centre will offer an opportunity for University students and staff taking undergraduate and postgraduate studies on development or related programmes. It will also be a research Centre where all UNDP and UNV information materials and publications will be made available to researchers and consultants.

The UNCTAD's Secretary-General—Dr Mukhisa Kituyi was also approached and briefed about the Centre by Dmitry Fris-

chin. Dr. Kituyi in his response was very interested in coming to the Centre however due to his tight schedules he promised to visit in the future.

*“From your brief I think the Centre is an opportunity for students to explore, learn and find information that would be relevant for development work. I am looking forward to visiting and seeing the Centre soon”*

*Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi.*



Above photo @ UNDP Kenya Country Director —Ms. Maria-Threase Keating officially opening the UND/ UNV Information and Communication Centre.

## *Anne Dalitz —Volunteering for Post 2015*



Approximately 500 days remain for the world community to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that were set in the year 2000. Since then millions of lives have been influenced. Successes have been achieved especially in the area of primary education, child mortality and access to improved sources of water and in the fight against malaria and tuberculosis. *Despite this progress ,many people still die of hunger or face severe*

*malnutrition. Too many people still fight diseases because of insufficient healthcare, women die from causes related to pregnancy, child-birth while others continue to be exposed to environmental threats. It is about time to ask the question: Will there be change for the remaining “too many”? The currently discussed follow-up development framework, the Agenda Post-2015 is aimed at reaching challenges in the next fifteen years . The idea seems simple but the impact might be tremendous. “The way forward is called bottom-up approach, meaning that the responsibility for the future we want lies with every one of us. All of us have to become active actors of change rather than to stay passive recipients of aid. Says” Anne Dalitz*

Member states are currently working to formulate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A zero draft of the SDG's has been released, currently comprising a set

of 17 goals.

So far, lots has been said about the significance of youth, in fact half of the world's population is under 25, and the need of **voluntary** civic engagement towards change and development.

During the recently held ECOSOC youth forum on Post-2015, a global youth call was developed to request the mainstreaming of youth issues in the Post-2015 development agenda. The Global Partnership for Youth in the Post-2015 Agenda called on Member States to incorporate a number of youth-focused target areas in the future development framework, and emphasized the need for access to volunteerism opportunities and support of youth civic engagement.

To achieve the future we want, we must answer the question : *“What am I doing to have the future I want?”*



## *Volunteering for Legal matters at UNEP—Camila Nkwenti*



*Photo above Camila Nkwenti at the United Nations Dispute Tribunal*

It is five months into my volunteer assignment and for the first time I represented the Organisation before the United Nations Dispute Tribunal as Legal Officer for UNEP for an oral trial which took two days. Like any the first day to everything I had masters the case file, the statutes, procedure and rules within the Tribunal and gone through all the necessary case law. It was a very rewarding experience as I got to understand how the Tribunal functions in practice. From this day I have began to settle in more with cases at the Tribunal sometimes having more than 7 cases in one day either for case management or oral hearings.

Thus far, I am beginning to settle into the day to day work, understanding the rules better and I can say I am getting 'really' familiar with the Organisation, UNEP in particular and the Office of Operations (OfO) which is my assignment is based.

One of the challenges I faced was that the Senior Legal Officer moved to another mission and I carried on her task while awaiting the recruitment of another Senior Legal office which was already going on. Suffices to say I had to learn quick and adapt fast to the system! I used to call Mondays and Fridays 'drama days' as these were the days that there was always some urgent agreement or legal adviser or deadline and everyone seemed to want to meet up with a deadline.

In order to overcome these challenges, I familiarized myself with the OfO profile which was given to me when I arrived and pretty much tried to read through all the rules and regulations within the Organisation.

