

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT
TO THE KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
THROUGH VOLUNTEERING



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How to Apply

GUIDE

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

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Dear candidate,

We have a very unique opportunity for youth. A chance to spend one year volunteering for United Nations in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I), and help improve the living conditions of people in Kurdistan. A chance to work in multicultural teams and acquire new skills.

The young people we are looking for must be highly committed to the United Nations Charter and the development of Kurdistan. They must represent the youth of the region and be between 22 and 30. If you are a teacher, an engineer, an accountant or have recently completed your university studies, take this opportunity to join over 7000 UN Volunteers in more than 60 countries around the world, who help people live better lives. With support of the KRG Ministry of Planning, UNDP Iraq currently provides opportunities for youth to champion the United Nations' work in their communities, and become actively involved in the realization of KR-I development agenda.

It is a pleasure to provide you with information about the YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES Programme “United Nations Volunteers Capacity Development and Support to the Kurdistan Regional Government through Volunteerism.” We want to provide you with this guide containing information, tools and resources to prepare your application.

Before we introduce you the programme, we would like to ask you one question: What is your motivation to be a United Nations Volunteer? With us, you will have the opportunity to make a difference for the people of Kurdistan, the opportunity to be part of an international team to make a difference in your community. Opportunities are not easy to find, and they are even more difficult to create. Nevertheless, the Kurdistan Regional Government through the Ministry of Planning, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme in Iraq, have created this opportunity for talented youth wishing to become champions on the work of the United Nations.

The YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES Programme “United Nations Volunteers Capacity Development and Support to the Kurdistan Regional Government through Volunteerism” offers the opportunity to obtain experience in development management and multilateral development cooperation, as well as exposure to the UN System in Iraq, focusing in Kurdistan. The selected candidates will join as National UN Youth Volunteers, bringing out their enthusiasm, professionalism and knowledge of the local culture and language, and their willingness to learn and be exposed to new ideas and processes. They will work in multi-cultural environments and at the grassroots level. The duration of their assignment is for one year and there is a strong Capacity Building component.

In addition, participants will receive training to develop their capacities in different areas to make them competitive for civil service careers at the national and international level. The Capacity Development Strategy includes trainings in Communications, Technical Writing, M&E, Youth Empowerment, Volunteerism and Grassroots/Community Development. The Strategy is framed on the UN Competences and Values.

In this document, you will find useful information to guide you through the application process, which may assist you developing your application materials such as how to prepare your CV and cover letter. Let me take this opportunity to also wish you good luck in the application process and thank you for your interest in the YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES Programme.

Best wishes,

Coordination Team

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Information for prospective candidates 2015 In-take – Cohort #1

1. Description of the project

1. The core of the project is to promote social responsibility through volunteerism and have a cadre of committed and prepared youth to become champions on the work of United Nations.
2. During the first year, university graduates (between the ages of 22 and 29) will join the cohort as national UN Youth Volunteers performing a variety of functions within the UN System in Iraq.
3. Participants will receive training to develop their capacities in different areas to make them competitive for civil service careers at the national and international level.
4. The Capacity Development Strategy includes trainings in Communications, Technical Writing, M&E, Youth Empowerment, Volunteerism and Grassroots/Community Development. The Strategy is framed on the UN Competences and Values.

2. Eligibility

Candidates must comply with the following requirements:

- Age: 22-29 years old at the time of the application
- Education: At least a bachelor degree completed at the time of the application
- Languages: Fluency in English and Kurdish; Arabic and other official UN languages are an asset
- Nationality: Iraqi nationals only
- Others: Evidence of direct community engagement, either by volunteering and/or work in social/community issues; links with under-privileged areas in the Kurdistan Region either by living or working in those areas
- Please note that each volunteer assignment will have its own requirements in terms of academic background and previous work experience. Female candidates are encouraged to apply.

Please note: If you are eligible, you must include your signed eligibility questionnaire. Failure to do so, your application will not be considered. The eligibility questionnaire is at the end of this guide.

