

UNV TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Strengthening the Capacity of National Volunteer Infrastructure for
HIV and AIDS Response In Swaziland

15 DECEMBER 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2011, UNDP working in conjunction with NERCHA and UNAIDS introduced a project aimed at strengthening the national volunteer for HIV and AIDS response. The project was implemented over a three-year period from 2012-2015. The project contributed to the UNDAF 2012-2015 outcome focusing on contributing to ‘reduced new HIV infections and improved quality of life of persons infected and affected by HIV by 2015’.

The purpose for establishing the UNV project was twofold; to build the capacity of CSOs to effectively respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and also to create opportunities for young people to be mentored on different skills (e.g. M&E and Finance) through exposure to the work environment. The establishment of the UNV project was also based on a number of CSO capacity assessments that had been undertaken by different organizations. The assessments had revealed that CSOs could not absorb additional funds due to inadequate systems and capacity gaps in a number of areas, including finance and M&E. Of particular note was the shortage of staff amongst implementing agencies, inadequacy of relevant skills, low morale and high staff turnover.

Initially, the project targeted professionals/skilled individuals but the response was very poor mainly due to the stipend which was not attractive. The focus then changed to recruiting fresh graduates as volunteers from different areas of specialty and placing them with the CSOs

The project came to an end in 2015, and UNDP commissioned an end-of-project evaluation. The overall purpose of the evaluation is to assess, capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of project results and how they have contributed to the broader national HIV response and strengthened organisational capacity.

The results of the evaluation indicate that on the overall, the project has been a huge success in different ways. Firstly, the volunteers gained significant skills and experience through training programs offered under the project as well as through their attachment to the various CSOs. Over 60% of the volunteers were able to secure gainful employment in the public and private sector through the experience they gained working with the CSOs. Notably, the volunteering experience gave the graduates a competitive edge in the labour market and increased their confidence in undertaking work-related tasks. Secondly, the project addressed staff shortages within the CSOs and also provided a pool of potential employees to select from. There are a few cases where some of the CSOs engaged the volunteers in permanent employment. Lastly, the project was a ‘learning curve’ for the country in terms of promoting and institutionalizing volunteerism. It provides lessons on best practice and pitfalls to avoid in implementing a national volunteerism program.

The recommendations emanating from the project are as follows;

- a. Institutions supporting volunteers need to be strengthened to function better.
- b. Graduates have to be balanced with professional volunteers to create an extensive, multi-skilled pool of expertise.
- c. There is need to consider establishing a National Service for school leavers that would present young people an opportunity to experience life and make choices

- d. There is a need for their increased involvement of PHLIV organizations
- e. Employees of organizations participating in the volunteerism program need to be properly informed and made aware that a volunteer will be joining so that they exhibit positive attitudes towards the volunteers.
- f. The organization in-charge for the voluntary scheme should also monitor/follow up on the volunteers even after the voluntary period has finished to ensure that volunteers do eventually get better job opportunities.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS¹

Relevance: The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.

Effectiveness: The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance

Efficiency: A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.

Sustainability: Measures the extent to which benefits are likely to continue, within or outside the project domain, from a particular project or program after GEF assistance/external assistance has come to an end.

Impact: measures changes in human development and people's well-being that are brought about by development initiatives, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

¹ Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP supported, GEF-financed projects, UNDP, 2012

ACRONYMS

AMICAALL	Alliance of Mayors Initiatives for Community Action on AIDS and the Local Level
CANGO	Coordinating Assembly of NGOs
CSO	Civil Society Organization
IDM	Institute of Development and Management
MDGS	Millennium Development Goals
MER	Monitoring and Evaluating for Results
MOEPD	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
MOHUD	Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
MOLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
NERCHA	National Emergency Response Council on HIV & AIDS (NERCHA),
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
RSSC	Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation
SAFAIDS	Southern African HIV&AIDS Information Dissemination Services
SWABCHA	Swaziland Business Coalition on HIV&AIDS
SWAGAA	Swaziland Action Group against Abuse
TSP	Technical Support Programme
WLSA	Women and the Law Southern Africa

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Global and Regional Perspective

Volunteerism, as defined by the United Nations, is an activity that should not be undertaken for financial gain even though some token of appreciation could be offered. An individual should engage in volunteerism out of free-will with an aim to benefit others and society as a whole, including himself/herself (UNV Report Volunteers Report, 2001).

There are a host of benefits accruing from volunteerism including expanding and mobilizing constituencies and effectively engaging people in developmental activities which are instrumental in sustaining livelihoods. The United Nations Volunteer Program has for over 45 years supported human development at a global level working with UN partners by engaging and deploying volunteers worldwide. In carrying out this work, the UNV has created links with government and civil society including UN partners.

The work of the UNV is in line with the 2030 agenda on sustainable development goals which seeks to harness “a healthy and well educated workforce with the knowledge and skills needed for productive full participation in society”. It is estimated that in 2015, over 2000 civil society organizations benefited from UN volunteering in terms of increased capacity and additional new skills and almost 5 million citizens were engaged in 132 countries. Besides working with national actors and communities, the UNV also engages with other volunteer organizations.

UNV’s work has included securing access to basic social services, building community resilience for environment and disaster risk reduction, peace building, youth, capacity building and knowledge and innovation.

USAID Peace Corps and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) are two other key entities working within the volunteerism space. The USAID Peace Corps has been in existence for over 50 years deploying volunteers in 140 countries, mostly placed at community level. Key areas of support include fighting HIV/AIDS, Hunger, protecting the environment and improving access to technology. In as much as communities where volunteers have been placed have benefited immensely from the programmes/support offered, the same can be said about the volunteers themselves who advance successfully in their respective careers with some becoming engineers, scientists, doctors, government officials and extraordinary leaders.

The VSO established in 1958 and now works in 120 countries with over 43,000 volunteers engaged. Volunteers are recruited from all over the world with about a third working in their respective countries. VSO also facilitates south-south cooperation, whereby volunteers from a developing country are recruited to work in another developing country. VSO recruit’s volunteers three types of volunteers; professionals and specialists, youth and corporate. The length of service is 12 months for professionals and specialists and 3 months for the youth.

Another volunteer organization of note is the African Union Youth Volunteer Corps which was launched in 2010. The AUVC recruits and deploys young people across the 54 AU member states. Volunteers work with non-profit entities in the fields of education, health and HIV/AIDS, Peace and Security, ICT, Business and Youth Entrepreneurship and Agriculture and Environment.

I.1 Country Experience - Kenya National Volunteers Programme and the National Youth Service

A National Volunteers Programme was established in Kenya also regarded as a national service programme. The programme addresses three main objectives:

- Creating enriching opportunities for over 30,000 unemployed Kenyan youth
- Promoting national cohesion
- Improving educational outcomes for over 2 million primary aged children

The programme is guided by the National Volunteerism Policy developed in 2015 and led by the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Services. The overall objective of the policy is to provide guidelines on efficient and effective coordination, management and sustenance of volunteerism in Kenya. Categories of volunteers covered within the policy are;

- Youth Volunteers** – young people aged between 18-35 years as enshrined in the constitution.
- Retired Volunteers** – individuals retired from formal employment offering their services voluntarily.
- Online Volunteers** – Individuals or groups of people offering volunteer services virtually.
- Institutional Based Volunteers**– individuals or groups offering volunteer services through organisations or institution
- International Volunteers** – Kenyans and non-Kenyans offering volunteer services in Kenya and abroad
- Diaspora volunteers** – Kenyan citizens living abroad who come to Kenya to offer volunteer services
- Community based volunteers** – individuals or groups that are engaging in volunteer activities informally within their communities
- Children volunteers** – Kenyans below the age of 18 years engaging in volunteer activities under guidance of an adult or institution
- Government volunteer initiatives**
- Professional volunteers** – individuals who are in active formal employment in various sectors and offer their services voluntarily on part time basis.

However, the national service programme targets the youth between the ages of 22-30 years. The programme recruits recent graduates to work in primary schools as Volunteer Graduate Assistants. The graduates are recruited through a highly competitive process and are expected to serve for an uninterrupted period of 1 year. They basically provide education support and are regarded as 'education ambassadors' in nearby communities. Two volunteers are placed in each participating primary school and are paid a stipend of KShs 6000 (approximately US\$59) on a monthly basis

Application is done online and potential candidates are expected to write essays, take online tests and interviewed by an independent and professional panel. Upon recruitment, the volunteers are intensively trained for 3 weeks to improve their job skills and prepare them for placement.

