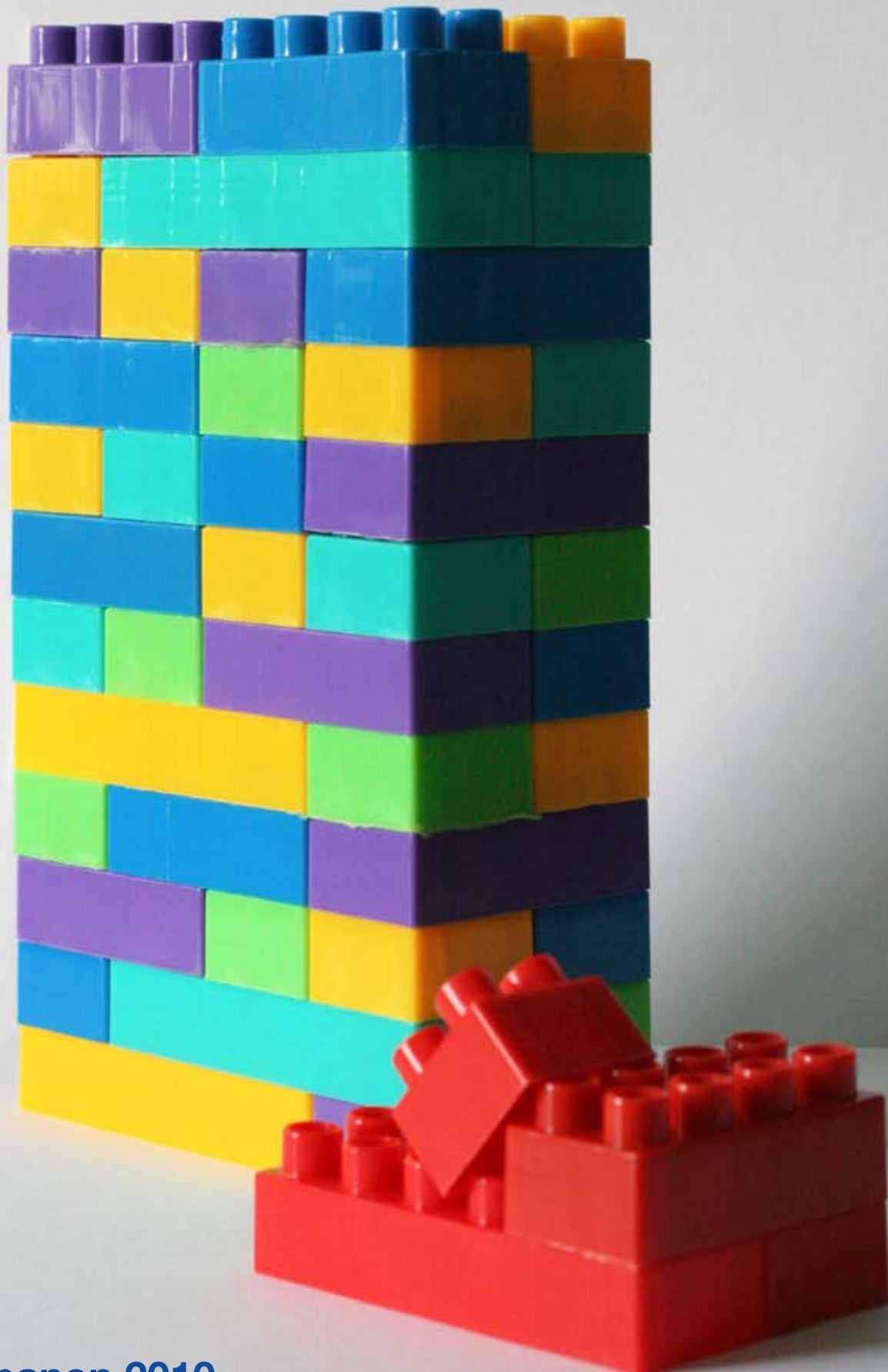


Engaging Youth



UNV Lebanon 2010



UN

Volunteers

inspiration in action

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Cover photo: MDG 8 - A Global Partnership for Development, by Elie Khoury, MDG Photo Competition for Youth in Lebanon. The long Lego tower symbolizes the development achieved by the partnership of different countries represented by the multiple colors of Lego pieces.



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ABOUT US

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development worldwide. Volunteerism can transform the pace and nature of development and it benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for volunteerism globally, encouraging partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing volunteers.



UNV is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



Introduction



The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme is the UN organization that contributes to peace and development worldwide, 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.

Established by the UN General Assembly in 1970 to recruit, place and administer qualified volunteers providing professional support to UN agencies, funds, programmes and governments in various countries, the mandate has widened considerably, in 1976 to promoting the advancement of the role of youth in development and lately extending its own programming, particularly in the context of the progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (the global development framework adopted by the United Nations Member States in 2000 for improving people's lives and combating poverty in a sustained manner by 2015).

On the ground in 128 countries, UNV focuses on five key areas: basic service delivery, environment and climate change, crisis prevention and recovery, humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping. The cross-cutting objectives of gender, youth and marginalized people underpin all UNV's work.

Inspired to make change reality, volunteers bridge the gap between development actors and governments on the one hand, and people at the grassroots level on the other.

In 2011, we mark the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV+10). Anyone and everyone can make a difference. We envisage societies that value, recognize and encourage volunteering as integral to local, national and international plans and priorities. We foresee a future in which all individuals embrace a shared commitment to voluntarily contribute, within their capacity, to the pursuit of the common good and to the ideals of peace.

