

Dear Colleagues,

Greetings and welcome to our newsletter.

# Newsletter

Nov- Dec 2021



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## UNV50 Country Awards

# Commemorating the Golden Anniversary of UNV



On the **7th of December**, UNV celebrated its **Golden Anniversary** recognising organisations and individuals who have contributed to the promotion of volunteerism in the country through the prestigious **UNV50 Country Awards**. This was also an occasion to commemorate **the 10th Anniversary** of our flagship initiatives **V-Awards and V-Force** launched by UNV in Sri Lanka.

**Fifty awards** were presented to **organisations** from the **Government, Corporate, Media, Education and VIOs** in recognition of their role in promoting the value of volunteerism and **individuals**; Celebrities, UN Volunteers, V-Force Volunteers, V-Awards Brand Ambassadors and other distinguished volunteering champions in recognition of their remarkable volunteering efforts. It was also an opportunity to acknowledge **the Host Entities from the UN and Development Partners** hosting UN/V-Force Volunteers.



The Minister of Youth and Sports- Hon. Namal Rajapaksa, the UN Resident

Coordinator - Ms Hanaa Singer-Hamdy, UNDP Resident Representative - Robert Juhkam were special invitees, while Heads of other UN Agencies and the World Bank and senior representatives of the Government, Corporate, VIOs, Media and Education Sectors were among the audience. The UNV Country Coordinator - Sharmalee Jayasinghe welcomed everyone to the celebration of volunteerism while the special guests reflected on the key role of UNV in championing the volunteerism agenda in the country and the importance of recognising its role in sustainable development.

UNV launched the e-version of the **'UNV at 50' Coffee Table Book** highlighting milestones of the volunteer journey in Sri Lanka and showcased [a video highlighting the importance of partnership](#). In addition, UNV Sri Lanka provided live coverage of the UNV50 Country Awards through [UNV global Instagram takeover](#) and [live tweets](#), and the highlights of the day were updated on our social media channels. Pictures of UNV50 Country Awards of Sri Lanka can be viewed [here](#).



**Partnership: the key to our success**



**UNV Instagram Takeover**

# Youth Community Leadership Initiative to Advance Youth Capacity



On **13 December 2021**, the first training of the **Youth Community Leadership Initiative (YCLI)** kick-started with 37 young inspiring participants at the MAS Athena Training Centre in Thulhiriya. The YCLI is a part of the project titled '**Youth Participation and Engagement for a Healthier, Equitable, Safer and United Sri Lanka**' organised by World Health Organization (**WHO**), and United Nations Development Programme (**UNDP**), United Nations Volunteers (**UNV**) in collaboration with The National Youth Services Council (**NYSC**).

The YCLI is a capacity-building programme aimed at **advancing youth participatory leadership skills** by promoting healthy settings, social cohesion and inclusive community development; providing youth leaders with **an opportunity to engage with like-minded individuals and design and implement collaborative projects** in their communities.

**CALLING ALL YOUTH**  
to Challenge Your Limits!

**ARE YOU AN ASPIRING YOUNG LEADER?**  
Join the Youth Community Leadership Initiative (YCLI), organized by the National Youth Services Council (NYSC), United Nations Volunteers (UNV), World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

**Why should you apply?**

- To receive a comprehensive capacity building programme which builds on collaborative leadership, equity, personal wellbeing, inclusive community development, stakeholder engagement and volunteer mobilization
- To be a part of a 12 months fully-funded (in-person & virtual) leadership programme
- To engage with diverse youth leaders with shared interests from across the country
- To pilot and implement innovative projects that address the needs in your community

**Who can apply?**

- Sri Lankan citizens
- Youth between 18 - 32 years of age
- Able to periodically commit over a 12 month period

Registrations close on **31st December 2021**

Scan here

Anyone interested in joining the programme, meeting the requirements given below is welcome to apply by 31 December!

- Sri Lankan citizens
- Youth between 18-32 years of age
- Able to periodically commit over a 12 month period

Visit [www.youthindex.lk](http://www.youthindex.lk) to register now!  
For more details: [youth@unv.lk](mailto:youth@unv.lk) ☎ 076 664 897

Registration

# V-Force Volunteers Supporting the South Asia Forum on the SDGs



Three V-Force volunteers supported the Sustainable Development Council and UNDP organise the fifth **'South Asian Forum on the SDGs (SAFS)'** held on 15 and 16 November in Sri Lanka. The forum focused on inclusive, resilient and sustainable strategies towards COVID-19 recovery efforts and identified priorities to accelerate the Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

The main role of the V-Force volunteers was supporting event coordination, logistics and documenting reports and letters. The Forum brought together multiple stakeholders from the Government, International Community, Civil Society, Academia and Private sector on to a common platform and the volunteers coordinated with participants and guests from diverse sectors and countries.

*"For me, this is a first-time volunteering experience involved in a large-scale international forum assigned to a Government organisation. I also learned from fellow volunteers serving with me who have been most supportive and kind. This helped me build many networks and made me feel proud to serve my country as a volunteer. I am grateful to UNV for giving me this valuable opportunity." - V-Force Volunteer Esandu*

## Latest: Activities and Contributions

## Reunion of the Global Cultural Jamboree



On 12th December 2021, UNV Sri Lanka was acknowledged by the Sri Lanka Scout Association for collaboration during the first-ever historical Global Cultural Jamboree held virtually in July 2021. UNV Country Coordinator, Sharmalee Jayasinghe joined the celebration as a special invitee.

## A Former UN Volunteer's Continuous Effort in Peacebuilding



Kishoth Navaretnarajah served with UNV as UN Youth Volunteer in Youth and Peace Coordination in 2018 and 2019, and he has kept contributing towards peacebuilding and youth and community empowerment at Strengthening Youth Leadership Collective (SYLC) as Co-founder and President.