On the other hand, the Kenyan Government has a National Youth Service programme in place. The NYS was established by an Act of Parliament in 1964 with a dual purpose of; 1) creating a pool of technical, disciplined and organized human resource to undertake national development programmes and 2) alleviating youth unemployment in both formal and informal sectors by providing skills necessary for employment while promoting national cohesion.

The programme was re-launched in 2013 by the President as a means of connecting with and encouraging young people to seek vocation considering that they are the future of our Nation. The NYS is actually under the Presidency in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning.

Originally, the programme recruited 4000 youth at a time but this number is projected to grow to 20,000. Youth recruited under the programme have participated in different projects including dam construction, improving informal settlements (building ablution blocks, access roads and pathways, ensuring food security and placement of fish tanks), vector control exercises and housing. Youth also receive paramilitary, diploma training, artisan and craft training.

1.2 Lessons for Swaziland

Swaziland could draw a number of lessons from the Kenyan experience considering the two models of volunteerism. This could be from the design, implementation to management of a national volunteer scheme. Notably, the NVP targets the education sector which means the Kenyan Government noted a gap that needed to be filled as part of strengthening primary education. The recruitment process is also rigorous and competitive ensuring that the best graduates are identified and placed in areas of need. The volunteers are also assisted in transitioning to the labour market by recommending them to potential employers. Further, their continuation is formally recognized by the government which acts as a 'badge of pride' and an 'indicator' to potential employers of a committed and experienced individual.

On the other hand, the NYS has a broader mandate but notably, the key lesson is the production of a disciplined and multi-skilled workforce. The NYS recruits school leavers and assists them to focus in terms of life and career choice.

The implementation of these programmes in Kenya ensures that most of the youth are engaged in productive and life-changing activities setting them on the path of success.

Once volunteers complete their one-year service, they formally graduate and are awarded a certificate. The names of the Volunteers who successfully complete the programme are gazetted and their service recognized.

Following the graduation ceremony, many Volunteers begin their internships, mentoring opportunities, jobs or start their own businesses. The programme also provides access to employers where volunteers attend a Career Fair and Capacity Building Workshop. Volunteers are also trained and guided on career development during the event. Potential employers, based on assessment of previous performance of the volunteers, then offer internship, mentoring and job opportunities.

I.3 Volunteerism – The case of Swaziland

a. Current Situation

Volunteerism in Swaziland has been in existence for over three decades and has taken different forms. Community health workers represent one of the most common volunteer groups.

CHWs perform a broad range of activities including preventive counselling, health education, behaviour change communication and health promotion, as well as screening, treatment and referral for a range of diseases (malaria, pneumonia, diarrhoea, neonatal sepsis, tuberculosis, HIV, among others). In addition, they help mobilize communities for vaccinations and other community health activities.

The RHM program includes 5,200 community health workers who are recruited from the communities in which they serve. RHMs are paid a monthly stipend of 350 Swazi Lilangeni (USD 22.30 not adjusting for purchasing power parity), and, according to the National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2008-2013, are responsible for between 15-20 households [13]. The program operates in all of Swaziland's four administrative regions and is intended to cover all households in the nation [13]. A recent UNICEF report estimates that the RHM program achieves a coverage of 80% of households in Swaziland [14]. In terms of job responsibilities, RHMs conduct a range of activities including (i) referring individuals to facility-based care, (ii) disseminating basic information on health, hygiene, and dietary behaviour, (iii) encouraging basic healthcare uptake, (iv) monitoring basic paediatric health indicators for children under 5, including weight and height measurements, and (v) promoting adult literacy [15]

Other health motivators include home based cares, adherence treatment supporters and community volunteers serving as liaison between clinics and communities. They also conduct health promotion and education, defaulter tracing, first aid, home based care and other primary health care services. These motivators are mostly supported by non-state actors who sometimes pay them a stipend or just cover transport and food costs.

Another group of health motivators working at community level includes expert clients, mentor mothers, expert clients, peer educators, community based communication agents, adherence officers, male circumcision recruiters cough officers, lay counsellors, social counsellors and community based educators. This group receives additional specialised training and are remunerated by partner organizations.

Perhaps a prominent group of social counsellors is Lihlombe Lekukhalela (shoulder to cry on) which is a voluntary group that refers/links abused children to the police, traditional leaders, social workers, medical doctors and teachers for immediate attention. There are approximately 10,000 LLs currently working in all four regions of Swaziland. (UNICEF Evaluation of LL, 2014)

Non-Governmental Organizations including the Family Life Association of Swaziland and the Baylor Clinic have introduced teen Clubs where the adolescents and the youth are empowered to live positively and successfully transition into adulthood.

Several local private sector companies in the services (e.g. banks, telecommunications, media) and manufacturing sector offer student internship programs. These programs provide an opportunity for students to hone their skills and expand their knowledge in their field of study.

b. Education and Youth Unemployment

In Swaziland, education does not appear to help narrow the youth labour market. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security (2013/14) found that youth unemployment rate in Swaziland is twice as high as the unemployment rate in any other age groups, pointing to an over-supply and labour underutilization of relatively low-skilled, inexperienced young workers. According to the survey

52 % of the youth were unemployed by 2013/14. Despite the fact that this was a decline of 12% from 64% in 2010, the figures are still relatively high and a cause for concern. The age group 15-24 years also comprised the highest proportion of the working population at 33% followed by the age group 25-34 years at 25.8%. This presents a huge problem in the near future given that the youth are the country's future leaders and unless they are involved in and incorporated into the development agenda, then all previous positive progress made by the country to increase GDP per capita growth will be nullified by an unemployed populace.

There are a number of colleges and universities providing different courses in several disciplines in technical, commercial and vocational training. The University of Swaziland (UNISWA) offers degrees in agriculture, nursing, commerce, education, humanities law and sciences, as well as part-time courses in business. The Swaziland College of Technology (SCOT) provides diploma and certificate courses in building, business, education and engineering; and the Gwamile Vocational and Commercial Training Institute (VOCTIM) in Matsapha also offers business and technical training. There are also two new institutions that have recently been established; Limkokwing University (provides courses on business management, ICT, journalism) and the Swaziland Christian University (provides medically related courses). The Good Shepherd Nursing School and the Nazarene College (recently upgraded to a University) also provide medically related courses. Aspiring primary school teachers are trained at the William Pitcher College, Nazarene Teacher Training College and Ngwane Teacher Training College. The Government also provides scholarships to students to study outside the country in South African Universities, Lesotho, Botswana and Tanzania. All these institutions combined produce thousands of graduates on an annual basis who find employment in the formal and informal sectors

There are also many other colleges scattered in the Mbabane-Manzini corridor also producing hundreds of graduates yearly. However, many more remain unemployed whilst others opt to seek for employment outside the country.

With all these efforts to provide training opportunities, it still remains to be seen if the training addresses domestic labour market demands. According to a World Bank (2014) report, the current technical and vocational education training (TVET) is not aligned with labour market demand. The same report identified tourism, manufacturing, mining and food processing as key sectors that could drive the economy and this means skills have to be produced to meet the needs of these sectors.

Although adult Swazis with tertiary education are less likely to be unemployed than less educated adults, the same is not true for the youth as there persist high rates of youth unemployment which points to challenges with school-to-work transition Brixiová, Kangoye, & Fakudze (2013). The study by Brixiová et al (2013) also found that tertiary education increased the likelihood of employment in the public sector vs unemployment, as well as

increased the chances of the youth to work in the formal private sector. Primary and secondary education raised the likelihood of being self-employed rather than unemployed. The skills diversity mix has been largely dominated by academic skills with little emphasis on technical and vocational skills. The country's educational systems has produced graduates who are 'job-seekers' mainly in the formal sectors as opposed to feeding into entrepreneurship and industry needs. As such, there is a general lack of Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) skills which have the propensity to create employment, foster innovation and meet specific industry needs. Generally, the skill sets that are available are semi-professional and mainly an oversupply of academic skills which do not necessarily address the industry needs of other sectors in the real economy.

Another notable gap is the lack of opportunities for graduates to practice their newly gained skills before transitioning into the labour market. This makes graduates unattractive to potential employers who prefer candidates with a few years of experience. As such, initiatives on volunteerism provide a leeway for may graduates to learn on the job and improve their competitiveness in the labour market.

I.4 Implementation of the UNV Project in Swaziland

In 2011, UNDP working in conjunction with NERCHA and UNAIDS introduced a project aimed at strengthening the national volunteer for HIV and AIDS response. The project was implemented over a three year period from 2012-2015. The project contributed to the UNDAF 2012-2015 outcome focusing on contributing to 'reduced new HIV infections and improved quality of life of persons infected and affected by HIV by 2015'.