This report highlights some of UNV's activities in Lebanon, showcasing in particular the creativity and commitment of Lebanese youth.



Mustafa Rayshouni,
MDG Photo
Competition,
UN Day 2010

Volunteerism For Development: Youth In Lebanon

Suad Joseph - Anthropologist

Suad Joseph is Professor of Anthropology and Women and Gender Studies at the University of California, Davis, where she is Founding Director of the Middle East/South Asia Studies Program. She founded the Arab Families Working Group (AFWG); the Association for Middle East Women's Studies (AMEWS) and co-founded the Journal for Middle East Women's Studies (JMEWS). She is President of the Middle East Studies Association of North America, 2011. She is General Editor of the Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures; editor of Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East, and Intimate Selving in Arab Families; and co-editor of Building Citizenship in Lebanon, Women and Citizenship in Lebanon and Women and Power in the Middle East.¹

Arab children and youth, those under 29 years old, constitute 60-65% of the populations of almost all Arab countries. In an area of the world that produces critical sources of world wealth, the rates of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and underemployment, and health problems among Arab children and youth are often staggering. Since World War II, when most of Arab states gained independence, the story of state-making and of nation-building has been a story of ringing failure. Nationalist and pan-Arab nationalist stalled, never started, or were unsuccessful. Wars and violence have lead or forced many of the young to leave or try to leave their countries.

For over the past half century, perhaps the majority of the children and youth of the Arab world, and Lebanon is a prime example, have grown up at high-risk, their futures filled with political uncertainty and likely violence. The current adults themselves emerged from years of political instability. For many, the state offers no national future. Some cling to whatever options are available to them. For many, opportunities are routed through kin and family systems which are at once sites of security and sources of oppression. Many are unemployed or underemployed. Many are mobilized into

militias, nationalist movements, resistance movements, or sectarian/religious movements. Islamist movements, which have swept through the region since the 1980's, are among a variety of alternatives for some youth who try to claim a vision for their future. Many try to leave their natal countries. Many migrate internally, willingly or reluctantly.

Yet many of the youth stayed in their national homes, some by choice and some against their best dreams. Among those youth who stayed, it becomes a critical question how, in these failed states, the youth see their sense of duty, obligation to the nation, to the civic public, to the national community. Lebanon is a prime example of a weak state that once held so much hope for its youth—a country beloved by its people, a large number of whom would nevertheless leave if immigration papers could be obtained; a country where family is the center of social life, and yet so many push their children to migrate to any better place.

Lebanon, in many respects is a failed nation. Since independence in 1943, it has been racked with civil unrest, with a Civil War (1975-1991), the settlement of 260,000 - 280,000 Palestinian refugees (AUB-UNRWA Survey, 2010), 300,000 Syrians, and at different times, both Israeli and the Syrian military presence. In many ways Lebanon seems "modern": high literacy rates with most of the population bilingual or trilingual; low fertility rates; an age structure that is not as "young" as many other Arab countries; relatively high life expectancy; highly urbanized population; extensive secondary educational infrastructure; relatively cosmopolitan city life as tourism brings people from all over the world when there are periods of political quiet.

If Lebanon does not have much of a "youth bulge", it is partly because so many of its young have migrated from Lebanon due to chronic civic unrest. At points during the Civil War, 25% of the population had left Lebanon. Many returned and left repeatedly as violence cycled through the past 4 decades. The official unemployment rate was 9% in 2009, but was 20% in 2008 and 2007 (Index Mundi 2011). Some predict an unemployment rate of up to 50% within the decade (Daily Star July 09, 2009). Unemployment among Lebanese youth is at 20% for those under 15- 25 years old (Qiblawi 2011) and much higher for those under 29 years old. Child labor is not uncommon, especially among the rural poor and the Palestinian population. Remittances from Lebanese abroad (especially youth) subsidize the economy. Coming from all over the world, foreign workers constitute anywhere between 1.25 (Agence Frances Press 1996) to 2.25 (Xinhua News Agency, 1996) million of the population which is estimated at a total of 4 million.

Youth in Lebanon include not only the Lebanese, but a large percent of the 300,000 Palestinians, 300,000 Syrians (15%



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¹This paper is based on Suad Joseph "Anthropology of the Future: Arab Youth and the State of the State" In Susan Slyomovics and Sherine Hafez, eds., State of the Art: Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa, Submitted to Indiana University Press.

of Syria's workforce), and several hundred thousand workers from Asia and Africa. Youth in Lebanon are also divided by 18 recognized religious sects: Muslim (Shia, Sunni, Druze, Ismaili, Alawite, Nusayri) and Christian (Maronite Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Melkite Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Syrian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Chaldean, Assyrian). Each of the religious sects organizes their own legally recognized family law dealing with marriage, divorce, child custody, inheritance. The Lebanese state does not offer civil family law alternatives. Religious conflicts have contributed to political instability and are a source for recruiting youth politically.

A country like Lebanon, that has offered such fragile security, so few services to youth, and so little guarantees for their future, still manages to inspire some youth to volunteer. Often the youth are called upon to serve the nation – for national liberation, for defense, for growth and advancement. Often they are called to serve subnational or supranational causes – religious, sectarian, tribal, ethnic, political/ideological and the like. At times, these calls for service are volunteeristic. The incentive is commitment to a belief, a cause, a social good.