The Programme provides equal opportunities to all the applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, age and disability status. In order to increase the participation of women, half of the volunteer assignments are reserved for women.

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT
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THROUGH VOLUNTEERING



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3. How to apply

1. After you have identified that you are eligible to participate, the next step is to find out how your qualifications and experience fit the requirements for the position you are interested in.
2. The list of opportunities to volunteer is in the following link:
<http://www.iq.undp.org/content/iraq/en/home/operations/v/YouthOpportunities.html>
3. Please note that each assignment has its own special requirements in terms of years of experience, academic degrees, languages, and others.
4. Once you have identified the best assignment for you, then you must apply by submitting the following documents:
 1. CV in English with the attached Questionnaire of Eligibility (maximum two pages for CV). You will have the opportunity to submit the PDF/Word file in the UNDP Jobs platform.
 2. Cover letter in English (maximum one page)

Applications received after the deadline are not going to be considered.

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Annexes

4. About the CV ...

The Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Introduction

Arésumé (brief, one to two pages) or **curriculum vitae** or **CV** (longer and more detailed, two to eight pages, often requested in Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia) is a **summary of your abilities, education, experience, qualifications and skills**. It is a critical tool in evaluating each potential candidate's match with the requirements of a position. In addition to education and academic qualifications, CVs also include doctoral thesis details, publications, professional associations, presentations, awards, honours and accreditations.

Your CV should be tailored to the position you are applying for and aim to attract attention, create interest and provoke a reaction: an invitation to be interviewed.

As previously explained under the "Vacancy Announcement" section, often, employers and Personnel Officers spend only a few minutes (or less) reviewing a CV, searching for **keywords** and phrases. To get someone to look at your CV longer, it has to be **appealing** in its **visual presentation** and **perfect** in the **quality of the writing**. The more thoroughly you prepare your CV, the more likely someone is to read it.

It is in your interest to provide a 'zero-mistake' CV. The assumption is that if you make a mistake on your own CV, a very important tool for your own interest, you will probably make mistakes on the job as well. Since your CV should be **flawless**, proofread it and review it several times. Then have someone with good language skills do so as well.

Your CV is a **quick summary** of what you have done with just enough details to let the readers know the depth of your skills. You should find out which skills the employer seeks by closely analysing the vacancy announcement and showcasing them in your CV. They will find out the rest in an interview. Less is more. If you drown the readers in words and details, you might not get to the interview.

Anatomy of a CV

Contact Information

Lead the document with your contact information: full name, address(es), phone number(s), including country code, area code, and extension(s), email address(es), UN and non-UN, and URL, if any (especially if this is relevant for the position). The objective is to be reachable, so the contact information will have to be updated as necessary.

Content

It depends on your experience and objective. Use headings to highlight the main topics. The order of the topics is based on experience. For example, students and recent graduates should highlight their studies by putting Education first and include relevant courses. Experienced workers should begin with Experience.

Education

Usually means post-secondary and can include special seminars, summer school, night school, e-learning and certification courses, as well as college and university.

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CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT
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When presenting the information, split the education in two, differentiating university or college degrees from complementary courses or training.

Use **reverse chronological order**. Begin with the most recent learning experience and work backwards. List degrees, dates (month and year obtained or expected), institution names and locations and major or academic concentration and dissertation, if any. A brief summary of the most important courses you have taken might be helpful.

Professional / Work Experience

Consider dividing your experience into subtopics such as research experience, training, organization / coordination, counselling, etc. Include: full-time paid jobs, academic research projects, internships (state if paid or unpaid), part-time jobs and volunteer work. List name and location of employers, job titles, dates, scope of responsibility and results or outcomes of your work.

Briefly give the employer an overview of the work that has taught you skills. Use [Action words](#) to describe your job duties. Use the active voice with simple, present tense for current assignments (mobilise, ensure, manage) and simple, past tense for previous positions (accomplished, improved, supervised).