I.4.1 Key Issue

Initially the programme was conceptualized as a mechanism to engage experienced professionals who will contribute to CSO capacity building. Various assessments by UNDP, NERCHA and CANGO had revealed that most CSOs working in the HIV/AIDS field had various capacity constraints. The Technical Capacity Needs Assessment conducted outlined the following constraints faced by CSOs

- a) Weak managerial and technical capacity among implementing agencies.
- b) Critical shortages in qualified human resources, particularly clinical and support staff in the health sector, NGO managers and implementers.
- c) Low morale and high staff turnover within implementing agencies, which undermines the impact of the training being provided as trained staff quickly move on leaving organizational gaps.
- d) Slow disbursement of resources, particularly within prevention interventions, which led to budgets being up to 60% under-spent.

Further, programme activities implemented by CSOs were not directly responding to demand and there was duplication of activities between them. It was also recognized that there was no sustainable mechanism for the coordination of technical support locally. Hence the volunteer project intended to address the aforementioned gaps

The purpose for establishing the UNV project was twofold; to build the capacity of CSOs to effectively respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and also to create opportunities for young

people to be mentored on different skills (e.g M&E and Finance) through exposure to the work environment. The establishment of the UNV project was also based on a number of CSO capacity assessments that had been undertaken by different organizations. The assessments had revealed that CSOs could not absorb additional funds due to inadequate systems and capacity gaps in a number of areas, including finance and M&E. Of particular note was the shortage of staff amongst implementing agencies, inadequacy of relevant skills, low morale and high staff turnover. This resulted in significant reduction of the absorption rate with under expenditures reaching 60% (TSP, 2010).

In light of these capacity challenges, a Technical Support Plan was developed in 2010 to support implementation of the National Strategic Framework and in particular outline a systematic approach to build the capacity of CSOs and all agencies involved in the implementation of the NSF.

It is around the same time that the idea of establishing a volunteer program was conceptualized to complement the TSP and address the capacity gaps amongst the CSOs. Initially, the project targeted professionals/skilled individuals but the response was very poor mainly due to the stipend which was not attractive. The focus then changed to recruiting fresh graduates as volunteers from different areas of specialty and placing them with the CSOs. A UNV project document addendum was then developed which captured the new approach to recruit fresh graduates as national volunteers. This was formalized in a memorandum of understanding which was endorsed by UNAIDS, UNDP and NERCHA whilst IDM was allocated the responsibility of managing the volunteer program. UNAIDS and the EU provided support for the recruitment of 10 graduates whilst UNDP/UNV Bonn project supported the recruitment of the other ten graduates.

The recruitment of fresh graduates was a worthwhile move given the relatively high HIV/AIDS prevalence and unemployment rate amongst the youth. Notably though, when the recruitment process was undertaken in early 2011, most of those who applied under the program were unqualified and inexperienced hence the decision to target fresh graduates. However, this could be taken as a strong indication of the magnitude of unemployment amongst the youth in Swaziland (and to some extent denotes the level of need amongst the youth to be engaged productively). The recent spike in new HIV infections amongst the youth points to the urgent need to also consider engagement of all classes of youth, irrespective of their qualifications.

The UNV project was introduced during a period of transition amongst CSOs linked to significant reductions in funding due to changes in global funding trends. As such, there was an increased demand for volunteers during the 2011-2012 period as many CSOs had to scale down operations and lost staff. In as much as this situation was unanticipated, it may have created a conducive environment for the UNV project to thrive and make it more relevant.

The key areas of focus of the project were therefore to;

- a) Strengthen the capacity of various multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS response coordinating bodies and implementing agencies at national, regional and chiefdom levels to improve service delivery through increased transparency, probity and accountability

- b) Create a conducive environment which will facilitate the attainment of the other MDGs

The project outputs were to;

1. Enhance the management and coordination systems and structures of CSOs in order to improve their response to HIV/AIDS at all levels
2. Strengthen the environment for community based volunteering for fighting HIV/AIDS
3. Enhance partnerships, cooperation and collaboration in fighting HIV/AIDS
4. Strengthen the capacity of national volunteer infrastructure for HIV/AIDS response

1.4.2 Project Management

The project commenced in 2011) and it was initially managed by NERCHA whilst CANGO took over management in 2015, the final year of implementation.

NERCHA led the implementation of the project during the 2011-2014 period working with UNDP, UNAIDS-TSP and UNV International. This role suited NERCHA given its responsibility in the leadership and coordination of the national response.

At inception, the Institute of Development and Management (IDM) was formally engaged to manage the project and had the responsibility of building the capacity of CSOs through offering training programmes on M&E, programme management, organizational development, and finance and grants management. IDM also had the responsibility of recruiting the volunteers and facilitating payment of their monthly payment.

Through the UNV program, a partnership was entered into with IDM to train Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) which was supported by Bristol Myers Squibb. The responsibility of IDM under the partnership was to cover tuition fees, lunch and the project covered registration fees and transport allowances for a maximum of 15 participants for each training module. NERCHA would cover extra costs in cases where the participants exceeded fifteen in number. The UNV project also covered other trainings which were not covered under the BMS support. IDM also had the responsibility of recruiting, re-skilling and mentoring national volunteers particularly on M&E and Financial management to enable CSOs to deliver on their obligations by the funders.

However, NERCHA re-claimed the project management responsibility which was eventually given to CANGO in 2014. According to the 2014 annual report, the discontinuation of IDM from the project was due to their non-compliance with reporting. The report however is not explicit with regard to this stance and despite discussions with several respondents, no further detail was obtained on this issue.

NERCHA's role in project management was constrained by the increased workload of the project coordinator which inadvertently affected its performance hence CANGO was engaged to assume this responsibility. CANGO being the umbrella organization of NGOs in operating in Swaziland, was identified as the most suitable institution to take over this responsibility. CANGO's mandate is to build the capacity of its members, coordinate CSO

activities and support advocacy efforts. As such, the UNV project fitted well with CANGO's mandate.

Notably, the project document outlined an elaborate coordination structure governed by a board at the apex and several key institutions at national, regional and community level. One of the key functions of the board was guiding the work of the project manager and approval of annual work plans /quarterly plans. The annual work-plan was derived from the project schedule but it is unclear to what extent the project board executed its responsibility of reviewing and approving it. Also, it had been anticipated that there would be links created with other key actors including the MOEPD, MOH and MHUD but these appear not to have been established. There were several attempts made to involve government but these did not bear any positive results until the project ended.

Regional and community structures were also not actively involved in the overall coordination of the project. It could thus be surmised that the project coordination remained mostly at national level and confined within NERCHA, UN and CSO structures

CSO beneficiaries were also included as part of the coordination structure. According to the 2012 annual report, there were at least ten CSOs that benefited from the project, namely; Swaziland Business Coalition on HIV&AIDS (SWABCHA), Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA), Women And the Law Southern Africa (WLSA), Church Forum, Swaziland National Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (SWANNEPHA), Save the Children, Alliance of Mayors Initiatives for Community Action on AIDS and the Local Level (AMICAALL), National Emergency Response Council on HIV & AIDS (NERCHA), NERCHA Information Centre and Southern African HIV&AIDS Information Dissemination Services (SAFAIDS).

However, a discussion with WLSA revealed that they did not actually benefit from the project due to organizational capacity issues (mainly lack of funding) which affected their operations and hence their ability to fully engage the volunteers placed with them. As such, the volunteers spent hardly a month with the organization and thereafter left. This points to the need to conduct an initial assessment of CSO beneficiaries before placing volunteers to ensure optimal utilization of resources.

1.5 Evaluation Purpose

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to assess, capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of project results and how they have contributed to the broader national HIV response and strengthened organisational capacity.

The evaluation will specifically;

- i. Measure the impact of the UNV/UNDP project on strengthening civil society's capacity to contribute to the national response.
- ii. Provide substantive input and direction to the formulation of future programmes and project strategies including scaling up of national voluntarism in Swaziland.
- iii. Establish the extent and impact of capacity building initiatives undertaken in order to strengthen civil society's capacities.
- iv. Assess policy requirements and implication for the establishment for a national volunteering scheme in Swaziland.

- v. Establish the strengths and limitation of the programme and make appropriate recommendations.
- vi. Document the National Volunteer programme as a case study for advocacy purposes for establishing a national programme on voluntarism.

The valuation seeks to answer three key questions;

- i. To what extent has the project built the capacity of CSOs to contribute to the national response?
- ii. What are the key challenges, successes and lessons learned from implementation of the project?
- iii. What policies and strategies are needed to scale up the project and fully establish a national volunteerism scheme in Swaziland?