While I was able to really do a lot of this, I realized that I learned faster when I received either a request for legal advice or a request for a review of an agreement from the Divisions within UNEP and within OfO (because trust me there are so many of these rules from the basic staff rules and regulations to rules relating to finance and Human Resource and legal instruments). I therefore realized that besides reading these rules, the constant requests for legal advise and contract reviews facilitated my knowledge, settling in and better understanding the rules and regulations as well as the system. So gradually, I used every opportunity I had when I had a request to study and research on a particular issue that I had to deal with.

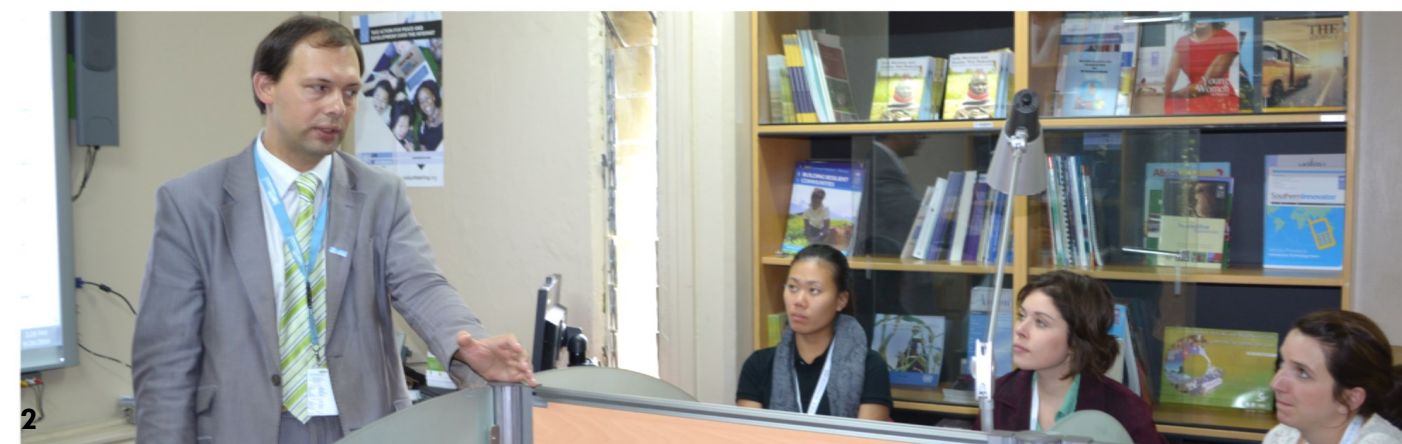
I am sure that many other UNVs the world over and basically most people within the UN system both UNVs and staff members inside and outside the UN system are faced with the challenge of settling into a new system. You sometimes feel so overwhelmed at the beginning with the desire to master every rule in the book.

Five months has proven to be a lot of change for me. Now when I pick up the OfO profile I understand it better than when I arrived and I can put a name to a face for example I know now that the Director of OfO legal has two dynamic women Susan Mutebi and Cecilia Morales who work hard to assist him in his work as the director and I can match several names to several faces.

One other thing I also learned which made my transition easier was to get assistance from those who were already within the system who were familiar with the system and how it worked both within the legal family and outside of OfO legal. And there were always people within UNEP and OfO in particular who were willing to assist me in my transition. This required me to go out of my comfort zone to request this assistance.

In all, I have learned that I still have much to learn but I am gradually getting there. I am confident that during my 2 years assignment, my experience as a UNV will have definitely afforded me a career and professional experience like non-others. At the same time, I would have contributed towards a achieving the goal of peace and development as a UNV.

