e-Update - FAO Global Internship, Volunteers, and Fellows (IVF) Programme

IN THIS ISSUE

- New Internship Agreements signed with: International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (UAE); Mississippi State University (USA); Russian Geographic Society (Russian Federation); Szent István University (Hungary); and University of Florence (Italy)
- UN Day @ UNESCO
- Voices from IVF Participants
- Global Presentations Day
- IVF Statistics 2019

OHR DIRECTOR’s MESSAGE

First of all, I wish you all a fruitful New Year.

Looking back the past one year, FAO Global Internship, Volunteers and Fellows (IVF) Programme was further expanded, with 397 participants joining the Organization. We managed to significantly increase the number of participants (44% in 2019, as compared with only 27% in 2018) assigned to our decentralized offices where the needs are the greatest. We have also reached parity between the global south/north, with 30% of the participants mobilized from non-/under-represented member countries. Furthermore, 16 indigenous youth interns joined FAO in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Our partnerships have grown exponentially: 21 new agreements were signed with diverse sponsors from Asia, Europe and Americas. As a result, 33% of the participants were externally sponsored by partners.

Under the leadership of the new Director-General, a high-level Youth Committee was established to enhance youth engagements in the work of FAO.

With only 10 years to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we continue to make this Programme more strategically relevant and catalytic to harness global youth talent and their innovative actions to realize a Zero Hunger World.

Bharat Ali
Director a.i.
Office of Human Resources (OHR)

VOICE FROM FAO LEADER

“The FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (RNE) relies on the synergy of its multigenerational workforce of experienced and young professionals to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the member countries in the region. The energetic presence of young people offers a sea of innovative ideas and delivery.

In my office, over 120 colleagues come from 28 countries, including five UN Volunteers and eight interns across the network of regional, sub-regional and country offices, serving to help member countries achieve SDGs and improve food security and nutrition towards a #ZeroHunger world. We are also setting a standard to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and youth.

In a region facing massive food security challenges, conflicts, water scarcity and climate change, FAO has a shared responsibility to pursue sustainable peace if we are to achieve food security and sustainable development in the region. To leave no one behind, FAO needs its most valuable assets: its employees. Young employees are more accustomed to new technologies. They relate strongly to the hopes and concerns of the baby-boomer generations. Regardless of age, everyone working at FAO shows a willingness to embrace change in a competitive knowledge-sharing marketplace. It is essential that different generations, working side-by-side at FAO, appreciate the strengths and weaknesses unique to each; and prepare themselves for a workforce environment that continues to shift and change.”

Abdessalam Saleh Ould Ahmed
Assistant Director-General and
Regional Representative
Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (RNE)
In October-December 2019, new Collaboration Agreements were signed with diverse partners.

**INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR BIOSALINE AGRICULTURE, UAE**
In October 2019, FAO signed a Fellows Agreement with the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) based in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It aims to support the Arab Women Leaders in Agriculture Programme, which is the first of its kind in the region to build the capability and contributions of Arab female researchers in agriculture towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by improving agricultural productivity, water management, poverty reduction, sustainable use of natural resources and protection of ecosystems. The Programme is financially supported by the Islamic Development Bank and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY, USA**
In November 2019, FAO and the Mississippi State University (MSU) signed Internship, Volunteers and Fellows Agreements. In the past nine years, FAO and MSU have collaborated in various fields of research and development, such as animal and fish health and capacity development for food security and nutrition. The three new Agreements will contribute to sustainable development and accessible and affordable agriculture innovation. Dr. Mark Keenum, the University President and the Chair of the US Board for International Food and Agriculture Development, delivered a keynote speech on enhancing access to innovation in agriculture to achieve the SDGs at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy.

**RUSSIAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, RUSSIAN FEDERATION**
In November 2019, FAO and Russia’s non-governmental organization, Russian Geographical Society (RGS), signed Fellows and Volunteers Agreements to facilitate exchanges of technical expertise and knowledge in the areas of forestry, conservation of biodiversity and natural resources, climate change, environmental awareness, among others. FAO Deputy Director–General for Programmes, Mr. Daniel Gustafson and RGS’s First Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Ilya Gurov formalized this new collaboration at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy. This new collaboration was initiated during the outreach missions carried out by the Office of Human Resources in May 2019.

**SZENT ISTVÁN UNIVERSITY, HUNGARY**
Building up on an existing Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen, FAO signed in November 2019 Internship and Fellows Agreements with Szent István University, one of Hungary’s most prominent institutions of higher education. The first cohort of students is expected to join FAO at the beginning of 2020.

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORENCE, ITALY**
In November 2019, FAO signed Internship and Fellows Agreements with the University of Florence, whose origins date back to the Studium Generale set up by the Florentine Republic in 1321. It is one of the most prestigious universities in Italy. The University is sponsoring one fellow in the FAO Representation Office in West Bank and Gaza Strip and one intern at the headquarters.

**UN DAY @ UNESCO, PARIS, FRANCE**
In October 2019, Ms. Ekaterina Lazarova, IVF Team member, participated in the UN DAY Career Day @ UNESCO - a platform for the attendees to learn about UN career. She presented the FAO Global Youth Programme and took part in the Career Fair together with the colleagues from the FAO Office of Corporate Communications. Over 1,200 young people attended the event, and may approached the FAO stand and expressed their interest in the Youth Programme and FAO’s work.
The internship opportunity with FAO Sub-regional Office in Abu Dhabi was a big milestone in my career development. It was a great chance for learning and applying my knowledge and fresh skills in a real working setting. I will strive to use everything I learned in the best possible way. Through this internship, I met wonderful people and professionals who helped me develop my experience. I would like to express my deepest thanks to my mentors Dr. Markos Tibbo and Dr. Dino Francesculli for their guidance and allowing me to participate in their projects which helped me expand my knowledge on various topics. I had the opportunity to contribute to an interesting project on the interactions of livestock and the environment, which was exciting as an environmental scientist. I am honored to be the first FAO intern from Zayed University.