I.6 Methodology

This is a summative evaluation which seeks to determine the level of success and extent to which program goals and objectives have been met. It is expected that this evaluation will contribute to the knowledge gap of what has worked well and also what has not worked well.

The evaluation will also consider, at a broader level, the inputs (budgets, staff including management and Volunteers), key activities implemented (e.g. training, strategy development support, funding proposals support), Outputs and targets and the outcomes/impacts (i.e. changes observed as a result of project implementation).

Further, the following criteria (underpinning the key questions) will be applied when undertaking the evaluation; relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of development efforts.

Primary and secondary data were collected utilizing three main methods

I.6.1 Literature review

This involved obtaining and producing a detailed analysis of secondary information on related to the project e.g. Annual reports, review of CSO reports, Activity reports etc.

I.6.2 Key Informant in-depth interviews

The interview of key informants was preceded by the development of a guiding questionnaire. The questions were a mixture of open ended and closed ended questions. Key informant interviews comprised focal persons from funding agencies, implementers, CSOs, Government Ministries and the Private Sector. A total of 11 respondents from lead agencies and CSOs were interviewed.

These included UNDP, UNAIDS, NERCHA, CANGO, IDM, Church Forum, SWABCHA, Save the Children, Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Society, WLSA and NERCHA Information Centre.

Information was also collected from the volunteers through administering the questionnaire to individual volunteers. Purposive sampling was used to select respondents.

1.6.3 Focus Group Discussions

A small group of about 5 volunteers were interviewed together to explore their opinions in depth as well as determine similar or divergent perspectives on the implementation of the project. Discussions sought to determine their perceptions on what has worked well including areas for improvements and if they have observed changes in the project as a whole, whether positive or negative

Generally, questions focused on the areas mentioned below;

- Were stated outcomes or outputs achieved?
- *• What progress has been made toward achieving stated goals and outcomes?
- What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended outcomes? i.e.
- To what extent have the project contributed to the project goal and outcomes?
- Has the strategy, policy and approach has been appropriate and effective?
- What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?

1.6.4 Documentation of Best Practice/Lessons Learned

The documentation of best practice/lessons learned was done concurrently with the desk review, individual and group discussions. There will be specific questions on what the respondent thinks has worked well, lessons learnt and overcoming challenges. The key output of the documentation is a case study on the Swaziland Volunteer Program which will be used for advocacy purposes.

1.6.5 Data Analysis and Report writing

The study is mostly qualitative in nature and the content analysis method was employed due to the nature of information that was collected through desk review and interviews. This method is suitable for this study since it involves transforming written text and transcribing interviews to reveal performance of the project as a whole.

The evaluation has therefore considered the extent to which all the above-stated strategies, approaches, processes and activities have been implemented. This has been done against the backdrop of the evaluation goals, objectives and results and resources framework as discussed in the sections below.

CHAPTER 2: FINDINGS

This section begins by discussing the project approach and results. It then presents findings from discussions with key informants (UNVs and CSO representatives) which are discussed under the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. This discussion also makes reference to secondary information.

2.1 Project Approach and Results

The project was designed, to strengthen the capacity of civil society organisation to effectively respond to the impacts of the national response to HIV/AIDS through an enhanced volunteer programme. It has been recognized that volunteers contribute significantly to the multi-sectoral response to HIV/AIDS and there were even greater benefits to be realized if the programme was delivered in a systematic and holistic approach aimed at strengthening national volunteer's capacities knowledge and skills. At the same time, the project focused on strengthening the capacity of CSO involved in the multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS response in the areas of organizational development, financial management systems and monitoring and evaluation.

The project adopted various strategies for implementation. One of the key strategies was ensuring that there is integration and institutionalization of volunteering for development through the involvement of traditional structures, CSOs and Volunteer Involving Organizations (VIOs). Other strategies and approaches included adopting the rights based approach to development, capacity development (training of trainers, sensitization workshops and seminars, skills transfer through mentoring, on the job training and knowledge sharing), communication, partnerships and networking and resource mobilization.

NERCHA and CANGO, provided support from a strategic level working through national and regional levels.

In terms of sustainability, the project aimed to build on existing capacities and structures through the implementation of feasible and desirable activities from a financial, technological and human resource perspective. A set of key indicators were put in place for monitoring and evaluating project implementation. These are presented in the table below together with level of performance.

Table 1: Performance against key indicators

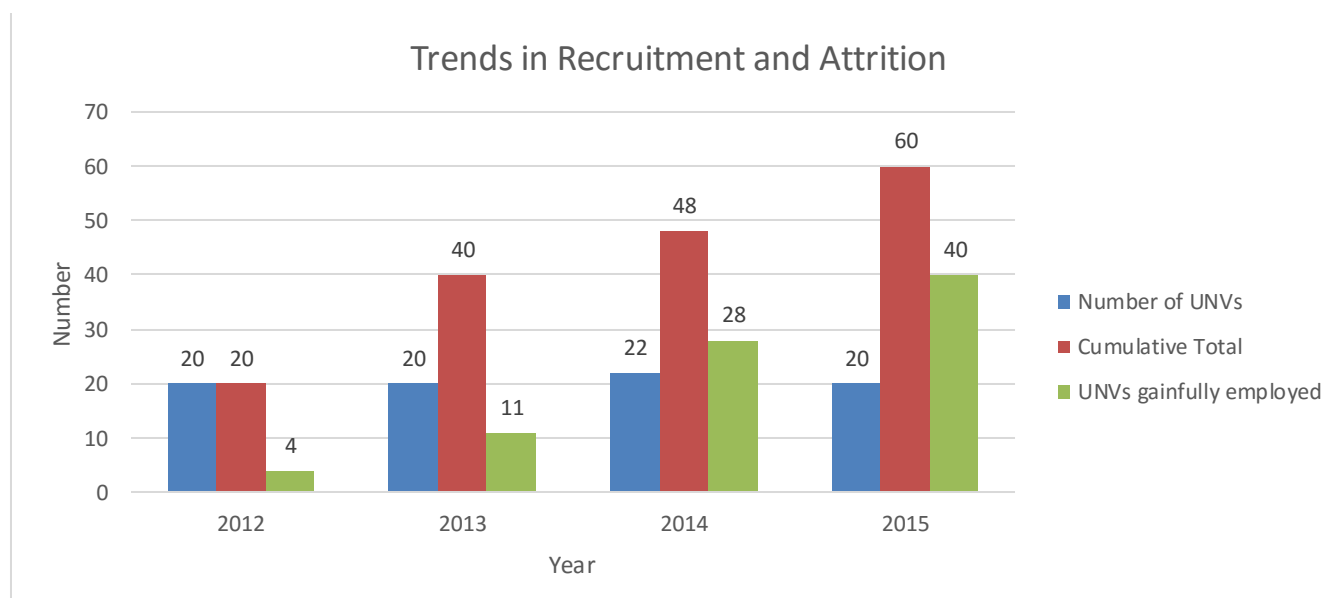
Key Indicator	Status	Comments
Number of coordinating system and structures equipped with tools and skills to contribute to the national response to HIV/AIDS by 2012	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CANGO's capacity strengthened through CSO Coordination Framework• A coordination plan for Swaziland HIV/AIDS Consortium (SHACO) was developed;
Number of sectors receiving training and mentorship in community based volunteering and applying the skills gained	0	

Number of sectors that know and utilize national coordination mechanisms in fighting HIV/AIDS	3	CSO, Public Sector and Private Sector(CANGO, SHACO, NERCHA, SWABCHA)
Number of partnerships between UNV and VIOs and training sessions with volunteer involving organizations	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships with SWABCHA, Save the Children, SWAGAA, AMICAALL, SWANNEPHA,SAFAIDS, NERCHA Info Centre, WLSA, NERCHA and Church Forum Trainings conducted in project management, M&E, Finance, Leadership skills, resource mobilization, general management and governance
Number of CSOs and VIOs practicing effective volunteer management in responding to HIV/AIDS	9	SWABCHA, Save the Children, SWAGAA, AMICAALL, SWANNEPHA,SAFAIDS, NERCHA Info Centre, NERCHA and Church Forum

A total of 60 volunteers were recruited over the course of the project. The project maintained at least 20 volunteers on an annual basis i.e. accounting for attrition. There was a high turnover rate of volunteers with most of them securing gainful employment whilst others left to further their studies.

An analysis of the 2012-2015 annual reports revealed that at least a total of 79 volunteers gained fulltime employment with local and international organisations based in the country. The organizations include SRA, ICAP, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, Ministry of Finance, MTN, Central Bank, Save the Children, AMICAALL, Baylor Clinic, SWABCHA, Lusweti and FLAS, amongst others.