## Australian Volunteers visit UNV Kenya at the UNV /UNDP Information and Communication Centre



*During the United Nations Environment Assembly in Nairobi ,student volunteers from Global Voices in Australia visited the UNV Office.*

*They had an opportunity to watch motivating volunteer videos from the UN Volunteers portal as well as briefing sessions from various UNDP Programme Units.*

*While speaking to them the UNV Programme Officer applauded the Australian volunteers encouraging them to continue their exchange programmes and volunteers action in order to contribute positively to the world.*

**Photo @ 1.** Australian Volunteers take a photo outside the recently launched UND/UNV Information and Communication Centre. **2.** Dmitry addressing the volunteers in the Communications Centre. **3.** The Kenya's Official Youth Representative to the United Nation



## UNEA 2014 Volunteers Share their experiences.

**Grace Sabiri Mageka -UNEA Communication Secretariat/  
Volunteer through UNV Kenya.**



I would like to congratulate the United Nations Environmental Programme for the success of the first ever United Nations Environmental assembly that brought together more than 1200 participants including environment ministers, government delegates and representa-

tives of major groups and stakeholders - under UNEP to sit and deliberate on the overarching theme on the first session on sustainable development goals and post 2015 development agenda including sustainable consumption and production one week.

The assembly was designed to inform ongoing discussions on the formulation of a set of targets and indicators that would succeed the millennium development goals.

I had the honour to be part of the UNEA Communication **Volunteer** at the international arena for a week-long event which enhanced my interpersonal skills and my knowledge in topics tackled from sustainable development perspective". The Assembly was an enlightening, inspiring and an amazing experience, undoubtedly, provided me a professional as well as social networking for good and the friends I made will stay with me on my way forward and took back new friends and contacts for my future endeavours."

The friendship, which we built during the whole week, was one of the unforgettable parts of the life. Indeed, such diversity generated hot discussions, and sometimes, uneven comments and discovered that everyone has a common dream of sustainable development and better future for our world.....

*One amazing component of UNV is the multi-dynamic culture of team work. My first experience with UNV was during the GSSD- Expo and the team work blossomed in every conversation, work and off-work.*

*I have come to earn hands-on skill in the social media team and communication as a whole, with every day being unique with new capabilities.*

*UNV has given me an opportunity to work and network with development initiatives champions and in a place that very much matches my career objectives and goals. My communication experience has been nourished adding up to my Master of Arts in development communication which I am currently pursuing.*

*Environment management is often left to the policy makers; it was amazing to realize I have such a huge role to play. I never thought polythene bags could cause such a serious menace in the oceans. Gender Forum reminded me as a woman there is more to be done with regard to sustainable uplifting of the women in the minority groups, OH! There is more to say on energy and wildlife. I feel more accomplished and look forward to sharing my UNEA experience with as many young people as possible, hoping to make a change within my circles. **Knowledge has never been more powerful.***

**- Esther Njeri Mwangi**



**Above Student Volunteers pose for a photo with Dmitry**

I never knew at any point in my life that I would be in front of world leaders giving support at the first United Nations Environmental Assembly. I was able to use my skill as an application developer to give technical and user support to the diplomats and dignitaries that were using the UNEA mobile application.

My desk was always full and I learnt a lot on how to network and make new contacts. I was part of a great team of fellow volunteers and

*I would have to start by thanking UNV for this rare opportunity presented to me to be a part of the secretariat during the United Nations Environmental Assembly, the first of its kind, an avenue to implement sustainable production globally.*

*It was a phenomenal learning experience as I got to attend various sessions that discussed Sustainable Palm*

Joining UNEA as a Communication Volunteer in DCPI has served me with such a yet-to-be nostalgic moment.

I didn't believe in the power of Volunteerism until I found myself sitting on that side of the fence with an enthusiastic team and even more unwavering supervisors who ensured that every last breath of our experience was worthwhile. I would like to share a couple of hundreds of experience I gained from the event but unfortunately I cannot put it all down on paper, I can only relate

I can't thank UNV enough. I was able to split my work into small tasks that were easy to complete.

My commitment to tasks was put into action because I had to be at my desk everyday by 8.30 am. Dignitaries came in one after the other and I helped them install the application and register as new users. I had the chance to be part of **#MyUNEAmoment** competition.

