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United Nations Volunteers

United Nations Volunteers programme

Annual Report of the Administrator

Summary

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme offers global citizens an opportunity to volunteer across the three pillars of the United Nations system: development; peace and security; and human rights. This annual report discusses the performance of UNV in 2023, the second year of its Strategic Framework 2022-2025, its mid-term review, and its efforts to expand opportunities for persons with disabilities as volunteers. Information on performance indicators for 2022-2023, the United Nations system entities hosting UN Volunteers, and statistical and financial overviews is presented in Annexes I–V on the Executive Board website.

Elements of a decision

In consideration of the accomplishments presented in this report, the Executive Board may wish to commend UNV for the results achieved in 2023 and since the start of the Strategic Framework for 2022-2025 as ascertained in the mid-term review, express gratitude to all United Nations Volunteers for their contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals and acknowledge the efforts of UNV in promoting disability inclusion across the United Nations system. The Board may also wish to reaffirm the importance of the Special Voluntary Fund and urge all development partners to contribute to it.



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I. Introduction

1. In line with the Executive Board decision 2018/8, this report covers the organizational performance of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme in 2023. Chapter II presents the annual results achieved against the results matrix of the Strategic Framework. Chapter III features UNV contributions to disability inclusion across the United Nations system. Chapter IV reflects on the mid-term review of the UNV Strategic Framework, and chapter V addresses the way forward.

2. In the context of the world's polycrisis, 2023 was the most challenging year in recent history for UNV. Wars in Gaza, Sudan and Ukraine, political volatility across the Sahel, natural disasters and the drawdowns of United Nations peacekeeping operations required extra focus on the duty of care for UN Volunteers. Against this backdrop, UNV has nonetheless managed to provide scaled community-level volunteer action for sustainable development and grassroots-level response in emergencies. In addition to that, UNV promoted digital innovation and actively championed disability inclusion delivering results in 169 countries worldwide.

II. Highlights of results achieved in 2023

3. UNV actively collaborates within the United Nations system, as well as with Member States and civil society to significantly contribute to peace, development and humanitarian efforts through volunteerism. This chapter outlines key results achieved by UNV during the second year of the Strategic Framework, 2022-2025, focusing on its three outcomes and six corresponding outputs. A detailed overview of organizational performance by outcome, output and indicator is presented in Annex I.

Contributing to a people-centred United Nations: The functioning of the United Nations system is supported through the engagement of empowered United Nations Volunteers.

4. The UNV people-centred approach is exemplified by the resilience and solidarity of UN Volunteers in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2023, UNV expanded volunteering opportunities for global citizens to support the United Nations initiatives worldwide. Attention was given to meeting the context-specific needs of United Nations partners and ensuring UN Volunteers' personal and professional development while fully integrating them into the United Nations system.

5. UNV mobilised a record-breaking number of 12,840 UN Volunteers, marking a four per cent increase from 2022. The increase demonstrated the indispensable role played by UN Volunteers and underscored their extensive reach at the local level. They served in diverse field-related and technical roles, such as community development, human rights, humanitarian assistance, water and sanitation, medical service, information management and monitoring and evaluation.

6. Based on data collected from the Volunteer Reporting Application submitted to UNV, more than one-third of UN Volunteers (36 per cent) contributed to Sustainable Development Goal 16, peace, justice and strong institutions, reflecting a high number of UN Volunteers in fragile development contexts. This was followed by Goals 5 and 3, gender equality and good health and well-being, at 20 and 19 per cent, respectively. Another 19 per cent focused on Goal 17, partnerships for the goals, and 14 per cent contributed to Goal 10, reduced inequalities, pointing to the breadth of UNV efforts towards inclusion, equal representation and empowerment of the vulnerable.

7. There were 3,792 UN Volunteers integrated as civilian personnel into United Nations Secretariat entities and missions, an increase of two per cent compared to 2022. The majority of these were international UN Volunteers (1,713) who served in United Nations peacekeeping operations and were a mainstay in efforts to uphold human rights, promote access to justice, reduce violence, integrate ex-combatants into society and provide public information.