His contribution was recognised at the Intercultural Innovation Award 2021 held on 18 November in Dubai, UAE. 'SMART Advocates' project initiated by SYLC won the award in recognition of its effort towards effective advocacy to address grassroots conflicts.

[Find more](#)

## Two UN Volunteers meeting at a field, Mullaitivu



In November, two **UN Volunteers** serving with WFP, **Usitha Rajeevan** and **Yoona Choi** met in **Mullaitivu**, one of the districts where WFP is implementing the Last Mile Climate Services (LMCS) project providing climate advisory services to farmers.

Yoona, Resilience Building Assistant undertook a field mission to interview the beneficiaries living in Mullaitivu. Usitha, as Project Associate based in Mullaitivu, helped Yoona understand the local



context and supported her task of developing the beneficiaries' story.

Usitha highlighted the importance of meeting colleagues in diverse settings enabling them to share ground realities. Yoona appreciated Usitha's intervention and collaborations and said *"I met a young farmer working hard to make organic compost and running his farm based on the information from the LMCS project. Witnessing such hard work of beneficiaries made me feel honored working as part of the project as a UN Volunteer."*

## Welcome to the UNV Family



*"I am very excited and honored to be part of the UNV team as a Community Volunteer Development Coordinator based in Batticaloa. It is an opportunity to help other youth because I am interested in youth and community issues. As a volunteer, I want to inspire others, and know that the world is full of possibilities and we need to go out there to get them."*

**Ahamed Sanoon Meera Mohideen**  
**Community Volunteer Development Coordinator**  
**(Batticaloa) - UNV**

*"I am really excited to be a part of the UNV team and contribute as a Community Development Volunteer for Ratnapura. I look forward to working with the team to effectively engage myself in different activities in promoting peacebuilding, youth well-being, development, and volunteering."*

**Anushka Weerakkody**  
**Community Volunteer Development Coordinator**

(Ratnapura) - UNV



*"I am delighted to start my new role as a Community Volunteer Development Coordinator with UNV. I look forward to establishing new networks, building partnerships, and starting volunteer initiatives for community development. Looking forward to making a positive contribution!"*

**Sudeepa Gunaratne**  
**Community Volunteer Development Coordinator**  
**(Colombo) -UNV**

*" I am thrilled to be joining UNDP as a UN Volunteer in the capacity of Operations Assistant. The opportunity to be a part of Climate and Environment team is very exciting. I look forward to contributing my skills and experience to the continued success of the organization while learning from all of you "*

**Ronali Philips**  
**Operations Assistant - UNDP**



**Welcome Back!**

*"I am glad to once again join UNV as a Community Volunteer Development Coordinator. I hope that we can reach new heights through cooperation and teamwork."*

**Lakshitha Prasad**





**Community Volunteer Development Coordinator  
(Anuradhapura) - UNV**

*"I am very happy to have the opportunity to work with the UNV family again as a Community Volunteer after serving as Community Volunteer - ESA Project with UNDP. I wish everyone good health."*

**Chamodi Sandunika  
Community Volunteer Development Coordinator-  
(Kurunegala) - UNV**



## Farewell & Thank You



*"I still remember how happy I was on that day when I was informed of being selected as a UN Volunteer! There is no doubt that UNV has given me great opportunities to learn and grow professionally. Above all, it made me realize my passion and how I can help to make a better world. This experience will be one of the most important milestones in my life. Thank you to UNV, UNDP, HackaDev Team, and Sri Lanka! "*

**Soyeon Kim  
Youth and Innovations Assistant - UNDP**

*"I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to all UNV and UNDP colleagues for the support and guidance given during my time here. I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunities and learnings I've been provided*

*working for several projects with the Climate and Environment team at UNDP in the past two years. It's been a wonderful experience and I wish you all the very best!"*

**Rashvini Weerasinghe**  
**Procurement, Management, and Finance Assistant -**  
**UNDP**



**Saanaaree Manoratne**  
**Research, Assessment,**  
**Monitoring Assistant -**  
**WFP**

*"I would like to thank UNV and WFP for providing me with this opportunity to learn and grow as a young professional in the development sector. UNV was a great platform for me to rethink and redefine my career with excellent guidance and support throughout my assignment. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have worked across diverse activities on improving the food security status of communities and bringing in transformative change.*

*I thoroughly enjoyed working with multiple stakeholders such as communities, private sectors and government counterparts in project implementation and monitoring. As challenging as it was, it was possibly one of the most satisfying assignments I have undertaken during my career.*

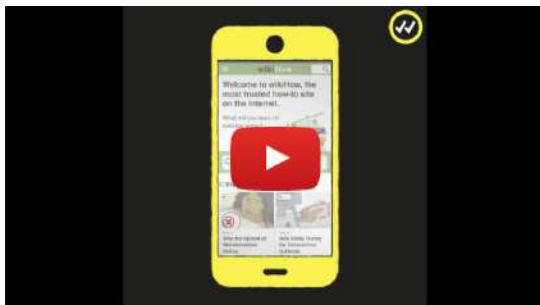
*I also take this opportunity to thank my incredible team in WFP Sri Lanka and UNV colleagues who have been with me and supported me every step of the way."*

## COVID-19 Updates

Stay updated on the COVID status in Sri Lanka by visiting the official website which can be accessed by clicking the link shared below.

[Click here for the COVID-19 updates](#)

## Take a free online course on fighting misinformation



The course is designed by Verified and wikiHow – an online community of experts creating trusted how-to guides. When you sign up, you will receive one lesson per day to your inbox over the course of five days.

[Find more](#)

Keep updated with our latest news!



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