

**UN****Volunteers**

inspiration in action

UN Observance of International Women's Day 2012: "Empower Rural Women – End Hunger and Poverty"

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development worldwide. Volunteerism is a powerful means of encouraging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. Volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for recognition of volunteers, working with partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing an increasing number and diversity of volunteers, including experienced UN Volunteers, throughout the world. UNV embraces volunteerism as universal and inclusive, and recognizes volunteerism in its diversity as well as the values that sustain it: free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity.

"It is important to ensure that opportunities for volunteering in all sectors are open to both women and men, given their levels of participation in different areas, and recognizing the potential positive effect of volunteering on the empowerment of women" (UN Resolution 56/38, 2001).

Following this premise, UNV supports the empowerment of rural women to end hunger and poverty through different activities and initiatives such as knowledge products and training, the development of inter-agency mechanisms and South-South cooperation. Below are some specific project examples.

Zambia, "Asia Youth Volunteers Programme" August 2006 – January 2014

The Asia Youth Volunteer Exchange Programme (AYVEP) in Zambia was initiated to mobilize skilled women and men from Asia to work as volunteers under the umbrella of a South-South cooperation, whereby skills, knowledge and best practices are transferred between developing nations. AYVEP Zambia promotes innovative, community-centered and sustainable agricultural methods to improve long term solutions for food security. UN Volunteers work directly with farmer groups especially women, agricultural workers and community volunteers to offer training, improve educational materials, and provide assistance in the design and implementation of various agricultural methods.

Through 11 sessions, some 66 men farmers and some 30 women farmers and community leaders were trained in sustainable agricultural practices, such as the environment friendly process of container vegetable production.

<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/browse/countries/zambia/doc/prodoc-asia-youth-volunteers.html>

Bangladesh, "Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF)"

UNV collaborated with UNDP and Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) on capacity enhancement of women in the Chittagong Hills Tract (CHT) in Bangladesh with a focus on increasing the employability of women for gender mainstreaming processes. Through this project, UNV assisted in developing a curriculum for a one-month residential training session on community development skills for women in CHT. It covered themes such as governance, poverty reduction through health, education, provision of small grant loans for livelihoods development etc. This project's key aim was to empower rural women from the three districts in CHT to be involved in community development. Primarily women were engaged as national UN Volunteers and

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an additional 40 women were recruited as community volunteers. The concept of volunteerism for development was incorporated as a subject in the training session in order to promote and encourage local volunteerism. Upon completion, graduates became local volunteers and received on-the-job training in local CHT institutions, which increased their employability.

See page 17 at <http://www.unv.org/en/news-resources/resources/annual-report-2010.html>

http://www.undp.org.bd/projects/prodocs/CHTDF/CHTDF_AnnualReport2009.pdf

**Jordan, “Takalam Project: Empowerment of local communities through Community Radio”
September 2009 - June 2012**

UNV together with UNDP and its local implementing partner, the Queen Zein Al Sharaf Institute for Development (ZENID), chose the Zarqa area, with the third highest unemployment rate and the largest population of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Jordan, as a target for the “Takalam” (Arabic, meaning “to speak out”) project. The project aims to empower the marginalized and disadvantaged members of society and to include them in the local development debate. To do this, Community Development Committees (CDCs) have been set up. The largest in overall numbers is the women’s committee, which has been particularly successful with local women, who have been actively participating in debates. The women are embracing the opportunity to have their voices be heard. By providing training both on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and in producing relevant radio messages, the project built the participants’ capacity to engage with local radio and municipal officials. This has given a voice to local, marginalized groups. UN Volunteers and their partners have helped women to share information. Volunteering through the community radio project has empowered rural women to be able to express their opinions directly, and made them aware that the issues they highlight will have an impact on the development of their community. As a result, civil society organizations and local authorities in Jordan have better access to the voices of local communities, facilitating their efforts to formulate locally sensitive MDGs/poverty alleviation plans and projects.

http://www.undp-jordan.org/index.php?page_type=pages&page_id=435&templateID=1

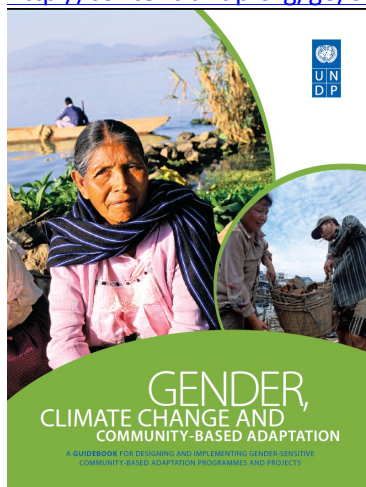
“Gender, Climate Change and Community-Based Adaptation (CBA): a Guidebook for Designing and Implementing Gender-Sensitive Community-Based Adaptation Programmes and Projects”.
Published in July 2010

Risks associated with climate change threaten to reinforce gender inequalities and even erode progress that has been made towards gender equality in many developing countries. Poor women’s limited access to resources, restricted rights, limited mobility and voice in community and household decision-making can make them much more vulnerable than men to the effects of climate change. This is unfair and can lead to unfortunate consequences for all, as women play a unique role in the stewardship of natural resources and support to households and communities. With their knowledge, they can shape adaptive mechanisms in vulnerable areas. It is therefore vital that gender equality considerations as well as men’s and women’s different needs, perspectives and knowledge, are taken into account when planning community-based adaptation activities. UNV’s support to community based adaptation (CBA) has contributed to the making of this UNDP report, co-authored by Volunteer Specialists and UN Volunteers. This Guidebook presents valuable advice on how to design gender-sensitive, community-based projects and programmes. It draws on a wealth of experiences and examples from UNDP CBA Programmes, together with lessons learned from Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programmes and UN Volunteers’ experiences within the field.

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<http://content.undp.org/go/cms-service/download/publication/?version=live&id=2713846>



Namibia, Low energy cookstove developed and promoted by UNV- supported Community Based Adaptation programme saves labour and mitigates deforestation

Cutting trees for fuel in Namibia is resulting in alarming amounts of deforestation, causing extensive desertification. A simple, low energy cookstove has been developed as part of the UNV-supported Community Based Adaptation (CBA) programme in Namibia and is being promoted both for home use and as a product for local manufacture.

The EzyStove is a fuel-efficient, easy-to-use and environmentally friendly stove designed for poor rural households dependent on burning wood or paper on open fires for their cooking and heating. Its widespread use could markedly reduce both greenhouse gas emissions and deforestation.

The easily assembled stove consists of a fire chamber fitted into a metal frame. Because the chamber concentrates the fire's heat, it reduces wood fuel consumption by two thirds to heat food or liquid.

The design also produces between 60 and 80 per cent less emissions and a fraction of the wood smoke. As a result, the stove can be used indoors.

The stove will have a labour saving effect for many rural women as it will reduce the time spent gathering wood for fuel, a task often done by women and children.

The stove's few Swedish-made parts can be easily assembled in a small local workshop without advanced tools. The CBA is promoting its local manufacture to create new jobs and encourage entrepreneurship.

<http://www.unv.org/en/news-resources/news/doc/unv-supported-low-energy-stove.html>