

UNV ALBANIA Newsletter April - June 2004

The joint UNV-UNDP Regional Initiative

RIVER See

Regional Integration through Volunteers Exchange for Reunion of SEE

In September 2003 UNV/UNDP launched "RIVER See Initiative" to enhance cross-border cooperation between civil society organizations, volunteer involving organizations and individual volunteers. The project includes all the countries of the region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro and Kosovo.

By supporting cross-border cooperation, networking and exchange through volunteerism, the UNV Regional Initiative aims at exploiting and channeling the traditional will and desire of Balkan people to help other people in need.

The idea behind this initiative is rather simple: enhancing regional cooperation through the exchange of volunteers for accelerating democratic and economic development as well as peace building in the Balkans.

Exchanges intend to strengthen networks between civil society organizations in order to increase confidence and interaction between individuals, as well as to develop capacity through exchanges and joint activities. Developing the capacities of large number of volunteers through exchanges of knowledge and experiences will aid capacity retention and add the multiplier effect to the initial capacity development and significantly contribute to confidence building in the Balkans region.

Main partners in this initiative are Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO), OneWorld South East Europe (OWSEE), South East Europe Youth Network (SEEYN), Youth Communication Center (YCC), EU/EVS Youth Programme.

The project seeks to develop a sustainable volunteer support structure in the Balkans, especially through the setting up of a relational/multilingual database and by carrying out an in-depth field assessment of Civil Society/Voluntary Involving Organizations and volunteers. Some 1500 Civil Society/Voluntary Involving Organizations and 3000 potential individuals/volunteers are expected to be assessed and entered in above-mentioned database. So far a special effort has been made to identify the Implementing partner organizations (IPOs) in all respective countries/targeted areas in the Balkans region that will act as focal points in their countries/areas. The two IPOs selected for Albania are respectively Albania Red Cross and Albania Youth Council.

The first training of participants from Albania and Bosnia Herzegovina took place during 15-27th September 2003 in the VSO training center in Birmingham (UK). The follow-up training for IPOs from other target countries has been held in Sarajevo during 24-28th May 2004. During the training IPOs were clarified the role they will play and the responsibilities they will hold in the implementation of future volunteer exchanges as selection process, pre and post departure orientation of selected volunteers, monitoring and evaluation and analysis of volunteer exchange process. However, the training was primarily the opportunity to pull together all the IPOs from the different countries in order to coordinate their actions and inspire a group of regional players with clear vision and commitment to the objectives and activities of such an important initiative aiming at gradually restoring in the Balkans the traditional forms of volunteerism to their rightful positions.



IPO Training Sarajevo 24-28 May '04

If you are planning for one year, grow rice. If you are planning for 20 years, grow trees. If you are planning for centuries, grow PEOPLE. - a Chinese proverb -

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April - June 2004

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- UNV's contributing to LGP: Message from Mr. Kalyan Pandey CTA
- UNITES: a service for projects in "ICT and development"
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UNV Albania Retreat 2004 in Ohrid, FYROM

Following up on the yearly tradition of UNV to hold a Retreat, this year UNV Programme in Albania has been held in Ohrid on the 17th and the 18th of May 2004. The opportunity and the imperative of this Retreat has been “*putting people together*” and it is within this framework that many discussions took place on different topics, always keeping in mind our commitment to give our contribution in the achievements of MDGs.

1. Objectives of the Retreat

- To discuss and share ideas on the concept of volunteer motivation and UNV visibility and how the MDGs can contribute to increase visibility of volunteers’ contributions;
- To strengthen the capacity of UNVs through discussions and sharing information particularly to further knowledge and awareness of volunteers’ contributions to the MDGs;
- To put forward new ideas related to regional issues concerning volunteerism, community participation and cooperation and development, including new opportunities to have new feedback on many related issues.



The UNV Albania troop

EXCHANGING EXPERIENCES:

Activities of the UNVs presented in the Retreat

One of the most important activities of the retreat is the presenting of work from the volunteers, especially the ones in the regions, with the retreat being a wonderful opportunity to present achievements, share ideas, experiences, best practices and discuss future plans and projects.

LGP Fier presentation

The project was focused on the Localizing MDGs at Commune and Municipal Level UNDP. The main objectives of the project were to empower People, enriching lives through volunteering action. LGP Fier served, as an example of localizing the MDGs and other features of the development strategies of the UNV and UNDP. The Fier region is achieving its outcome through many different activities such as:

- Regional Development Strategy aligned with MDGs (4 goals and 1 Fier Goal/MDG Compact);
- Series of local strategies on-going (Hekal, Fier, Lushnje, Ballsh focus on MDG7);
- Village Development Plans pinned to MDGs;
- Priority projects implemented;
- Micro-Crediting for Women.

Apart from being involved only through the MDGs the LGP Fier is also supporting the local governance of the region in the following ways:

- Data Collection linked with monitoring RDS;
- Mobile Training Unit institutionalized;
- Recent training to women with income-generating activities;
- Series of local strategies on-going (Hekal, Fier, Lushnje, Ballsh focus on MDG7).

2. Principles of the Retreat

- Create an open atmosphere for everybody to feel free to participate and contribute in discussion through its ideas and creativeness;
- Respect and tolerance for any critical and out-of-the-box comments and suggestions;
- Exchange of ideas and opinions on many issues that are vital to volunteering development and enlargement in the Albanian context.



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The true adventure is not exploring new lands, but gaining new views.....

Activities of the UNVs presented in the Retreat

LGP Kukës presentation

The LGP-Kukës project team was highly concerned on the following objectives:

- Eradication of poverty through community involvement and promotion of community cooperation;
- Gender equality through formation of 8 Women CBO-s (Community Based Organizations);
- Over 20% of savings mobilized by women;
- Out of 26 courses, 29% training days were for women participants;
- Improvement of maternal health through: Reconstruction of 3 Health Care centers and 2 other Health Care Centers which are being built.
- Ensuring environmental sustainability through: 3 Water supply projects, 2 Sewerage system projects, 3 Electrical Transformer projects, 3 Kindergarten/park rehabilitation projects, 2 Green Clubs formed;
- Developing global partnership for development through: Supporting Regional Council to prepare MDG RDS (Regional Development Strategy) 24 courses and 2 orientation programmes conducted for over 500 participants (29% women). Bicaj Commune Development Plan completed.

