



UN
Volunteers

Press Release
For immediate release

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UN Staff Give Blood

UN Volunteers in Lao PDR celebrate International Volunteer Day by hosting a second Blood Donation Day

“This International Volunteer Day comes near the end of a difficult year marked by rising food and fuel prices, accelerating climate change and turmoil in world financial markets. There have been many calls for resources to combat these problems. Rarely however, is volunteerism fully recognized as a potentially vast and powerful resource to engage people in the pursuit of peace and development. Yet the UN Volunteers programme deploys 7,500 volunteers every year to support national development efforts, and many millions more contribute their time and energy in their own way”. UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon.

To mark International Volunteer Day 2008, on Friday 5 December UNV is launching its Online Volunteering service. This service brings together hundreds of development organizations from around the world and thousands of online volunteers. It is a platform for collaboration to address the challenges of peace and development and to contribute in many different ways to helping countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals. These online volunteers are a valuable addition to the work of the many national and international UNV volunteers working on the ground in 140 countries, and the millions of other volunteers worldwide who contribute every day to addressing the challenges of peace and development.

To celebrate International Volunteer Day in the Lao PDR, UNV, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), in association with the Lao Red Cross National Blood Transfusion Centre, hosted their second ‘Blood Donation Day’ in the UNDP building. “Due to the overwhelming support of staff in August this year, UNV have organized this second event to coincide with the International Day of the Volunteer” said Ms Elizabeth Bransfield (UNV Programme Officer). “From our past learning we now appreciate that the safest source of blood is from regular and repeat voluntary unpaid blood donors - donating once, though very welcome, is not enough”.

People who weigh at least 45kg and meet other donor requirements are welcomed to donate blood at any time. Contact the Lao Red Cross National Blood Transfusion Centre, on Tel: 021 214 763 (<http://www.laoredcross.org>).

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For more information please contact UNDP Public Information Unit Ms Janet Pontin or Mr Jussi Kainulainen +856 (21) 267777 ext 715 or 716, email janet.pontin@undp.org or jussi.kainulainen@undp.org

Notes for editors: The United Nations Volunteers is the UN organization that supports sustainable human development globally through the promotion of volunteerism, including the mobilization of volunteers. It serves the causes of peace and development through enhancing opportunities for participation by all peoples. It is universal, inclusive and embraces volunteer action in all its diversity. It values free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity, which are the foundations of volunteerism. It is administered by the United Nations Development Programme.