What are the conditions which facilitate youth volunteerism in Lebanon and the sites which inspire youth to volunteer? What does youth volunteerism mean in a country like Lebanon which has not been able to make itself into a nation, yet has so many of the best promises of nationhood and development? Who is mobilized for youth volunteerism, where, and who mobilizes them? Who rejects volunteerism and what are their alternative activities? While most of the questions raised by this brief reflective require empirical research to effectively answer, the existing social research allows us to speculate towards answers.

It is our hypothesis, that, despite years of turmoil, despite disillusionment with the weak state project, despite high un/underemployment – there are still many sites and causes for youth volunteerism in Lebanon. This paper offers examples of some of those opportunities within Lebanon's civil society; explores what motivates youth to invest in or reject volunteerism; and considers the character of the sites of volunteerism (social/political/religious/national). While most of the opportunities to volunteer are subnational, the question is raised whether Lebanon, as a State, can inspire its youth to serve.

Indeed, what counts as volunteerism, complicated at best, became even more problematical as youth were pressed into militias, movements, and other activities over the past many decades. While not as much of an issue at the turn of the 21st century, during the Lebanese Civil War, many families felt compelled by political parties and militias to offer their young sons as volunteers and fighters. Some families fought enlistment of their children, while others endorsed the recruitment as heroism. Lebanese political parties, mostly no longer armed (other than Hezbollah), continue to solicit the services of the young on behalf of party leaders and causes. At crisis moments, such as the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in 2005, the youth hardly need to be called. The demonstrations of millions of Lebanese, mostly youth, divided the nation among those who thought Syria had a hand in the assassination and those who did not. The tent city, that was grew up and remained



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for a few years in the City Center, following the Hariri assassination was manned largely by youth, mostly under 25. These acts of civic participation, while motivated by conflicting political ideologies, do demonstrate the will of the young to offer themselves up to their visions of the nation. A number of the political parties capture this youthful enthusiasm to enlist youth in volunteer social services for communities addressed by those parties. In these instances, the lines between volunteerism and acts of civic and political participation may fade away.

Living with chronic political turmoil since the opening of the Civil War in 1975, the youth and people of Lebanon have experienced a blurring of the lines between political, religious and social volunteerism. Below are a few examples of sites of youth volunteerism.

In South Lebanon, as well as the suburbs of Beirut, there has been active volunteerism of youth, organized by Hezbollah. Many of these volunteers are young females and women. The Women's Association of Hezbollah, in particular, actively recruits young women to volunteer in clinics, schools, and other offices in different capacities. Since few of these Hezbollah positions are paid, volunteers run many of their organizations. They offer training, education, basic information on food, health, child care. They organize talks and panels. They go to the homes to deliver services and goods as well as religious education. Often, their work is to help families network for jobs, sociability, and mobility. Given Hezbollah's considerable legitimacy in South Lebanon and Beirut Southern Suburbs, especially among the Shi'a, families are often more willing to allow their young daughters to volunteer than they might for other organizations or causes. Similarly, young men volunteer for Hezbollah, sometimes doing work parallel to the women's work. At times,

their militarism begins as an act of volunteerism. Perhaps one of the best known and longest serving volunteer associations organized by a Christian church is the Social Movement, founded by Bishop Gregoire Haddad, a Greek Catholic cleric. Highly active since the 1960's, the Social Movement has worked in every social domain. It helps with training, medical needs, jobs skills, social welfare and the like. Its central mission, and the life mission of Bishop Haddad, is fighting religious sectarianism in Lebanon. To move towards a secular society that practices true civil liberties, he invites youth to work with him in the Civil Society Movement as well. The Civil Society Movement focuses on advancing freedoms within the public arena. Even at the age of 85, Bishop Haddad remains an innovative leader. He was among the first to erase his religious identity on the Civil Registry Records in 2009, when Interior Minister Ziad Baroud issued a circular allowing Lebanese to remove their religious identity from these records. He has inspired generations of youth to work on behalf of Lebanon as a nation, across religious lines.

While youth volunteerism in Lebanon appears to have many ready organizational outlets in religious institutions, secular organizations organize youth volunteers as well. The Charitable Woman's Progress Association for the Welfare of Childhood and Maternity in South Lebanon was founded in 1969 and works to offer social, medical and educational services to the poor and needy of South Lebanon. They provide family planning and family organization information and skills. They give job training skills workshops and classes. They recruit youth in the name of national service and developing civil society.

In Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon, Sour—all the major cities, and even many of the towns and villages—offer youth opportunities with voluntary organizations. This has been true in Lebanon for decades. Even in the early 1970s's the number of registered NGO's was over 2,000 (Joseph 1971). There are 3,600 NGO's registered now in Lebanon (Safa, 2010). While some of these are NGO's in name only, many actively

engage the citizenry in a variety of social, charity, service, and recreational activities. While a significant number can be considered religious organizations or affiliated with religious sections, a large number are neither religiously nor politically aligned. Indeed, one of the important characteristics of these NGO's is that, unlike the period of the Civil War, they enlist the youth in non-militaristic activities which serve the nation. Many of the NGO's are sports clubs (volleyball is particularly popular). Literary and cultural organizations are found in most cities. A movement, growing for several decades, has recruited the youth to work on behalf of secular laws and human rights issues. A number of groups focus on changing electoral laws. The environment is a favorite concern of youth and has inspired large numbers to join NGO's on behalf of "green" alternatives to environmental degradation. Perhaps one of the most powerful themes of NGO organizing of youth is found in those organizing for gender equality. This is particularly central to organizations working to challenge sectarian family law and gender-based citizenship laws (nationality law). Some organizations address violence against women. A few are organized around issues of sexual orientation, tending to operate with subtle appreciation of the cultural environment. A number of NGO's offer occupational training, short courses, and preparation for the job market, especially for women and youths. It is striking that many of these training-oriented NGO's are themselves staffed with youth. A number of volunteer organizations work on behalf of immigrant workers in Lebanon (especially Sri Lankan domestic workers), whose plight has been documented by a number of UN, in particular ILO, reports. While it is difficult to assert with confidence without empirical study, it may be the case that volunteerism increased in Lebanon in the aftermath of external military invasions. The 2006 incursions into Lebanon by Israel were followed by extensive volunteerism, particularly by youth, in the clean up and rebuilding, especially of the South and the Southern Suburbs of Beirut.

