

MARKING THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF VOLUNTEERS +10

A GLOBAL CALL FOR ACTION

The year 2011 marks the 10th anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV) in 2001.

Opportunities exist for activities throughout 2011 that will showcase the diversity, breadth and depth of volunteering worldwide and offer the chance to raise the profile of volunteering and mobilize many more volunteers.

On International Volunteer Day, 5 December 2009, a Global Call for Action was extended to all stakeholders to engage in activities that mark the tenth anniversary of International Year of Volunteers.

1. The Global Call for Action

All stakeholders are invited to join the global effort to mark IYV+10.

In so doing all stakeholders are encouraged to reinvigorate the spirit of the International Year of Volunteers and its four pillars:

- Further promote recognition of the contributions of volunteers to society, and peace and development
- Promote better understanding of how volunteerism can change the nature and pace of development beyond the Millennium Development Goals
- Provide a platform for continued advocacy and policy development
- Facilitate linkages and cooperation with and among Volunteer Involving Organisations in the public, private and civil society sectors.

All stakeholders are encouraged to:

- Bring the voices of volunteers to the attention of policy decision-makers;
- Show-case volunteers in action including informal volunteering by people living in difficult circumstances, and self-support actions at the community level;
- Support the reactivation of National Committees for IYV+10;
- Encourage local and regional consultations and support improved tools for networking;
- Support the European Year of Volunteering 2011 (and similar in other regions);
- Bring the voices of volunteers to the international stage during the UN's General Assembly (GA) session in

2010 and 2011 – plus during the Commission on Social Development meeting in the UN Secretariat;

- Include the marking of IYV+10 in activities and/or events already planned to take place in 2011;
- Advocate for a GA resolution with strong recognition of the value of volunteerism to society with recommendation to governments for institutional support, and with call on governments and society to support and fund volunteer initiatives.
- All stakeholders are encouraged to immediately engage in participatory dialogue and to formulate Plans of Action to mark IYV+10.

2. Background

In November 1997, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers (IYV). The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme was designated as the international focal point.

The idea for IYV emerged from deliberations among several major international NGOs in the early 1990s. The formal proposal to proclaim 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers was made by the Japanese government, co-sponsored by 123 countries, and was approved by the UN General Assembly.

The premise underlying IYV 2001 was that voluntary service makes an essential contribution in addressing problems in areas of social, economic, cultural, humanitarian and peace-building. For this to happen, there was a need for greater recognition and facilitation of volunteer work, more vigorous promotion of voluntary service, and networks to facilitate a drawing upon – the “best practice” – of volunteers. The designation of an International Year of Volunteers by the UN General Assembly (GA) provided a valuable framework and established a favourable environment enabling a more strategic use of volunteer contributions.

3. Marking the International Year of Volunteers +10

The year 2011 marks the 10th anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV) 2001. Opportunity exists for activities throughout the year that will showcase the diversity, breadth and depth of volunteering worldwide

According to the General Assembly report:

“A major outcome of the Year has been a collective recognition by Governments of the role and contribution of voluntary action and of the need to adopt strategic approaches to enhancing the environment for such action to flourish. Global trends towards greater self-help, decentralization, participatory democracy and networking are all having an impact on citizen participation, and volunteerism is one defining characteristic. The challenge now is to consolidate successes attained, build on the momentum created by the Year and move the volunteer agenda forward.”

Paragraph 86 – (A/57/352)

and offer the chance to mobilize many more volunteers and raise the profile of volunteering.

The UN Secretary-General was asked by the GA in 2001 to report back on the follow-up to IYV on a tri-annual basis. UNV prepared follow-up reports for the Secretary-General in 2002, 2005 and 2008. As a result of the 2008 report, the UN GA, in its resolution A/Res/63/153 adopted on 18 December 2008 called for the marking of IYV+10. In the GA resolution, the UN invited governments, with the active support of media, civil society and the private sectors, as well as development partners and the relevant organizations and bodies of the UN system, to carry out activities focused on marking the tenth anniversary of IYV in 2011 at the regional and national levels. The resolution also reaffirmed the United Nations Volunteers programme as the focal point for the marking of IYV+10.

The overall goal of marking IYV+10 is focused on promoting greater global recognition of the contribution of volunteerism to society and to achieving peace and development.

4. Stakeholder Consultations

Achievement of the expectations for marking IYV+10 will require both an early and comprehensive involvement of stakeholders and a sustainable mechanism for stakeholder involvement.

In December 2007 UNV convened a consultative workshop in Geneva, hosted by International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), attended by a number of volunteer involving network organizations with regional and/or global outreach. The consultation helped to shape the content of a report that provided the foundations of UN GA resolution 63/153 adopted on 18 December 2008.

The Consultative Meeting on marking the International Year of Volunteers + 10 (IYV+10) was held on October 22 and 23, 2009 in Bonn, Germany. It was an opportunity for diverse organizations to discuss ways to mark the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers. This was an opportunity to share activities and how these may link to broader aims. From the Bonn Consultative Meeting emerged a preliminary Action Plan to guide all parties toward a successful IYV+10.

5. Participants at the Bonn Consultative Meeting on marking the International Year of Volunteers +10

Association 'Learning and Helping Overseas' (AKLHÜ)
 Association of Voluntary Service Organisations (AVSO)
 Bertelsmann Foundation
 Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS)
 European Volunteer Centre (CEV)
 European Youth Forum (YFJ)
 German Development Service (DED)
 German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
 ICVolunteers
 Institute for Volunteer Research (IVR)
 International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE)
 International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
 International Forum on Development Service (FORUM – Comhlámh and HVSF)
 International Labour Organization (ILO)
 International Movement ATD Fourth World
 Japanese Embassy Germany
 Japanese National Network of Organizations Promoting Volunteerism (NNOPV)
 Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)
 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
 Peace Corps
 The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF)
 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Millennium Campaign
 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
 United Nations Office on Sports for Development and Peace (UNOSDP)
 United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme
 World Health Organization (WHO)
 World Alliance for Citizen Participation (CIVICUS)
 World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM)

For more information see: www.WorldVolunteerWeb.org