

Name of Volunteer: Chiu Yui
Position: Support to the National Aid Management Platform
Agency: United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
Duty Station: Laos

Having the unique position of working with both the local Government and United Nations in Lao PDR, I feel proud of being selected for the programme. The three most unforgettable things I have gained are the multicultural environment, friendship in the world and reflection with the nature.

At the Ministry of Planning and Investment, I was working with a group of local people for public communication and international liaison. It was challenging to work with multiple stakeholders and tasks, but it is a rewarding experience to know the local work style. A colleague who I worked closely with thought I am a Lao lady when he first saw me. He was talking to me in Lao language but I did not respond and make him a bit angry. Misunderstanding like this happened with language barrier but it is all about working with mutual respects and cultural exchange. I had been invited for their local traditions like cleaning the office on the National Day. I can now still speak some of the local language. The experience allowed me to observe how international political dialogues take place and developed my communication and negotiation skills.



Photo of me at the reception of the United Nations House in Lao PDR

Working in the United Nations gave me a multinational environment. We always gathered with people from the globe to share about their experiences in international development and we hanged out together. I keep in touch my friends from Lao PDR and some of them are coming to visit me in Hong Kong! No matter how we think of an issue, we discuss openly with each other. It has made me a person with strong critical thinking.



'A group of international volunteers and interns sharing their experiences'

Lao PDR is such a magnificent country with unpolluted natures. I have also been to other countries to volunteer but this time is the longest assignment I have had. During my spare time, I always travelled around the country. I had been thinking about the meaningfulness of development work because it can be hard to balance between development and environmental protection. Volunteering as an expat can bring extra waste to a country which may not has established waste management system, or we may bring our own values to a country's development. After the 6 months, I understand it is difficult to balance all expectations on how 'development' should be but the point is to do what we believe as right. I personally believe environmental protection is vital as human is not the single creature using the world's resources. While I was in Lao PDR, I always reused my bottles and utilized a water filter which reduced the demand of bottled water. I believe every single action can inspire people.



'A beautiful scene which I can't see in Hong Kong'