The peacekeeping missions hosting the largest numbers of UN Volunteers were the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the United Nations Multidimensional

Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). In addition, 397 UN Volunteers served in the United Nations special political missions, mainly the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). As a result of the mandate termination of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the assignments of 294 UN Volunteers have ended, and of those 50 UN Volunteers have been already redeployed, mostly in other peacekeeping and political missions.

UNV support to various entities under the United Nations Secretariat was not limited solely to missions. Valuable contributions were made by 402 UN Volunteers to the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 269 served with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), while 160 bolstered the efforts of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), among others. In Colombia, UN Volunteers with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) integrated human rights into national police reforms, facilitating 16 regional dialogues between police and civil society and 133 agreements countrywide.

8. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) saw the highest number of UN Volunteers at 3,309 among all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. UN Volunteers, primarily nationals of their countries of assignment, were deployed in 124 countries.

To empower under-privileged communities in remote geographical terrains in Bangladesh, 44 UN Volunteers assisted 7,500 people in accessing climate financing grants through local banking systems. In Brazil, they served alongside national justice councils to address prison overcrowding. In Ecuador, 45 UN Volunteers from the largest indigenous confederation in the Amazon region contributed to the PROAmazonía programme, conserving 789,099 hectares of forests and water basins, including restoring 15,023 hectares of the Amazon region in the country. Across Kenya, UN Volunteers supported youth-led enterprises in communities through training sessions.

The UNDP Crisis Bureau partnered with UNV to pair national volunteer talent from 10 countries with international expertise through the Global Policy Network rosters. As such, 10 UN Volunteers were recruited in such tandem teams as information management officers and economists in Djibouti, Ecuador, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Mali, Tanzania, Ukraine and Zambia.

9. There was a significant surge in the number of UN Volunteers serving with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), totalling 1,971. This marked a 25 per cent increase from the previous year. UN Volunteers were deployed in 127 countries.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UN Volunteers acted as youth champions and launched projects for young people living in camps for the internally displaced. In Ethiopia, UN Volunteers raised awareness of the consequences of female genital mutilation to eliminate the harmful practice for young girls in villages. In Indonesia, they identified gaps in child immunization coverage of preventable diseases. In Mexico, UN Volunteers, as psychologists, social workers and lawyers, supported attorney offices in handling 31,875 cases of children's rights violations. Helping Ukrainian refugees in Romania, UN Volunteers supported safe spaces that provided psycho-social assistance for up to 5,000 children and women daily.

10. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) hosted 1,012 UN Volunteers, a 12 per cent decrease from the previous year. They delivered on refugee protection and humanitarian operations in 77 countries, many of which were affected by war and conflict.

In Cameroon, UN Volunteers developed a platform for equal access to education, reaching almost 3,000 children under UNHCR's global strategy for refugee education. Responding to the war in Sudan, UN Volunteers in Chad guaranteed health through water, sanitation and hygiene activities, and in planning and installing some 3,000 refugee shelters. Across 16 municipalities in Colombia, 210 UN Volunteers monitored migratory flows and provided support for migrant registration, case management and protection. They supported registration in the Zaatari camp for Syrian refugees in Jordan. In Bulgaria, UN Volunteers provided vulnerability assessments of 13,000 Ukrainian refugees

in the country. In Tunisia, they supported the status determination for the displaced persons seeking international protection and lifesaving assistance.

11. Advancing the mandate of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 85 countries, the number of UN Volunteers grew to 554, a 20 per cent increase from the previous year.

UN Volunteers with WHO Regional Office for Africa improved health for people on the continent while expanding opportunities for African public health professionals. In Azerbaijan, they assisted with the pandemic response and tackled the health and economic effects of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Following Cyclone Mocha in Myanmar, UN Volunteers were first responders in 33 villages, raising awareness of hygiene and access to safe water. In Pakistan, they monitored vaccine-preventable diseases and identified bottlenecks in immunization cycles in 13 districts.

12. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) engaged 526 UN Volunteers, an almost six per cent increase compared to the previous year. The service of UN Volunteers contributed to the importance of reproductive health programming and monitoring in 95 countries.

UN Volunteers in Nigeria provided support on family planning and maternal health and assisted the survivors of sexual violence in communities. As a response to the war in Gaza, they distributed aid and evaluated the financial burdens faced by women. In Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, UN Volunteers created training modules for adolescent girls on life skills education.

13. With the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), 478 UN Volunteers were the backbone of crisis and recovery operations in 60 countries, noting a 13 per cent increase compared to the previous year.

As a response to the war in Sudan and its impact on neighbouring countries, UN Volunteers in Egypt played a crucial role in helping migrants at border control points and facilitated their repatriation processes. Another group of UN Volunteers joined earthquake recovery efforts in six affected provinces of south-eastern Türkiye.

14. There were 395 UN Volunteers who served with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in 64 countries, a slight decrease of two per cent compared to the previous year.

In Bolivia, UN Volunteers helped women in six municipalities across La Paz and Santa Cruz to enhance business skills and promote equal livelihood opportunities. Other UN Volunteers provided access to basic human services and government-sponsored aid to refugees, such as collaborating on crisis response in the Republic of Moldova and assisting local administration in distributing medical kits to the internally displaced in Ukraine.

15. The World Food Programme (WFP) hosted 384 UN Volunteers, an eight per cent increase from the previous year, marking the commitment to food security in 59 countries.

In the Sahel region, UN Volunteers boosted the resilience and adaptation of communities to ecosystem degradation and supported health and nutrition in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. In the Dohuk governorate in Iraq, 42 UN Volunteers updated the population registry, making food distribution effective and accessible to 70 per cent of the governorate. In Mozambique, national UN Volunteers provided medical assistance, water purification and sanitation services to more than 15,000 affected people in the aftermath of Cyclone Freddy.

16. In addition to these United Nations entities, hundreds of UN Volunteers served in 49 other agencies, funds, programmes and regional commissions. Some regional initiatives included:

(a) Under the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), 44 UN Volunteers with UNDP, UNODC, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) supported community development to stabilise Lake Chad Basin in Chad. In Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, they provided crisis and emergency response to the Liptako Gourma region.

(b) The United Nations in Ecuador, through a collaboration between UNHCR, IOM and UNV, brought to fruition the regularization of more than 150,000 migrants and refugees. In 20 regions of the

country, 175 UN Youth Volunteers were mobilised together with the government to register migrant Venezuelans and refugees.

(c) The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNV created the Young Talent Pipeline for passionate and skilled individuals to become the environmental leaders of tomorrow and propose solutions for the triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature loss and pollution and waste.

17. Under the strategic guidance of the General Assembly through the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for the United Nations system,¹ UNV contributed to system-wide action, through inter alia, in the areas of peacebuilding, electoral support and youth empowerment:

(a) Implementing activities under the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF):

(i) UN Volunteers helped reduce plastic waste and build resilience to climate change by including youth in the small island developing States of the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru and Palau.

(ii) In Sri Lanka with UNDP and WHO, UN Volunteers engaged 571 youth leaders from youth parliamentarians and youth clubs to increase civic participation for young aspiring leaders.

(iii) Jointly with UNDP and UNFPA, UN Volunteers combatted hate speech through local media outlets in Kosovo.² With UNDP and IOM, UN Community Volunteers advocated for expanded employment opportunities for youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(iv) In Madagascar, 33 UN Volunteers supported a youth-led conflict prevention initiative by UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA. A peer support system was established involving marginalized youth to promote the inclusion of 18 ethnic groups across the country.

(v) In Guatemala, UN Volunteers supported the PBF and the tri-national project along with Honduras and El Salvador to address human mobility and migrant flows in Central America.