I am a French master’s student in development economics from the University of Florence, Italy. I am currently working as a data analyst fellow at the FAO Office in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. I contribute to the analysis of food insecurity prevalence in the two regions of better capture and target those who are in most needs. I also participated in a data collection in a rural area of Nablus. It was great to meet the people who are benefitting from FAO project. I made an impact evaluation of a FAO project in the Gaza Strip aimed at providing solar panels to farmers to cope with the power shortage. I realized how FAO projects can really make a positive change for people’s lives. I wanted to have a field working experience before getting my degree, and I am so glad I get the opportunity to work with FAO, to apply my knowledge in development economics and to learn even more day by day. I am grateful to all the people working here who have been very welcoming and making this experience very enriching, both from a professional and personal viewpoints.

I joined FAO Office in Egypt in October 2019 as an intern in water management, sponsored by Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology of Japan. Water is a finite resource and key to achieving SDGs. For a four-month internship, my work is to support member countries of a project for Near East and North Africa Region, including Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and occupied Palestinian territories, in setting the sustainable limits of water consumption and making the best use of every single drop of water. I have been involved in training on water accounting and water productivity through an online platform, face-to-face learning, and on-the-job coaching to build the capacity in managing their water resources in a sustainable manner. This assignment enables me to learn more about the challenges that they face and what solutions and innovations can be applied. It is indeed an invaluable experience and will surely broaden my perspective for the global fight against water insecurity.

I joined FAO Malawi in February 2019 as UN Youth Volunteer, funded by the Government of Finland, and dived into procurement and agri-food supply chains after finishing my thesis on design of value chain model for edible insects. Volunteering as Procurement and Market Development Officer, I am making sure that the agricultural inputs, equipment, facilities and services for successful project implementation are sourced and delivered. I am happy and proud to work for supporting FAO projects that enable the farmers to become climate-smart in agricultural practices, enhance their nutrition and diversify their livelihoods. Starting with the emergency procurement after Cyclone Idai, this has been an excellent spot to develop in practice of public procurement, especially since we have the expertise of International Procurement Officer here. Now we have started to prepare for stronger market development focus for next year. I am excited to contribute to market development of local suppliers and beneficiary groups, for them to boost their participation in the economy in a profitable and sustainable way. In the future, I hope to explore humanitarian and agricultural value chains, to which this assignment is definitely building not only my technical skills but also the mindset.

I joined FAO Botswana Office as a Volunteer in January 2019 under an agreement between FAO and a French NGO “International Impact”. After several months in Senegal in horticulture, I decided to focus more on livestock and wildlife. Botswana is a wonderful situation to deal with these two issues. Mr. Czudek, FAO Representative in Botswana, wanted me to help him on a project in the Okavango Delta. This project addresses Human Wildlife Conflict while improving herders’ income and reducing poaching. This project fits me perfectly, I am so glad to work on this topic. As a program assistant, I closely work with our local partners. These relationships helped me a lot during my field mission. I had the privilege to go three times in the village where the project is. It was the favorite part of my job: to spend days in the bush with farmers, to understand the situation and to find solutions together. I participated in numerous workshops in the capital and I met many FAO colleagues from Rome, Accra or Harare. I consider this experience an excellent opportunity to improve my skills, to build my professional network, and to discover new cultures. I only have one message to young people like me: do not hesitate and join FAO. You will enjoy, for sure!
Global Presentations Day

The Global Presentations Day was held in November 2019, as a first event to connect IVF participants worldwide. Ms. Angélica Jácome Daza, Executive Chief of FAO Youth Committee, Office of Director-General, opened the Day by encouraging youth engagements towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals. She expressed her support to the Programme which harnesses young talents and new ideas in FAO. Mr. Basharat Ali, OHR Director a.i., welcomed the participants and reiterated his support for youth engagements to realize a world without hunger.

18 presentations were made on IVF assignments ranging from water security, forestry, climate change, bio-economy, procurement, family fanning to antimicrobial resistance, transboundary animal diseases, nuclear technology against mosquito-borne viruses to drought.

Members from the IVF Activity and Support Group presented their activities and survey results. They also facilitated the presentations and the discussions among the participants in different locations.

About 60 colleagues joined the event from headquarters and decentralized offices.

IVF PROGRAMME DATA IN 2019

**Participants from 84 Countries**

- Latin America and the Caribbean: 10.08%
- Near East and North Africa: 4.79%
- North America: 7.05%
- Africa: 10.08%
- Asia and the Pacific: 34.51%
- Europe: 35.50%
- Africa: 8.06%

**Participants in 72 Duty Stations**

- Near East and North Africa: 4.28%
- Europe and Central Asia: 3.06%
- Latin America and the Caribbean: 9.57%
- Asia and the Pacific: 10.83%
- Africa: 8.06%
- HQ: 56.18%

**Participants**

- 286 FAO Interns
- 74 FAO Volunteers
- 11 FAO Fellows
- 26 UN Volunteers

**Applications**

- 26690 applicants applied for the Global Calls for expression of interest for interns, volunteers and fellows

**Gender Balance**

- 69% females
- 31% males

---

**FAO IVF Programme Information**

**Introductory Video**

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzp5NgjJ2-dK7BExzARuMG7aAAhFaV9CmU

**Previous IVF e-Updates at FAO Document Library**

http://www.fao.org/documents/search/en/#querystring=JmVuZHN0cmVuZz0x

---

© FAO, 2020

Some rights reserved. This work is available under a [CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/igo/) licence