Awards and Honours

List **academic awards, scholarships or fellowships**, e.g.

- Dean's List, 2005, Cum Laude, Columbia University, New York;
- Erasmus Mundus Scholarship, 1998;
- World Bank Robert McNamara Fellowship Program, 2000.

List **professional memberships**, e.g.

- Charterholder Member, Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute;
- Member, New Zealand Society of Civil Engineers;
- Fellow Member, Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (UK).

Awards, honours or recognition. Name the awards, issuing organizations and dates, e.g.

- Recipient, Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee Medal, British Columbia, Canada, 2005;
- Manager of the Year, Group on Equal Rights for Women in the United Nations [GERWUN], Department of Management, June 2005.

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT
TO THE KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
THROUGH VOLUNTEERING



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Community Service

Demonstrate your leadership skills and care for others through participating in community activities. List **academic**, **professional** or **community organizations**, in which you hold office or are currently a member, e.g.

- Member, Rotary International, Sao Paulo Chapter.

List professional and community activities, including volunteer work, e.g.

- Construction Manager (Volunteer), Global Crossroad's Tsunami Reconstruction Project, Dadalla, Sri Lanka (October 2005).
- Fundraiser (Volunteer), Washington Free Clinic, Washington, DC.

Generally, hobbies or travel are listed only if they relate to your job interests.

Languages

Include foreign languages (especially if it is related to your job interest) that you would feel comfortable demonstrating in an interview. You may want to indicate your proficiency level, where or how you learnt it and how often you use it.

Computer skills

List your computer skills (especially if related to your job interest), stating proficiency level.

References

Do not include your reference information on your CV. Instead, prepare a separate list of references, with complete name, title, company name, address (postal and e-mail) and telephone numbers for each individual. Be sure to ask for agreement before you put a person's name as reference.

http://www.jposc.org/career_management/content/application/cv-en.html

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT
TO THE KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
THROUGH VOLUNTEERING



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5. About the cover letter ...

Why a Cover Letter?

A cover letter allows you to **tailor your application to a specific job**. It reflects your personality, your attention to detail, your communication skills, your enthusiasm and motivation, your intellect and your specific interest in the company/organization/unit to which you are sending the letter.

It highlights the aspects of your experience that are most useful to the potential employer and you can earn points for knowing what those aspects are. It should call attention to the skills, talents and experience the employer seeks. It provides the opportunity to show what you know about the field you are interested in and the company/organization/unit to which you are writing.

A well constructed cover letter can also demonstrate your ability to organize your thoughts and get to the point: **keep your letter focused on what you can do for the employer**. You must demonstrate a clear understanding of the company/organization/unit's current situation. You clearly can increase your chances of being invited for an interview by writing an effective cover letter.

Writing an Effective Cover Letter

Cover letters are constructed with close attention to:

Purpose

The main purpose of the cover letter is to gain an attentive audience for your CV. It is the opportunity to let your prospective employer hear your voice. The cover letter should reflect the fact that you have conducted enough research to know the interests, needs, values and goals of the company/organization/unit to which you are applying.

Content

The letter should **name the position for which you are applying** and also **make specific references to the company, organization or unit**. Moreover, it should be addressed to the specific individual who will process your application, when ever possible. In the private sector, this usually can be found through research or by calling the company to find out to whom you should address your letter. This is more challenging with online systems, especially with rosters and multiple duty station listings.

Indicate your knowledge of and interest in the work the company/organization/unit is currently doing and your qualifications for the position. You want the reader to know:

- Why you believe to be the perfect match for that specific company/organization/unit.
- How you qualify for the position to which you are applying.
- Why you fit with that company/organization/unit.

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THROUGH VOLUNTEERING



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The cover letter should also:

- Highlight the most important and relevant accomplishments, skills and experience listed in your résumé/CV;
- Point to the CV in some way;
- Request specific follow-up, such as an interview.