(b) More than 100 UN Volunteers provided electoral support worldwide, among them in the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Timor-Leste and Zambia. UNV assignments ranged from operational functions, such as coordination and logistics, to advisory roles such as in training and voter sensitization.

Expand opportunities with United Nations entities for more and diverse people to support United Nations development, peace and humanitarian efforts.

18. UN Volunteers supported 56 United Nations entities in 169 countries and territories. The number of nationalities represented increased to 180. The largest numbers of UN Volunteers were in sub-Saharan Africa (5,299), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (2,762), Asia and the Pacific (1,931), the Arab States region (1,649), and Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (1,224).

19. Of the total number of UN Volunteers, 11,339 or 88 per cent were from the Global South. Of these, 8,027 served as national UN Volunteers in countries of origin, while 3,350 served as international UN Volunteers in other countries of the Global South. This demonstrated the commitment of United Nations partners and UNV to engaging local volunteer talent in peace and development worldwide, as well as to South-South cooperation.

20. In recruiting UN Volunteers, the focus was, inter alia, on Member States, countries and territories that previously had limited to no representation. The targeted efforts led to the recruitment of UN Volunteers from Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Palau and Tonga.

21. The age distribution of UN Volunteers was as follows: the average age was 35, and the overall age range was from 18 to 78 years. There were 167 UN Volunteers aged 60 and above. There was a total

¹ [A/RES/75/233](#) (2020)

² [S/RES/1244](#) (1999)

of 2,012 UN Youth Volunteers aged between 18 and 26, signifying the commitment of UNV to the United Nations Youth 2030 Strategy.

22. The proportion of women UN Volunteers increased to 57 per cent (two per cent growth from 2022). Notably, in 2023, 49.8 per cent of UN Volunteers on the African continent were women, whereas this was 48 per cent in 2022. UNV commitment to gender parity reflected in several of its partnerships:

(a) A joint initiative with UNICEF in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) enrolled talented young Arab women (aged 24 to 32) across the region as UN Volunteers. UN Volunteers under this initiative in Iraq and Jordan raised awareness on sanitation and hygiene, talent acquisition and communications. In addition, UN University Volunteers enrolled at the faculty of Women's Studies at the University of Jordan supported the gender team with UNICEF MENA with the aim to increase women experts in the job market.

(b) In Afghanistan, UNV and UNDP aspired for gender equality and women's empowerment through a project where women UN Volunteers with graduate degrees in technical vocational training helped create opportunities for women in the community through education and training.

(c) Together with UNDP, UNFPA and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in a joint Sustainable Development Goals project in Sri Lanka, women national UN Volunteers served as peer educators, distributing 1000 maternity and 1000 hygiene kits in 12 underserved low-income communities. A knowledge platform for women was created to educate community members on family planning and gender-based violence.

(d) In collaboration with UNFPA and UNICEF, women UN Volunteers supported midwifery training institutes in four states of India and provided specialised services for maternal and newborn care. In five other states with UNDP SDG coordination centres, national UN Volunteers contributed to government efforts in evidence-based decision-making and implementation of the Goals, including gender-based budgeting and collecting and analysing gender-disaggregated data.

(e) The flagship programme Africa Women Health Champions with WHO Regional Office for Africa entered its second phase in 2023, providing essential health services to 47 African countries and contributing to gender parity for the WHO workforce. As part of this initiative, 134 women UN Volunteers served across WHO country offices in Africa in 2023, representing 31 nationalities and 27 professional areas of public health.

23. United Nations entities, Member States and civil society partners posted requests for 14,050 Online Volunteers. Examples included:

(a) In Niger, UNHCR deployed 100 Online Volunteers to raise awareness for the rights of refugees through social media campaigns in French and English for refugees in the country, mostly from Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria. In Guinea and Niger, UNFPA engaged 586 Online Volunteers to raise awareness of women's reproductive rights and another 552 in Niger to combat fake news against the backdrop of political instability. Also in Niger, 125 Online Volunteers raised breast cancer awareness with WHO, and 105 advocated for women's rights with UN-Women.