As a result the LGP-Kukës team defined the people at the regional level as eager to work for their development if opportunities does exist. The fact that social mobilization is very effective could be easily used to mobilize human and financial resources for empowerment and development of the communities in different areas. Through these efforts and social mobilization the gap between Local Governance and community actors will be highly reduced.

LGP Gjirokastra presentation

The presentation of Gjirokastra team was mainly focused on the main volunteering activities in the regions: Municipality - Gjirokastra Commune – Cepo Commune –Dropull i Poshtem. The following activities are formulated as corner stones for the development of volunteering initiatives in the region:

- Preparation of announcements for meetings with the community;
- Defining the most active and respectful people in the quarters;
- The most interested people undertake to mobilize others;
- Organization of successful meetings;
- Open discussion to address the problems; further activities are planned for voluntary actions;
- Participation of a considerable number in the voluntary actions (mostly cleaning of the quarters, planting of trees).

Another activity of the regional program was the organizing of the CBOs.

This was defined according to the following steps:

- Introduction of the social mobilization idea;
- Explanation of the new concept of the CBOs, its importance;
- Ways of CBO functioning (a by-law);
- The rights and responsibilities of each CBO member;
- Compilation of the Community Development Plan, which is presented to communes and municipalities;
- Members of the community are becoming members of CBO on voluntary basis.

At last but not least, are the voluntary activities of the region on the basis of god will and regional cooperation. The following were defined as the main activities in the volunteerism area:

- Finalization of the project “Systematization of the torrent in Sofratike village”;
- Most of the works done by community in cleaning the public areas;
- Date 21/04/2004 Planting of trees and flowers in 18 Shtatori recreation Park;
- Date 25/04/2004 Planting of trees in Sofratika Village;
- Poverty week Planting of trees in Roma school in Gjirokastra municipality;
- Poverty week Reconstruction of the toilets in Humelice elementary school;
- April 2004 Construction of the toilets in health center in Humelice and Palokaster.



Attentive listening during the presentations

Volunteerism is ...teaching and learning

Activities of the UNVs presented in the Retreat

Presentation from Maria Roura, IUNV working with IOM

The basis of the IOM presentation at the retreat was the development of the HIV/AIDS problem in Albania and the possible solutions to the social and economical issues raised by this plague of our century. The presentation was focused on the global trends on HIV/AIDS and the global as well as regional responses to this problem. The main trends in Albanian case were:

- 80% cases contracted abroad of Albania;
- Main pattern of transmission: sexual/ blood transfusion;
- High % of infected men related to women;
- Risk of a *silent* expansion of the epidemic due to lack of culture of consulting and presenting the truth in public.

After putting forward the main reasons of the existence of HIV/AIDS, the IOM representative explained the possible manners to socially smooth the dramatic challenges of the disease such as a National Migration Strategy Task Force on health operative international regulation, policy options, international regulation.

Presentation from Tyler Hague, IUNV working for the MDG Linkages Project

Ms. Hague presented the idea that strong thematic linkages exist between the NSSD (National Strategy for Social Economical Development), MDGs, Sap (Stabilization & Association process). The three frameworks are complementary and mutually re-enforcing, and while the Sap is based on a political framework focusing mainly on institutional strengthening, on the other hand the NSSD and MDGs reflect more mid and long term socio-economic development targets. The objectives of the project are to integrate MDG-NSSD-Sap Albanian development priorities through long term visioning process and support efforts to achieve MDGs in Albania through donor coordination, resource mobilization, and support mechanisms for strengthened capacities at all levels.

Other presentations from UNV's



Ms. Stefania Di Paola and Mr. Enik Pogaçe presented their work in regards to the eSEEu-rop (electronic South Eastern Europe), which is a regional initiative founded by the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and supported by UNDP. The main aim of

eSEEu-rop is to better integrate SEE countries into the global, knowledge-based economy by means of regionally supporting the development of Information Society. UNDP CO Bosnia and Herzegovina is hosting the Stability Pact eSEEu-rop Initiative's Secretariat since February 2001, which is assisting eSEE Working Group to accomplish the goals of the eSEE Agenda for the Development of the Information Society adopted by the ICT ministers of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro in October 2002. *(more on this project can be found in page 1 of this newsletter).*

AMAE presentation

Ms. Melanie Reimer, IUNV working with Albanian Mine Action Executive (AMAE) spoke about the work done from AMAE in regards to the de-mining of mined areas



in the Northeastern part of Albania. The mines problem is a very debated issue due to the issue of the people that have lost their lives or their limbs and the constant danger in the regions that are considered threatened by this phenomenon. The basic steps in assisting the de-mining process in Albania are based on the following:

- Manual Clearance through different ground procedures;
- Mechanical Clearance through machines;
- Explosive Detecting Dogs.

The goal of the project is to build an Albanian Survivor Assistance Capacity by 2005.

MDGs Regional Report Project

Ms. Katia Saro (UNDP/MDG Intern) carried out the presentation on the project, as requested with high interest from all the UNVs. Reporting on and monitoring the progress of MDGs is an important process that helps to renew political commitment on the principal development goals, focus national development debates on specific priorities, and promote the inclusion of MDGs within the national and sector development strategies. The project has been developed until now on the following track:

- Adoption by Albanian Parliament of an MDG Resolution;
- An MDG Advocacy tour to all 12 regions of Albania;
- The completion of MDG Regional Reports and Regional Development Strategies aligned with MDGs in a number of regions with locally defined MDG targets in line with Sap and PRSP;
- Integration of MDGs into main development agendas (MDG-PRSP-EU Sap linkages);
- Costing-financing of MDGs in all the regions.

Volunteerism is ...to enrich yourself and empower others

UNV Albania Retreat 2004: an opportunity to strengthen partnerships

UNV's effective work in Albania is made possible through close technical and financial cooperation with many partners. This year's UNV retreat was considered as an important opportunity to strengthen such partnerships.

The attendance to the retreat of representatives belonging to two of the main UNV partners (Mrs. Denada Sejdiaj, Specialist in the Directorate of Coordination of Youth Policies, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport / Mr. Endrit Ducka, Coordinator of Tirana Municipality for Citizens Commission, voluntary groups of different topics) shows the strong contacts that UNV maintain with its partners.

