



UN Volunteers

inspiration in action

UNV KENYA NEWSLETTER

August 2015

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“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”

- Nelson Mandela

UNV Deputy Executive Coordinator holds a Town Hall with UNVs

UNV Deputy Executive Coordinator, Ms. Rosemary Kalapurakal, held an engaging Town Hall dialogue with over 40 UNVs serving in Kenya on 25th August 2015. The DEC was accompanied by Marzia Baldassari from Volunteer Knowledge and Innovation (VKI) Section



UNV participants with UNV DEC, Staff and Kenya Field Unit

in UNV, Olga Devyatkin, UNV's Volunteers Portfolio Manager and Sarah Anyoti, UNV Portfolio Manager for East Africa.

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UNV Regional Capacity Building Workshop enhances UNV Regional Positioning in Africa

The United Nations Volunteer Programme (UNV) held the UNV Regional Capacity Building Workshop for Africa in Nairobi from 24th to 27th of August 2015, bringing together UNV Programme Officers from over 20 countries, UNV senior management...*More on page 2*

Regional Capacity Building Workshop Cont..

UN Resident Coordinator for Rwanda, UN Resident Coordinator for Kenya, UNDP Kenya Country Director, 6 UN Agencies and representation from the civil society. The workshop aimed at providing a forum for UNV Field Units and UNV management to better position the UNV programme and the value added by volunteerism within the mandates of the UN partners. The highlight of the workshop was its success forging strong regional UNV cooperation and partnership, particularly highlighted by the UNV Kenya and UNV Somalia at the inclusive dialogue sessions.

Several field units had bilateral discussions on areas of collaboration in addition to discussions with the UNV management on strategic areas for improving UNV positioning. The workshop was convened by UNV Regional Office for Africa with the support from UNV Kenya Field Unit. In an effort to strengthen UNV relevance, programmatic



Participants during the UNV Regional Workshop

engagement, and capacity in the field, three strategic regional offices were opened at the end of 2014 in three locations: Latin America and the Caribbean (Panama), Africa (Nairobi), and Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok) to ensure strategic, focused and high-quality programmatic and partnerships responses to country and regional needs.



UN Resident Coordinator for Rwanda, Mr. Lamin Manneh making a point during the Workshop



UNV DEC setting the stage during the UNV Regional Workshop for Africa

Town Hall Meeting Cont..

Some questions addressed by the DEC touched on the new conditions of service for International UNVs, transitions between national to International UNV positions, relations between UNVs and UN staff and training allowance. Other issues that were adequately addressed by the UNV senior management included questions on family duty stations, methodologies

for volunteer allowances, differences between National and International UNVs and medical cover conditions. The DEC assured the UNVs that they are at the heart of the UNV programme and the organization always strives for the best working conditions for them. Here is a link to the photos from the meeting: <http://bit.ly/1K6VHX6>



Woori Cho, an international UNV with UNEP, asks a question during the Town Hall session



UNV DEC, Ms. Rosemary Kalapurakal, third right, stressing a point during the Town Hall



Marzia Baldassari (Volunteer Knowledge and Innovation (VKI) Section, UNV) right and Dmitry Frischin, (UNV Kenya FU), second right, during the Town Hall

YOUTH DAY VOLUNTEER STORIES

During this year's International Youth Day, UNDP Kenya's Strategic Policy Advisory Unit (SPAU), with support from the UNV Field Unit, UNDP Communications team and the Inclusive Economic Growth (IEG) unit, organized a Youth Innovations Pitch to give the young innovators a platform to highlight and get support for their business ideas. Here are some of the motivating stories we gathered from some of the volunteers who helped make the event a success.

Willy Watieri's Story

It had never dawned upon me that one day I would have a rare opportunity not only to volunteer with UNDP in the facilitation of the International Youth Week events but also to be part of the success story that many would live to tell. The International Youth Week is a very special period of the year during which all the youths from all over the globe celebrate their talents, abilities and achievements. Just like in the past years, this year's week was fully packed with lively activities. Tuesday, the 11th of August, 2015 was the Innovations and Entrepreneurship day, dedicated to pitching of innovation ideas by 10 youths that had been shortlisted after a rigorous process. At the end of the day, three candidates smiled their way home with winners' certificates- Ndombellah Sikwattah, Brian Lukano and Winnie Waudu respectively. Away from the excited achievers, I was able to have a conversation with some of the candidates whose ideas never got to the top.



