Liberian National Youth Volunteer Service Project

Mid-term Review Report

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**3. List of Acronyms**

MDGs Millenium Development Goals

MoE Ministry of Education

MoH Ministry of Health

MTR Mid-Term Review

MYS Ministry of Youth and Sports

NVs National Volunteers

NYVS National Youth Volunteer Service

NYVS PO NYVS Project Officers

TOR Terms of Reference

UNDP United Nations Development Programme.

UNV United Nations Volunteers Programme

V4D Volunteerism for Development and Peace



Monrovia, University Students during IVD 2006



NYVS Graduation Ceremony (Aug. 2008) with Mr. Sam Hare, Deputy MYS

## Executive Summary

The NYVS project is a two-year pilot initiative that aims at establishing a National Youth Volunteer Service in Liberia, to enable youth to contribute to the development process in the country. It has the following objectives:

1) Provide an opportunity for university graduates to support the provision of public education and health services at the community level;

2) Promote awareness of both the youth and the communities on the role of volunteerism in development and peace building, the meaning of the MDGs and major government policies;

3) Strengthen local capacity for citizens’ participation and social cohesion through the formulation of micro-projects on ‘Youth, Governance and Volunteerism’ involving both communities and students;

4) Address the lack of skills among the youth through the enhancement of their capacity to access the labor market and enable them to contribute to the economic development of the country.

Since the start of its implementation in September 2007, the NYVS targeted 100 but only recruited 67 university graduates referred to as National Volunteers – NVs. They support the local socio-economic development in four counties (Bong, Lofa, Grand Geddeh and Maryland) through the provision of volunteer services. The NVs are assigned to teach in elementary schools and to provide assistance in clinics in fifteen communities and towns in the four counties. In each county, the work of the NVs is coordinated by one National UNV Volunteer, or NYVS Project Officer - PO.

The pilot phase of the NYVS, supported by UNV, aims at training and deploying two classes of NVs. With the assignments of the first class coming to an end by end of August 2008, and the second group starting in October (the dissemination of vacancy announcements is already underway), it was felt that this was the right moment for a mid-term review. This report consolidates the results of the mid-term review - MTR, implemented through a two-week in-country mission in Liberia, from 22 June to 04 July 2008.

The MTR found very clear and concrete evidence that the NYVS has an enormous capacity and potential to promote positive change. There is no doubt that the presence of the 67 NVs in the 4 counties has been appreciated, has brought benefits to the communities and host organizations, and has had a positive influence on the lives of the NVs (and of others). Similarly, the NYVS also has the power and potential to develop national capacity: the NVs have brought new technical knowledge and expertise to host institutions, to local professionals, to community members; and have enriched their own personal and professional skills. In short, there is no doubt about the added value of a youth volunteer scheme in Liberia, particularly considering the country’s shortcomings, the still existing need for reconstruction and peace building and the urgent call for development.

The NYVS has also proved that working with youth volunteers is a constructive approach. The NVs that were part of the first class have demonstrated a lot of commitment (energy), flexibility, openness to learn, analyze and change their own attitudes and behaviors, to adapt to new circumstances that they had never faced before. These are all positive factors that have been appreciated by the people around them, and have been acknowledged by themselves as key for their own development during the period of their assignments. In addition, they have been exposed to the reality and problems of their country, to the hardships of poverty, to the suffering of many people and families, especially in rural areas. If some of these young men and women become future leaders of Liberia, they will have had a formative experience that will be key when they rise to positions of power.

The NYVS project demonstrates the added value of volunteerism. Throughout the MTR exercise, the review team heard repeatedly that “the NVs are the Liberian Peace Corps”. They were recognized by the communities as “sons and daughters of Liberia”, sacrificing themselves to do something for their country, at their own free will, and without a financial expectation. In many communities, the review team could detect that this level of personal commitment towards others had not been seen in a long time. In all districts, we heard that people were more willing to volunteer, that parents wanted their children to volunteer and to participate in a positive wave to develop Liberia. People who have had contact with the NVs are slowly learning that volunteering is a route to empowerment.

There are many areas of good practice that the project can build on. The induction training, in particular, was considered of excellent quality and offered an overall framework and coherence to the practice of the NVs working in very different and distant parts of the country. If youth volunteering becomes a mass movement in the future, this coherence will be essential to guarantee that good results are obtained across the board. Other initiatives piloted by the volunteers have also produced very positive effects, such as awareness campaigns, gender advocacy, sports to promote peace, working with existing development structures, as well as the various practical tools applied in the specific areas of their assignments.

A first seed was planted with the first class of NVs. Now that the programme has been underway for almost one year, more people know about it, there are already positive results that can be disseminated, and the potential to engage other partners is higher than ever. But there is still a lot to be done and changed. The future of the NYVS depends on strong political and operational support by the Government Liberia. The chances of survival and long-term impact are very restricted if the programme remains (as) an isolated initiative of the MYS. Rather, it needs to become a national policy, part of the country’s development plan and poverty reduction strategy. It needs to link with local agendas and structures. This will require political coordination, advocacy, communications and heavy financial investment. These are areas that need to be factored into NYVS’s strategic planning.

Improving the areas of weakness and capitalizing on the strengths is a necessary approach to move forward with the NYVS. In this context, communications and strategy are essential elements where a lot of effort and attention needs to be invested. In particular, these will play an essential role once UNV’s support is concluded after the end of the second class, and the MYS will need to take full responsibility, both technical and political, for the implementation and expansion of the programme. In that sense, it is also wise to expand the programme carefully, and not lose sight of the risks involved in expanding: the NYVS needs to do good, not harm, to both the NVs and the communities.

The recommendations of the MTR are of strategic, programmatic and operational nature, and should be addressed in the short (as soon as possible), and longer terms (by the end of UNV’s support phase/ in the next three years of implementation of NYVS). They are:

1. Develop an exit strategy for NYVS
2. Develop a sustainability strategy for the results achieved by the NVs in the field
3. Develop a communications strategy for the NYVS
4. Develop a long-term strategic plan for the NYVS
5. Expand the programme carefully
6. Improve the learning of NVs and NYVS Project Coordinators
7. Review the financial support to NVs
8. Continue to address management issues that need to be solved

## Introduction

The NYVS project is a two-year pilot initiative that aims at establishing a National Youth Volunteer Service in Liberia, to enable youth to contribute to the development process in the country. It is an initiative of the Liberian Ministry of Youth and Sports – MYS, and a response to the demands of the country’s youth as expressed in the Kakata Declaration[[1]](#footnote-1) and the National Youth Policy Framework[[2]](#footnote-2). It started with an eight month Preparatory Assistance Phase (Dec. 2006 – June 2007) that UNV Bonn funded with 100,000USD to assist with the commencement of the NYVS project initial activities.

The PA phase led to a full-fledged project document, approved both by UNDP and UNV HQ in August 2007, with the allocation of USD 603,199.76 funded under UNV SVF and USD 200,000 funded by UNDP Liberia. Its implementation started in September 2007 by UNV/UNDP, to achieve the following objectives:

1) Provide an opportunity for university graduates to support the provision of public education and health services at the community level;

2) Promote awareness of both the youth and the communities on the role of volunteerism in development and peace building, the meaning of the MDGs and major government policies;

3) Strengthen local capacity for citizens’ participation and social cohesion through the formulation of micro-projects on ‘Youth, Governance and Volunteerism’ involving both communities and students;

4) Address the lack of skills among the youth through the enhancement of their capacity to access the labor market and enable them to contribute to the economic development of the country.

The project’s anticipated major long-term outputs are an increased access to education and health for communities living in remote areas and support to ongoing efforts to strengthen social reintegration and cohesion at community level through the active involvement of the youth. The active interaction between urban youth and rural communities will help reduce the divisions and polarization in the communities resulting from 15 years of war, promote awareness on the value of volunteerism, the meaning of MDGs and peace building and reconciliation.

This report consolidates the results of a mid-term review, implemented through a two-week in-country mission in Liberia, from 22 June to 04 July 2008. The following pages describe the methodology used in the review, and highlight the main findings, lessons learnt and recommendations for the future of the NYVS project.

## Mid-term review profile

Since the start of its implementation in September 2007, the NYVS targeted 100 but only recruited 67 university graduates referred to as National Volunteers – NVs. They support the local socio-economic development in four counties (Bong, Lofa, Grand Geddeh and Maryland) through the provision of volunteer services. The NVs are assigned to teach in elementary schools and to provide assistance to clinics in fifteen communities and towns in the four counties. In each county, the work of the NVs is coordinated by one National UNV Volunteer, a NYVS Project Officer. There are four NYVS POs in place, two men and two women.

The pilot phase of the NYVS, supported by UNV, aims at training and deploying two classes of NVs. With the assignments of the first class coming to an end by end of August 2008, and the second group starting in October (the dissemination of vacancy announcements is already underway), it was felt that this was the right moment for a mid-term review.

The objectives of the review were the following:

1) Assess the project in terms of design, implementation, management, sustainability and capacity, based on the project document and realities of practice from the perspectives of various stakeholders.

2) Document positive changes to which the project has contributed (or is contributing) so far, at the level of local communities, elementary schools and clinics.

3) Assess the added value and relevance of the role and functions of the national volunteers with respect to host communities and to themselves.

The review process was also expected to provide opportunities to enhance partnerships among participating ministries, and with other development organizations working at local and national levels, including the UN system. In particular, one very important focus of the review was to make recommendations for the rest of this volunteer class cycle, especially the exit strategy for volunteers, and document lessons learned and good practices that could help to prepare the next volunteer class cycle.

The expected outcomes were an enhanced capacity of the project team and partners to manage and monitor the project; practical recommendations for quality improvement of aspects of the volunteer management cycle; strategies to enhance sustainability and partnership building; and plans of action for identifying and highlighting project accomplishments.