Youth policies and volunteerism in the framework of the Albanian Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport

The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports in Albania and specifically the Youth Directorate of Coordination Policies is the responsible structure for the coordination of government policy in youth sector. They have specified some of their objectives as follows:

- Including youth people at all levels of the decision-making process;
- Encouraging young people to design and implement their own social, educational and creative projects;
- Increasing the co-operation between young people and governmental structures responsible of youth, through personal contact, organizational links and joint projects.

In close cooperation with the donors and non governmental organizations, the Youth Directorate has presented the National Youth Strategy which can facilitate the coordination with all the structures. This strategy will for sure increase towards youth from actors covering social, cultural and economic development. This was the initial step, which will subsequently lead to the National Action Plan of 2004. The Plan represents the combination of concrete actions the Directorate will undertake during 2004. Furthermore other initiatives promoting youth policies have been: the creation of an Albanian Youth Parliament in 12 regions, construction of youth friendly services in cooperation with UNICEF, assignment of youth specialist within the municipalities for better coordination in the field of youth policies.



Mrs. Denada Sejdiaj, Specialist in the Directorate of Coordination of Youth Policies

The experience of the municipality of Tirana on volunteerism issues

The Municipality of Tirana is particularly active in supporting voluntary actions as a mean for fostering an ethic of voluntary participation in community problem-solving.

Through the creation of seven municipal commissions the Municipality seeks to provide opportunities for maximizing citizens' awareness and participation in problem analysis, policy formulation and program development in the municipal government of Tirana.



Mr. Endri Ducka,
Coordinator of Tirana
Municipality for Citizens
Commission

The seven Commissions aiming at engaging the citizens in the decision-making processes of local government are:

- Commission on Youth
- Commission on Social Welfare
- Commission on Elderly People
- Commission on Economic Development
- Friends of Albania
- Education
- Environment

The seven Commissions are composed by representatives of different strata of the population working on a voluntary basis. Such Commissions do not only function as advisory bodies to the Mayor and the City Council because they have the opportunity, capability and authority to generate, evaluate and disseminate invaluable information on existing and proposed public policies and programs. For the first time the 'doors of government' were opened to direct involvement of citizens to reach a better fostering the development of democratic institutions, systems and processes, promoting the concept of 'social contract', achieving a higher level of transparency and accountability in the municipal government of the city, favoring a better communication between local government and citizens.

The value of this project is augmented and amplified by the fact that there is a beneficiary other than the volunteer getting involved in the decision-making process: the entire community.

Comparative Study of Volunteer Legal Frameworks

Volunteerism is a very well known phenomenon for anyone, but still far away from efforts to characterize it as an interesting and complex phenomenon for the society. A very strong and potential power, which is ready to become active and give its human help, which characterizes it, with its instruments, methods and its special means.

Volunteerism has a potential ancient past, an operational and problematic present and a very promising future prospective. An eternal campaigner of communities through their existence, though little engaged in state's serious commitments, have eagerly to develop it in order to help him grow successfully, although a lot of them have thought of using and abusing it as a phenomena.

The legal position of volunteers in different countries

GREECE - There is no legal definition for volunteerism and volunteers in Greece. According to the Hellenic Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations, volunteering is defined as "willing commitment of a person to work for a specific or unlimited period of time, for the greater good of society without pay". There is no specific legal framework for volunteers and volunteer organizations in Greece. Consequently volunteers do not benefit from any particular legal protection. In the absence of any specific law, the general regulations governing employment, residency, social and health benefits and mobility apply. Any legal conflicts that arise in relation to volunteers or their organizations are generally dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

ITALY - Two different volunteer concepts can be found in Italy. The first are 'development volunteers', those who participate in development programmes for international cooperation, the second are 'part-time volunteers' where the activity is carried out personally, spontaneously and regularly with a non-profit purpose. These kinds of volunteers usually act at a local level and are students, workers or retired people.

SWEDEN - Volunteers in Sweden are called 'frivilliga or volontärer'. Volunteering is understood as time and effort that is freely given, not forced and not remunerated, to non-governmental and public organizations by individuals. Swedish volunteers are engaged in volunteer activities in the framework of local associations, which often belong to a network. The motives may be to help others or to get involved in the goals and activities of an organization they

are connected to. The activities linked to volunteerism are generally in the fields of education, culture or sports. Social work has not traditionally been the domain of volunteers as the public authorities mainly deliver social protection.

The exception is mens violence against women and support to homeless people which are often dealt with by NGOs.



Position of Volunteerism in Actual Albanian Legislation

Although the legislation deals with an endless phenomenal, it ranks and classifies them according to their importance (important, very important, standard), timing (urgent, on a waiting list) and field of the law (property, defense, public order etc.) Volunteerism does not have yet the privilege to be ranked as "a priority" and immediately we might get the idea that investigating its position in the legislation would bring out some modest and insubstantial results. Anyhow, let's better start our investigation and then conclude on its place in the new legislation.

It is understandable that the research of specifying how the new democratic legislation had been dealing with volunteerism, and how it was legally regulated, will start with the Constitution of Republic as the Fundamental Law. The Constitution of 1998 is very contemporary and has been complied according to the best latest standards. It has adopted formulations and judicial definitions that are considered scientifically very correct. In its entirety and especially in all its chapters the Constitution is characterized via an effort to be new. While investigating, we should stress out that in a very special way the Constitution talks about the social, political and economic organization of the society; the functioning of the democratic state; it talks about the human rights and freedoms, which make the cornerstone for the rights and freedoms of humans and individuals of different groups of society. Meanwhile, you can find there the acting mechanism that guarantees the practical implementation of these rights.

The Albanian Constitution does not mention words such as volunteerism and does not treat it as a phenomena or occurrence of the society individualized and on its own.

Volunteerism is ...giving and sharing your best part

Comparative Study of Volunteer Legal Frameworks...continued

But there many positive facts in our legislation that promote volunteerism:

- The Constitution understands and characterizes volunteerism as one of most fundamental human rights.
- The legal regulations that take place in our Constitution open the way for a legal base for volunteerism and for a wider development in the life of individuals and social groups.
- It has opened the way for legal regulations for volunteerism and specific laws, as for any other human and individual right and freedom.