Figure I: Trends in recruitment and attrition



On the other hand some volunteers stayed on (permanently engaged) with the CSOs to which they were attached e.g. SWABCHA, Save the Children and AMICAALL.

2.2 Outcome of Discussions with Key Informants

2.2.1 Relevance

The project recruited an international volunteer and national volunteers to work with the CSOs. The International volunteer served as an organisational development expert and focused on strengthening CSO's capacity. According to the 2012 annual report, there were thirteen Global Fund sub recipients who benefited from this expertise. The international volunteer also provided support to the implementing agencies and also guided the work of the national volunteers. However, the international volunteer was only available during the 2012-2013 period.

On the other hand, National volunteers were recruited and placed with several CSOs working primarily in the areas of Finance, Monitoring and Evaluation and ICT.

Indeed, all respondents interviewed concurred that the project was very much relevant as it mainly addressed the critical staff shortages and at the same time provided an opportunity to the UNVs to acquire much needed skills to make them more competitive in the labour market.

Whilst some respondents noted that the intentions for establishing the UNV project were good as it gave exposure and experience to young people, others observed that there is a need to also engage professional volunteers who with their expertise would directly contribute to CSO capacity building.

“The concept is excellent but the hindsight is that the young people are ‘poached’ as soon as they gain skills and knowledge”

NGO Director

Also, some respondents observed that there is a need to improve screening especially because most of the volunteers are fresh from college and lack the required experience and knowledge hence others would be effective whilst others would tend to be less effective and be more of a burden. Nonetheless, the project had intended to provide them with the requisite experience so they are marketable for paid employment

On the other hand, there were instances where volunteers did not feel challenged or as part of the team where they were placed. It would seem that some of the CSOs had not prepared themselves to receive and productively engage the volunteers placed with them.

Nonetheless, respondents from lead agencies, CSOs and volunteers themselves strongly felt that the project is highly relevant for Swaziland and needs to be scaled up and sustained.

UNV CASE STUDY No.1 - MS BUYISILE SHONGWE

Ms Buyisile Shongwe is a former UN Volunteer holding a Bachelor of Arts in Social Science (Demography and Geography, Environmental Science and Development which she obtained in 2012 from the University of Swaziland. She did her primary and secondary education at Evelyn Baring.

Whilst undertaking her tertiary education, Buyisile aspired to be a Demographer or Geography Teacher. Unfortunately both options did not materialize for different reasons, one of them being that she did not have funding to undergo the mandatory one year training to qualify as a teacher.

Buyisile was recruited in the UNV project in 2012 after she had applied to NERCHA for a job. She went through a rigorous interview process with 30 other aspirants. She passed her interview and was recruited to work as a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. Gaining new skills and knowledge, having a

passion for working with people, being an agent for change, helping those in need and trying out new things are some of the factors that drove Buyisile to participate in volunteerism.

Following recruitment, she participated in a training with other volunteers and was then placed at Church Forum on HIV & AIDS in Swaziland with four other volunteers.



Pic 1: Group photo of UNVs at a training

The Church Forum is a mother body for the 5 Church bodies in Swaziland and Buyisile's responsibility was to monitor the League of churches (Zion churches). The big challenge she faced was that the League of Churches had no offices and she only got to meet them once during the introductory session. Sometimes she accompanied the Early Childhood Care & Development Coordinator to the field when he visited the Neighborhood Care Points (NCPs). After 6 months she was given a project to handle which was funded by PEPFAR, to train 40 church leaders from the League of Churches on Gender and Gender Based Violence.

Buyisile attended various training workshops during her tenure at the Church Forum and these include

Monitoring & Evaluation and Results Based Management sponsored by UNDP, Early Childhood Care & Development sponsored by OSISA and Gender, sponsored by SWAAGA.



Pic 2: Buyisile receiving a certificate on Result based management

In April 2013 she started volunteering at **Acts of Faith** which is an affiliate of the Church Forum. A total of 3 staff members had resigned from **Acts of Faith** and they requested for volunteers at Church Forum and Buyisile volunteered to assist the organization. She would be at the Church Form for 3 days in a week and be at Acts of Faith the other 2 days. At Acts of Faith she was the M&E officer, monitoring 25 churches, 65 orphaned and vulnerable children and 25 care-givers who provided Home Based Care to people living with HIV & AIDS. One of her key tasks was to produce monthly and quarterly reports. In January 2014 Acts of Faith enrolled Buyisile in an international exchange volunteer program, fully funded by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), an organization based in the US and Canada. For 5 months she prepared for the exchange program doing medical tests, application for international passport, application for visa and orientation about life overseas. The agreement was that she would go

and serve as an exchange volunteer and upon her return Acts of Faith would hire her as a permanent M&E officer.

In August 2014 she joined the International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP) and was placed in Wichita, Kansas, USA. This was a one year program with a stipend of \$80 a month paid by MCC. There was a one week orientation where all the 50 volunteers from different parts of the world were oriented about life and rules in the US and Canada. After the week-long orientation they left to their different placement locations to stay with host families who would provide all their needs. Buyisile stayed with the Orr family.



Pic 3: Buyisile with her host family, the Scott, Shirley and Gloria Orr.

She was also placed in a refugee ministry called **Episcopal Wichita Area Refugee Ministry (EWARM)** to serve and offer her skills during the course of her one year attachment



Pic 4 & 5 : Volunteering at EWARM

She carried out various activities including data entry for new arrivals and refugees who were now citizens of the US, manning the reception desk, welcoming new arrivals, apartment set-up, nursery, etc. She finished her term in 3 August 2015 and returned to Swaziland.

Upon her return she went back to work as at Acts of Faith as a Program officer for Support Groups of HIV infected and affected people formed by the organization.

Through volunteerism, Buyisile gained extensive knowledge and skills in the following areas; proposal writing and developing a logical framework, data collection, data entry, data coding, data cleaning and data analysis; Report writing; Microsoft Excel; Formulation of data collection tools and Strategic planning.

Buyisile had developed a passion for M&E but unfortunately there was already an M&E officer hired when she returned so she did not stay long in her new position at Acts of Faith.

Currently, she is a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at **Swaziland National Network of People Living with HIV & AIDS (SWANNEPHA)**. She monitors the organization's activities in the 4 regions of the country. Presently, there is the Health and Mobility in the Mining Sector of Southern Africa (PHAMESA) project aimed to maximize access to services which will improve the health of community members especially migrant mine workers, Ex-mine workers and their families at

Zombodze, Matsanjeni and Somntongo. She works with the regional Coordinator and 214 change agents, who collect data in the field which she then captures, analyses and reports on.

She further provides support to the MaxART project in the Hhohho region as well as the Global Fund project on mapping of support groups for people infected and affected by HIV in the Shiselweni Region.

2.2.2 Effectiveness

a. Recruitment and Placement

To a large extent, the recruitment and placement of volunteers was done in a transparent and accountable manner. Perhaps the shortcoming was on the advertising of job vacancies as most volunteers claim to have heard about the opportunity through word of mouth from their friends, colleagues or lecturers whilst others voluntarily submitted applications and got placements.

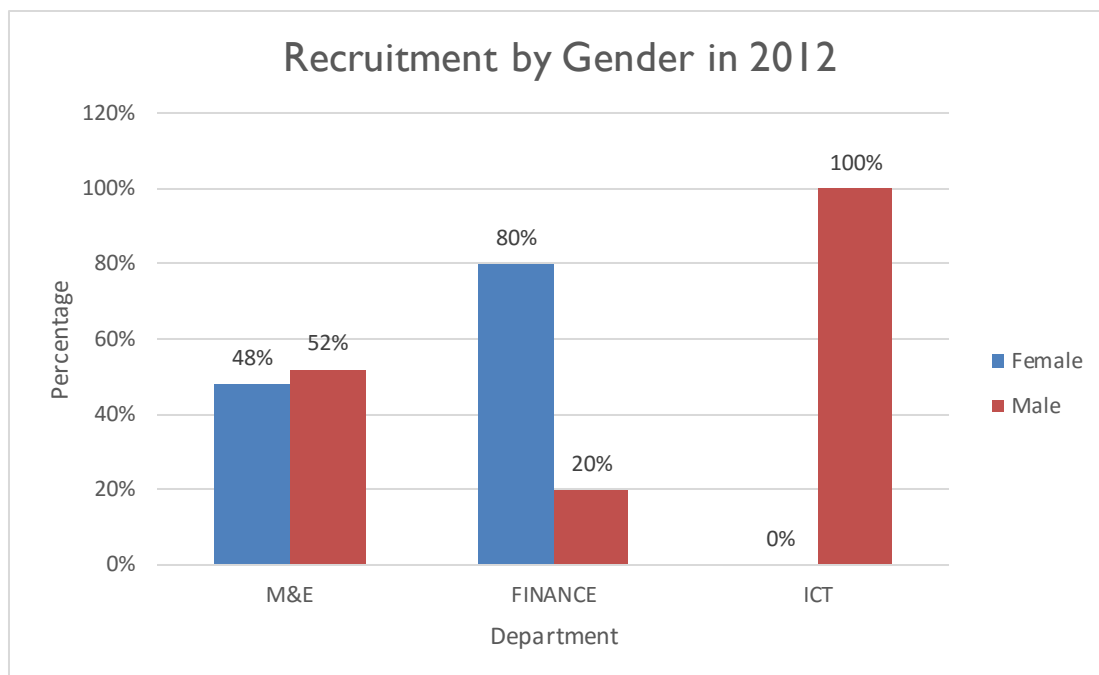
Upon hearing about this opportunity, aspiring volunteers submitted applications and they were invited for interviews administered jointly by the lead agencies i.e. NERCHA, CANGO/IDM and UNDP. Interviews would normally be oral and written. CSOs would then select from the pool of recommended volunteers as per their requirements. Some CSOs would select three recommended candidates and administer their own interviews before selecting the ideal candidate.