The mission was carried out during two weeks, in Monrovia and in the four counties involved in the project. The mission team comprised members of the MYS (Minister Etmonia Tarpeh, Deputy-Minister Sam Hare and Public Information Officer, Mr. Macaulay Paykue, of the project management team (Project Manager Aminu Waziri, National Counterpart Isaac Bropleh and UNV Country Operations Assistant Katrina Flomo), of the UNV headquarters (Programme Specialist Veronique Zidi-Aporeigah and Evaluation Specialist Ana Cristina Guimaraes Matos) and a communications consultant (Bill Ross).

Key issues discussed with stakeholders during the MTR:

* Induction training to NVs
* Changes and results achieved by NYVS
* Learning outcomes for NVs
* Support received by NVs
* Challenges of the programme
* Lessons learned
* Recommendations

Gender was a cross-cutting theme in all discussions

The mission’s coverage was extensive – the review team traveled to the four counties, and spoke directly to all NVs and NYVS POs, as well as to local authorities, heads of host institutions and community members in fifteen towns and districts. In Monrovia, the team also spoke to partners in the UN system. The instruments to collect information were varied, in order to permit triangulation, and included the application of written questionnaire surveys to NVs, NYVS POs and host organizations, one-to-one interviews, focus groups and community gatherings. Prior to the mission, meetings took place with UNDP Senior Management, MYS and with representatives of the Ministry of Health and Education. At the end of the mission, a de-briefing meeting was also conducted at UNDP, in order to collect feedback from key stakeholders in Monrovia, including the Deputy UN Special Representative of the Secretary General.

In addition to the regular monitoring activities, the engagement of the communications consultant also guaranteed a detailed documentation process. All gatherings, meetings and interviews were recorded in photographs and video. All NVs were interviewed individually on their experiences, lessons learned and messages to other youth in Liberia. The video material will be used in the production of a promotional film (an initiative of the MYS), which will be aired on national television, with the objectives of promoting the NYVS country-wide and attracting more young men and women interested in joining the scheme as volunteers.

The configuration of the mission team posed some interesting opportunities, as well as challenges. In particular, the Minister’s and Deputy Minister’s presence was a very important asset to engage and motivate stakeholders at all levels to participate in the discussions and to offer the government’s view. It was also a major factor of motivation to the NVs, who felt recognized by their presence and appreciated hearing their positive feedback on achievements and constructive recommendations on ways forward. It was, moreover, a unique experience for the Minister and Deputy Minister themselves, who had the opportunity to understand better the activities of the project, and to see the contribution of NVs to the improvement of services in the communities where they are deployed. This same positive factor – the review as an opportunity to understand better the reality of the project implementation in the counties – applied to the members of the project management team, who are based in Monrovia.

On the other hand, it is also important to acknowledge that there were limitations posed by this team configuration. The presence of the Ministry, for instance, in some cases brought a risk to the review’s agenda, with communities seeing their presence as an opportunity to bid for solutions to their needs, which were not always related to the project itself. Furthermore, the participation of both the Ministry and the project management team determined from the outset that the review would not be an independent process – and the review team needed to manage the risks of stakeholders not speaking freely about challenges and constraints due to a possible conflict of interest.

Therefore, understanding this process as it really is – a mid-term review, not an independent evaluation – is key for a correct and fair interpretation of the findings and lessons collected in this report.

## Mid-term review findings

The Mid-term Review Terms of Reference – MTR/ToR focused on four key areas of inquiry (detailed review questions can be found in Annex 1 – MTR/ToR):

Area 1) Volunteer management: including different aspects related to the management of the NVs’ assignments in their various phases;

Area 2) Results achieved: including the areas of change envisaged by the project, such as improvement in health/education services, social cohesion of communities, awareness raising, changes in gender relationships, planning and implementation of micro-projects, personal learning for the NVs;

Area 3) Sustainability and exit strategy: including sustainability of the results achieved and of the programme.

Area 4) Project management: including practical constraints and areas for improvement in the current management arrangements;

The findings described in this section of the report are organized according to the four key areas of inquiry above.

## Area 1: Volunteer Management

# Recruitment and selection of NVs

The positive feedback received by the review team indicates that overall the recruitment of the NVs was well done and the individual volunteers selected were adequate for the assignments. All communities and host organizations demonstrated deep appreciation for each NV personally, and there were clear indications that they are well integrated to and liked by the people they are involved with in the field.

However, there were issues at the outset of the project that need to be considered in the implementation of future classes. These are:

* The high number of NVs who received training, collected their relocation allowances and ultimately absconded from taking up their posts was high (18)
* The ultimate number of NVs in place was 67. One volunteer left after 3 months, to take up a job offer, making a total of 66 currently serving volunteers. The initial target was 100.
* The intended gender balance (50-50) was not achieved. Current balance is 72% men and 28% women.

These challenges suggest that the recruitment and selection processes need to be improved, including targeted media campaigns to disseminate the programme and attract female applicants especially. In this regard, an analysis of why the programme did not attract more women will also be useful for a future strategy to improve gender balance.

# Induction Training received by NVs

All NVs received a 3-week induction training in Monrovia before the beginning of their assignments. Feedback on the training was one of the key points of inquiry of the review, since the training for the second class of NVs (starting in October) is currently being designed. Overall, the review found a high level of satisfaction with the induction course: both the NVs (79%) and host institutions (73%) felt that the NVs were well prepared for their assignments.

The review also found that the induction training has contributed to an overall consistency of the approaches that are being used by the NVs in the different counties and communities. NVs are carrying out different activities in their counties of assignment, and the choice of activities depends very much on the local context and possibilities of intervention. But the framework under which they are working is quite consistent: approaches and activities included in the National Youth Policy (such as promoting peace and reconciliation through sports; raising awareness on critical issues such as HIV/AIDS and the MDGs; tackling gender-based violence; advocating for girl’s education), as well as practical tools and methods adopted to improve the services provided by schools and hospitals are being coherently applied by the NVs across the board. This is a positive factor in the programme, and a key factor for future sustainability and for increasing the likelihood of long-term impact.

The NVs, NYVS POs and host organizations were consulted on their suggestions for improving the training for the next class of volunteers. The main suggestions included:

* Extend the length of the induction training to one month, while reducing the number of hours per day (e.g. 8am to 3pm, instead of 8am to 5pm);
* Add some subject matters that are key to the work of NVs in the field: report writing, project proposal writing, youth entrepreneurship, NGO policy, national/ health education policies, agriculture, organizational strengthening, coaching others; financial management
* Increase time and depth dedicated to specific issues: V4D, leadership, teaching practice, ALP (accelerated learning programme).

NYVS POs also need to benefit from an in-depth training. The current group of POs did not receive such training, but rather a briefing at the beginning of their assignments. During the review, we were informed that plans for the next induction training include the NYVS POs. This is a very welcome initiative, and will facilitate the POs’ understanding and coordination of the work done by the NVs in the field.

# Monitoring and reporting during assignment

The NYVS project offers a lot of good practice on monitoring and documenting the activities of NVs on the ground. From the onset of the project, a monthly monitoring system (which includes regular meetings between the NVs, their supervisors and the POs, and the preparation of weekly and monthly reports) was established, and has been working according to the original plans. In general, the system is assessed as effective by all parties and allows for timely and constructive guidance, orientation and correction of routes: 94% of the NVs felt that the regular feedback

they received from supervisors or NYVS project officers have been useful to improve their performance.

There are practical constraints to the NVs to preparing monthly reports, as most of them do not have access to computers or internet during their assignments. However, a useful measure that will be introduced by the project management team to the next class of volunteers is a template for the report, which will include pre-established questions and spaces to fill in. The review team also considers that the project should promote occasions in which the NVs meet and exchange their experiences. Living and working in very remote locations, the NVs rarely have opportunities to get together and to learn from each other. During their assignments, one or two meetings of NVs in the same county could make a significant difference in their overall learning experience, and also to their personal motivation.

# Volunteer Living Allowances – VLA

NVs receive a monthly living allowance of USD 100. Although this seemed a reasonable amount at the outset of the project, all NVs stated to the review team that the VLA is too low, with many of them reporting being hungry during the fourth week of the month. This is aggravated by the remote and impoverished conditions of the districts where they live and work – some of the districts do not even have a local food market. Another factor that adds to their high cost of living is the issue of accommodation (discussed in further detail below): a lot of NVs are renting rooms and do not have access to a kitchen, thus forcing them to eat out very often. Rent, call cards for mobile phones, and entertainment (such as going to video clubs) add to their expenditures.

NVs gave different suggestions for increasing the VLA: on average, recommendations stayed around USD 200 to 300. An increase in the VLA (for the next class of NVs) is already being studied by the project team and will be discussed with the steering committee, but it is very unlikely that the amount will meet the values suggested by the NVs. Before granting a substantial increase, the steering committee will need to consider all different factors involved in this decision, and in particular keep the perspective that the NV is a *volunteer* assignment, not a job: as a matter of comparison, the minimum wage in Liberia is USD 50. How to provide a VLA that is fair and enough to cater for the basic needs of NVs, without causing a severe distortion in the labor market, needs to very carefully examined. In addition, a preparation of the NVs on how to better manage their money is also very much needed (this point will be addressed in the recommendations).

# Support received by NVs

The NVs were unanimous in confirming that they receive excellent support from the NYVS POs. Beyond the regular monitoring and reporting, the POs also provide support in the implementation of activities, mediate delicate situations, and help the NVs cope with their essential needs, such as finding adequate housing. In general, the NVs also reported a good level of interaction with and support from their host institutions – school and hospital/clinic directors seem to welcome the support provided by NVs, and to offer the right conditions for these volunteers to improve the services of the institutions, as well as to develop themselves.

On the other hand, the support that NVs receive from their host communities can vary significantly. Most of the NVs have stated that community members are very supportive in what regards the implementation of activities proposed by the NVs, but are much less supportive regarding the NVs’ personal needs. One clear finding of the mid-term review was that the initial assumption that community members would accommodate volunteers in their homes for free, in exchange for the services they are offering, did not materialize: most of the NVs are paying rent for rooms in family houses, varying from USD 5 to 15, depending on the county/ district.