With the attitude that the Constitution has taken toward treaties, agreements and international convents, ratified by our Parliament, declaring them as part of our national legislation, Constitution has directly helped in legal regulations

for volunteerism as well as its practical implementation in our country according to the standards of international law.

The name of volunteer is mainly concerned with non-governmental organizations and facilities concerned with these organizations itself shows clearly that the purpose of them is the non-profit activity, but the volunteer activity is the cornerstone, which justifies its existence and achieving of the purposes.

Article 2 of law nr. 8788, date 7/5/2002/ "For Non Profit Organizations" says that: "Activity in the good and interest of the public" means any activity that supports and develops spiritual and other humanitarian values for the individual and society, protects human life or health, secures and realizes public and social services, help and support in case of disasters, protects the environment and develops culture and education about it, supports and develops cultural and historical values and traditions, science, education, physical and spiritual education, helps in development of good habits and democratic values, as well as any other aspect in the good interest of the public".

Promoting staff cohesion through sport

The UNV Unit brings together UNVs and other UN organizations staff for several sport activities

The UNV Unit in the UNDP Albania Country Office has been very active in promoting the cohesion of staff from different agencies and projects of the UN system in Albania. With the aim of creating better relationships between staff members, easing off some of the stress accumulated during work and improving interaction between national and international staff, as well as staff from different departments, several sportive events have been organized. The most interesting, as showed from the significant participation of staff members, was the football match between UNDP CO and UNDP projects, later followed by basketball matches, which were especially characterized by the strong performance of the female staff members. More activities, including sports like volleyball and other, will follow in the future.



Volunteerism is ...ageless

The Albanian Mine Action Program and Volunteers **Volunteers working for a Mine-free Albania**

Long after conflicts have ended, landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) continue to maim and kill people in at least 60 countries worldwide. This is the case of Northeast Albania where the mines and UXO threat emanated from the Kosovo conflict of 1999 continue to contaminate 120 km border between Albania and Kosovo. The Kukës prefecture of NE Albania is the poorest in the country and the dire poverty here is further exacerbated by the mines and UXO that directly affect 39 villages. Nearly 120,000 people, mostly living in abject poverty, whose livelihood depends on farming, grazing, gathering firewood and other subsistence activities, are profoundly affected by the presence of mines and UXO.

To address this problem, in 1999 the Albanian government established the framework for the Albanian Mine Action Programme (AMAP) whose policy and strategy is developed by the Albanian Mine Action Committee (AMAC) and executed by the Albanian Mine Action Executive (AMAE).

Not only does Mine Action involve clearing the landmines, but it is also about people and their interaction with mine-affected environments. Its aim is humanitarian and developmental: to recreate an environment in which people can live safely; in which economic and social well-being can occur free from the constraints imposed by landmines; and in which the needs of mine/UXO victims are addressed. More specifically, Mine Action is articulated in the following activities: clearance projects and removing landmines from the ground, survivor assistance, mine risk education, stockpile destruction and advocacy against landmines. Within this wide range of actions, Survivor Assistance is of central importance for the lives of an estimated 220 mine/UXO survivors living in the North-East of Albania.

Melanie Reimer, a Canadian IUNV, has been working on Survivor Assistance at the AMAE since April 2004. Her main task is developing a sustainable survivor assistance capacity that includes: emergency assistance, providing psychosocial assistance and physiotherapy to mine victims, socio-economic reintegration and advocacy for people with disabilities. Before joining AMAE, Melanie worked in the same field of coordinating assistance for landmine/UXO victims in the north of Sri Lanka. Thus, she is able to share her expertise and experience in this field with a profound knowledge of the assistance needed by people injured by landmines.

During the last year, Melanie has met with many mine/UXO victims including Dorian and Eltion Dajci. In November 2001, Dorian and Eltion, two brothers, were seriously injured while playing with a grenade they had found near their house in Burrel. After intensive surgical operations and medical treatments the two boys have stopped attending school due to their sight impairments and disablement. Reintegration within society is one of the most difficult challenges for mine/UXO victims in Albania: even little difficulties appear to be insurmountable. Dorian and Eltion, for instance, do not leave the house often as their family lives on the fourth floor of an apartment building and Eltion has difficulty in using the stairs as his right leg is amputated above the knee. This is why, as Melanie underlines, it is crucial to assist mine victims and their families in all the phases following the injury.

In the area of mine victim treatment and rehabilitation, progress has been slow but ongoing. The Tirana Orthopedic Centre provides free full support to amputees in providing them with polypropylene prostheses. Up to date 14 Prosthesis technicians have been trained and 82 victims were treated abroad at the Slovenian Rehabilitation Institute for upper limb prostheses and difficult cases. However, further and substantive steps need to be taken, particularly in regards to improving physiotherapy services.

In this framework, volunteerism represents an almost unique resource in the national Mine Action strategy. VMA (Victims of mines and weapons association) and Care International established 39 anti-mine Committees composed by volunteers who dedicate their time to disseminate regular information on mine risk education, gather information on accidents and mined areas, support communities with information on mine fields, and monitor and protect mine signs.

The main aim for the forthcoming years is to develop and implement a sustainable Mine Action Programme in order to eliminate the effect of mines and unexploded ordnance in North-east Albania by the end of 2006. The principal steps to be taken in this direction are twofold: 1) The creation of a national capacity in Demining through the establishment of an apposite NGO or governmental body, and 2) The approval of a law that binds the government to fully support mine action through the institutionalization and financing by the government of AMAC. Mine Action is about recreating an environment where people can live safely and resume their normal and productive lives. It is an important challenge which can and should not be underestimated.



“UN-volunteers are working in IOM Missions around the world and IOM Tirana has had a very positive experience working with UN Volunteers” explains Mr. Maurizio Busatti, IOM Chief of Mission in Albania. Since 2003 several UN Volunteers have been working with us at IOM Tirana. Each volunteer has brought the Mission his/her own blend of dynamism and enthusiasm. UN Volunteers are vital to IOM because of their wide experience, sense of team spirit and commitment. In general UN Volunteers can be characterized as hard working and skilled, with a strong sense of idealism matched by practical thinking and application.

What is the experience of UN Volunteers with IOM Tirana?