Once a volunteer is selected, they would be taken to the respective CSO for formal introductions and given TORs/ job description. However, this appears to have been happening on an ad hoc basis as some volunteers would not be formally introduced where they were placed and they would work without clear job descriptions.

An analysis of the CANGO UNV database, in terms of gender, shows that females comprised 54% of the total number of volunteers. It is unclear though if there were deliberate efforts made at recruitment stage to encourage applications from females given the higher proportion.

A further analysis of revealed that there were 4 times more females than males working in Finance whilst on the other there were no females working in ICT. This is presented in Figure 1 below;

Figure 2: Recruitment by Gender 2012



M&E had the highest number of volunteers (67%) followed by Finance at 27%. ICT had the least number of volunteers at 6%

c. Training

The training component of the project is perhaps the most successful one especially with regard to the number and range of trainings offered to CSOs and the volunteers. The trainings intended to improve the skills and knowledge of the volunteers so that they are able to execute their duties where they were placed. In the earlier stages of the project, IDM had the responsibility of recruiting the graduates and taking them through a structured training program with the intention of acquainting them with their new roles. Training modules that were designed comprised General Management, Project Management, Financial Management, Leadership, Governance, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation and mentoring. All the 20 graduates recruited at the project inception underwent this training.

During the course of the project complementary trainings were conducted to enhance the capacities of the volunteers and these are in the area of monitoring and evaluation, project management and resource mobilization, financial management, data management and results-based management.

The types of complementary trainings and target group are summarized in the table below;

Table I: Summary of trainings conducted over project life

Type of training	Number trained			Target Group
	Male	Female	Total	
2012 Trainings				
1. Financial Management			5	Representatives of CSOs and government
2. Governance			11	Representatives of CSOs and government
3. Monitoring and Evaluation			25	Representatives of CSOs and government
4. General Management			13	Representatives of CSOs and government
5. Leadership			10	Representatives of CSOs and government
6. Resource Mobilization			14	Representatives of CSOs and government
7. Project Management			27	Representatives of CSOs and government
2013 Trainings				
8. Gender and Human Rights	28	84	112	Public Sector, CSOs, Private sector (SWABCHA) and National Volunteers.
9. Results Based Management	9	19	38	CSOs and National Volunteers
10. Project management Cycle	10	16	26	AMICAALL staff
11. Monitoring and Evaluation	8	7	15	National M&E Volunteers
2014 Trainings				
12. eNSF 2014 – 2018, corporate governance principles, advocacy role in the national response.			17	Swaziland Association of Visually Impaired Persons board members

In addition to the trainings reflected in the table above, the volunteers would be oriented on volunteerism as soon as they were recruited. JICA supported trainings on M&E and also assisted with the development of tools.

From where data was disaggregated according to gender, it is apparent that there were more females who benefited from these trainings compared to males. The proportion of females benefiting from the trainings ranged from 50% to 75%.

Specific details on the number of trainings including beneficiaries were not reflected in the annual report and hence not included in the table above.

d. Job Execution

As mentioned prior, after completion of the recruitment process, volunteers would be introduced to the respective organizations and oriented on the job based on the TORs.

A discussion with respondents though revealed that results were mixed in as far as the execution of tasks was concerned. Some volunteers took up their roles with eagerness and vigour, showing a willingness to learn and contributing to the organization's goals. However, in other cases some of the volunteers had difficulty acclimatizing to the work environment and remained idle most of the time or were just not effective. In some instances, volunteers would struggle with work and this was mostly due to inability to apply skills acquired through tertiary education.

There were also instances where others found the work environment challenging whilst some failed or refused to comply with organizational values especially in faith based CSOs. In one particular case, an M&E volunteer absconded work (left without notice) complaining of pay and lack of professional growth. Of course in some cases it was not the fault of the volunteer

“I was recruited as a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer under AMICAAL Manzini. I was working in the office mainly but I would travel to the communities that were supported by the organisation to review data collection tools and to monitor if the users understood the tools and used them correctly”

UNV Respondent

as some CSOs did not furnish volunteers with the required job description. As such, volunteers would only be active during trainings, workshops and meetings. CSOs had no funding to absorb the volunteers.

Generally, most volunteers were placed in the Finance and M&E departments and below are some examples of tasks executed from some of the volunteer respondents

On the overall, CSOs observed that most volunteers executed their tasks effectively and gained experience which gave them a competitive edge in the market hence many of them went on to secure highly marketable jobs.

e. Coaching and Mentoring

CSOs had the responsibility of coaching and mentoring volunteers that were placed with

“I helped the organisation in terms of writing a proposal for a survey that they wanted to do to evaluate their Home based care projects to find out if it was effective and to identify gaps to implementing such a program in the urban sector”

UNV Respondent

“I was posted at CANGO as an M&E Volunteer under the Programmes/MER unit. I was given a job description which outlined my roles and responsibilities as a Volunteer. On a daily basis I was involved in routine data collection for both the organization and its Implementing Partners (IPs). Here I would do data entry, basic analysis and reports. I also participated in a number of capacity building initiatives (MER Trainings and or One-on-One interventions) targeting IPs where I was both a Facilitator/Participant. I also helped IPs design, monitor and evaluate their interventions among other things. I found all these rewarding and very interesting”.

UNV Respondent

I gave support to the IT systems of IDM which included installing anti-viruses, re-installing operation systems, helping students to recover data at the information centre I also update the website on a daily basis with current information.

UNV Respondent

I supported data collection exercises on SHAPMoS Community Forms and Implementer Forms and helped with data capturing and analysis I also conducted trainings on data collection tools for the NCPs Programme such as the NCPs Register and NCPs Quarterly Monitoring Tool. I assisted in producing monthly and quarterly progress reports on M&E activities.

UNV Respondent

them. All respondents from CSOs interviewed in this exercise mentioned that they had put mechanisms in place to coach and mentor volunteers. In fact this was done by the departmental officers to which the volunteers were attached where they received hands-on training. For instance, at the Church Forum, the M&E officer coached and mentored the volunteers on a daily basis and held regular meetings to ascertain progress. It was during in house-trainings that capacity gaps were noted and addressed.

The organization also had an M&E framework in place which was used as a reference point for building the skills of volunteers on M&E.

This kind of arrangement contributed immensely to the rapid acquisition of skills by the volunteers and ensured that their participation and contribution in organizational activities begins early.

In a nutshell, there was extensive transfer of skills and knowledge from CSOs to volunteers. Most volunteers were appreciative of the skills they gained through during their attachment with various organizations and found the experience to be very beneficial to them on a personal and professional basis

b. Supervision and Monitoring

It had been envisaged in this project that the project managers (in this case IDM and CANGO) would also provide oversight and periodically monitor the work of volunteers placed with CSOs. However, according to some respondents this did not take place as expected due to lack of resources, especially staff and transport. Apparently, at the initial stages, the international volunteer would monitor the work of the volunteers working in together with IDM but when she departed, this also stopped happening. The vehicle allocated for this task also ended up being utilized for other work. When the IDM contract was terminated, there were challenges with continuing with supervision and monitoring of volunteers.

Nevertheless, there were attempts made to communicate with volunteers but this was mainly through emails. CANGO also interacted with CSOs through the Directors' quarterly meetings where the project would also be discussed. A forum was also created for discussion with volunteers on a periodic basis. This resulted in improved reporting by CSOs on project performance.