This lack of “living support” to the NVs is anchored in several reasons, as the review team could conclude from conversations with different groups of stakeholders. The first one is, naturally, the poverty in which these community dwellers live – the rent money does make a difference to their budgets in the end of the month, and the cost of living is considered high in the interior of the country, with limited access to basic shopping alternatives and facilities. The second factor is the dependency culture, very common in countries that have emerged from crises, and which Liberia developed after the war. After the conflict, the country was flooded with external aid, and Liberians have become used to being paid for participating in activities that, in a “normal” development situation, would be done voluntarily. Renting their rooms is one example of that, as expressed in the words of one NV: “*Why would they give me the room for free, if they can rent it to an NGO field officer?*”. A third factor is a mis-conception by the communities regarding the nature of the volunteer assignments. The review team learned that, very often, NVs are wrongly perceived as UNV volunteers, or even UNDP staff members, who, in the understanding of community members, “are making good, enough money”. This point is addressed in other sections of this report, as it relates to the overall communication challenges faced by the NYVS project.

The consequences of this lack of support, particularly concerning accommodation, have been very grave for some of the volunteers, who are living in extremely precarious conditions (witnessed by the review team). This has brought risks to their lives, their health and property, particularly in the incidence of natural adversities, such as storms, which can severely damage houses with unsafe and unstable structures. Three volunteers in Lofa county had all their personal belongings destroyed after a storm removed the roof of their house. Another volunteer in Bong county escaped just by a few minutes from a falling wall, which destroyed his bed. The project management team is already studying alternatives to include a rent allowance as part of the NVs’ VLA. This will be discussed in future steering committee meetings, and is also further explored in the recommendations section of this report.

Limited support in the counties is also observed from representatives of the line ministries involved in the NYVS project – namely, health and education. In general, local health and education authorities are not in close contact or following up the activities of the NVs. The exceptions were the education authority in Lofa and the health authority in Bong, who demonstrated good awareness of the activities of NVs and had regular contact with them. Despite the positive presence and participation of members of the health and education ministries in the steering committee in Monrovia, if there is not an equal level of support at the local level, or even at strategic levels in the ministries, there will be serious risks to the sustainability of this project, in particular of the changes and results achieved in the districts where NVs are working. More on this subject will be discussed in the sustainability section of this report.

# End of volunteer assignments

Several important factors are behind the motivation of the 66 young people who have become NYVS volunteers. Examples include the opportunity to learn about the rural areas of Liberia, to provide services to communities with poor health and education conditions, to gain personal and professional skills, to increase the chances of finding a good job in the future. The mid-term review found that, out of the areas above, the perspective of finding a job is a most delicate issue that needs to be addressed in the context of the project, and communicated well with the volunteers.

When NVs joined the programme, many of them were under the impression that, at the end of their assignments, they would automatically be granted a job by the government or the UN. Although this misunderstanding was addressed very early by the project team – during the induction training – the review team found that at least five of the NVs were still not clear on this area[[3]](#footnote-3). There is, in practice, a mis-match in the perceptions of NVs and the project team.

The mid-term review was an opportunity to clarify to NVs that the NYVS project is supportive of their efforts to enter the job market. For instance, a graduation week (August 2008) is being organized by the project team, and will include career guidance and training, a job fair, and a graduation ceremony with the presence of potential employers and the President of Liberia. Other efforts from the project team and the MYS include prioritizing the NV experience as a key criterion to fill in future job openings, producing communication materials that will spread the word nationally on the NVs’ experience, and liaising with development actors in the country to include a stronger employment component in future designs of the NYVS.

However, the motivation to find a job cannot be the key driving force behind the dedication of the NV volunteers. It cannot be forgotten that promoting volunteerism is one of the objectives of the NYVS project, and that NVs are role models for students, community members and youth around the country. Volunteerism can be a very powerful asset in the rebuilding of Liberia as a country, and the spirit of benefiting others in addition to oneself needs to be present in every young person who becomes an NV. In this sense, the suggestions made by NVs to improve the V4D training during the induction course seem very appropriate to balance the discussion and expectations around these issues as well.

## Area 2: Results achieved

The findings under this section of the report are the most important, and the most impressive, conclusions of the MTR. However, before going into details, it is necessary to call the attention to three caveats that need to be considered when analyzing the results achieved by NVs in the field.

First, one cannot lose sight of the dimensions of the changes being reported here. Liberia has a population of about 3.5 million people[[4]](#footnote-4), distributed in 15 counties. There are 66 NVs working in elementary schools, clinics and hospitals in 4 counties. The estimated number of direct beneficiaries of the NVs’ services ranges from 50 to more than 500. Therefore, although it can be said that the NYVS project has already produced and contributed to very important outcomes, it is sensible to understand that the scale of these results is limited, if compared to the country as a whole. More on this topic will be addressed under the sustainability and lessons learned sections of this report.

The second caveat relates to the nature of the changes to which the NVs are contributing. There is no doubt that their work is generating positive results, and that they are influencing not only the delivery of services, but also attitudes and behaviors. However, the NYVS project has been in place for less than six months, and this group of 66 volunteers is only the first class. At this moment, there is no guarantee that the changes created are in fact long-term results. From its outset, the MTR did not have the objective to measure “impact”, because impact cannot be measured after six months of implementation. Impact relates to long-term, sustainable change, which this project is not yet ready to claim. There are also other factors, including external ones, that are essential for sustainability (and thus for future impact) – these are discussed further down, in the appropriate section. For these reasons, this report treats the contribution of NVs as results, or positive changes, and not as impact.

A final word of caution refers to the attribution of the results achieved under the NYVS. To a certain extent, it is fair to attribute some achievements to individual NVs, particularly in schools, where NVs have in fact introduced new school and class management tools and subjects (more details below). Nevertheless, it is not the intention of this report to claim that the higher-level positive changes described here were generated exclusively as a consequence of the action of the NVs. Liberia is a country in reconstruction, coming from a long conflict, and counts on several national and international actors who play an important role in its development efforts. The NYVS project is one of these actors, and recognizes itself as part of a “bigger picture”, where the creation of changes and results depends on more than individuals. This context needs to be taken into consideration for the correct understanding of the results achieved.

# Improving the provision of education services

The area of education is where the NVs have made the most visible difference. Education is a deprived sector in Liberia, as a direct result of the conflict, which forced professional teachers to leave the country. Currently, most schools in the counties where NVs are working rely on the support of few professional teachers and many community volunteers, who have never had any teaching training, and are not familiar with basic teaching techniques and resources. In addition, several schools also lack key management tools and quality enforcement mechanisms.

41 NVs are working in schools. In practice, the main contribution of the NVs in this area was observed in three levels:

Introduction and/or improvement of methods and systems:

In various cases, the NVs have had a key role in training and improving the performance of the community school teachers, by introducing, enforcing or improving areas such as class management and discipline, development of basic curriculum for different school grades, attendance check, devotion hours, enforcement of school hours, etc. In particular cases, the NVs have also introduced new subjects and activities that were not adopted by the schools before:

* In Bong county, two NVs introduced Physical Education classes in a small community school. As a result of this experience, the district education authority decided to adopt physical education for all primary schools in the Sudkoko district.
* Also in Bong, two NVs introduced sex education as a school subject, raising awareness of HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, preventive care and gender equity. HIV/AIDS, in particular, has been a common thread in the work of all NVs, as can be seen in other sections of this report.
* In Lofa, a group of NVs introduced agriculture days in the school routine, and are raising awareness of the students to the importance of gardening and farming for sustainable livelihoods.
* In all counties, the NVs have involved students in cleaning campaigns, raising awareness to the importance of keeping the environment around them in good conditions.

Changes in attitudes and behaviors:

One key part of the work of the NVs in schools has been raising awareness to the importance of education, including various areas of attitude and behavior change, both of parents and of students. Some concrete examples of change observed in the schools visited include the enforcement of school dress codes and hygiene habits, attention to school schedules (time and attendance), and a better understanding of the value of girls’ education.

In addition, the introduction of new classroom and school management tools (as reported above) has contributed to a better relationship between teachers and students. Similarly, several NVs have worked on conflict management, and have observed that the level of conflict between students (including those conflicts of ethnic origin) has decreased. Finally, being role models, many NVs have influenced students and teachers to continue to invest in their own education and have promoted volunteerism as both an opportunity to learn and gain skills, as well as to support the development of Liberia.

##### Improvements in students’ performance

School principals are unanimous in their opinion that the work of the NVs has greatly contributed to an overall improvement in the performance of students with whom they are working directly. The combination of the actions above has had a healthy influence on student’s motivation and enthusiasm to go to class, to invest in their own education, and to learn things in which they were not interested before. In Bong, these results are expressed by an increased school enrolment ratio; in Foya, Lofa, the community reports that their children are speaking better English and have won spelling competitions against other schools in the county (an unprecedented fact); also in Lofa, the drop-out rates of girl students in the Kolahun district school (most of them baby mothers) has decreased. The results of the national exams, still not available during the mid-term review, will be a good indication of this perceived improvement in students’ performance.

# Improving community health

26 NVs are working in the area of health - a minority in relation to the overall group, particularly considering that only 8 have a health background. During their induction training, the NVs were asked about their area of preference for their assignments, and those who did not have a health background and still chose health as their preferred field were explicitly guided to focus on awareness and preventive health, and never to provide clinical services. Therefore, most of the work of the NVs in the area of health has concentrated on i) providing administrative support to clinics and hospitals; ii) improving community health by raising awareness and changing attitudes and behaviors; and iii) in some very few cases, providing direct services to patients in hospitals and clinics.