Despite these opportunities, it must also be noted, that there are many youth who do not and would not think of volunteering.



Ali Najem, MDG Photo Competition, UN Day 2010



Khaled Halwani, MDG Photo Competition, UN Day 2010

Many of these young are disillusioned with Lebanese political leadership, the chronic political hazards and stalemates, the economic uncertainties, and the tenuousness of their futures. For some youth, supporting their families is a basic issue, and volunteering must seem like the dream of elites. For many of disillusioned or impoverished youth, the answer is to turn inward towards their families – and, if possible, leave Lebanon. For others, they do their best to keep their heads down and focus on their private lives.

Given that opportunities for volunteerism appear to be relatively robust, despite the political, economic, and social turmoil, it is useful to ask, of what relevance is the abundance of youth and the potential for youth volunteerism to economic development². A number of local organizations and political parties have been successful in organizing youth volunteerism for economic development. Perhaps among the most interesting examples of the mobilization of youth for development was the work of Hizbullah in reconstructing South Lebanon, particularly in the aftermath of Israel's invasion in 2006. Immediately after Israel withdrew, Hizbullah mobilized the youth to do house by house surveys of the needs of families. In many cases they were able to provide building material, volunteer labor, and helped families rebuild. In other cases, they offered medical or social assistance. At times, it was simply their presence, as a recognizable Lebanese institution, that helped calm the air and offer a sense of local security – particularly in light of the weakened position of the Lebanese state. Their acts may have been controversial politically, yet viewed through the lens of understanding the potential for organizing youth for economic development, it was an important case study.

While there is need for much empirical research, the parameters of youth volunteerism in Lebanon have had a solid history. What remains to be ascertained is how effectively they can be mobilized at a national level, by the Lebanese State itself, on behalf of national social, political, and economic development. At the moment, it is maybe hard to imagine. In the minds of many, the Lebanese state barely exists or is a shadow the limps along behind the aggrandizing *zu'ama* (political leaders) and their parties who insist on carving spaces for their own agendas rather than national agendas. With the chronic fragmentation, the frequent lack of a government, the instability of any cabinet, the Lebanese state has not imaginatively addressed the potential of its youth to serve.

It is perhaps in light of this political instability that the volunteerism of youth offers a powerful antidote to Lebanon's current social realities. That 3,600 NGO's are registered, that youth volunteer in a broad range of activities which are non-political, nonsectarian, and nonmilitary, that they have hope for their country and are willing to give of their time and skills to create opportunities for others are all signs of a hopeful future for a country that is trying to revision itself. Modern Lebanon has inspired its youth with a deep love of the land. Perhaps few young countries (independence in 1943) have produced as much poetry, song, and verse expressing a love of the nation. National existence is based on assumptions of shared values, a shared culture, and a shared history. Youth volunteerism presumes, to some degree, the embracement of some essential shared values. In a country like Lebanon, with 18 recognized religious sects and which has come through a major long-term civil war, youth volunteerism has built on values of respect, of commitment to co-existence, tolerance of differences, and the foundational principle that the country can move forward as a unified social entity. Youth volunteerism offers opportunities for inclusion, connection, and integration. It is this spirit of volunteerism which dedicates youth to offering themselves up for the work of community-making and nation-making. It is the youth who may best save Lebanon from its dilemmas. No doubt, it will be youth who will produce new visions of sociality from which a new nation emerges. Youth volunteerism is one of their chosen pathways towards this future.

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² The UN General Assembly, in its annex to resolution 56/38, recommended that governments "establish the economic value of volunteering" as a way to raise the visibility and credibility of volunteerism and to stimulate government policies to support volunteerism. Johns Hopkins University's report, "Measuring Civil Society and Volunteering: Initial Findings from Implementation of the U.N. Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions", summarizes findings from analyses of data from official statistical agencies of eight countries. These countries were the first to implement the guidelines in the United Nations Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions, issued by the United Nations Statistical Division in 2003. Pulling together statistical data on nonprofit institutions which had previously been scattered throughout official statistics, allowed significant analysis for the first time. "We now have an officially sanctioned method for capturing the economic scale and importance of civil society and volunteering around the world, and what it is revealing is that this set of organizations is far more important than we have realized," observed Lester Salamon, the report author and director of the Johns Hopkins center for Civil Society Studies. Five percent of the GDP is produced by the civil society sector (private, not-for-profit hospitals, schools, social service agencies, symphonies, environmental groups and other organizations), according to the report. In another case, a UNV survey conducted in Kazakhstan in 2002, found that volunteer organizations contributed about 3.5 percent to the GDP (Kargbo, 2002).