The essence of the competition was to get diplomats to take great pho-

*Oil – a forum that aims towards increasing global demand for palm oil and raise the market standards. I also had the opportunity to engage in the UNEA unplugged session where critical issues were raised on how to tackle the pressing issue of illegal wildlife trade that is currently a crucial matter not just in Kenya, but globally.*

*Moreover, promoting UNV and Tunza at the exhibition pavilion was productive as several people expressed interest in being volunteers. The assembly gave me great exposure as I*

the amazement and the amusement I got.

The experience encouraged me to challenge myself and set some new realistic goals, establish new role models that I can relate to. I learnt a lot from UNV but the real experience gained was person-person relation gained during the numerous interactions with people from different backgrounds, ethnicity, culture, race, religion etc. UNEA for me was like a whole new world with no such segregation-

tos during the conference and share it on Twitter, and the diplomat with the best photo would win a Samsung Galaxy Tab 3.

To sum it all, I had the best 7 days of my life; interacting with diplomats, updating the UNEA Mobile Application and above all making new friends and being able to use put my skills of an application developer to use.

**Ngusale Imali.**

*interacted with dignitaries from all over the world and all walks of life from whom I had the chance to learn something different.*

*It was an honour to have in attendance the Prince Albert of Monaco, Secretary General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon and President Uhuru Kenyatta supporting the cause. It is my hope that the realization of sustainable development policies and initiatives will be fully implemented in both developed and developing countries to make the world a more eco-friendly place to live in. ....Hilda Kilel.*

different colors one people! Now I believe I am a better person than I was yesterday!- **Rejab Mwaniki**



**UNEA Volunteers take a selfie after working**





# UN Volunteers

inspiration in action

Being part of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) in the Division of Communications and Public Information (DCPI) has been an experience of a lifetime. It gave me an opportunity for an in-depth understanding of the various projects being undertaken by the United Nations Environmental Program worldwide (UNEP) since I was stand in in and administering the UNEP booth.

Attending the various conferences in the state of the art facilities at the UNEP also expanded my knowledge on various environmental issues across

the world and the various measures taken across the globe to make the world a better place for us and the future generations.

The social aspect of my experience was one that I will forever be nostalgic about. Having interacted with people from all walks of lives across the world was so exciting and the networking was worth the time. The cocktail parties with fellow volunteers and the new friend I made was so awesome and the memories can be told best by the pictures. Indeed volunteering changes the

world and my UNEA moments tells it all!!— **Gerald Kadede.**



Above UNEA Student Volunteers take a Selfie with Dmitry

If all insects were to disappear in the fifty years, all life forms would disappear. If all humans we to disappear in the next fifty years all other life forms would flourish. Every human being has a role to play when it comes to protecting the environment.

During UNEA I volunteered under the Division of Communication and Public Information. I have gained massive experience on social media and audio visual skills. I have also had a chance to interact with many people passion-

ate about the environment and delegates from various parts of the world.

UNEA has given wide and in depth perspective on environmental issues and the different aspects that make up environment like and how some of the human activities lead to illegal crime and violation of human rights.

An interesting fact is that women also have the potential to play a critical and key role in the decision making and policy making processes, as they use and manage land and other natu-

ral resources, while meeting water, food and energy needs in households and communities.

The volunteering experience was definitely one worth remembering and my UNEA moment is one that I will miss so much but most importantly one that I will live to remember for the rest of my live. **The experience has made me a better person and increased my growth intellectually.**

**Lucy Akinyi Ogot**

**CHANGE THE WORLD**  
BY VOLUNTEERING OVER THE INTERNET



@UNVKenya



UNV Kenya

[www.onlinevolunteering.org](http://www.onlinevolunteering.org)

For more information on this Newsletter, the UNV programme or to submit your volunteering, stories contact the UNV Communications Officer in Kenya **Kelvin Keya** on [kelvin.keya@undp.org](mailto:kelvin.keya@undp.org) or [unv.ke@undp.org](mailto:unv.ke@undp.org).

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