Most of the administrative support provided by the NVs has included the introduction and/or improvement of methods and systems to enhance the management of hospitals and clinics and the service offered to patients. For instance, in Grand Geddeh, one NV helped the clinic to improve their patient records management system, and has also worked with the clinic directors to introduce psychosocial counseling to patients as part of their treatment. In Bong, NVs introduced a “healthy mother health baby” certificate system, which rewards the mothers of newborn babies that stay healthy and, consequently, take care of their children’s health. Initiatives like these have had limited, but significant results: they have contributed to an overall perception by the communities that better, more numerous and more “human” services are being offered to patients: 84% of the NVs consider that they helped to improve the health services in the community.

; they have also sensitized hospital and clinic administrators to provide services that go beyond medical treatment and thus have a positive effect on the continuity and follow-up by patients.

One particular area where NVs working in health have been very active is in introducing and/ or supporting health awareness campaigns: from their induction course, they have brought methodologies that many hospitals and clinics lacked before. The NVs have been actively involved in preventive health campaigns, particularly focusing on personal and family hygiene, and on common and serious diseases like HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, yellow fever and malaria. In Bong county the results of these campaigns are clear to both the NVs and the clinic director: people are changing their attitudes and seeking more hospital treatment (instead of trying to treat themselves at home); the number of hospital patients per day has increased; and more patients are seeking HIV/AIDS testing and treatment.

Despite the overall positive perspectives, one risk needs to be very carefully monitored by the NYVS project: the involvement of NVs in clinical activities, particularly when they do not have a health background. With such a deprived system (as in the area of education, doctors and nurses have become scarce in the country after the conflict), there is a risk that NVs end up being seen as a helpful hand to support the treatment of patients. One of these cases happened in Lofa, with one NV with a background in sociology providing assistance to vaccination campaigns, with no specific training or professional guidance. It is needless to say that the risks involved in this particular situation are enormous, and they are directly related to the lives of patients. If one serious problem, let alone death, had happened, the whole credibility of the project could have been ruined and all the work of NYVS would be lost. These exceptional and risky situations need to come up very early through the effective volunteer monitoring system that the project has built – this is the *raison d’etre* of the monitoring: identifying problems early on, correcting routes, avoiding bigger problems. If the monitoring does not pick up this kind of problem, it has no reason to exist.

# Bringing communities together

In addition to their tasks in schools, clinics and hospitals, all NVs were also required by their TOR to perform community activities. This has included different initiatives, the most common being the promotion of environmental and cleaning campaigns and the implementation of community gardens. 99% of the NVs mobilized community volunteers for these various activities, 92% organized meetings and discussion groups and 94% considered that they helped the community develop projects that support their interests. The community work has been a very meaningful part of the work of the NVs: in all community gatherings that were part of the MTR process, the review team heard, unanimously, that one of the most significant contributions of the NVs has been to “bring the communities together”.

The cleaning campaigns and gardening activities have been an important element of mobilization in the communities. The NVs have often been perceived as leaders, or have been associated with existing leaderships in the districts, such as women’s and youth organizations. Moreover, the mobilization initiatives have frequently become a positive incentive for people to open up for discussion, and in various districts the NVs have supported the organization of discussion forums and opportunities for conflict management through discussion. In Foya district, Lofa, the incidence of people taking each other to court for small problems has decreased, as a result of the NVs’ intense work with the community members on solving their conflicts on the basis of rational, face-to-face discussion.

It is clear that both the induction training, the MDGs and the National Youth Policy (the latter two were key subjects in the training) have offered a concrete framework, tools and methodologies for the NVs to promote community integration. It has been observed, for example, that, in all districts, the NVs have used sports as an entry point to promote conflict management and social cohesion. All of the communities visited have reported that the organization of sports activities (most of which football games) has been extremely constructive and has reinforced positive attitudes and behaviors related to teamwork, fair play and healthy competition. In the future, it would be useful for NYVS to promote a discussion on how to make these activities more sensitive to young women, since, in their current format, they tend to attract more young men. The women could also benefit from the positive results facilitated by sports, if they were more involved in the events, not only in the traditional roles of cheering or preparing food, but also through sports that would be more attractive to them and to their children. Finding out what their needs and interests are is essential for a more inclusive planning. According to the NVs, it is mainly the male youth that they were able to mobilize for community work: 73% of men and 96% youth and children.

Despite this figure, gender,has been a central theme in the community work done by NVs. In addition to discussions on girls’ education (already described above), the NVs have also been actively involved in advocating to end gender-based violence - GBV and discriminatory practices. In Kolahun district, Lofa, the local women’s organization has found a major support in the male NVs to what they had been saying for a long time. In Foya district, Lofa, the NVs have teamed up with and supported the MAWPEVAW programme (men and women as partners to end violence against women), and community members claim that the occurrence of GBV and rape has decreased. Working alongside existing structures, or strengthening local organizations and movements, has proved to be an effective strategy to move forward in discussing sensitive or “unpopular” subjects such as traditional gender inequality. In fact, this is a conclusion that applies to other areas of the project as well, and will be further discussed in the sustainability section of this report.

All of these community mobilization and integration activities have offered an important platform for NVs to promote volunteerism. 84% strongly feel that they have contributed to stimulate community volunteerism. Not only by acting as role models, but also by involving the communities in a way that brings concrete and visible benefits, the NVs have been able to foster dialogues on the potential of volunteerism to contribute to community development, and to the development of Liberia. The review team observed many signs within the communities that they are absorbing this message: different people (parents, students, members of local organizations) in the districts visited have reported that volunteering through the initiatives promoted by the NVs has helped them to overcome individualism, and to consider volunteering themselves in other counties to support the development of Liberia. The education authority in Lofa complemented that “*the NYVS project has helped us to understand that we need to take responsibility for ourselves, and not wait for others to do something for us. We can promote our own development*”.

On the other hand, the culture of dependence already mentioned in previous chapters is an obstacle with which the NVs need to deal on a daily basis. Even though most of the NVs confirm that, in general, community members have been open to volunteering whenever they were called, they also met situations where expectations were frustrated. A group of NVs in Kolahun district, Lofa, who planned a community gardening day, for instance, went from door to door inviting people, only to face a complete no-show on the agreed day.

**Good practice: Friends of the Volunteers**

In Toe Town, Grand Geddeh, the NYVS PO and the NVs created the “friends of the volunteers”, a group of school children, from 5 to 18 years old. The group gets together regularly, and the NVs promote games, arts and activities that help the children understand the importance of collaborating and helping each other. This has been a very important initiative to help parents and other community members overcome pre-conceived ideas about the NVs, and to be more open to volunteering themselves. Within the community, the involvement of the children is appreciated and, for the NVs, it has gradually become easier to mobilize adults for volunteering activities.

By linking these facts with the NVs’ request for more emphasis on V4D during the induction training, one can conclude that the V4D part of the induction can be improved to offer more concrete tools for raising the awareness to the benefits of volunteering and mobilizing communities in a more sustainable way.

# Volunteering as learning experience

From the long list of results achieved during the short life of the NYVS, perhaps the most significant outcomes are the ones related to the personal learning that each NV is acquiring from the volunteering experience. 91% of the NVs consider that their volunteer assignment has helped to improve their skills. This is not to minimize the importance of improvements in education, health or community integration, but simply points to the fact that the changes in those fields are recent, limited, and have no guarantee of sustainability at this stage. On the other hand, the experience of each one of the young men and women that is participating in the project has been formative and has brought visible change, growth and maturity that – pretty much without doubt – will continue to make a difference in their personal and professional lives in the future. 100% of the NVs consider that the NYVS project has made a positive difference in their lives.

One of the central ideas of the NYVS is to provide Liberian youth with an opportunity to improve professional skills and acquire work experience, and at the same time count on their support to the development of the country. In this regard, a key finding of the MTR is the corroboration that the volunteer assignments have indeed been effective to improve their skills. All NVs and supervisors are unanimous in this opinion, confirming that the assignments not only exposed them to professional experience, but also equipped them with practical tools to address the challenges commonly found in exercising their professions.

Furthermore, the assignments have also presented an opportunity for NVs to learn more about their country, its cultural diversity, and the importance and reality of the rural area. Coming mostly from middle-class families based in the capital, many NVs witnessed for the first time the hardships that poor people face in their everyday lives, the challenges of living away from the center (with very practical implications such as short supply of food or even the inexistence of local food markets), the vulnerability and scarce opportunities that these families are prone to. For many NVs, experiencing these adversities themselves (also considering that they had a low reserve of financial resources), in addition to living away from their families, has been a revealing and challenging exercise that has forced them to learn and readapt to a very different lifestyle.

In the personal sphere, they have learned skills such as leadership, mobilization and conflict management. They have recognized themselves (and have been recognized by others) as role models, and have had to cope with the implications of that, studying and changing their own attitudes and behaviors. They have learned about the value and impact of volunteerism, and how important it is for the reconstruction and development of Liberia. And this whole learning has paid back with more confidence, and increased self-esteem. There is no doubt that being an NV can be a powerful experience, that opens up and changes the minds of young people, to be more aware of the reality of their country, the importance of others beyond themselves, and their own role in making positive changes in reality.

**Words used by the NVs to describe their assignments:**

challenging, educative, great, inspiring, empowering, difficult, tedious but good, enriching…

“*I have learned in five months what I would never have learned in five years of school work*”, NV in Lofa

# Two areas that did not work well

Every development project, however much success it achieves, will always have lessons learned on areas that have produced different effects from the ones envisaged in the original planning. In the context of the NYVS, the MTR found that two particular activities did not work well: the provision of seeds for community gardens and the participatory preparation of micro-projects.

The provision of seeds was a very special case, because most of the gardens prepared by the NVs and communities did not germinate. It is not clear why this happened: it can be that the seeds (procured by UNDP on the basis of lowest price) were of bad quality or dead, or that the NVs and community members simply did not have the skills to grow a garden. This was obviously a frustrating result, which undermined a lot of the NVs’ credibility in community work – in some cases, they had to work hard to regain the confidence of community members and “convince” them to participate in other subsequent activities.