UNV Field Unit, Lebanon And The Lebanese Red Cross Jointly Mark The International Volunteer Day 2010



In 2004, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the UNV programme agreed to intensify their cooperation on issues of common interest and concern. They share the aim of establishing an environment whereby volunteers can participate actively in the development and humanitarian fields. Both organizations embrace volunteering as universal and inclusive, and recognize volunteering in all its diversity, with a firm belief in the values of equality, solidarity and civic engagement.



International Volunteer Day (IVD) celebrates the engagement of millions of volunteers who give their time and talent to help advance peace and development around the world. To further enhance collaboration at the country level, UNV Field Unit, Lebanon and the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) Youth Department, on the occasion of the International Volunteer Day 2010, embarked on a first joint activity in Lebanon to highlight and increase the breadth and depth of volunteerism schemes and opportunities in general and to enhance the understanding of refugee rights among youth in particular.



Both organizations' youth volunteers, along with UNDP youth groups, were engaged in a role play "On The Run" where they experienced how hard it is to be in a situation of a refugee. A different reality, identity and passport made the participants feel as if they were on the run. The UNHCR Deputy Representative addressed the youth in an opening session to share information on the work of the organization in assisting refugees and in facilitating solutions for them.



World Youth Conference In Guanajuato: Lebanese UN Volunteer In Mexico To Identify Priorities Of Action On Youth

As countries approach the year 2015 it is becoming more urgent to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Realizing the potential of youth as active contributors to the local and social development of their communities, the World Youth Conference was held and brought together more than 400 youth representatives from over 160 countries. Youth with a record of engagement in development work were selected to share their experiences, in bridging the gaps that prevent countries from attaining national MDGs by 2015. UNV Field Unit, Lebanon was chosen to represent UNV at this World Youth Conference, and chose youth volunteer Anthony Guerbidjian to participate in recognition of his contribution to development while serving on a local development project assignment in Beirut.



Anthony's participation reflected the impact of volunteers on tackling development challenges across the country. Volunteering has allowed Lebanese youth to devote time and attention on issues related to achieving MDG targets for Lebanon. Anthony and other UN Volunteers have been active in equipping schools with missing educational material, preventing the waste of water and other natural resources, and working with women's cooperatives to ensure gender equality. This active engagement of Lebanese youth has mobilized individuals eager to overcome local MDG barriers, to work for healthier communities, to become environmentally conscious citizens, and to contribute to a more prosperous future.

The World Youth Conference was a platform giving opportunity for a global perspective on the crucial role played by youth in reaching national MDG objectives and in accelerating the momentum of developmental progress within their own communities.

Engaging Youth In Local Development



Hassan Khazaal, UN Volunteer (left)

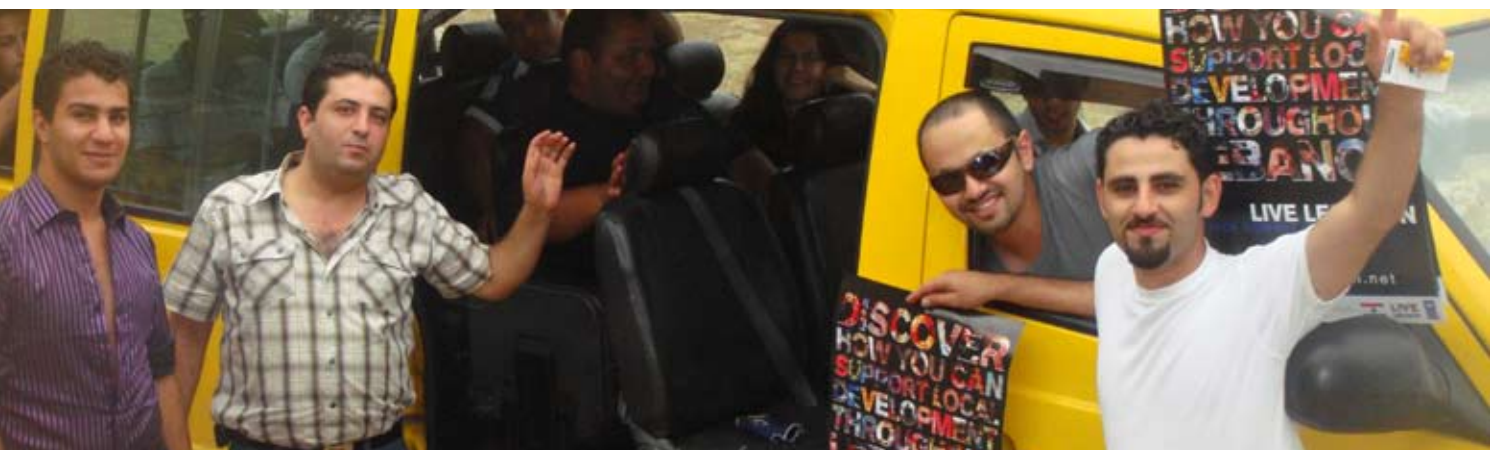
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UNDP LIVE LEBANON is an innovative partnership between civil society, local authorities, the private sector, and Lebanese emigrants. The project aims to support the development of Lebanon focusing on its most underprivileged areas. In an effort to involve Lebanon's youth in the work of LIVE LEBANON throughout the country, the initiative has extended its outreach to enthusiastic youth groups willing to lend a hand to improving local living conditions. In collaboration with the UNV programme and the Volunteerism Unit of the Ministry of Social Affairs, LIVE LEBANON facilitated the innovative engagement of Lebanon's youth in local development projects. Partners collaborated to enable participation by a broader cross section of society in their own development. This was achieved through locally adopted forms of voluntary action.