Miwa Takahashi from Japan worked in 2003 for IOM Tirana as UNV Legal Officer. She worked on a range of legal issues, including the gap analysis of the legal framework of immigration, as compared to EU *acquis* and other international standards. This analysis serves as a benchmark for reform in immigration legislation in Albania, and is an important source of inspiration for the development of the National Strategy on Migration. Miwa states: *“The UNV programme has given me a great opportunity to work for an international organization which respects the human dignity and well-being of migrants. Although each volunteer has different reasons to work as a volunteer, his/her work always enriches him/herself and his/her society”*. Currently, Miwa works for IOM Head Quarters in Geneva as Legal Assistant at the Legal Department. *“My understanding of volunteerism continued evolving even after my UNV ended, as the experience remains with me as an important aspect of myself”*.

Maria Roura from Spain joined IOM in 2004 as HIV-AIDS expert. She brought HIV/ AIDS issues to the forefront and is currently supporting the drafting of the National Strategy on Migration concerning health issues. With her expertise as UN Volunteer in providing technical advice to the National HIV-AIDS Strategy process in Albania, she is of great value to IOM. Maria says: *“In many countries of the region, volunteerism is perceived as a heritage of the past and has negative connotations. I hope that the presence of UNVs in Albania contributes to raise awareness about the importance of the social values attached to volunteerism”*.



MAURIZIO BUSATTI
Chief of Mission, IOM Tirana

UN Volunteers work closely together with national and international IOM-staff members. With their rich and diverse experience in different parts of the world, they are able to link the work within IOM Tirana with processes outside the organization, enabling their colleagues to look across the borders of their own organization. Besides, the promotion of volunteerism and sustainable development are inspiring for the work environment.

IOM Tirana enables UN-volunteers to build up experience in an international organization, working on cutting edge projects. As international organization working in the field, IOM offers many possibilities to implement, learn and develop.

Volunteerism is ...an unlimited process with its background being the overall welfare of people



Becoming an International UNV: Success stories from the Albanian perspective

*8 questions to know
more about
Albanian IUNVs
worldwide...*



Migena Tane
IUNV, Afghanistan



Shkelqim Sina
IUNV, Liberia



Ejona Lika
IUNV, Kosovo



Ermir Mucka
IUNV, Liberia

1. Why did you decide to become an IUNV?

M.T: Having worked for more than 7 years in humanitarian field and, specifically, more than 3 years with UNHCR BO Tirana in the Programme Unit, I saw the human values and the team spirit getting to a greater standard than ever before. That's what helped me to take the decision and apply to become IUNV.

S.S: I had worked for around three years with UNDP-projects in Albania and I thought it would be interesting to get out of the country and give my contribution in other countries where UN is involved. As Albania uses to receive help and assistance from different international organizations and foreign countries we should move ahead and deliver our expertise to other countries mostly trying to resolve some of their problems.

E.L: The private company I worked for in 2002, after completing my studies in Turkey and returning to Albania, was one of the most successful ones. But it was my taste for new adventures that convinced me to accept a greater opportunity and embrace the chance to work as a UNV in Kosovo. I felt ready for a new challenge and I believe that the IUNV experience is a significant stepping-stone for my future carrier.

E.M: My background, my feelings, my culture have always oriented me to find ways to assist people who need more help than me. It's more than enough just to mention the name of Mother Teresa (you know her origin is from Albania) the best example in the world that demonstrates the power of love, of giving and sharing. I always remember her words: "I don't do great things. I do little things with great passion."

2. How did you become an IUNV? How was the recruitment process?

M.T: I applied online and got included in the roster. UNHCR

officials facilitated the recruitment process.

S.S: I applied on the roster and I had to wait for a long time before being asked if I was interested to be assigned to Liberia. I then received a great support by UNV office in Albania and I was able to leave for Liberia in two weeks time.

E.L: After learning that there was a vacancy as Media Adviser in the Ministry of Education, Science & Technology in Pristine, I submitted my CV to the UNV Office in Pristine. In a couple of weeks I was invited for a personal interview to the Ministry of Education, Science & Technology. After passing the first round, I was contacted and informed that I had to undergo a written test of my English skills and translation abilities. It was not easy, but I am happy to admit that it was worth it!

E.M: I wanted to join UNHCR again after 3 years. My links in HCR HQ in Geneva assisted me to get other links with UNV HQ in Bonn. After applying to the UNV roster, I was interviewed by phone from UNV HQ since I was in Canada at that time. I was then offered a position as UNV in HCR Liberia.

3. What is your current assignment about?

M.T: I'm working as UNV Programme Officer UNHCR in Gardez, South-Eastern Region of Afghanistan.

S.S: My current assignment is COE/MOU (Contingent Own Equipment) Inspector in Liberia. In other words I am checking equipment that different troop contributors bring to mission area and for which action UN reimburses them.

E.L: I am working as Media Adviser in the Information Office of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Pristine.

E.M: I am working since October 2003 as GIS (Geographical Information Systems) Officer in UNHCR Liberia. I produce

Volunteerism is ...a part of yourself, a part of ourselves

Becoming an International UNV: Success stories from the Albanian perspective...continued

maps and develop databases.

4. What were your previous experiences/background before becoming a IUNV?

M.T: I have worked in Logistics and Programming humanitarian field with NGOs and UN organizations.

S.S: I worked for twelve years for military as an Ammunition Technician officer and Logistic Officer in different units and assignments. During the last three years I have been working as a National Officer for different UNDP Projects in Albania in support to Albanian Police dealing with weapons collection programs.

E.L: I graduated from the Department of Public Relations and Publicity in the Faculty of Communication at Ankara University in Turkey in 2001. Then, after part-time working experiences with NGOs, I have worked for a private construction enterprise. Honors received at national level in Turkey were in the fields of Public Relations and Advertising.

E.M: My background is in IT (Information Technology) area. I worked for the Savings Bank of Albania as IT specialist for one year. I joined UNHCR as Database developer and GIS assistant in 1999-2000. Then I immigrated to Canada, where I got certified with distinction as Oracle Database Developer and Web Master from the University of Toronto.

5. How does it feel to become an IUNV?

M.T: Becoming an IUNV is a completely different experience from the one that any of us could have in our own country, surrounded by our families and environment. It feels as part of a well-structured body that moves and acts to meet the world's most vulnerable population needs.

S.S: It has been one of my dreams in life, which I am very happy to have accomplished and thanks to help and support I have received from UNV Personnel Recruitment Office and UNV Office in Albania. I feel proud of being able to exercise my expertise and experience abroad in support to an African country such as Liberia, which has been under unrest and civilian war during last fourteen years.