CASE STUDY NO.2 – CHURCH FORUM

Background

The Swaziland Church Forum has since 1998 coordinated the church's response to HIV/AIDS in Swaziland bringing together all major church organizations and independent denominations. The membership of the Forum includes the League of African Churches, Swaziland Conference of Churches, Council of Swaziland Churches, Swaziland Conference of the Seventh - day Adventist and International Tabernacle Ministries. The Forum has since establishment focused on building the capacity of the Church in implementing HIV/AIDS programmes. Approximately 90 church based NCPs are being supported countrywide through food support, early childhood development and education and psychosocial support.

In light of the aforementioned mandate and activities, the Forum identified a need for volunteers to support its membership.

Key Issue

Each of the church bodies under the Forum faced challenges in implementing their programmes. The key challenges included staff shortages and weak M&E systems which led to poor reporting of activities. As such, there was a great need for M&E volunteers to improve reporting to stakeholders and assist

with developing robust M&E systems. There was also a need for support in the Finance section at the Forum's Office.

Action Taken

The Church Forum expressed their need for volunteers and managed to get five volunteers through the UNV project. The volunteers served under the different church bodies. Four of the volunteers were placed in M&E whilst one was placed in Finance. The expectation was that volunteers would be treated as part of staff.

An M&E Framework was developed and the M&E volunteers were trained by the Forum's M&E Officer. The M&E volunteers also had regular meetings with the M&E officer for guidance. It was also the responsibility of the M&E officer to coach and mentor the volunteers every step of the way. Capacity gaps were noted during the in-house trainings and addressed.

Result

The volunteers gained significant experience whilst attached at the Church Forum. This was through participation in various activities including workshops, training and mentoring. They gained confidence in executing tasks as individuals and would at most times represent the church bodies in various meetings within and outside the country e.g. Sweden and South Africa.

Four UNVs got better jobs after leaving the organization through the experience they acquired whilst on attachment. They are now with the Swaziland Revenue Authority, Family Life Association of Swaziland, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development and SWANNEPHA. The other got a job in Malawi and recently returned to Swaziland.

Conclusion

Volunteers are still needed at the Church Forum as there is still a lot of work to do. What is of critical importance is to support the church bodies to monitor their denominations so that they improve their reporting mechanisms. The organisational capacity of the mother bodies also needs to be strengthened so that they are able to take full advantage of the volunteer program.

2.2.3 Efficiency

Efficiency is discussed from the perspective of organizational or technical efficiency – the ability to implement plans using the smallest possible expenditure of resources. A review of the annual reports from 2012-2014 focusing on the budget for the UNV component of the project (funds allocated to NERCHA) reveals that the rate of expenditure started at 77,38% in 2012, reached 100% in 2013 and dropped slightly to 97% in 2015. As such the average rate of expenditure over the project life was 90%². Of course, this also means there were some balances remaining, especially in 2012 and 2015, which could have resulted in some activities not being implemented.

A discussion with respondents from the lead and implementing agencies did not reveal challenges with funds availability or utilization. The annual reports also did not cite this as an issue. So it is assumed that funds made available to the project were to a large extent fully utilized, albeit the rate of expenditure as discussed above. Perhaps a notable issue is that at some instances, the stipend due to volunteers was not paid on time and this was apparently due to funds not being released timely from the implementing partners. Also, the funds made

² Rate of expenditure for 2014 not reflected in the annual report for the same year

available did not allow for an increase in the stipend which was a source of frustration for most volunteers and the CSOs.

2.2.4 Sustainability

The project was a pilot with a definitive timeline, it was always expected that it would come to an end at some point in time. Perhaps what is of importance is how this project could be replicated and institutionalized given its potential impact on capacity building at a broader scale, youth unemployment and reduction of new HIV/AIDS infections. This issue is discussed further in Chapter 3 and 4.

Sustainability is therefore discussed from the perspective of the project's ability to retain volunteers within the project for a specific period to allow for capacity strengthening within the CSOs. What had been observed since the project began was that there was high turnover of volunteers with most of them spending less than the 12 months stipulated in the contract.

A case in point is SWABCHA who had six volunteers, four females and two males. Four of the volunteers were placed in Finance whilst the other two were placed in M&E. 50% of the volunteers stayed for less than 12 months, the shortest being one month.

This could be viewed as a positive spin-off from the project as it is an indication of successful training programs and skills transfer as it made the volunteers more attractive to potential employers. On the other hand, this situation affected the operations of the CSOs and sustainability of interventions as they had to find replacements and orient new recruits on a more frequent basis than desired.

However, as mentioned before, there are some cases where volunteers were absorbed by the CSO in which they were attached. For instance, at SWABCHA, the first volunteer is now a full time M&E officer. Also, there was a case in the same aforementioned organization where

“It must be recognized that we are dealing with very mobile young people who are ever looking for better opportunities elsewhere - they cannot be stopped once they decide to leave”

NGO Director

one volunteer changed her career because of the work experience she had. When viewed in the short term, it appears that the project benefited the volunteers more than the CSOs. However, in the longer term, everyone becomes a winner since the youth are given critical skills, become more focused and get better jobs, potentially contributing significantly to the country's socioeconomic goals.

In fact, one of the CSO respondents pointed out that they actually assisted two of their volunteers to find better jobs in the private and NGO sector. Their stance is that it may not be fair to expect young people to be volunteers for lengthy periods.

Probably the biggest 'push factor' was the stipend which most volunteers considered to be little, falling short of meeting their basic needs. Some of the volunteers cited the stipend as the main factor that made them look for better paying jobs as soon as they started volunteering. This view was also supported by some of the CSOs who suggested that the stipend needs to be market related to ensure that volunteerism survives.

The issue of the stipend however, needs to be considered alongside the need to build understanding on the description and importance of volunteerism in our society. This would ensure that the expectations on remuneration/compensation are not set too high. As one respondent noted, “The project should invest in educating Swazi people about volunteering as it is not only about getting paid, but learning new skills and assisting where there is a need. This then leads to opportunities of networking and boosting work experience of an individual.”

Another issue raised by the CSOs is that the support given was not congruent with deliverables/expected results. As such, it was challenging for the CSOs to sustain the UNV project from their end and there was no deliberate engagement to discuss sustainability.

2.2.5 Impact

From discussions held with various respondents and review of available reports and documents, it is no longer a question as to whether the project made an impact or not. Evidence shows that the UNV project made an impact both at CSO and volunteer level. The question being addressed though is the extent to which the project made an impact.

It can be proposed that the program was catalytic as it influenced the institutionalization of volunteerism. For instance the MOYSC is now coming up with a full program on volunteerism and internship which has been included in their policy/strategy. The project also addressed the issue of preventing new HIV infections amongst the youth, ensuring that they are actively engaged in productive activities

According to the 2015 annual report (which is the final report from the project), a total of 60 volunteers were recruited over the life of the project and over 65% (40) volunteers secured fulltime employment with locally based organisations. The end of project evaluation of the TSP (2014) noted that reporting of programmatic and financial reporting of sub-recipients (mostly CSOs) had improved and CSOs had developed a Coordination Sector Action plan to build their capacity and harmonize their contribution to the national response. There were also a host of training programmes that had been conducted as a means of building CSO capacity.

Below is a discussion of impact in terms of CSO capacity building and the acquisition and utilization of skills by volunteers

CSO Capacity Building

- a. All CSO in Swaziland are working on behavioural change and the new HIV/AIDS landscape with more focus on treatment was a threat to their existence. So support was given to CSOs to better position themselves to access funding e.g. by partnering with government Ministries
- b. Development of M&E capacity and reporting. CSOs previously had no M&E tools but now do have them and as such are now able to report as per SHAPMOS
- c. Successful capacity building initiatives (graduate volunteer program) in areas such as grants management, financial management, monitoring and evaluation, resource mobilization. CSOs also capacitated on skills including governance, leadership, general management and project management

- d. Support for development of project funding proposals and strategy development. Organizations supported include Church Forum, SWANNEPHA, CANGO and SWAGAA
- e. Development of Coordination Sector Plan to inform CSO contribution to the response management of the NSF
- f. Development of a web based skills database to maintain information on local technical support providers and volunteers with particular sets of skills
- g. Development of an online national volunteer database to facilitate recruitment of national volunteers. However, the database awaits hosting by the internet service provider and as such it remains inactive.