In the one case where the garden germinated (Kolahun, Lofa), the experience was positive, and community members have confirmed that the garden has made a difference in their lives. One mother in a community gathering reported that her children “*can now go to school, because they do not have to walk long distances to go to the food market*”. In the school, the garden has been the most important dietary complement. However, even in the case with a positive result, if the NYVS wants to continue investing in this area, it needs to consider two factors: i) the NVs do not have experience in agriculture, and this was not an area of training in the induction course; and ii) there needs to be an educational action that prepares the community to maintain their garden in the long run and to obtain additional seeds without depending on supply from external parties.

The second area that did not work well was the preparation of micro-projects with the communities. Three main reasons have contributed to that. First, the NVs did not have any training on how to formulate a project proposal, and therefore the projects presented to the steering committee were, in general, of low quality: the ones that receive the grant will need substantive revision. All NVs, during the focus group discussions, suggested that project proposal writing be included in the induction training, a suggestion that has been positively taken by the project team. The second reason was that the concepts and ideas behind the micro-projects need to be better clarified to the NVs themselves and the communities. The original idea behind the micro-projects was to stimulate initiatives that would improve income generation and other sustainable processes in the communities. Nevertheless, 47 projects were submitted by the deadline, out of which 15 were directly related to the provision of goods and services that are not considered sustainable, such as building youth centers, toilets and “palava huts”. Finally, the arrangements for project implementation were not clear to the NVs (such as the NVs going back to the field on the same basis of their assignments, i.e. receiving the same VLA), and needed to be clarified during the MTR. The suggestion is that, if the preparation and implementation of the micro-projects is to go on in the next classes of NVs, i) the NVs need to be properly trained on the different elements of project proposal writing; and ii) the objectives, terms and conditions of the micro-projects and their implementation need to be clear before the NVs go on their assignments.

## Area 3: Sustainability and exit strategy

The results achieved by the NYVS project, in a short period of less than one year of implementation, are truly impressive. The review team was able to observe very concrete changes, learning and positive outcomes emerging from the experience of 66 young men and women in the beginning of their professional lives. However, whether these results – and the NYVS project itself – are sustainable is a question that needs special attention and consideration.

The sustainability of the results achieved depends on a combination of factors that are not necessarily under the control of the NYVS. For instance, NVs have been able to influence and foster changes in the schools where they work, related to both school management and to attitudes and behaviors, which naturally have led to an improvement in students’ performance. But there is a question about whether the new mechanisms and culture introduced will remain after the NVs finish their assignments. During the MTR, it was possible to observe that the school principals value these contributions, and have good will to continue them. It is not clear, though, whether there is enough capacity established in the schools (among teachers and administrative personnel) to carry on with activities such as school gardens, new subjects that have been introduced, new teaching and class management techniques, ongoing motivation of students to continue to invest in their education. The permanence of these changes depends very much on the school being able to implement them on a systematic basis without the coaching of the NVs – and this depends on continuous capacity development within the schools that can only be offered by the education authorities. In other words, the work of the NVs in introducing changes in the schools can only be sustained if the policies and actions of the Ministry of Education to improve local schools are in line with, support and equip the school staff to maintain the new parameters introduced.

The same applies to actions in health and in community development, which also call for continued and improved capacity of the local actors and professionals who offer services in these areas. Awareness campaigns and preventive health, advocacy for gender equity, conflict management, youth participation – these are fields where NVs have had a very relevant contribution, but that will need continuity and follow-up in the long-run, once the assignments are finished. The identification of local champions, the strengthening of local organizations, permanent capacity development and an incentive structure for staff in local hospitals, clinics and civil society bodies are a strategy that needs to be better integrated into the NYVS and in concerted actions between the MYS, MoE and MoH. In addition, the integration with other development actors working locally, such as NGOs, is also a valid route to sustainability.

**Good sustainability practice: NVs integrating into local structures in Lofa county**

In the Foya district, Lofa, four NVs have performed their tasks related to community development by integrating into local participatory and civil society spaces, or “clusters”. These are, among others: the NGO committee, which discusses the coordination of development work by the different actors in the district; the protection cluster, which deals with issues of criminal justice; and the MAWPEVAW (men and women as partners in ending violence against women), a Liberian initiative currently happening in three counties. By playing the role of resource persons in these existing development structures, the NVs have brought technical knowledge and other skills that the community members did not have, and are training and building the capacity of local actors and leaders. “*We are calling the local leaders to take action, instead of taking action ourselves*”, observes one NV.

Similarly, it is only through the engagement of different development actors in the country that the results of the NYVS can be scaled up. Currently, the programme works in 4 counties, and 15 districts – a very limited coverage if one considers it in the context of development in Liberia. An expansion is being planned, which is welcome, but it is also clear that the NYVS is a pilot, and that NVs cannot be considered the panacea for promoting development in the country. The lessons learnt and the good practices generated with the implementation of the NYVS can be used, replicated and applied in a wider scale if other actors know about and take advantage of them. The project already has a good practice of documenting experiences, and this needs to be built on, and communicated effectively so that development actors across Liberia can see the positive aspects of NYVS and be interested in providing their own contribution to this important enterprise.

Although some of these future developments are beyond the control of the NYVS, there are possibilities of intervention at the ministerial level that can be pursued. The MYS, as the owner of the NYVS initiative, and as a key stakeholder in Liberia’s political arena, should take responsibility for engaging the other line ministries more actively, and for achieving support from and awareness by the local and national authorities of the actions that are going on in the districts and institutions where the NVs are working. The Minister and Deputy Minister have shown enormous commitment to making this project successful and sustainable, and they need to continue playing a role in advocating for it, in involving more partners, and in pursuing the transformation of the NYVS into a national development policy for Liberia.

The NYVS needs to have a strategic plan that goes beyond the deployment of NVs in the field. The project needs to invest on advocacy and influencing at the high and political level. These are important elements that also need to be considered in an exit strategy, i.e. planning for the continuity of the project beyond the engagement of UNV. The allocation of resources at ministerial level, which the MYS already signaled during the MTR, is an important first step for this sustainability. But it is also true that, in the long run, the project will be more effective and sustainable if it becomes an integral part of Liberia’s national development plan, and counts on engaged partnerships, including (but not limited to) financial contributions, of other line ministries.

One final point about sustainability relates to the continued capacity of the NYVS to attract young volunteers. In this context, it cannot be denied that the employability perspectives are important, although, as said before, a future job should not be the single motivation for volunteering. It is essential that, in the short to medium term, the NVs who leave the programme are able to recognize that their volunteering experience has enhanced their employability potential. If this is clear, other young people will also be interested in the programme. As mentioned before, the NYVS and the MYS are investing a lot of time and energy on a graduation programme for the current NVs, and are giving them priority in new job openings. For the future, a potential partnership with ILO on linking the NV experience with the labor market (signaled by the ILO representative during the de-briefing meetings in Monrovia) should be carefully considered. The challenge will be to achieve the right balance between maintaining the volunteer spirit and focusing on employability – and the way to deal with it is to carefully guide the NVs to understand that there is much more to volunteering (for themselves, the communities and the country) than a future income perspective.

## Area 4: Project management

The overall project management structure seems to be adequate for the implementation, and there do not seem to be major challenges. However, there are specific areas of day-to-day management, such as dispatching materials, occasional payment delays and transportation, which are still subject to practical difficulties. Some of these issues are already being addressed by the project steering committee: for example, the purchase of motorcycles for the NYVS POs has been concluded as a response to the transportation issues raised by the POs, and to facilitate their coordination of the activities in the counties where they work. The review team encourages the steering committee to continue working on solutions to these practical problems, which may often seem small but can also have a high impact on the implementation of activities in the field and, consequently, on the success of the project.

A significant management issue that arose during the MTR, and which the team considers key in the way forward to the NYVS, is communication. Several challenges related to communicating well (both internally and externally) have been observed during the review, and demonstrate an overall weakness in this area. To name a few:

* Despite intense campaigning, the project did not manage to recruit the expected number of candidates, and was not able to attract women;
* Some NVs were under the impression that they would be granted jobs by the end of their assignments;
* Some NVs were under the impression that they would be hired by NGOs (with a different salary) to implement the micro-projects prepared with the communities;
* During the assignment, there were problems that were not identified in the monitoring system (e.g. the sociologist providing clinical services in the hospital in Lofa) and/ or not well communicated with the project management in time to take corrective action;
* Some community members were under the impression that the NVs were UNV volunteers or UNDP staff;
* Some community members and local authorities were unaware of the roles and activities of the NVs in the districts;
* The Ministries of Health and Education did not demonstrate a firm institutional commitment to the project and practical support to the volunteer assignments.

The NYVS needs to address these communication challenges by planning a communications strategy for the project. Internally, a lot of the issues can be addressed with the development of simple tools, such as: i) a complete written induction package for NVs (including, for example, a one-pager on “what the NYVS is and what it isn’t”; “practical things that all NVs should know about their assignments and entitlements”; “guidance note on the preparation and implementation of micro-projects”), ii) a communication toolkit for NYVS POs (including guidance notes on how to brief communities, local authorities and host organizations, what should be clarified about the programme, “what the NYVS is and what it isn’t”); iii) standard formats for monitoring reports (already being considered by the project management team), with detailed information on the NVs’ assignments. For external communications, the strategy needs to be broader, and work at higher-level of advocacy and influencing, for example: i) using effective communication tools (including the video prepared during the MTR) in a national campaign to attract candidates to NYVS; ii) studying and using channels to influence other actors in the Government of Liberia, including ministries, to support the NYVS in a consistent way. Ideally, the NYVS should consider hiring a communications specialist, to support the project in this area, bringing a holistic view and strategic planning.

Another potential management challenge for the project will be the expansion of the activities, which is currently being considered by the steering committee. An expansion in different areas is being studied: in the number of NVs, in the areas of work, in the number of counties covered, in the educational level of the NVs. It is important for the project management to clearly identify all the implications of this growth, and carefully reflect on which additional burden the project is structured to take (taking into account, among others, staff numbers and capacity, necessary training, additional financial resources, etc.). Any movement in the direction of increasing the coverage of the NYVS needs to be very cautiously analyzed.