Youth learnt about LIVE LEBANON's implemented projects and nationally targeted areas – namely: health, environment, income generating activities, youth and education – all projects contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Youth will be devoting their time and effort to include their own villages within the LIVE LEBANON programme.

Youth volunteers from around the country came to the discussion having already planned several activities through which to promote the development work of LIVE LEBANON in their communities. They shared ideas about possible fundraising events and developed project proposals for implementation consideration by LIVE LEBANON.

Lebanese youth contributed significantly to LIVE LEBANON's development efforts and as volunteers, these youth were given opportunities from which they could develop their own potential. Their enthusiasm and dynamism is key to achieving local development in the most deprived areas of the country. This is inspiration in action.



Razi Awada, UN Volunteer (right)

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UNV Leads Teach-In Initiative In Lebanon



UN Volunteer Davigh Karamanoukian (UNDP Peace Building Project) during the first round of Teach-Ins

The UNV programme in collaboration with the National Commission for UNESCO led an initiative dubbed “Teach-Ins”. The Teach-Ins aimed at raising awareness about the development challenges in Lebanon by engaging Lebanese youth from different schools in dynamic discussions and debates about the social, political and development work of the United Nations in Lebanon.

The First round of the Teach-Ins was launched in April 2010 during “Education for All Week”. UN officials including Special Coordinator for Lebanon Mr. Michael Williams, UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Marta Ruedas, several Heads of UN Agencies and many UN staff took part in this initiative and visited 36 Lebanese schools, both public and private, and reached out to more than 5,000 students.

The second round of the Teach-Ins was held for a period of three months, during which UN officials and staff members spoke at different schools and universities from all regions in Lebanon. The speeches highlighted the importance of the Millennium Development

Goals and the inspirational work that has already been done to achieve them.

“I want to show people what I am passionate about, and maybe I will inspire them too” said Davigh Karamanoukian, a national UN Volunteer serving with the UNDP Peace Building project. Students were very pleased to meet UN officials and staff, and they requested volunteering opportunities, suggested ideas for projects, and debated ideas on volunteerism.

While it is the governments of the world who committed to attaining the MDGs in their countries, achieving the goals will require the ingenuity, solidarity and creativity of millions of ordinary people. Youth in particular are the lynchpin of any success in realizing these ambitious targets.



Youth In Lebanon Engage In Achieving The MDGs



“Each of us can [...] make an enormous difference for the better in protecting our planet and achieving the MDGs.

Volunteers and volunteerism have an important role to play in this.”

Helen Clark,
UNDP Administrator ¹

On the occasion of UN Day 2010, the UNV programme in Lebanon, together with UNDP and UNRCO, launched an innovative awareness campaign on the Millennium Development Goals. With only five years left before the deadline to achieve the goals, raising awareness on the MDGs has become crucial. One of UNV’s programme priorities is to build capacity for youth volunteerism, which can contribute to the development of young people, and in turn allow them to contribute and commit to the development of their communities, to achieve the MDGs cohesively on a local level. “Volunteer action is essential for communities to get closer to the target of achieving the MDGs”, said Flavia Pansieri, UNV Executive Coordinator, at the International Volunteer Day 2010 in Colombia. Following United Nation’s declaration of International Year of Youth as of 12 August 2010, the awareness campaign encouraged youth in Lebanon to participate in development. The campaign consisted of awareness sessions in schools and universities, dubbed “Teach-Ins” (refer to page 09), a MDG photo competition, and a UN Day event to announce and celebrate the winners of the competition. It reached approximately 114,000 youth, and actively involved more than 9,000 of them.

The awareness campaign was successful in familiarizing youth with development goals, and related challenges. Over a three month period, Heads of Agencies and members from the different UN agencies representing UNDP, ESCWA, UNIC, FAO, UNICEF, OHCHR, ILO, UNRWA, UNESCO, UNSCOL, UNV and UNRCO visited 21 universities and 19 high schools, reaching 2,500 students from different regions of the country including vulnerable groups.

On 1st September, UNV, UNDP and UNRCO launched a MDG photo competition entitled “A Snapshot for Development”. The objective was one of broadening youth understanding of development objectives. Within 45 days 387 photos were submitted through the competition website (www.un.org.lb/photocompetition). By the closing date of the competition, the website had received up to 13,093 hits. The “UNV-Lebanon” group page and UN Day Event page on Facebook were also created, reaching out to a large network of Lebanese youth. The five-member professional jury selected eight MDG winners and an overall winner. A People’s Choice winner was awarded through approximately 6,000



MDG Photo Competition Poster for Arab International Book Fair 2010

votes cast online. To integrate members of UNDP youth groups and UNHCR youth refugees in the photo competition, UNV purchased and allocated 200 disposable cameras to provide them with the means of participating. The jury members chose to commend seven of these vulnerable participants, and one was winner of MDG 2.

The competition results were announced during an Awards Giving Ceremony at UNESCO Palace on 22 October. A selection of photos, including the winning and highly commended photos, were exhibited. 800 youth gathered from the different regions and filled up the theater. Famous TV Presenter Tony Baroud hosted the evening, and renowned violinist Jihad Akl performed Middle Eastern and European songs. A youth rap group from the rehabilitation center in Nabatieh, presented their very own MDG song. The Lebanese Palestine Choir assembled to promote Lebanese Palestinian dialogue also performed at the event, led by award winning maestro Barkev Taslakian. The youth rap group and the Lebanese Palestine Choir were both given support from UNDP. The event came to an end with the awards ceremony, carried out by the Resident Representative and Heads of Agencies from UNDP, UNESCO, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO, ESCWA, UNHCR, FAO and UNIDO.