(b) Responding to the floods in Libya and the earthquake in Morocco, 95 Online Volunteers designed social media posts, mapped volunteering initiatives and managed information flows. Responding to the crisis in the State of Palestine and neighbouring countries – Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon – 18 Online Volunteers supported all United Nations entities. The assignments focused on media monitoring, need-based analyses, response mapping and translation.

(c) Supporting UNDP Kenya, 102 Online Volunteers raised awareness for the 54 Faces of Africa social media campaign and the Youth Connekt Africa Summit in Nairobi in 2023. Another 77 analysed development plans and budget priorities for UNDP Ethiopia country office. Online Volunteers with UNEP contributed to research on climate, nature and pollution. For the Government of Zambia, they created content for the Africa Music, Art and Cultural Exhibition 2023.

(d) In the Asia-Pacific region, 257 Online Volunteers supported UNDP youth empowerment, while with UNFPA, another 151 Online Volunteers supported the #EveryGirlCounts digital campaign. In Thailand, 134 Online Volunteers supported the social development ministry by

contributing to International Volunteer Day activities and creating social media content. In an AI-generated platform on gender equality, 56 Online Volunteers assisted UNITAR. In China, UNV and UNDP launched #HerDigitalFuture with the support of 185 Online Volunteers, amplifying STEM skills for teenage girls.

(e) In the Latin America and Caribbean region, 647 Online Volunteers served with WFP in Peru to provide information to refugees and migrants, with a primary focus on those from Venezuela. In Bolivia, another 72 Online Volunteers helped to inform people about accessing public information.

(f) For emergency response in Ukraine, 392 Online Volunteers mapped, translated and provided research support to United Nations entities. Another 30 with the UNDP Accelerator Lab created chatbots for public information. The Gender Equality and Women Empowerment programme was assisted by 60 Online Volunteers with UN-Women in Kazakhstan, the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, with assignments ranging from research to data management, women entrepreneurship, peace and security. In response to the earthquake in Türkiye, 17 Online Volunteers contributed through psycho-social support, translation and social media.

Motivated, well-equipped volunteers contribute to United Nations peace, humanitarian and development efforts.

24. The proportion of UN Volunteers who reported that their assignments led to personal and professional development held steady at 92 per cent, compared with the annual target of 93 per cent. 87 per cent of UN Volunteers said they were satisfied with their volunteer experience, a one per cent decrease compared to last year. The perception of safety and security by UN Volunteers in highly charged crisis contexts was a major reason for the decline in volunteer satisfaction.

25. By expanding educational initiatives and nurturing an environment for knowledge exchange among UN Volunteers, UNV played a vital role in advancing their personal and professional growth. UNV supported UN Volunteers by increasing learning opportunities that best aligned with the results of a global learning needs assessment and the United Nations-UNDP competency framework. Consequently, 10,647 UN Volunteers participated in 162 online and on-site learning events, and 6,800 UN Volunteers enrolled in self-paced learning activities, cumulatively representing a 72 per cent increase in participation compared to 2022. UN Volunteers gained essential core and cross-functional skills, covering areas such as preventing anti-racism and sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment and learning to develop diversity, equity and inclusion.

Serving the United Nations system: UNV is a fit-for-purpose organization contributing to the efficiency gains of the United Nations system.

26. Against the backdrop of a challenging year, UNV contributed to financial efficiency and business process simplification. UNV diversified its donor base, improved gender representation and employed a targeted approach to deepen its candidate base via its newly established talent acquisition function.

United Nations partners are provided with more efficient services.

27. UNV continued to simplify business processes with a dual objective: improve the experiences of volunteers and partner entities and achieve further efficiency gains in 2024-2025.

28. UNV over-achieved on its 29-day target on the deployment of national UN Volunteers. It took 23 calendar days to deploy a national UN Volunteer, while it took 72 calendar days to deploy an international UN Volunteer, a decrease from 78 calendar days in 2022. This was made possible by the continued UNV digital transformation and business process simplification, which enabled United Nations entities to respond to humanitarian emergencies through swift deployment of UN Volunteers.