E.L: The UNV experience in Kosovo has helped broaden my civil service perceptions and abilities. While working in the Ministry of Education I have come to understand how important the building of transparent and professional civil services is for

the proper functioning of a democratic society. I have also learned how to approach and work with minorities and look beyond race, religion, and gender issues, to provide appropriate solutions, not only to certain groups, but to all involved, by increasing cooperation on issues of mutual concern, by building confidence without being discriminatory, and by trying to establish civil society structures.

E.M: It's a privilege to be a UNV. I think many Albanians have the capabilities to join the UNV system. However, when Albanians hear about volunteering, it reminds them the communist regime. Albanians are great people. I can say hospitality, friendship, volunteerism as well as a lot of other virtues are the virtues of Albanians. I would encourage all Albanians to look for a challenge in their communities, as well as in other countries and step forward to give a hand. Just remind Mother Teresa example.

6. What experiences are you looking for in this assignment? What do you feel you'll get from this experience?

M.T: In the beginning of this assignment I was looking forward to work again on Programme field, although the hardship/security of the place does not allow the normal implementation of activities. I believe that this experience will increase my personal capacity on cultural understanding/background, my professional background on Programme field and boost my team spirit.

S.S: I hope this is going to be a very good experience as the COE/MOU has been introduced in UN system only after 1996 and is growing up quickly. Also, it is very much something which I, as a former military officer, used to do while working for the military.

E.L: There are times when it is not easy, but the experience I have gained here, away from the comfort and support of my family, has helped shape the person that I am today: able and willing to face any challenge, strong-willed, and highly motivated. It is the challenges I am faced with in Kosovo that inspire me to bring my best and to thrive while achieving goals.

E.M: Coming to Africa for the first time, was really a great experience. The country is beautiful and people here are very friendly. I am learning a lot from this experience. It's really a great experience to be part of a great team that is implementing a great operation for the benefits of an entire society. I have designed two Liberian Returnee camps. Those camps are the communities for returnees. My work definitely affects directly their lives. A proper design can solve a lot of community challenges. Where the shelters, water wells, latrines, and a lot of other com-

Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve - Martin Luther King, Jr.

munity structures must be built? Those structures will serve as a protection of their lives.

7. What is the thing you liked the most so far?

M.T: I really enjoyed the team spirit, hospitality of local population and landscape.

S.S: Working and meeting with different peoples from around the world. When we conduct inspection we do meet troops of different nations that show their culture, way of shaking hands, serving food, leavings and so on. I really feel proud of being a part of a big team trying to help a population who has been suffering for long time and is still missing a lot of basic means and resources.

E.L: The way people approached me, their kindness especially. I learned that it is very important to have a comprehensive look and an in-depth examination of the problems people are faced with. Only in this way, can one be more responsive, efficient and accountable to them.

E.M: I like the invaluable experience I am gaining here. Every day is a different experience. I liked working close with so many wonderful people from so many countries, trying all together to succeed in the humanitarian mission to assist as much as possible and in the most effective way so many people in Liberia, to

make a big change, a difference in their lives.

8. Why is volunteering important to you?

M.T: First and foremost volunteering is important to me as it increases a lot of understanding in terms of culture, operations and so on, which most probably one would not find in his/her own environment. Secondly, the experience in the field increases the professional capacity in a different way than as a local staff. Last but not least, volunteering in the ground broadens the views taken from all forms of media.

S.S: I think it is important as you see by yourself how reality is on the ground and not as the others report it to you. I work with people shoulder to shoulder facing difficulties but, at the end of the day, I feel satisfied for what I have done and people I have helped. Therefore, I like working with others instead of having others working for me, I like helping people myself instead of receiving reports, I like working in the ground instead of working in the office.

E.L: I enjoy the sense of productivity and helpfulness I gain from this work. At the same time I am doing something I enjoy, while it gives me personal fulfillment to be able to contribute to shape Kosovo's future and have a positive impact on society and its quality of life. Being a volunteer means being a vital and productive member of the community.

Do you want to become an International UN Volunteer?

The first step is applying to get accepted in the IUNV-roster; find below instructions how to do it online or by regular mail.

1. Apply online

- go to UNV homepage: www.unvolunteers.org
- click on "Volunteers" on the left side menu
- click on "options" in the first paragraph entitled "Your options"
- choose the second option under the heading "Get involved", i.e. "I want to volunteer abroad"
- choose the first option under the heading "Volunteering abroad with UNV", i.e. "Professionals who want to share their expertise with counterparts in developing countries."
- click on "questionnaire" in the last paragraph of the page

2. Apply with your CV (curriculum vitae) or resume:

- send your CV by email to: enquiry@unvolunteers.org
- or**
- send your CV (hardcopy) by fax or mail to: UNV, Cyprus Offshore Centre, PO Box 25711, 1311 Nicosia, Cyprus, Fax: +357 22 8783-61

Volunteerism is ...a perfect display of our human side



Statistics UNV Global

Number of assignments: 5,832
Number of individual UN Volunteers: 5,635

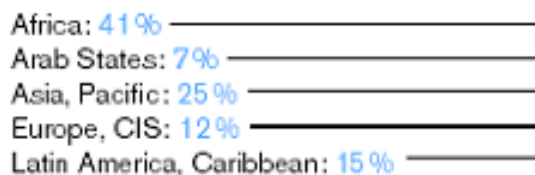
Countries of assignment: **144**
Countries of origin: **162**
From developing countries: **72%**
From industrial countries: **28%**
Male: **63%** Female: **37%**



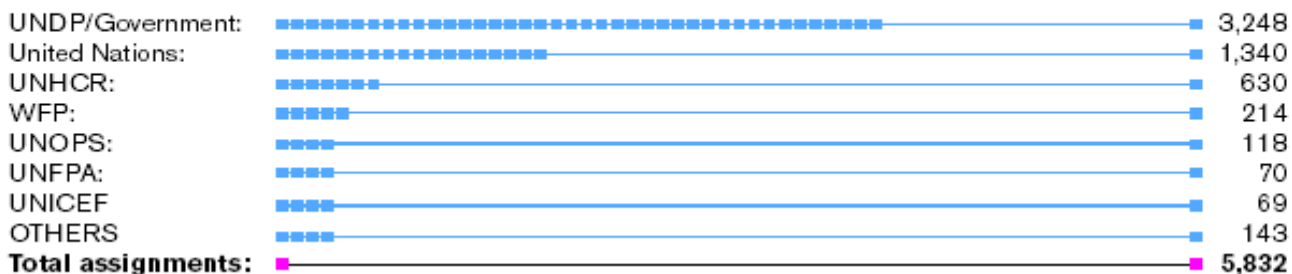
In addition to the 5,635 UN Volunteers mentioned above, thousands of Online Volunteers (making their skills available through the Internet), university graduates, private sector employees or retirees

engage in the diverse opportunities opened by UNV to volunteer for development.