## Summary of results achieved according to the project’s results framework

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| --- | --- |
| **Original project outputs** | **Progress identified by the MTR** |
| **1. Increased teaching resources and skilled manpower in the elementary schools and improved support in the health services in the clinics and the hospitals benefiting the communities**  Output targets (until the end of the project):   * 100 volunteers assigned to teach in 25 elementary schools in Lofa, Grand Gedeh, Bong and Maryland counties * 100 volunteers assigned to assist in 25 clinics and hospitals in Lofa, Grand Gedeh, Bong and Maryland counties * Elementary school textbooks donated to 25 schools in Lofa, GG, Bong and Maryland counties   Indicators:   * Number of host organizations and communities benefitting from services of NVs * Data on communities benefitting from improved health and education services, as a direct reuslt from the fielding of NVs | The NYVS is making good progress to achieve this output, although there are questions about the sustainability of the changes to which the NVs are contributing in the areas of education and health. In addition, the number of NVs working in education is much higher than in health, and the project did not manage to attract enough candidates with a health background for the first class of NVs. This needs to be considered when planning a communication strategy to attract future NVs.  Progress on targets (after deployment of first group of NVs):   * 41 NVs have been assigned to teach in 25 elementary schools in the four counties. * 26 NVs have been assigned to assist in 10 clinics and hospitals in the four counties. * 58 sets of textbooks printed and donated to schools   Indicators:   * 34 host organizations in 39 communities have benefited from the services of NVs * 82% of host organization representatives who responded the MTR survey state that education and health services have improved in their communities |
| **2. Enhanced youth’s skills through the provision of practical experience opportunities to the volunteers to facilitate their access to the labor market**  Output targets (until the end of the project):   * 200 NVs skills enhanced, with increased opportunities to access the labor market * NVs field assignment completed   Indicators:   * Data on NVs self-assessment of benefits of their field assignments * CV database established and employers who registered to use it * Number of access to the database by employers * Number of potential employers represented at the job fair * Number of NVs attending carreer day/ job fair | The experience has proven very successful in increasing the skills of NVs, although the number of NVs selected and deployed for the first group was lower than planned. There are already plans to expand the number of volunteers selected and deployed for the second groups. It is too early to assess improvements in the NVs’ access to the labor market, but there is progress according to the indicators.  Progress on targets (after deployment of first group of NVs):   * 85 NVs have participated in the induction training * 67 NVs completed their assignments   Indicators:   * 87% of the NVs, 75% of NYVS POs and 28% of the host organization representatives who responded the MTR survey confirm that the NVs’ skills have been improved during their field assignments * Database of NVs established * 100% of 67 NVs attended the career day/job fair * 13 potential employers have participated in the job fair * 40% of the 66 NVs have already been offered positions with the government and UN Agencies |
| **3. Increased awareness of youth and communities on the role of V4D and peace building, the meaning of the MDGs and major government policies**  Output targets (until the end of the project):   * 40 awareness campaigns conducted – 10 each in Lofa, Grand Gedeh, Bong and Maryland counties. Each campaign involving 40 participants from local communities   Indicators:   * Number of beneficiaries reached through awareness campaigns and volunteer initiatives conducted * Number of new volunteer jobs created in the communities after the awareness campaign and number of people mobilized | The NYVS has made good progress in raising awareness of communities on the MDGs, V4D and National Youth Policy.  Progress on targets (after deployment of first group of NVs):   * 90 awareness campaigns have been carried out in the four counties. The estimated number of participants is 85,000.   Indicators:   * According to the NVs who responded the MTR survey, the estimated number of beneficiaries reached through the campaigns varies from 50 to beyond 500. * There is no indication of the creation of volunteer jobs in the communities. |
| **4. Local capacity building and strengthened citizens’ participation and social cohesion through formulation of micro-projects on “Youth, Governance and Volunteerism”, involving both students and communities**  Output targets (until the end of the project):   * Exit strategy implemented. * Evaluations conducted at mid-term and upon completion of the 2-year project   Indicators:   * Number of micro-project proposals selected * Data on the active involvement of communities in the design of the proposals | The formulation of micro-projects took place in all the communities. However, the number and quality of proposals formulated was lower than the initial expectation. Revising this component of the project is recommended.  Progress on targets (after deployment of first group of NVs):   * An exit strategy has not yet been formulated in the context of NYVS * A MTR took place and a final evaluation is planned for the end of the UNV support   Indicators:   * 15 micro-project proposals were selected * 93% of the NVs and 100% of NYVS POs who responded the MTR survey concluded that the process for the preparation of micro-projects was participatory. |

## Conclusions and lessons learned

The MTR found very clear and concrete evidence that the NYVS has an enormous capacity and potential to promote positive change. There is no doubt that the presence of the 66 NVs in the 4 counties has been appreciated, has brought benefits to the communities and host organizations, and has had a positive influence on the lives of the NVs and of others. Similarly, the NYVS also has the power and potential to develop national capacity: the NVs have brought new technical knowledge and expertise to host institutions, to local professionals, to community members; and have enriched their own personal and professional skills. In short, there is no doubt about the added value of a youth volunteer scheme in Liberia, particularly considering the country’s shortcomings, the still existing need for reconstruction and peace building and the urgent call for development.

The NYVS has also proved that working with youth volunteers is a constructive approach. The NVs that were part of the first class have demonstrated a lot of energy, and an openness to learn, to analyze and change their own attitudes and behaviors, to adapt to new circumstances that they had never faced before. These are all positive factors that have been appreciated by the people around them, and have been acknowledged by themselves as key for their own development during the period of their assignments. In addition, they have been exposed to the reality and problems of their country, to the hardships of poverty, to the suffering of many people and families. If some of these young men and women become future leaders of Liberia, they will have had a formative experience that will be key when they rise to positions of power.

The NYVS project demonstrates the added value of volunteerism. Throughout the MTR exercise, the review team heard repeatedly that “the NVs are the Liberian Peace Corps”. They were recognized by the communities as “sons and daughters of Liberia”, sacrificing themselves to do something for their country, at their own free will, and without a financial expectation. In many communities, the review team could detect that this level of personal commitment towards others had not been seen in a long time. In all districts, we heard that people were more willing to volunteer, that parents wanted their children to volunteer and to participate in a positive wave to develop Liberia. People who have had contact with the NVs are slowly learning that volunteering is a route to empowerment.

There are many areas of good practice that the project can build on. The induction training, in particular, was considered of excellent quality and offered an overall framework and coherence to the practice of the NVs working in very different and distant parts of the country. If youth volunteering becomes a mass movement in the future, this coherence will be essential to guarantee that good results are obtained across the board. Other initiatives piloted by the volunteers have also produced very positive effects, such as awareness campaigns, gender advocacy, sports to promote peace, working with existing development structures, as well as the various practical tools applied in the specific areas of their assignments.

A first seed was planted with the first class of NVs. Now that the programme has been underway for almost one year, more people know about it, there are already positive results that can be disseminated, and the potential to engage other partners is higher than ever. But there is still a lot to be done and changed. The future of the NYVS depends on strong political and operational support by the Government Liberia. The chances of survival and long-term impact are very restricted if the programme remains as an isolated initiative of the MYS. Rather, it needs to become a national policy, part of the country’s development plan and poverty reduction strategy. It needs to link with local agendas and structures. This will require political coordination, advocacy, communications and heavy financial investment. These are areas that need to be factored into NYVS’s strategic planning.

Improving the areas of weakness and capitalizing on the strengths is a necessary approach to move forward with the NYVS. In this context, communications and strategy are essential elements where a lot of effort and attention needs to be invested. In particular, these will play an essential role once UNV’s support is concluded after the end of the second class, and the MYS will need to take full responsibility, both technical and political, for the implementation and expansion of the programme. In that sense, it is also wise to expand the programme carefully, and not lose sight of the risks involved in expanding: the NYVS needs to do good, not harm, to both the NVs and the communities.

## Recommendations

This section consolidates recommendations related to issues that have been addressed in detail in previous chapters. They are of strategic, programmatic and operation nature, and should be addressed in the short (as soon as possible), and longer terms (by the end of UNV’s support phase/ in the next three years of implementation of NYVS). They also indicate who should be responsible for implementing the recommendations.

## Strategic recommendations

**1. Develop an exit strategy for NYVS**

Rationale: The exit strategy needs to take into consideration the end of UNV’s funding to the programme and what is necessary to guarantee continuity beyond the second class of NVs. Although the future support of other donors for the continuity of the programme was already envisaged in the project planning phase, this will not happen automatically. The MYS and project management team need to think about the necessary steps and the formal mechanisms to involve other partners.

Examples of issues to consider (this list is not exhaustive):

* Necessary financial resources to maintain the NYVS programme
* Potential sources of funding (e.g. MYS core budget, other line ministries, potential donors, other international development partners)
* What needs to be done to mobilize other partners?
* The key political, advocacy and influencing role of the MYS and UN agencies.
* Including in the TORs of POs a role to advocate for more ownership and commitment from the ministries regarding NYVS.

Responsible units: Project management team and MYS.

Timing: short term.

2. Develop a sustainability strategy for the results achieved by the NVs in the field

Rationale: The changes to which the NVs are contributing in the field are many and positive, but there is no guarantee of sustainability after the NVs leave their places of assignment and host institutions.

Examples of issues to consider (this list is not exhaustive):

* How to guarantee the support of local authorities to the NVs in the field?
* The role of line ministries to make sure that schools, hospitals and clinics continue the work initiated by the NVs after they leave. What needs to be done to mobilize the ministries in this sense? What kind of concrete commitment can line ministries guarantee in following up the NYVS project?Identifying champions in the schools, hospitals, clinics and communities to take over the role of the NVs after they leave. This needs to be factored into the NVs’ TOR and the NVs need to be adequately prepared/trained to do this.
* NVs working with local organizations and existing development structures.
* What is more sustainable: sending NVs to the same districts where the first class has already worked or sending the new NVs to different ones? What are the implications of both choices to guarantee that results achieved will be maintained?

