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## Media Release

### Volunteerism for Development – gaining momentum with Filipino youth

#### The Event

On February 27-28, 2009 the Philippine Normal University (PNU) in Cadiz City hosted the third Youth Empowerment Series for the Millennium Development Goals (YES 4 MDGs).

It covered many topics including:

- the Philippine Progress Report on the MDGs
- volunteerism
- HIV/AIDS prevention
- leadership
- youth entrepreneurship.

The sessions were led by multi-sectoral teams with members from the UN Volunteers programme, the United Nations Associations of the Philippines (UNAP), the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA), and other non-governmental organizations.

When talking about bottom-up efforts in achieving the MDGs Professor Rene C. Romero from the Philippine Normal University in Manila stated emphatically, “Kaya ng’ Pinoy, Kaya Natin ‘to (Filipinos can, we can).” Professor Romero is known as an advocate for sustainable, integrated development rooted in communities.

“Many young people have been raised to be passive and to live in their comfort zones,” said Elvie Jo Robis, Sustainability Program Officer of Zone One Tondo Inc. (ZOTO), in an address to enthusiastic young leaders. “We must put an end to our indifference, open our eyes to social issues and take action.”

John Alexiz Uo, a student from Chiang Kai Shek College, echoed Robis saying “We should recognize the importance of contraceptive use along with the traditional reminder of abstinence from sexual intercourse in the prevention of HIV/AIDS.”

Many attendees expressed support for the Youth Empowerment Series with much positive feedback.

#### Quotes by Youth Empowerment Series attendees

“YES 4 MDGs has increased the volunteer spirits within myself not only to help other people but also to lead other people.” – Marcos P. Melicano, Maritime University in Iloilo

“I realized that how youth can be a great help in this country through voluntary action and leadership that go hand in hand.” – Arnold P. Palencia, Maritime University

#### United Nations Volunteers

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UN Volunteers is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



“It is important for the youth to be involved not only in their schools but also in communities. Being a youth leader myself, we should encourage other students to help the less privileged by rendering our volunteer service to the community wholeheartedly. In this way, we also learn the problems that our community faces.” – Mariegeil S. Milaran, the Philippine Normal University Cadiz

“YES 4 MDGs enabled me to realize our potentials in guiding and empowering others to take action, in helping alleviate global problems through voluntary action.” – Jenie C. Mahilum, Technological University of the Philippines, Visayas

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a set of targets aimed to:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- Achieve universal primary education;
- Promote gender equality and empower women;
- Reduce child mortality;
- Improve maternal health;
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases;
- Ensure environmental sustainability; and
- Global partnership for development.

Endorsed by 189 heads of governments in 2000, the MDGs are a road map for building a better world for all by the year 2015.

The United Nations Volunteers programme is inspired by the conviction that volunteerism can transform the pace and nature of development and by the idea that everyone can contribute their time and energy towards peace and development.

With partners, UNV advocates for volunteerism, integrates volunteerism into development planning and mobilizes volunteers. The enormous potential of volunteerism is an inspiration to UNV and to volunteers around the world. Delivering on that potential is UNV's mission.

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Attached photos

UNV-01 & UNV-02: Participants cleaning up the beach on February 28 as part of YES4MDGs  
UNV-03: Group photo in PNU Cadiz

**To download more YES4MDGs photos for your publications, please visit:**  
<http://www.unv-ph.org/unv4/YES4MDGs.php>