29. UNV took stock of its partnerships with United Nations entities through a partner survey in which 98 per cent of the respondents expressed satisfaction with services provided by UNV, and 91 per cent reported that UNV recruitment processes were efficient and timely.

30. The financial value of UNV activities totalled \$311.6 million in 2023 – an increase of \$24 million or eight per cent from \$287.6 million in 2022. During the year, UNV continued to invest in its organizational agility through sustained investment in digital excellence and by effectively

streamlining business processes and workflows and containing costs, as illustrated in Annex IV. UNDP core contribution remains a significant funding source to ensure UNV field presence and strengthen its corporate performance.

The institutional effectiveness of UNV is enhanced.

31. In 2023, contributions to the UNV full funding programme totalled \$19.2 million. UNV deployed fully funded UN Volunteers with support from the Governments of Australia, China, Czechia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Norway, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, as well as the Agency for Volunteer Service of Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region of China. Iceland and Saudi Arabia joined as new funding partners to the programme in 2023. In addition to Member States, UNV collaborated with academic institutions to fully fund national volunteer assignments with partners such as King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi in Thailand and Mount Kenya University in Kenya.

32. To leverage the Special Voluntary Fund, UNV continued to conduct volunteer research, promote volunteerism, drive innovation for development and advance gender parity, diversity and inclusion, as well as use for immediate emergency response. In 2023, the Fund contributions reached \$5.3 million with 12 donor Member States – Bangladesh, China, Czechia, France, Germany, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, and Türkiye, with Spain joining as a new donor thanks to UNV outreach efforts to diversify the donor base of the Special Voluntary Fund.

33. Sustaining strong performance under the United Nations system-wide action plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), UNV achieved outstanding results in leadership and communication for gender equality and the empowerment of women, and the representation of men and women in its personnel. UNV achieved gender balance in the international professional category, while men were underrepresented in the national officer and general staff categories. Exceeding the target, 73 per cent of the UNV staff came from the Global South.

Promoting volunteerism: The efforts of Member States to deliver on the 2030 Agenda are supported through volunteerism as an effective means of implementation and engaging people.

34. In 2023, UNV continued to focus on knowledge exchange and research on volunteerism, and the integration of volunteering in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. There was a significant increase of 28 per cent in the number of countries that integrated volunteerism in the Voluntary National Reviews in 2023 from nine per cent in 2022. In addition, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, which referenced volunteers, were also on the rise at 33 per cent compared to 24 per cent in 2022. The emerging trend pointed to the recognition of volunteerism and UNV advocacy outreach to Member States and United Nations entities.

35. During the year, 32 of 39 the Voluntary National Reviews recognised the positive impact of volunteering for development. In addition, volunteer initiatives often led by civil society focused on health care, education, climate action and disaster risk reduction, and citizen participation in community development. The Member States that integrated volunteering into development plans, policies and strategies included: Chile for education; the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Timor-Leste and Zambia for health response; Fiji, Guyana, Portugal and Saudi Arabia for climate action and disaster risk reduction; Ireland for bolstering decision-making; Lithuania for equal opportunities for women; and Rwanda for child protection.

36. Five of 15 published United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks during the year that integrated volunteerism into results and reporting were: Cambodia for increased civic participation and decision-making in development, Chad for volunteers engaged in job opportunities for vulnerable population, Madagascar for climate change risk mitigation measures, Papua New Guinea for crisis prevention and conflict resolution with engagement of volunteers, and Senegal for monitoring of actions for better accountability of public policies.

Brokering of data, research, evidence and knowledge on volunteerism for the Sustainable Development Goals is enhanced.

37. The UNV Knowledge Portal on Volunteerism remained a primary source for volunteering data for partner institutions. In 2023, the portal consolidated a wide range of information, including laws, policies, volunteer modalities and knowledge products. It also provided an information exchange section encompassing webinars and virtual discussions and published 23 diverse pieces on volunteerism.