The initiative was successful in integrating youth in development and increasing their interest in achieving the MDGs. "Overcoming the world's big challenges related to environment, hunger, education, maternal health, gender equality, and HIV/AIDs will require the engagement of millions of people through volunteer action" (Flavia Pansieri, one week after the launch of the UNV Facebook Page - November 2010). Youth is considered the leading decision maker and catalyst for social and cultural change, and as it holds the future in its hands, it is crucial that it occupies an active role in achieving development, and has the opportunity to participate in civic engagement.



MDG Photo Exhibition at UN Day 2010



MDG Photo Competition Poster



Interactive Teach-In session with Iraqi Refugee Group on MDG 6 led by National UN Volunteer Dalia Chabarek and Gender Specialist Gudrun Jevne (ILO), to clarify that HIV victims cannot be spotted – team participants stood shoulder to shoulder and passed a ball from behind, opposing team had to guess ball carrier.



Celebrity Jihad Akl greeting Heads of Agencies (front row) and audience in packed theater of UNESCO Palace

MDG Photo Competition For Youth Winning Photos

1 World, 1 Future, 8 Goals





6.



7.



8.



9.



10.

1. Overall Winner: Abir Ghattas. *Nada is seven, and her labor, filtering dried peas seeds, supports her family's economic welfare.*
2. People's Choice Winner: Jack Martinos. *A poor Lebanese fisherman, he keeps on fishing despite his health condition in order to survive.*
- 3-4. MDG 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger. George Semaan (photo 3), Mohamad Dekmak (photo 4). *Provide children with basic security and the opportunity for a brighter future, poverty which is interlinked with the seven other challenges to development needs to diminish.*
5. MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases. Charbel Zakhour. *When in trouble you use FIRST AID, to prevent trouble FIGHT AIDS!*
6. MDG 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. Nadine Khoury. *Home scary home: Basic rights of a woman should allow her to feel secure within her home, and empower her in order to participate in development.*
7. MDG 8: A Global Partnership for Development. Elie El Khoury. *The long Lego tower symbolizes the development achieved by the partnership of different countries represented by the multiple colors of Lego pieces.*
8. MDG 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education. Lana Ezzeddine. *Many children are denied their basic right to attend even primary school, to have the opportunity to improve their living situations and seek peace and prosperity.*
9. MDG 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability. Sahar Al Khatib. *If the tree of life dies, everything else dies. Fight desertification, environmental degradation, and marine pollution, and strive for a healthier environment.*
10. MDG 4: Reduce Child Mortality. Sandra Fayad. *Rêves d'enfants.*

Volunteerism And The MDGs In The Arab World

Success Stories from the UNV programme

Volunteerism is considered a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and a crucial renewable resource for social and environmental problem-solving throughout the world. General Assembly resolution A/Res/56/38 asked the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme to provide technical cooperation in the field of volunteerism to realize its potential as a resource for attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). UN Volunteers provide technical expertise and promote local capacity building, and are supporting the mandates of 23 United Nations entities and 19 missions, bringing expertise in over 100 professional categories.

Indeed, achieving the Millennium Development Goals will require the ingenuity, solidarity and creativity of millions of ordinary people through voluntary action. The willingness and ability of citizens to give freely of their time out of a sense of solidarity will have a major influence on poverty reduction. Not only can volunteers serve to address a specific challenge or pursue a precise development objective, but just as importantly, volunteerism promotes human development by facilitating individual transformation. Voluntary work additionally represents an increasingly rare opportunity for bringing together people from very different social and cultural backgrounds thus directly fostering understanding, tolerance and recognition of the necessity to respond to the challenges facing human development with both local solutions and global awareness.

UNV has the potential to open the doors for a wider and larger participation as well as local involvement by the communities. The UNV programme is streamlining its programmatic focus to respond more directly to MDG challenges and national development goals of programme countries. Political will and sustained efforts on the part of national governments, supported by the international community, can only complement what will ultimately depend on the active participation of people worldwide. Six billion people have something to contribute to these efforts.

Examples of UNV's contribution to the achievement of the MDGs at the local level



1 The project "Supporting the Empowerment of Local Communities through Community Radio Stations in Jordan" brings the power of the media to the marginalized who become active participants in working towards the achievement of the MDGs in articulating the development priorities for their own communities. Impoverished and traditionally marginalized from the development debate, women, youth, people with disabilities and children are working with reporters, radio and local government to have their concerns and challenges addressed by policy makers.



2 Local volunteer organizations and individual volunteers address low enrolment, support the training of trainers for national education systems, encourage community-based organizations to provide literacy courses and practical skills training for children who do not attend school and help develop innovative curricula adapted to local realities and needs. UN Volunteers contribute to improving primary education within the Distance Teacher Education Programme through teacher training.



3 In Morocco, in an innovative approach to apply gender concepts down to grassroots activities, a dynamic team of 6 national UN Volunteers was fielded as the gender-sensitive eyes and ears across six UNDP pilot projects. "Gender Mainstreaming through Results-based Management (RBM)" makes project reporting gender sensitive with quantitative and qualitative indicators, and translates gender issues into practical, down to earth project activities. Furthermore, the UNV project to combat female genital mutilation (FGM) in Sudan was mainstreamed and replicated by UNICEF and UNFPA. In

Egypt, UNV worked with national partners and other United Nations entities in FGM-Free Villages, where national UN Volunteers raised awareness and advocated against the social pressure on young girls and women.