Responsible units: Project management team, MYS, steering committee.

Timing: short term.

3. Develop a communications strategy for the NYVS

Rationale: Addressing internal and external communications is an urgent issue for the NYVS, as this was considered one of the most important managerial challenges. Ideally, a communications specialist should be hired by the project, in order to bring a holistic vision to communications, as well as technical knowledge and effective tools. If necessary, a budget revision should be done to accommodate the costs of hiring a professional.

Examples of issues to consider (this list is not exhaustive):

* External communications: how to attract more volunteers? How to promote the work of NYVS across Liberia? How to attract more partners? How to communicate effectively with the local authorities, host organizations and communities about the NVs, the nature of their assignments, the necessary support?
* Internal communications: how to enhance the communications between the project management team, POs and NVs?
* Preparation of practical instruments and guidance notes that are user-friendly, self-explanatory, and avoid misunderstandings.
* Necessary human, physical and financial resources.

Responsible units: Project management team, steering committee.

Timing: short term for the identification and hiring of communications specialist; longer term for the development of the communications strategy.

**4. Develop a long-term strategic plan for the NYVS**

Rationale: To be sustainable and to generate real impact, the NYVS needs to become part of Liberia’s development agenda and poverty reduction strategy. It needs to be strategically linked with other initiatives going on in the country, and to complement them, rather than work in isolation. It also needs to enhance its capacity to respond to country needs. At the same time, the long-term strategic plan needs to be an umbrella that coherently hosts the strategies recommended in points 1 to 3 above.

Examples of issues to consider (this list is not exhaustive):

* What are the areas in Liberia that need most of volunteer work? In what areas could the work of NVs be helpful beyond education and health? Who needs to be consulted in order to answer these questions adequately?
* What are the existing development policies and what are the points in common and the areas of conflict with NYVS? How can complementarity be enhanced?
* What are the practical ways that could approach the volunteers and the local development initiatives? (the lesson from Lofa, integrating into existing structures and developing their capacity, is a very good example that needs careful consideration).
* How can the links between volunteering and employability be enhanced? Consider establishing a partnership with ILO to enhance this component of the programme.
* Review indicators and establish annual targets for the next years of the NYVS.
* Review the NYVS gender approach, and areas that need improvement. Contracting a gender consultant for the project can be a useful support.

Responsible units: Project management team, steering committee.

Timing: short to longer term.

## Programmatic recommendations

**5. Expand the programme carefully**

Rationale: The success of the NYVS has the immediate implication of raising expectations towards expanding the programme. While this is a positive sign, any expansion carries risks and needs to be carefully planned. Currently, there are debates on expanding the programme in different directions: adding two counties, increasing the number of volunteers, including agriculture as one of the professional areas of assignment, expanding the programme to secondary school students. Out of these options, the most risky and costly one is expanding the programme to secondary schools, as it would mean a much heavier preparation of the NVs, a need for much closer supervision and guidance of their work, a completely different training set-up, a much higher risk that they “do harm” in the communities where they serve. UNV does not recommend the expansion of the programme to secondary school students at this stage. If possible, the other expansions above should be done with a phased approach.

Examples of issues to consider (this list is not exhaustive):

* In what areas does NYVS really need to expand? What is more and less urgent? How can a phased approach be implemented?
* Human, physical and financial implications of the expansion. Who will provide the additional resources necessary once the partnership with UNV is concluded? Is an expansion sustainable in the future?
* What are the risks involved in an expansion in each area? What needs to be done to mitigate these risks?

Responsible units: Steering committee, MYS.

Timing: short to longer term.

**6. Improve the learning of NVs and NYVS POs**

Rationale: Although the learning outcomes are clear and very significant in the NYVS, there is room for improvement, both by introducing changes to the induction training and by offering other learning opportunities to NVs.

Examples of issues to consider (this list is not exhaustive):

* Improve the induction training: see suggestions from NVs (page 5)
* Invite NYVS POs to participate in the full induction training, with a particular role to share their experiences, know and guide the NVs. The POs’ monitoring role should also be made clear from the outset of the induction training.
* Invite former NVs to selected sections of the induction training, to share their experiences with new NVs
* Alternative forms of learning, networking and experience sharing among NVs during their assignments. Examples: i) a quarterly three-day meeting of all NVs working in the same county, with the agenda divided in two parts, one more informal, for experience exchange, and one more formal, with in-depth courses or workshops to complement the training they received in the induction; ii) a virtual network for NVs to maintain contact in the future. This has implications such as developing a web-based platform, moderation, etc, with needs for human, physical and financial resources. It could be the object of a separate project, in cooperation with a different donor.

Responsible units: Project management team, steering committee.

Timing: short to longer term.

## Operational recommendations

**7. Review financial support to NVs**

Rationale: It became clear during the MTR that the financial support provided for the NVs is not sufficient to cover their costs during the assignments. However, it may also be true that the NVs, leaving their families and living on their own for the first time, are not well prepared to manage their own money. A reasonable readjustment is required, however bearing in mind the volunteer nature of the assignment and the reality of Liberia’s labor market. A VLA of US$ 150 is recommended.

Examples of issues to consider (this list is not exhaustive):

* The reality of many duty stations, e.g. in some villages there are very restricted options to find food and accommodation, and NVs end up spending more than planned
* An additional rent allowance of US$ 10 to 15
* Including a module on basic domestic economy in the induction training

Responsible units: Project management team, steering committee.

Timing: short term.

**8. Continue to address management issues that need to be solved**

#### Rationale: Management issues like logistic constraints, lack of access to computers, postage delays, transportation, among others, may seem small details and not a priority. However, they are a significant source of risk for the implementation of the project in the field, and, therefore, its success. Solutions to some of these problems have already been found and are being implemented by the steering committee and the project management team, but other issues still need to be addressed. It is recommended that the project team and the steering committee continue to work on solving these issues, with practical and quick solutions, to guarantee a smooth implementation.

Responsible units: Project management team, steering committee.

Timing: short to longer term.

## Annexes

## Annex 1: Terms of Reference for the Mid-Term Review

**Terms of Reference for Mission to Conduct Mid-Term Project Review**

**of the National Youth Volunteer Service Pilot of Liberia**

**22 June to 4 July 2008**

**1. Background**

The NYVS project is a two-year pilot initiative that aims at establishing a National Youth Volunteer Service in Liberia to enable the youth to contribute to the development process in the country. It is a response to the demands of the Liberian youth as expressed in the Kakata Declaration and the National Youth Policy Framework It started with an eight month Preparatory Assistance Phase (Dec. 2006 – June 2007) that UNV Bonn funded with (100,000USD) to assist with the commencement of the NYVS project initial activities.

The PA phase then led to a full-fledged project document, approved both by UNDP and UNV HQ in August 2007, with the allocation of USD 603,199.76 funded under UNV SVF and USD 200,000 funded by UNDP Liberia. Its implementation started in September 2007 by UNV/UNDP, to achieve the following objectives:

1/ Provide an opportunity for university graduates to support the provision of public education and health services at the community level;

2/ Promote awareness of both the youth and the communities on the role of volunteerism in development and peace building, the meaning of the MDGs and major government policies;

3/ Strengthen local capacity for citizens’ participation and social cohesion through the formulation micro-projects on ‘Youth, Governance and Volunteerism’ involving both communities and students; 4/ Address the lack of skills among the youth through the enhancement of their capacity to access the labor market and enable them to contribute to the economic development of the country.

The project’s major long-term outputs anticipated are an increased access to education and health for communities living in remote areas and support to ongoing efforts to strengthen social reintegration and cohesion at community level through the active involvement of the youth. The active interaction between urban youth and rural communities will help reduce the divisions and polarization in the communities resulting from 15 years of war; promote awareness on the value of volunteerism, the meaning of MDGs and peace building and reconciliation.

Since the start of its implementation in September 2007, the program targeted 100 but only recruited 67 university graduates referred to as National Volunteers to support the local socio-economic development in four counties (Bong, Lofa, Grand Geddeh and Maryland) through the provision of volunteer services. They are assigned to teach in the elementary school and to provide assistance in the clinics.

According to the M&E plan in the project document, the monitoring and evaluation of the NVs’ performance on the field will be carried out at 2 levels. The first is conducted by the elementary school principals and directors of clinics where the volunteers are assigned. The principals and clinic directors fill up a monthly performance appraisal form in respect of each volunteer in their establishment. The appraisal focuses on the following issues:

* Accomplishments of the volunteer during the month
* His/her attitude to work (commitment)
* His/her relationship with other teachers and workers
* Volunteer activities organized
* Impact of the volunteer’s activities

The 4 National UNV volunteers assigned as project officers in each county monitor the NVs’ involvement in community activities through a survey to be conducted on a monthly basis with the various stakeholders. The project manager will prepare guidelines for interviewing the local communities. The survey will focus on the following:

* Volunteer activities organized in the community (nature and quantity)
* Attitude of volunteer in promoting community activities
* Relation of volunteer with host family/host community
* Living conditions of volunteer
* Impact of volunteer’s activities on the community

The UNV HQ Evaluation unit, in collaboration with UNESCO, the CBR Programme, UNDP and other partners, is committed to provide consulting support on how to enhance the M&E plan in this area. According to the PRODOC, this should include more specific educational and health objectives, as well as training and capacity building to the Committees, staff, and UNV volunteers who will be working directly with the volunteers and host organizations and are responsible for the placements, monitoring and assessments.

**2. Objectives of the Mission**

The purpose of the mission is primarily to conduct a mid-term review of the project during the term of service by the first class of National Volunteers (NVs). The objectives are as follows:

1. Assess the project in terms of design, implementation, management, sustainability, and capacity, based on the project document and realities of practice from the perspectives of various stakeholders.