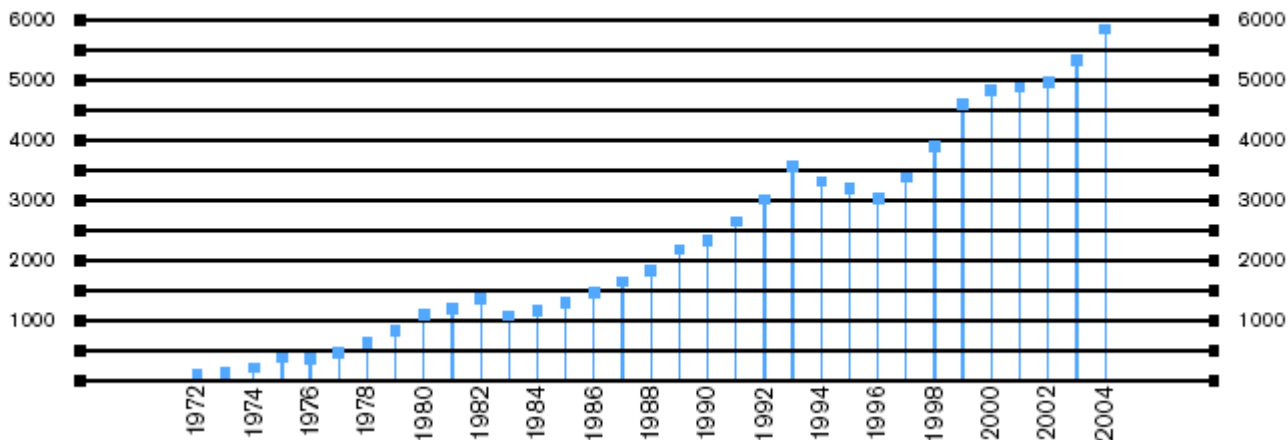
Assignments by region



Number of UNV assignments with main partners



Growth of the UNV Programme, 1972-2004



I believe that democracy can survive if volunteering does - Harriet Naylor



Exploring an invisible but powerful resource: measuring volunteering

The word “volunteering” can mean different things to different people: from giving blood to mentoring others are all regarded as volunteering in one culture or another. However, although volunteering takes different forms and meanings in different settings, it is possible to identify some core characteristics of what constitutes a voluntary activity: it is not undertaken primarily for financial gain, it is undertaken of one’s free will and it brings benefits to a third party as well as to the people who volunteer.

Within this broad conceptual framework it is possible to identify at least four different types of volunteer activity: mutual aid or self-help; philanthropy or service to others; participation or civic engagement; advocacy or campaigning. Each of these types occurs in all parts of the world. However, the kind of volunteering people engage in is to some extent conditioned by their social, cultural, political and economic environment and differs markedly from country to country.

Given the diversity of volunteering it is not possible to put forward universal models for its development. However, measuring the contribution volunteers make to development is of crucial importance.

Why is it important to measure volunteering? Because volunteering achieves two important results: it helps to create a sta-

ble and cohesive society and it adds value to the services that governments provide. Measuring the true value of volunteering is rather difficult because both quantitative and qualitative aspects (such as the impetus it gives to the stability and cohesion of society) need to be taken into account.

That is what emerges from the book ‘*Measuring volunteering: a practical toolkit*’. This is a practical guide on the study of volunteer behavior and is full of useful background and knowledge that will empower countries, particularly developing countries, to produce their own empirical data to underpin policy measures related to volunteering. Limited information on how to undertake research on volunteering has prevented for a long time to begin studies on this topic. That is why researchers and practitioners from ten countries pooled their expertise to produce this practical toolkit on measuring volunteering.

The aim of the guide is twofold: to encourage users to design a survey that will be valid for measuring voluntary activity across an entire country and to teach how to present the results in a form that could be useful to policymakers, practitioners and researchers in that country. The book is therefore an extremely valuable tool that seeks to explain how to promote volunteering and raise awareness by carrying out a comprehensive survey of its extent and nature.

Suggested Reading on Volunteerism

Brooks, Kate, “*Talking about Volunteering: A Discourse Analysis Approach to Volunteer Motivations*” *Voluntary Action*, 4(3) 2002.

Chirzin, M. Habib, ed.
“*Volunteerism and Global Ethics*” *Islamic Millennium Journal*, volume 2, 2002.

Lynch, Richard, “*Volunteer Retention and Feelings of Connection*” *e-Volunteerism*, July/Sept 2002.

Dekker, Paul, “*On the Prospects of Volunteering in Civil Society*” *Voluntary Action*, 4(3) 2002.

Graff, Linda, “*Making the Case for Risk Management in Volunteer Programs*” *Journal of Volunteer Administration*, Vol 20, no 2, 2002.

Govekar, Paul and Michele Govekar,
“*Using Economic Theory and Research to Better Understand Volunteer Behavior*” *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, Fall 2002.

Macon Debbie, “*Political Volunteering: Lifeblood of a Health Democracy*” *e-Volunteerism*, April/June 2002.

May Laurie, “*Tapping Global Resources: A Guide to Involving and Managing Online Volunteers*” *Journal of Volunteer Administration*, Vol 20, no 2, 2002.

McCurley Steve and Susan Ellis,
“*Mandated Service - The Future of Volunteering*” *e-Volunteerism*, July/Sept 2002.

Wardellz, F., J. Lishman and L.J. Whalley,
“*Who Volunteers?*”, *British Journal of Social Work*, 30, 2002.

