

Post-assignment Report: University Volunteer in Social Media and Communications

From 30 August 2024 to 28 February 2025, I served as a UN volunteer in Social Media and Communications at UNFPA Kazakhstan. My main duties include drafting and creating visuals for social media posts, crafting communication materials to inform stakeholders on project progress, and general campaign assistance. I traveled to Almaty to support the execution of the gender-based violence awareness campaign on reporting ethics. I also contributed to the social media promotion of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, World Population Day, etc.

Thanks to the opportunity to volunteer at UNFPA in Astana, I gained valuable insights into international advocacy work and the UN structure. I learned a lot about tailoring content and maximizing engagement through contributing to the promotion of cross-region campaigns. Assisting with event planning also deepened my understanding of project coordination and stakeholder engagement. Since cultural sensitivity is essential in advocacy work, volunteering in Central Asia honed my cultural awareness and helped me understand the nuances in cross-cultural communication.

Although the 6-month assignment was deeply rewarding, it was not without its challenges. One of the challenges I encountered was the language barrier. Since English is not widely spoken in Kazakhstan, some documents are written in Kazakh and Russian. Thankfully, I was able to overcome this challenge with the help of my colleagues and some more time to ensure clarity. Another challenge I faced was remote coordination. Since we had to work with the regional office in Turkey and country offices in other Central Asian countries, we faced delays and slow feedback due to differences in time zone and office closures due to national holidays. However, we were able to work around the problem with more advanced planning ahead of the campaign period.

This volunteering opportunity with a UN agency was invaluable. It reinforced my passion for non-profit work and deepened my understanding of international advocacy work. I am grateful for the precious opportunity and the support from the UNFPA office in Kazakhstan. Overall, it was an enriching and unforgettable experience that I will always be thankful for. I look forward to applying the experience with social media and communications in my future roles and contributing to initiatives for social change.