International Youth Week Volunteers from right, Willy Watieri, Stephen Kariuki and Lynette Kithinji with Patrick Maingi from UNDP Kenya's Inclusive Economic Growth (IEG) unit

One of them was Martin Chivova, the founder of the Ray of Hope Society whose idea was addressing the plight of poor school going girls who cannot afford sanitary towels.

"We are all winners, my dream is still valid and the fact that I was shortlisted for this contest tells it all," he calmly says and begins to recount the year-long journey he has walked with his "Tulia Dada" initiative. The idea behind his initiative was developing an app on mobile platform whose subscribers will be donating at least Ksh1.00 per month for the purchase of sanitary pads. His target was to collect more than ksh.1M per month, buy the towels and invest the extra coin in a sanitary towels manufacturing firm. I realized at that moment why volunteers are so crucial for the world to realize its development goals.

Willy Watieri from Action2015 Kenya was one of the International Youth Week 2015 Youth Volunteers;

Lynette Githinji's Story

This year, the International Youth Week addressed the issue of youth and civic engagement with the slogan "Youth Civic Engagement"; with varying activities within the week in a bid to actively involve the youth as agents of change.

As part of the campaign, UNDP in its quest to engage the youth in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Empowerment, set up an Innovations Pitch Event targeting the youth with innovative ideas. The aim was to awaken the slumbering yet creative minds in them and gear them towards explorative initiatives.....More on page 12



Winners of the Youth Innovations Pitch, from left, Sikwatah Ndobellah, Brian Lukano and Winy Waudo

PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING LAUNCHED AT UNV TEAM ASSOCIATION MEETING

UNV Team Association launched the Peer-to-Peer Learning initiative on 31st July during the UNV Team Association (UNV TA) meeting for July/August.

Emmanuel Ngore, UNV with UNEP, reported on a training he underwent at the British Council on professional report writing. He elaborated on two main report writing formats that he was trained on that developed his report writing skills tremendously. One was the **4Ps format, acronyms for Position, Problem, Possibilities, Proposal**; where position provides the current situational status that forms the basis of the report., problem provides an analysis of challenges being addressed in the report., possibilities provide the variables that lead to the problem and the proposal provides the recommendations that provide a solution to the situation. The other format was **BLADE, acronyms for: Bottom-line, Action, Details and Executive Summary**. The BLADE format starts with the bottom-line situation that provides background foundation for the report. The Action section provides the activities that were carried out in summary form. The Details section provides more detailed elements for the activities, while the Executive Summary provides a concise summary of the whole report. Emmanuel also elaborated on several best practices in professional report writing.



The UNV TA during the July/August meeting. The Peer-to-Peer Learning project is one of the initiatives by the UNV Team Association and Kenya Field Unit for professional development of the UNVs in Kenya. UNV Team Association chairperson Anthony Sirengo highlighted the need to strengthen the UNVs' umbrella network beyond professional representation of the UNVs, into a vibrant organ within and without the UN fraternity

Picture Speak: *August in Pictures*



Fourth sitting from Left, Asfaw Kumssa, Advisor, UN Marsabit/ Moyale area-based development project and Right Standing, Kevin Ochieng, UNV programme Support Officer during the Marsabit County Integrated Development Plan Review meeting in Nairobi. UNV is working alongside other UN Agencies to help counties integrate volunteerism and volunteer programming into Counties' development agenda.