4 UNV partners with UNDP, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), WHO, Government and national health institutions to enhance service delivery and access to services, reduce child and maternal mortality. In 2009, about 850 UN Volunteers served in the health sector to address child mortality, including through local health committees and village pharmacies run by indigenous people.



5 Thousands of volunteers serve as health workers and birth attendants in communities around the world, helping women prepare for the life-giving tasks relating to motherhood. They expand the outreach of medical care, such as through mobile medical units. They also help set up local health committees to promote village health centres and pharmacies.



6 Fighting disease and bringing hope through their care, volunteers fill vital human resource gaps caused by epidemics such as HIV/AIDS. They mobilize the support of volunteer-involving organizations (VIOs) for health campaigns in areas such as immunization, the use of condoms and contraceptives, and cleaning of disease breeding places. From 2006 to 2008, medical caravans were organized at several stops of Egypt's "Sailing the Nile for the Millennium Development Goals" campaign, including gynaecological and family planning consultations.



7 In Morocco, volunteerism is a critical component of the Community-Based Adaptation (CBA) programme, and stands out as a major tool for adaptation to climate change. CBA projects build on traditional practices of volunteerism, solidarity and collective work to help the communities formulate and implement adaptation solutions to preserve the ecosystem on which they rely and to sustain their livelihood. In the Oasis of IGUIWAZ (south of

Morocco), the entire community unites in order to protect their environment and adapt to the effects of climate change. The message voiced with other communities in Morocco and other parts of the Arab world was captured in a recent community-produced Video, is "TIWIZI - together, we can adapt to climate change and protect our environment".



8 UNV continues to strengthen partnerships with United Nations entities, civil society organizations (CSOs), academic institutions, foundations and the private sector, by engaging in joint programming and advocacy for volunteerism and development, in particular at local and community level to stimulate participatory development. Through its unique joint initiative "Sailing the Nile for the Millennium Development Goals", 18 UN Agencies, government institutions, NGOs, civil society, donors, academia and the private sector put their efforts together to raise awareness about the MDGs in Egypt.

UNV Hotline Operators Fostering A Culture Of Democracy

By: Elite Shehadeh, UN Volunteer, UNDP Journalist/ Writer

“Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, Good morning. How may I help you?!”

This is how Christianne Abou Zeid gently answered the phone when she received a call on the Ministry’s free hotline”1790”. Christianne is one of the 13 UN Volunteers who received daily inquiries about the electoral processes. In the operations room based at the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities in Hamra, Christina, Sami, Joseph, Jules, Oussama, Majida, Bernadette, Cecile, Lina, Raya, Serge and Nora worked nonstop in a friendly environment, six days per week. These UN Volunteers provided fast, efficient and accurate information on the 2010 Municipal Elections, answered routine questions and managed the influx of calls and requests for information on the four Election Days on 2,9,23 and 30 May 2010.

“Voters, candidates, polling officials, journalists and people from across the country and from different backgrounds contacted us to provide them with the needed information about the electoral process” says UN Volunteer Nora Mourad, adding that the team received more than 100 calls on weekdays and around 1000 calls on weekends. Serouj Apikian, a UN Volunteer who also participated in the 2009 parliamentary elections as a Hotline Operator, believes that this service is an important step towards democracy. “People now refer to us, and not to politicians, to get information.”

Sami Shatila, UN Volunteer, shares the same opinion as Serouj. “The idea of establishing a hotline was initiated by H.E Me Ziad Baroud, for a better integration and interaction with civil society and information providers” explains Sami. “The caller appreciates the follow up we do, as UNV Hotline Operators, on his/her complaints and concerns.

In fact, The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been playing a major role in raising citizen’s awareness since 2005 and in empowering the Lebanese citizens to actively participate in the electoral processes.

The United Nations Development Programme’s Strengthening Electoral Processes in Lebanon Project (SEPIL) supported the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities in its efforts to strengthen the electoral process and good governance practices during the 2009 legislative elections and the 2010 Municipal elections. The assistance included technical support to enhance the voter ID production process, voter awareness campaign, training of polling officials, the establishment of an election hotline and a series of training sessions on electoral coverage for journalists. In addition to these activities, the UNDP promoted womens participation in the 2010 local elections and worked on increasing their representation in the parliament.



H.E. Me Ziad Baroud, Minister of Interior and Municipalities, with UN Volunteer Hotline Operators

Glossary

AMEWS	Association for Middle East Women's Studies
AUB	American University of Beirut
CBA	Community-based Adaptation
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross
ILO	International Labour Organization
IVD	International Volunteer Day
IYV	International Year of Volunteers
IYV + 10	Tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers
LRC	Lebanese Red Cross
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SEPIL	Strengthening Electoral Processes in Lebanon (UNDP Project)
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIC	United Nations Information Centre
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNSCOL	Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
VIO	Volunteer Involving Organization
WHO	World Health Organization



Back Cover: "Citizenship" title of 2010 UNDP summer camp attended by more than 80 youngsters from South Lebanon.

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For general information about UNV Field Unit, Lebanon please contact:

United Nations Volunteers
Arab African International Bank Bldg,
Riad El Solh Street,
Nejmeh, Beirut 2011 5211
Lebanon
Telephone: + 961-1-962500 ext: 507 / 523
Fax: + 961-1-962491
Email: unv.lb@undp.org
Internet: www.undp.org.lb/unv

Join us on Facebook: UNV – Lebanon

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Engaging Youth



UNV Lebanon 2010



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