38. UNV produced a technical note for Member States for a step-by-step analysis of the scope and scale of volunteer contributions in the Voluntary National Reviews. Another technical note for United Nations entities provided practical suggestions on integrating volunteerism in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.

39. Preparations have begun to launch the State of the World's Volunteerism Report in 2025. Six regional consultations and two advisory group meetings have been organised to ensure inclusive, broad-based and well-informed discussions on measurement and developing a volunteer index.

Integration of data and evidence on volunteerism for the Sustainable Development Goals is strengthened among Member States and United Nations entities.

40. UNV extended technical assistance to 18 United Nations country teams – Bahrain, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Timor-Leste, Türkiye and Ukraine. This comprehensive support included evidence-based analyses to integrate volunteerism into the Common Country Analysis and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.

41. In Chile, UNV partnered with the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office (UNRCO) to implement the 2030 Agenda by integrating volunteerism to develop skills for youth, promote peace and human rights, and strengthen justice for the marginalized. Similarly, in Senegal, UNV collaborated with UNDP to facilitate dialogues between the government and volunteer organizations ensuring their voices were included in the national development plan. In Türkiye, UNV together with UNDP and UNRCO integrated volunteerism for awareness of social assistance, eradicating poverty, reducing disaster risks and promoting volunteer culture among the elderly. In Zambia, UNV helped develop the National Youth Policy, recognizing the importance of youth in strengthening state-people relationship.

III. Expanding opportunities for United Nations Volunteers and Online Volunteers with disabilities

42. UNV champions the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the United Nations workforce. Up to 187 UN Volunteers with disabilities served in 2023 with 27 United Nations entities and five United Nations missions, with a majority engaged by UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA. While Germany, Sweden and Switzerland remained active funding partners in promoting an inclusive and responsive United Nations system through volunteerism, more than 70 per cent of UNV assignments for UN Volunteers with disabilities were funded by the United Nations entities themselves.

43. UN Volunteers with disabilities served in 81 countries worldwide, contributing to Goals 3, 4, 5, 10, 11 and 16. Their actions spoke volumes and demonstrated that a disability should not be seen as a barrier to making a positive impact in society.

(a) In Guatemala and Lesotho, UN Volunteers who are braille users campaigned for equal access to education and supported the translation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework into braille with the UNRCO.

(b) UN Volunteers with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA) in Lebanon and UN Volunteers with UNDP in Sri Lanka identified gaps in gender knowledge and enabled sign language interpretation of the Parliament session in Sri Lanka—the first time this service has ever been offered in South Asia.

(c) In Mozambique, UN Volunteers with UNESCO supported the national action plan on Albinism.

(d) UN Volunteers with UNDP in Kazakhstan and Pakistan raised awareness on the rights and accessibility challenges of wheelchair users. In Nepal, UN Volunteers with UNDP raised awareness of mental health issues drawing from their personal experiences.

(e) UN Volunteers in Côte d'Ivoire with UNEP secured funds for orphanages, while in the State of Palestine with OCHA, they provided humanitarian field support, and with UNFPA in the Republic of Moldova, they informed on gender-based violence through podcasts.

(f) The first woman with a disability to serve in Libya was a national UN Volunteer with UNICEF advocating for the rights of children with disabilities.

44. Up to 127 Online Volunteers with disabilities served with 16 United Nations entities across six regions, with the majority engaged with UNFPA, UNDP and UNRCOs. Online Volunteers mapped digital volunteering trends in the Asia-Pacific region. Similarly, in East and Southern Africa, Online Volunteers edited and translated books on autism and ethnicity, and in West and Central Africa, they supported youth information campaigns. Online Volunteers in Latin America and the Caribbean transcribed audio recordings into text, and in the Arab States, they contributed to public information on sexual violence against women and girls. In Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Online Volunteers supported administrative tasks for local communities.