Meshack, Chair of Volunteer Involving Organizations (VIO) Society, right and George, UNV from UN-Habitat pose after the Blue Room Talks session



International Youth Day Pitching event panelists from mLab and Microsoft with Patrick Maingi, UNDP Kenya's Inclusive Economic Growth (IEG) unit during the pitching event



UNV Programme Officer for Sudan presenting on a Youth Empowerment Joint Project during a session with the UNV Programme Board Team



Middle, George Gachie, UNV from the UN-Habitat Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP), with his supervisor, Mr. Joshua Mulandi, Regional Program Advisor for the programme and Asha Sitati, UNV from UNEP



Geoff Prewitt Chief, UNV Development Programming Section presenting on Volunteerism during the Regional Workshop



From Left, UNVs Marjorie Nyabuti and John Sagimo from UNEP and Faten Bokri from IFAD listening keenly during the Town Hall Meeting with the UNV Deputy Executive Coordinator



Geoff Prewitt, Chief, UNV Development Programming Section, gestures as he makes a point during the UNV Regional Workshop. Looking on is Dr. Nassarullah Dar, an International UN Volunteer doctor based in Somalia.

Dr. Dar, one of the Blue Room Talks participants, has been a volunteer for over 23 years.

Blue Room Stories

The concept of having “TED” type talks for UN Volunteers was conceptualized and started for the first UNV Partnership Forum in 2014. The first Blue Room talks were a great success and speak for themselves. The videos of the talks, along with the highlights, can be found on YouTube and also are featured in UNV’s Annual Report 2014. <http://www.unv.org/en/news-resources/news/doc/at-unv-partnerships-forum.html>

The overall objective of the **Blue Room talks** is to bring the real experience of UN Volunteers to meetings/gatherings (in real time or virtual) of those donors/ stakeholders interested in UNV.

In the **Blue Room**, UN Volunteers take centre stage and provide an inspiring insight into their assignments and the impact they have within communities, along with the important partnerships at country and regional levels.

On 24th August 2015, UNV Kenya Field Unit hosted the first Blue Room Talks in Kenya at the UNV Regional Workshop in Nairobi. Here are 3 of the amazing stories from the inspiring volunteers.



Blue Room Talks participants, from Left, Asha Sitati, UNEP; Anne Dalitz, UNDP; Dr. Nassarullah Dar, Rex Mlotha, UNHCR and George Gachie, UN-Habitat with UNV Regional Manager for Africa, Tapiwa Kamuruko

Asha Sitati, Project Assistant, UNEP

A few months ago, during my field assignment in Turkana, I spent time with Florida Ere who is a widow of five children. She recalled a day when she lost all her livestock and the few crops she had grown due to prolonged droughts. She didn't give up though. She planted maize the following season on her small land that is located next to Turkwel River...

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Asha's Story Cont..

This is just one among the many desperate cases when disasters wreak havoc in local communities due to lack of information. The good news



is that some simple solutions could be availed that could save lives. Based on the information I gathered during my assignment, I worked to-

gether with the UNEP project team to design an integrated system that is more actionable. The

prototype system is in its final stages of development and we hope it can be adopted by various institutions so that no one is left behind in disaster risk reduction.

I am glad that through volunteerism, I am substantially contributing to change beyond communities. As a volunteer, I pride in the satisfaction I get from my everyday job. I remember turning down a permanent and pensionable job offer in government for the volunteer position. For me, it wasn't about the title or the money but about my substantial contribution to environmental and human development.

Rex Mlotha, Associate Community Services Officer, UNHCR

Fatuma Noor Ibrahim is a standard seven (7) school drop-out, 17 years old girl and teenage mother, from Mogadishu in Somalia, who was born and raised in the camp after her ..more on Next Page



Anne Dalitz, Volunteering and Post 2015 Officer, UNDP

In the beginning of my assignment I did struggle with finding an answer to the question on how my volunteering transforms communities in Kenya and helps to better the lives of people.

The moment of realization came with an email send by a young man which I received after a speech that I delivered on the importance of volunteerism towards sustainable development during the International Youth Day celebrations 2014. I wish to read his words to you:

"Dear Madam Anne,

I am Stephen Wanjiru. I write to you to bring it to your attention that when I attended the Youth week conference in UNDP your speech on the volunteering world inspired me so much...More on the Next Page

Rex's Story Cont..

parents escaped conflicts in her war torn country and continue living in one of the camps. As a child, life in the Dadaab refugee camp was full of hardship and difficulties for Fatuma. She came from a family of eight; her parents, her grandmother, her-



Dadaab-based International UNV , Rex Mlotha, confers with Geoff Prewitt Chief, UNV Development Programming Section

They were trying to open up her legs. It was very terrible. She spent two weeks in traumatizing pain..Fatuma had no one to trust to narrate her story due to cultural norms and traditional practices, but my meeting with her as a UN Volunteer opened a new window of hope

self and four siblings, who were all born at the camp. Lack of clean water was common and their only shelter was a plastic sheet. That sheet protected them from the hot sun during the day and extremely hot weather condition at night.

