



Press Release

First ever State of World Volunteerism Report: volunteerism key to sustainable future and *global well-being*

New Delhi, 6 December 2011: *"The steering committee of the Planning Commission will soon finalize a road map for the voluntary sector,"* informed **Dr. Syeda Hameed**, Member, Planning Commission, releasing the UN's *State of World's Volunteerism Report (SWVR)* here on Monday. *"Volunteerism is not a new concept in India and has been a fundamental value as early as Mahatma Gandhi's time,"* she further added. Dr. Hameed also recommended engaging the country's vast population as a potential and powerful resource in tackling all of its problems.

The report was launched by an impressive panel of dignitaries that included **Patrice Coeur-Bizot**, UN Resident Coordinator & UNDP Resident Representative, **Dr. Syeda Hameed**, Member, Planning Commission, GOI, **Kiran Mehra-Kerpelman**, Director, United Nations Information Centre for India and Bhutan and **Caitlin Wiesen-Antin**, Country Director, UNDP, India among others.

Speaking on the occasion **Patrice Coeur-Bizot**, applauded the excellent work carried out by volunteers in development work, humanitarian assistance, environmental preservation and progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and reiterated that the *"Values of Volunteerism are crucial for human and sustainable development."* *"The spirit of volunteerism is present in every culture, country and community and no doubt an expression of humanity's finest values,"* noted Ms Mehra while addressing the gathering. Ms Wiesen emphasised that *"Volunteerism to build resilient and peaceful societies is the need of the hour."*

The report shows that volunteer work contributed approximately 0.9 percent of the GDP in India. It says, *"In developing and transition countries, volunteer work represented 0.7 percent of GDP, while for developed countries it was 2.7 percent of GDP."* The figure was calculated on the basis of economic contribution of volunteers in the 36 countries.

The first-ever **State of the World Volunteerism Report (SWVR)** was launched in New York on 5 December, 2011, during the UN General Assembly's morning plenary session on Volunteering, and in more than 80 countries around the world as part of global and national events being supported by **United Nations Volunteers** to mark the International Year of Volunteers (IYV+10). *"The full potential of volunteerism can only be unleashed when it is recognized as a powerful and universal renewable resource and a vital component of the social capital of every nation"* said **Flavia Pansieri**, UNV Executive Coordinator on the occasion.

UN General Assembly has proclaimed 2011 as IYV+10, commemorating the **Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers**. This global celebration of volunteerism provides an opportunity to engage with the positive energy of volunteering and the innovation by millions of ordinary people jointly working towards realizing the Millennium Development Goals of achieving sustainable development and creating an enabling environment for citizen engagement.

The people-centred approaches and partnership are key to delivering on the sustainable development agenda, supports the Report. It promotes a better understanding of volunteerism, and demonstrates the universality, scope and reach of volunteerism along with new trends in the twenty-first century and will become the UN's flagship publication to enhance the understanding of volunteerism and its contribution to society.

About UNV: United Nations Volunteers (UNV) is the nodal UN agency that contributes to peace and development worldwide through volunteerism. UNV believes in 'Volunteerism for Development'. The concept of volunteerism for development centers on optimizing impact of volunteerism on peace and development. Volunteerism by many millions of people is critical to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Please visit: www.undp.org.in/unv

About UNDP: UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. With offices in more than 160 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations. Please visit: www.undp.org

About UNIC: The United Nations Information Centre in New Delhi covers India and Bhutan. UNIC conducts information activities on behalf of UN agencies without local representation and maintains close co-operation with and assists UN agencies based in India. The centre provides information on the United Nations to print and electronic media, governmental and non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, academic and other research centres and think-tanks, students and the public at large. Please visit: <http://www.unic.org.in>