In as much as the volunteers seem to be the ones who benefited mostly from the project, there are instances where they also contributed to the performance of CSOs. One example is that of a volunteer who supported the Ka-Gogo Centre Manager trainings on SHAPMoS. The volunteer tabulated the targets for 2013-2018 for the HTC Programme on the National Operational Plan Matrix Tool. He also assisted the eNSF costing team with the logistics for the costing by making appointments for meetings with the various key stakeholders in the programmatic areas that needed to be costed. He further attended quarterly review meetings to support sharing experiences, identifying gaps and giving recommendations on the implementation of the national response.

Another example is that of a volunteer who worked as an M&E Officer at CANGO. He was tasked with a number of roles and responsibilities which included but not limited to; designing of data collection tools and reporting templates, routine monitoring and participating in the evaluation processes for both CANGO and implementation partners. He also actively participated in the CANGO MER capacity building initiatives all of which positively contributed towards the attainment of the CANGO mandate.

However, there are differing views on the extent of support received from the project. Others felt that the UNV project only went as far as the national level in improving capacity of CSOs and did not cascade to the lower levels as expected. For instance the expectation was that CSOs had to submit regular reports but they had problems getting reports from their regional and community based structures. An extension of the UNV program could have improved the systems from the grassroots to the national level.

Success Story

“Volunteerism made a huge impact, one which I don’t think words can clearly articulate. All the skills and experience I have today can to a great extent be attributed to my attachment as a volunteer at CANGO. Through my participation in various CANGO MER platforms, structures, systems and processes, my skills were cultivated.

At a personal level, the project changed my life as it did not only introduce me to the world of work but to MER as a key management process and or profession. I have moved within the ranks of CANGO from being a Volunteer, to Programs Assistant and M&E Officer for the Global Fund Project under the Grants Management Unit. I am also serving as the Secretary General for the newly established M&E Association of Swaziland (MEAS). In terms of my contribution to CANGO, I believe I have made immense contribution not only in MER but rather across all the CANGO programmes”.

UNV Respondent

a. Skills Acquisition and Utilization by Volunteers

The training provided under the project presented an opportunity to volunteers to gain new skills and/or expand and hone their existing skills. Prior to joining the project, many volunteers had not been exposed to the concepts of M&E, gender and rights, strategic planning, project management, governance and even volunteerism. Upon taking up volunteerism they were introduced to these concepts which led to career advancement and improved chances of securing better jobs. Overall, volunteering was a career development mechanism and it helped graduates shape their career path and future educational aspirations. Volunteerism also served as a learning curve for many who did not have prior work experience.

Some UNVs got better jobs after serving as volunteers in places like the Central Bank, SRA and in various NGOs including SWABCHA and CANGO. Most of the UNVs got employed in their designated fields (especially in the field of M&E) because of the experience and skills acquired as being part of the programme.

At the Church Forum, some volunteers got an opportunity to travel abroad (e.g. Sweden) to represent the organization in meetings whilst one volunteer got attached to a program in USA for a year. These opportunities nurtured and sharpened the skills of volunteers. Most volunteers present felt if given a chance to volunteer again, they would as the project was giving so much experience.

“The project helped me to gain skills and experience I have been able to apply in different aspects of my personal life.

Staff from Save the Children were very much supportive and guided my everyday work during my 2 year stint with the organization”

UNV respondent

CHAPTER 3: LESSONS LEARNED CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Lessons Learned

Several lessons could be drawn from the five year long implementation of the project as suggested by a number of respondents. These lessons are outlined below;

- a. The engagement of UNVs depended on the mandate of each organization which in itself is not a problem. However, there is a need to develop generic TORs for CSOs and UNVs which could improve the effectiveness of the program. CSOs also need to set minimum requirements in terms of the calibre of volunteers required including their skills and qualifications
- b. Volunteerism should not be confined to 12 months but also consider 3 months especially to accommodate professionals who could add more value to the operations of CSOs.
- c. A minimum training on volunteerism needed. Establishment of an induction program on volunteerism would be a step in the right direction as it would inculcate the culture of 'serving others' with less emphasis on size of remuneration/compensation.
- d. There is a need to further explore community based volunteerism as this would create opportunities for volunteerism to grow.
- e. The youth need to learn basic life skills to become more effective
- f. It is difficult to attract and retain professional volunteers in Swaziland- maybe due to the size of the labour market and existence of a variety of skills
- g. There is a need to explore the involvement of the private sector where similar programs have been implemented successfully e.g. RSSC. Also recognizing that some private sector companies have for a long time implemented internship programs with huge success.

3.2 Challenges

Some of the challenges encountered during project implementation have been discussed in the foregoing sections. Outlined below are additional challenges that were faced;

- a. Volunteers had split allegiance due to the nature of their recruitment and the mode of payment. They seemed to show more allegiance to the recruiter and the institution paying their stipend than to the CSOs where they were placed. This situation sometimes posed challenges in managing the volunteers. Ideally, volunteers have to comply with the organizational procedures of the organizations where they are placed and this needs to be made clear in their contracts.
- b. Volunteers normally stayed for a short period of time, much less than the 12 months stipulated in their contracts. Ideally they should be staying for a definitive period to apply skills and knowledge gained from the trainings
- c. The calibre of some of the volunteers was not very good to assist CSOs in contributing to the national response. As such the criteria for recruitment needs to be revised and made more robust in order to get the right candidates Lack of inherent instruments and structures within the project to facilitate a smooth transition (from Volunteerism to formal employment).

- d. Delays in recruitment and deployment of volunteers affecting effectiveness of CSOs
- e. Inadequate capacity amongst CSOs to supervise and train volunteers as well as absorbing them into full time employment

3.3 Recommendations

- g. Institutions supporting volunteers need to be strengthened to function better. It might be worthwhile to develop an institutional development program that would assist CSOs to develop sustainable systems so that they are better positioned to take advantage of initiatives that are similar to the UNV project
- h. Graduates have to be balanced with professional volunteers to create an extensive, multi-skilled pool of expertise. Young people become a burden to the benefiting organization if they are inexperienced
- i. There is need to consider establishing a National Service for school leavers that would present young people an opportunity to experience life and make choices. This could also be used as an incentive to access tertiary education.
- j. PHLIV organizations benefitted minimally from the project. Volunteers placed with SWANEPPHA were not engaged optimally as there was no staff to mentor them. As such there is a need for their increased involvement
- k. Employees of organizations participating in the volunteerism program need to be properly informed and made aware that a volunteer will be joining so that they exhibit positive attitudes towards the volunteers.
- l. The organization in-charge for the voluntary scheme should also monitor/follow up on the volunteers even after the voluntary period has finished to ensure that volunteers do eventually get better job opportunities.

“Let us not only help the volunteers to develop but also help the CSOs to develop”

CHAPTER 4: POLICY DIRECTION

There is a common view amongst respondents that the program should continue and ideally be led by the government with support from development partners and involvement of CSOs. Specifically, the suggestion is that a National Volunteerism Scheme (NVS) be established and hosted by the relevant Ministry within government. This is mainly because volunteerism is a national issue given the nature of issues (e.g. youth unemployment, HIV/AIDS) it is addressing, at least in the local context.

As highlighted from the foregoing chapters, the NVS needs be broadened to include; Professionals and Specialists Volunteering, Youth Volunteering and Corporate volunteering for businesses (i.e. skills-based corporate volunteering for private sector and development partners).

Besides the high demand for jobs due linked to the relatively high youth unemployment, there are also many professional mature individuals seeking such opportunities. There is willingness to volunteer from many individuals but currently there is no mechanism/platform for those individuals to access voluntary services. Swaziland could learn from other internationally recognized volunteer organizations including UNV International, USAID Peace Corps and Voluntary Service Overseas. In fact it would be more beneficial for the country to also link up with these organizations in order to open up opportunities to volunteer abroad.

Best Practice

*Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross has engaged a retired civil servant working as a volunteer. She works 3 days a week as a Human Resources consultant. She has assisted in producing various documents including HR policies and organization strategy and oriented staff on the policies
There is also a teacher volunteer who works during school holidays*

The advantage of recruiting professionals is that they could ‘hit the ground running’ and add more value to the operations of organizations.

A recruiting agency for volunteers could be established through a partnership between government and other stakeholders. This could be done in tandem with the standardization of the conditions of service, establishing guidelines for ‘ethical behaviour’ to ensure volunteers add value where they are placed.

There are several ongoing initiatives on which the NVS could ride on. This includes the ongoing development of the National Human Resource Development Policy led by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Demographic Dividend study led by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. Both initiatives present an opportunity to include issues of human capital development aligned to national development goals. In fact, it could be worthwhile to include national volunteerism in the NHRD policy before it goes for approval. At the same time, strategies to harness the demographic dividend could also encompass national volunteerism as a way of productively engaging the youth and optimally exploiting locally existing skills.

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