Both her parents had no jobs or any other means to generate income for their living, but relied on relief food at the camp. In 2004, her father became sick and died when she was just six years old. Her mother was everything to her from then on.

One evening, during Fatuma's 7th birthday, her mother gave her a new dress and told her to wear it the following day. As usual, she was very happy with her new dress, she had no idea of what was going to happen the following morning. All she remembered from then was an elderly woman talking to her mother. Everything looked exciting and she was happy too. Then the elderly lady joined her grandmother in the tent, they held her on her shoulders and knees as she started crying.

for her. She found trust in me and became a close friend. I walked with her through a healing experience and process and helped put her at the centre of our programming work in Dadaab.

Anne's Story Cont.... *"In you I saw a better world filled with people ready to assist the world and make it a better place for humanity. Since that conference at UNDP on youths I have desired to hear and learn more from the experienced one and those who have walked through that path of life.".....more on Next Page*

This email made me understand what my volunteering really is about. It is not in the first place about reports and studies to inform policy-makers and practitioners and to help shape policy frameworks, development plans and implementation strategies. But instead it is about being a role model to others to also

volunteer for development and become a key to sustainable change instead of a passive recipient of aid. It has also sparked the urge in me to do other volunteering that brings me physically closer to the vulnerable and I decided to spend regular time with children from the Mary Faith Rescue Centre in Nairobi.

UNV TEAM Visits Kibera Slum Upgrading Project

UNV staff and volunteers visited a slum upgrading project in Kibera, the largest slum settlement in Kenya. Through the project, UN-Habitat set up a community resource center run by volunteers under the leadership of George Gachie, a national youth volunteer. The center offers medical care, IT training and a space for community gatherings and events. The UNV team got to meet and share experiences with the project beneficiaries. (EC) and UN-Habitat.

Launched in 2008, the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) is a joint effort of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, the European Commission. To date, the programme has reached out to 38 ACP countries and 160 cities, and has provided the necessary enabling framework for improving the lives of at least 2 million slum dwellers.



UNV Team listening as the project team takes them through the Kibera Slum Upgrading project



UNV Regional Manager for Africa, Tapiwa Kamuruko introducing the participants to the project team

YOUTH DAY VOLUNTEER STORIES CONT...

I got the amazing opportunity to volunteer in organizing the Pitch and my exposure in this event has helped me realize the power that lies in the spirit and effort of volunteerism. There is always a lot more to learn. Contrary to my expectations, the biggest share of this is acquired through practical engagement. The event had a remarkable response from invitees particularly USIU-A students; the looks on their faces were that of stimulation. I am proud of the impact of the event; the candidates secured themselves a platform to progress and expand their ideas from the various participants of the event. This built confidence in the youth that the efforts of engaging and nurturing them in innovations are being enhanced.

The experience also affected me on a personal level. It has taught me to nurture a 'get out of the comfort zone' attitude and tactic when working on any particular initiative. I got to interact with some of the innovators on their journey with their ideas. To them it was never a bed of roses; some of the ideas were born out of nasty experiences while others had to try end -

lessly to come up with something tangible yet they kept the idea of giving up at bay. "I am very thrilled to get this far; to be frank I never expected this award although initially I had promised myself never to give up on my dream. In fact, I have never won before; this shows how lengthy my journey has been", narrated a delighted Ndombellah Sikwattah who emerged the overall winner.

Her idea gears to wards a development center for learners with special needs, especially children and youth to equip them with variable skills at a subsidized fee.

And just as the theme is, I have really been engaged. Have you? Take the bold step and volunteer. It makes a difference.

Lynette Githinji, International Youth Day Youth Volunteer, Member, Action2015

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