Volunteerism is the voice of the people put into action. These actions shape and mold the present into a future of which we can all be proud. - Helen Dyer



Regional Albanian Cinema Screening for Promotion of MDG's

“Film as dream, film as music. No art passes our conscience in the way film does, and goes directly to our feelings, deep down into the dark rooms of our souls” - Ingmar Bergman

This past decade, Albania has experienced rapid political, economic, and social transformations, which have increased the expectations and challenges faced by the population. Though the early gains, which were brought about by radical reforms during the period 1991-1997, were promising, they were mitigated by the near anarchy that followed the 1997 crisis. The country's socialist background, which emphasized forced cooperation, has made it difficult to mobilize communities to work together in addressing to address their development issues throughout this emerging democratic era.

UNDP Local Governance Program experience has shown that innovative approaches appealing to all ages and genders can succeed. One such way of mobilizing communities as an initial step to more concrete action is through film and culture. Albania has a rich tradition of cinematography, which has emerged numerous times at both national and international levels. Although regular production of feature films did not begin in Albania until 1957, the country has produced over 200 films throughout its cinematographic history. Even by the end of the 1980's, Albania had over 450 movie theatres. The efforts dedicated to the art of Albanian cinematography throughout the years have generated critical acclaims in several festivals. Films such as *Slogans* and *Tirana Year Zero* have received prestigious prizes and awards. This shows that the Albanian strong cultural identity is widely applauded, and should be encouraged even further, starting from the Albanian regions.

Therefore, considering that Albania is a country with a strong cinema tradition and that most remote rural areas of the country still do not have access to cinema facilities, UNDP, UNV and UNFPA, in collaboration with local authorities, the Albanian National Film Centre and the Academy of Fine arts, are keen to launch the 'Regional Albanian Cinema Screening for Promotion of MDGs'. The idea behind this project is rather simple: to link the promotion of the Albanian film industry and culture with a greater awareness in the regions about UNDP-LGP efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Cinema has appeared to be the most original, communicative and effective instrument to strengthen community spirit and involvement, as it is capable of spreading an extraordinary cultural, passionate and emotional experience. The power and the simplicity of this communicative instrument can attract the attention of all categories of people without any distinction of age, sex, language (including illiterate people), or simply people that have never been given the chance to take advantage of either cinema images or informative papers.

Traveling across Albanian provinces and districts to bring local – and in the future international – movies to the most remote rural areas of the country will be the means through which UNDP, UNFPA and UNV will raise awareness and information among the population as regards the Millennium Development Goals. The total coverage of the territory will make possible to bring cinema to areas that were not reached and that never had the opportunity to see cinematographic screenings. This initiative will try to involve sectors of the population belonging to different ages that had very limited exchanges with different cultures and with the main cities of the country.

In Albania the regional cinema screening will be promoted in the three regions where the UNDP Local Governance Program is implemented: Fier, Kukes and Gjirokaster. A pilot project will take place in Fier region in mid July: two vehicles will bring all the necessary equipments for the cinematographic projection (the giant screen, the electrical generator, audio-video equipments) to the villages of Fier, Ballsh and Cakran. The event will commemorate a specific and relevant UN International Day: the *World Population Day* (July 11th). This year's theme is devoted to the 10th anniversary of the groundbreaking International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) committing themselves to undertake significant steps to save millions of women's lives and empower societies to achieve a better future.

A twenty minutes documentary on MDGs, family planning, HIV/AIDS prevention will be shown before the projection of an Albanian movie. The idea is to invite participants to watch the movie in a friendly and sociable atmosphere and, at the same time, to learn something more about the promoted actions for achieving the MDGs. Furthermore, this cultural event seeks to foster active partnerships through structures established in the MDG showcasing and partnership facility projects.

If the project proves successful, the touring cinema initiative will be proposed again in September in Kukes and Gjirokaster regions. Once more, it will be an invaluable chance to pull people together, regardless of gender, class or age in the name of solidarity and, of course, a good movie.

The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others. - DeAnn Hollis



UNV & Corporate/Private Sector (CPS) Missions

General Description

Under the UNV-managed Corporate/Private Sector programme (CPS), senior business leaders and retired executives provide managerial and technical advice to companies and industries in developing countries and emerging economies. They make a real impact in private sector development in a matter of weeks. Missions last from 1 week to a maximum period of 3 months.

UN Volunteers serving on CPS missions are highly qualified in their field of expertise with solid professional experience. They bring a wide range of business and management skills in the areas of strategic planning, engineering, industrial design, product development, manufacturing, marketing, quality control and financial management as well as technical expertise for a variety of industries. They are motivated by a desire to help.

CPS services benefit small- and medium-scale companies, trade and industry groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as government policy makers and other stakeholders who influence the development of private and public enterprise.

Costs

CPS Volunteers provide their services free of charge. Clients cover airfares and living expenses. In some cases, costs are partially or fully covered by a government agency, a private company or a United Nations project.

Requesting a CPS Volunteer

Governments, industry and trade groups, NGOs, and entrepreneurs who are seeking CPS services are invited to contact the UNV Albania office (see address below) or the UNV HQ in Bonn.

CPS missions in Albania

Albania has been an important recipient of Corporate Private Sector (CPS) advisory missions. Since the very beginning of such missions being implemented in Albania (previously known as United Nations International Short-Term Advisory Resources UNISTAR) in 1994, there have been some 110 missions, targeting and helping various companies and entrepreneurial activities with much satisfying results.

Albania has recently been the country with the largest number of CPS missions carried out; only in the last three years some 60 missions have been deployed, especially in the agro industry and tourism sectors, for developing business plans, management and feasibility studies.

A desk review carried out by our Italian Focal point in June 2002 confirmed that advisory missions have been appreciated by clients, who remained extremely satisfied from the quality

and effectiveness of the knowledge and expertise that was brought to them through the CPS volunteers.

UNV HQ mission in January 2003 discussed and developed a strategy for more effectively aligning CPS advisory services with the overall UNDP and UNV programmes in Albania.

The deliberations of the UNV HQ Mission evoked crucial issues concerning wider awareness for CPS missions in the country and suggestions for taking it to the state levels, emphasizing a need for better and improved business community relations, promotion of aggressive corporate volunteering, learning of the current business community relations scenario in the country, experiences of the companies in taking up social initiatives, and emerging thoughts on strengthening the relationships and forging new fruitful partnerships.

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