45. To mark the progress made in 2023, UNV undertook an internal assessment of implementing the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy. A disability-specific strategy was recommended with potential assistance from the Special Voluntary Fund to increase inclusion initiatives and build on best practices from the full funding programme. In addition, the reviewers recommended modifying internal policies to attract, recruit, retain and promote persons with disabilities and expand this model together with United Nations entities.

IV. Midterm review of UNV Strategic Framework 2022-2025

46. A midterm review was conducted to gather evidence and draw lessons on the implementation of the Strategic Framework 2022-25 during the first two years. It also included an analysis of the results obtained from a United Nations partner survey and recommendations for 2024-2025. The review methodology included focus group interviews with Member States representatives. United Nations entities and UNV staff. The midterm review has resulted in the following findings and recommendations:

(a) Outcome 1 – In 2022-23, UNV deployed 17,164 UN Volunteers serving 72 United Nations entities in 169 countries, setting a new record and demonstrating its crucial role as a system-wide service provider. National UN Volunteer deployments were on the rise, in line with a year-long trend. The United Nations partner survey amplified the overwhelming demand for UN Volunteers, with 98 per cent reporting UN Volunteers' significant contribution to mandate implementation. UNV saw a significant increase in requests for Online Volunteers, underscoring the importance of leveraging technology for volunteer engagement. Ninety-four per cent indicated that United Nations partners effectively utilized UN Volunteers as a key element of their workforce, contributing to diversity in their workforce.

The review recommended continuing to expand the partner base while also deepening existing partnerships through a foresight approach and targeted initiatives.

(b) Outcome 2 – UNV achieved outstanding results by reducing lead times for deployment of national and international UN Volunteers. The deployment of national UN Volunteers at 23 days overachieved its 2025 target of 29 days, while the deployment of international UN Volunteers was cut by six median days from 78 in 2022 to 72 in 2023. The digital transformation process concluded with improved outcomes. This was validated by 90 per cent of United Nations partners stating that the digital transformation of UNV resulted in better, more efficient services. The cost recovery remained at 13 per cent, reflecting the organization's commitment to cost-effectiveness. The percentage of

women staff in UNV reached 61 per cent, while the percentage for recruiting staff from the Global South reached 73 per cent.”

The review recommended strengthening business processes while allowing more flexibility in UNV recruitment and deployment. It was also recommended to strengthen capacities of UNV field units at country level.

In addition, the review suggested revising the deployment speed target for national UN Volunteers as per Annex V.

(c) Outcome 3 – By the end of 2023, the number of countries reporting the integration of volunteerism in the Voluntary National Reviews rose to 28 per cent, up from nine per cent in 2022. References to volunteerism in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks also increased. With help from the Special Voluntary Fund, UNV acted as a knowledge broker with volunteer organizations to identify gaps in volunteer knowledge and produce products. The knowledge portal was established to provide greater exposure and dissemination of research and analyses from partners, including the private sector and civil society. Of United Nations partner survey respondents, 87 per cent noted the value proposition of UNV in integrating volunteerism in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, Common Country Analysis, country programme documents and national development plans.

The review recommended scaled communication efforts to promote the integration of volunteerism, especially leading up to the International Year of Volunteers in 2026. The review further recommended integrating volunteering evidence and policies more effectively into the Voluntary National Reviews.

47. The midterm review concluded that all targets set out in the Strategic Framework at midpoint have been achieved. The indicators for the 2022-23 biennium are captured in Annex 1.

V. UNV in 2024

48. In the latter part of the 2022-2025 Strategic Framework cycle, UNV will focus on consolidating the progress made during 2022-2023 and enhancing its impact on the 2030 Agenda. Prioritization of these efforts will be determined by the findings and recommendations of the midterm review of the Strategic Framework.

49. UNV will actively engage in mobilizing and integrating volunteers into the United Nations system, promoting gender parity, intensifying efforts to reach out to talented individuals, and increasing volunteer opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

50. Building forward better, UNV will deepen its partnership with United Nations country teams, integrate volunteerism into Common Country Analysis and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and begin preparations for the 2026 International Year of Volunteers.