

International Volunteer Day: UNWTO Volunteers Promote Tourism's Contribution to Development



On International Volunteer Day (5 December), celebrated in 2011 under the theme 'Volunteering Matters', UNWTO is highlighting how tourism and volunteer work can make a difference through its UNWTO Volunteers.

UNWTO Volunteers work on tourism projects around the world, contributing to development through tourism. On International Volunteer Day, UNWTO Volunteers have been sharing their experiences and showing how their support to tourism projects in the world's developing regions is helping to change lives.

Whether in Bhutan, Brazil, Guatemala or Niger, the UNWTO Volunteers all agree that tourism is having a positive impact on the local communities they work with, economically, socially and culturally. Tourism can be one of the most effective drivers of grassroots development and employment for developing countries, and volunteers are helping to make this potential a reality.

UNWTO's Volunteers programme, run by the UNWTO.Themis Foundation, counts on over 200 individuals who have received training in tourism as a tool for development. Many of these professionals, including the four in the video, go on to volunteer around the world, applying their training to benefit local communities.

Note to editors:

The UNWTO.Themis Foundation is the body responsible for UNWTO's work in the field of education and training, offering UNWTO's Member States education and training-related assessment, strategic guidance and specialized training to increase the competitiveness and sustainability of their tourism sectors.

Its Volunteers Programme trains young professionals in tourism as a tool for poverty reduction and development, enabling them to transfer practical know-how to local communities and empower beneficiaries looking to undertake initiatives related to the sustainable development of tourism.

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