Format

The cover letter should be in paragraph form with a conversational tone. The first paragraph should be brief, two or three sentences, stating:

- Which job you are applying for and how you learned about it,
- Any personal contacts you have in or with the company or organization,
- Your motivation for that specific company/organization/unit and for the job,
- Your general qualifications for the job.

The body of your letter should consist of one to three longer paragraphs in which you expand upon your qualifications and fit for the position.

Pick out the most relevant qualifications from your CV and discuss them, demonstrating how your background and experience qualify you for the job. Be as specific as possible and refer your reader to your résumé for additional details

The concluding paragraph of your cover letter should request an interview. State where and when you can be reached and express your willingness to come to an interview or supply further information. Close by thanking your reader for his/her time and consideration.

To see a sample cover letter click [here](#).

For more information, you may visit www.jobweb.com or www.cvtips.com.

Source: http://www.jposc.org/career_management/content/application/job_correspondance-en.html

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CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT
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THROUGH VOLUNTEERING



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ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire must be included together with the CV and cover letter.
Failure to do so, your application will not be considered.

UNV assignment title:

Full name:

•Age:

• Gender/Sex:

•Languages:

•Geographical area:

•Educational level:

•Years and type of professional experience:

- | | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> NGO | Years: _____ | If months, please indicate: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private sector | Years: _____ | If months, please indicate: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government | Years: _____ | If months, please indicate: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International organization | Years: _____ | If months, please indicate: |

•Time spent abroad:

•Links with unprivileged zones in Kurdistan. Please specify the zone and the type of link:

•Work and volunteer experience at the community level

I certified that I meet all the eligibility criteria and allowed to work in the Kurdistan Region. If selected for any of the assignments, and I certify that I have not first and second degree relatives working at UN, high positions in the government, UN contractors and high executives of private sector.

Name and Signature: _____

Date: _____

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CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT
TO THE KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
THROUGH VOLUNTEERING



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Frequently Asked Questions

Who can participate in the programme?

What is a UN Volunteer?

A UN Volunteer is a professional who decides to contribute time and efforts to peace and development programmes offered the United Nations. There are currently more than 7,000 UN Volunteers making a difference in the lives of people around the world.

I am currently working for the UN, can I be considered?

Yes, you can.

What is the difference between a national and international UN Volunteer?

A national UN Volunteer holds the nationality of the country where the assignment is taking place. An international UN Volunteer comes from another country to volunteer in a different country.

About the process

How many assignments will be available?

This year, twenty (20) assignments will be available. During the first in-take, ten will be advertised and after two months, the second batch of ten opportunities.

When is the deadline?

It varies for each opportunity, but normally the deadline is within two weeks from advertising the assignments. All application documents need to be submitted before the deadline, or the application cannot be considered.

How do I fill an application?

Advice is provided about what we are looking for in each application; we have created "How to Apply" guidelines that will allow you to follow the process. Please download from this page (top of the right trail).

About the programme

What is the aim of the volunteer's programme in KR-I?

The aim is to provide an opportunity to talented and highly committed youth to spend one year volunteering in the United Nations system in Iraq.

Are there any trainings that the selected participants will attend?

All selected candidates will participate in trainings aiming at develop UN competencies and skills. Each participant will be evaluated and will work with a mentor along a learning plan.

What happens when the programme ends?

Participants will be trained to become competitive to apply for jobs within the United Nations system, national and international NGOs, and the Kurdistan Regional Government.

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About entitlements

Do UN Volunteers receive any financial and/or other benefits?

The key benefit of being a UN Volunteer is the personal satisfaction the volunteer assignment brings to you as you make a positive impact on peace and development. However, we support you during your assignment in several ways, e.g. through a monthly volunteer living allowance, annual leave, or medical insurance.

Are there any other entitlements?

In addition to the monthly living allowance, annual leave and medical insurance; UN Volunteers participating in this programme are also entitled to participate in trainings and capacity building events.