

# UNV -HK University Volunteer Programme

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*Figure 1 The public defenders were having listening about human right cases.*

Just less than a year ago, I was still preparing for the interview of this UN University Volunteer Programme. It feels like just after a blink, all our volunteers have already returned to Hong Kong after completing the six-months journey. Now or never, I would say I am so glad that I made the decision of joining this programme right after my graduation. It is a very precious opportunity to step out of your comfort zone to discover yourself. Also, I am honored to become a part of the volunteer team to represent Hong Kong and work in Timor-Leste.

## My Role as a Communication Support Officer at Governance Unit UNDP

As a UNV – Communication Support Officer in the Democratic Governance Unit at UNDP, my scope of work is assisting with designing and development of communication materials such as banners, newsletters and press release which would be used for raising awareness of issues that the projects under Governance Unit working on, such as Justice System Programme (JSP), Timor-Leste National Police Project (PNTL) and Electoral Project. Some other job duties include extracting key information from dense documents for project's research; taking minute of regular unit's meeting and sharing the result to the Country Director of UNDP; writing quarterly report and article for various projects to present their process to the stakeholders.



During my assignment with UNDP, I spent most of the time with the Justice System Programme which it aims to make a difference towards providing fair, efficient and accessible justice services for everyone,

*Figure 2 The qualified judges were having legal training.*

especially the poor and disadvantaged. The project team also has partnership with some Non-Profit Organizations and travel to the remote districts to deliver seminar about providing certain free legal aid services for the citizens. In addition, JSP provides legal education to the existing qualified legal professionals so as to reinforce the quality and efficiency of the justice institutions in resolving cases. Although I didn't contribute anything on this sector to develop the education, I feel so proud to see the project from UNDP is really helping Timorese to strengthen their national capacity.



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### small difference to promote volunteerism

*Figure 3 Citizens from the remote village were attending*

Except just being a communication officer at my unit every day, I didn't forget my fundamental identity – a Volunteer. I am so grateful that the workplace offered me a chance to organize event on



the International Volunteer Day with a wide range of

freedom. Occasionally, I took up the role as the focal point of UN Volunteers to cooperate with other volunteers' agencies, such as KOICA and JICA to prepare the event. One of the purpose of the clean-up activity was spreading the message "Change comes from any of us". We think it's better to make good use of this chance for the international volunteers and local people to do volunteering work together. While interacting with each other, the international volunteers can introduce more about what is happening in Timor with these international organizations and what the volunteers are doing to assist Timorese to build a stronger nation after the mission, also to let the local people understand that they can make a difference for their own country easily.



## Learning from the journey

I am a volunteer who supposed to serve in the country. However, I guess I had gained way more than what I contributed. Thanks to the one-week training before our departure, which had been a shot in our arms for the preparation of the assignment. We were given opportunities to think of many situations and problems that we may encounter so we can have better preparation to adjust our mental state. Especially when organizing the event, there were so many different new obstacles we might came across every day. It was a precious experience to train my problem-solving skill when tackling them step by step with my co-workers. Working with the specialists

from different aspects in my workplace, I was under pressure but growing at the same time. I realized one of the key of success is, never limit yourself and take the risk to accept the challenge.

To be honest, I didn't know much about the country of Timor-Leste. Superficially, it is not advanced enough when it compares to other developing countries. However, the people I met here and the simplicity which had inspired me the meaning of life doesn't require many materials and persistence. As long as we are holding less, we are freer to give our helping hands to others. If you let me to choose once again my host country, I will absolutely choose Timor-Leste again.