2. Document positive changes to which the project has contributed (or is contributing) so far, at the level of local communities, elementary schools and clinics

3. Assess the added value and relevance of the role and functions of the national volunteers with respect to host communities and to themselves

The review process is also expected to provide opportunities to enhance partnerships with the Ministry of Youth, ILO, etc.; develop continuous improvement recommendations for the rest of this volunteer class cycle, especially the exit strategy for volunteers, and use the lessons learned and best practices to prepare the next volunteer class cycle.

The expected outcomes will be enhanced capacity of the project management team and partners to manage and monitor the project; practical recommendations for quality improvement of aspects of the volunteer management cycle; strategies to enhance sustainability and partnership building, and plans of action for identifying and highlighting project accomplishments.

**3. Expected Activities**

1. Meet with project team to discuss progress to date and build their understanding and capacity in project management, monitoring, and evaluation.
2. Visit communities where NVs are placed to obtain multiple stakeholder inputs from the NVs, school and clinic host organizations, community members, and local officials
3. Meet with government partners, especially the Ministry of Youth, for their inputs regarding the project to date, its accomplishments, and future operations; and ensuring the sustainability of the project.
4. Meet with individual UN agencies, especially with UNDP Liberia, for their inputs regarding the project to date, its accomplishments, and future operation; discussion of M&E for this project and V4D projects in general. Also address long-term sustainability of this project and other potential V4D partnership opportunities.
5. Meet with bilateral and other current and potential resource partners for their inputs regarding the project to date, its accomplishments, and future operation and to discuss long term sustainability of this project.
6. Conduct end of mission debriefing with project team and other relevant stakeholders to gain agreement on and to document lessons learned, action recommendations, and follow-up commitments.

**4. Expected Outputs**

The mid-term review team will produce a written report (maximum 10 pages), with the following content:

* Background and process of the review;
* Overall assessment of the project progress to date;
* Lessons learned;
* Action recommendations;
* Follow-up commitments.

**Annex 1 – Areas to be covered by the review and proposed questions**

#### Area 1: Volunteer management cycle

##### Application to NYVS

* What processes have been used to call for applicants to NYVS?
* Are there any views (positive and/or negative) on how/where the call for applications was announced? Is there anything that could have been done differently or that should have been done but wasn’t done? Was the choice of media for the announcement an adequate one?
* Are there any lessons as to whether/how this process should be different in future calls for application to NYVS?

##### Selection & recruitment

* How was the selection and recruitment process done for NYVS?
* Was there any particular consideration in terms of gender?
* Are there any lessons as to whether/how this process should be different in future selection and recruitment of NYVS volunteers?

###### Pre-assignment briefings

* How were selected NYVS volunteers briefed after selection?
* How were recipient communities, families and organizations briefed?
* Were there any particular problems or issues during these pre-assignment briefings?
* Are there any lessons as to whether/how this process should be different in future pre-assignment briefings of NYVS volunteers, recipient communities, families and organizations?

##### Orientation briefings & training

* What were the key elements of the orientation briefings and trainings of NYVS volunteers?
* Did volunteers receive any specific V4D guidance?
* Did volunteers receive any specific gender guidance?
* How useful did the volunteers find the orientations and trainings?
* How do volunteers see the application of the briefings and trainings during their assignments, including V4D and gender?
* Were there any particular problems or issues during the orientation briefings and trainings?
* Are there any lessons as to whether/how this process should be different in future orientation briefings and trainings of NYVS volunteers?

##### Support during the assignment

* What kind of support are NYVS volunteers receiving during their assignments?
* What support do they consider most useful and why?
* What support is not working well and why?
* Is there any difference in the support offered to men and women?
* Are there any lessons as to whether/how the support to NYVS volunteers can be improved?

###### Reporting & monitoring during assignment

* Are the monitoring and performance measurement mechanisms planned at the outset of the project in place?
* How useful do volunteers, their managers and other stakeholders find them?
* What important things can these instruments **not** capture? What should be done to capture these other important things?
* What can be done to improve the current monitoring and performance measurement mechanisms? Should other systems be in place? If so, which ones?

###### Performance evaluation & appraisal

* Are volunteers satisfied with the processes for performance evaluation and appraisal? How are these processes being used to improve the work of the volunteers? Are there examples of changes influenced by the results of the performance evaluation and appraisal?
* Are there any particular rewards or recognition for championing V4D or for fostering community volunteerism?

##### End of assignment

* Out of the total of volunteers involved in the first class, how many are interested in extending their assignments? What are the reasons behind it?
* What can the project do to strengthen the potential of former volunteers to continue carrying the message of V4D?

###### Reintegration

* What is being planned for the future of the first class of NYVS volunteers?
* Are the original project plans (e.g. job fair) still taking place and how?
* Are there any particular ideas on how to maximize the opportunities generated by the job fair?
* Are there other ideas to maximize the potential that the NYVS volunteers be engaged in future employment?
* Is there a difference in opportunities for men and women? If so, what can the project do to facilitate that men and women have a similar level of employment opportunities?

#### Area 2: Project management

* Are the current management arrangements working well?
* What are the most relevant management challenges and to what extent do they hinder project results?
* Are there any lessons as to whether/how the management of this project should be improved?

#### Area 3: Results achieved

* Do communities and host organizations feel that the health and education services have improved since the deployment of the NYVS volunteers?
* Do NYVS volunteers feel that they have improved their skills since their deployment?
* Has a CV database been established? Who is using/ accessing the database?
* What awareness campaigns and volunteer activities have been organized in the communities? How many people attended?
* Are micro-projects with the communities taking place? How were they prepared and how are they being managed? What are the most significant results so far?
* Overall, what are the most significant changes that NYVS volunteers are contributing to?
* Are the NYVS volunteers being able to foster or facilitate community volunteerism? What are the concrete examples?
* Is there a change in attitudes and behaviors of the communities towards volunteerism?
* Are there any changes in gender relationships or on gender professional stereotypes that can be noticed during the implementation of the NYVS?

#### Area 4: Sustainability and exit strategy

* How are different partners being involved in or being kept aware of the NYVS?
* Are there any perspectives that other donors and/or development organizations will take over the NYVS after the end of the UNV project?
* What is the Liberian government doing to mobilize potential future partners? What else can be done to increase the possibilities of engaging more partners and guaranteeing financial resources for the future of NYVS?

## Annex 2: Mid-Term Review Programme

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NYVS & UNV BONN EVALUATION MISSION TO THE COUNTIES (22ND JUNE - 5TH JULY 2008)** | | | |
|
| **Date** | **From** | **To** | **Activity** |
| **22-Jun-08** |  |  | **Bonn Team Arrives in Monrovia** |
| **23-Jun-08** |  |  | **Project Meeting (09.00-12.00)** |
|  |  |  | **Meeting UNDP CD (12.00 - 13.00)** |
| **Lunch (13.00-14.00)** |
| **Meeting DRR / Programs (14.20- 15.00)** |
| **Joint Meeting MoE &MoH Reprs to Steering Comm (15.30-16.20)** |
| **Security Talk (Paul / Edward) (16.45 - 17.30)** |
| 24-Jun-08 | 09.00am | 12.00 (noon) | Meeting with Ministry of Youth & Sports Team at SKD |
| 12.00 (noon) | 01.00pm | Lunch |
| 01.00pm | 04.30pm | Project discussions (Manager & Bonn Team), documentation review at SKD |
|  | | |
|  |  |  |  |
| 25-Jun-08 | 09.15am | 11.15am | Travel from Monrovia to Harper Maryland by UNMIL flight |
| 11.30am | 12.30pm | Meeting with NYVS Project Staff in Maryland County |
| 12.30pm | 01.20pm | Lunch |
| 01.30pm | 03.00pm | Meetings with LGAs(Superintendent, Education & Health Authorities) |
| 03.00pm | 05.00pm | Meetings with schools, hospital & communities and NVs in Harper |
| 26-Jun-08 | 08.00am | 06.00pm | Meetings with Schools, clinics, communities and NVs outside Harper |
| 6/27/2008 | 11.35am | 12.05pm | Travel from Harper to Zwedru by UNMIL Flight |
| 12.30pm | 01.30pm | Meeting with NYVS Project Officer in Grand Gedeh |
| 01.45pm | 03.00pm | Meeting with LGAs (Superintendent, Education & Health Authorities) |
| 03.01pm | 06.00pm | Meetings with schools, communities and NVs in Zwedru |
|  | | | |
| 6/28/2008 | 08.00am | 06.00pm | Meetings with Clinics, communities and NVs in Zia, Tuzon and Toe Town |
|  | | | |
| 6/29/2008 | 08.00am | 01.40pm | Travel from Zwedru to Gbarnga, Bong County by road |
| 04.00pm | 05.00pm | Meeting with NYVS Project Officer for Bong County |
|  | | | |
| 6/30/2008 | 08.00am | 09.00am | Meetings with LGAs (Superintendent, Education & Health Authorities) in Gbarnga |
| 09.15am | 12.00 (noon) | Meetings with schools and communities |
| 12.05pm | 01.15pm | Lunch |
| 01.30pm | 05.00pm | Meetings with clinics/hospital and NVs in Gbarnga |
|  | | | |
| 7/1/2008 | 07.30am | 11.00am | Travel from Gbarnga to Lofa by road |
| 11.00am | 12.00 (noon) | Meeting with NYVS Project Officer for Lofa County |
| 12.15pm | 01.15pm | Lunch |
| 01.15pm | 02.30pm | Meeting with LGAs (Superintendent, Mayor, Education & Health) In Vionjama |
| 7/2/2008 | 08.00am | 06.00pm | Meetings with schools, clinics and NVs in Kolahun & Foya districts |
|  | | | |
| 7/3/2008 | 07.00am | 04.00pm | Travel back from Lofa to Monrovia by road |
|  | | | |
| 7/4/2008 | Debriefing session in Monrovia (09.00 am to 12.00) & departure of the Bonn group (06pm) | | |
|  | | | |

## Annex 3: Data collection guidance

**Mid-Term Project Review of the**

**National Youth Volunteer Service Pilot of Liberia**

General methodology guidance for the review

*This is a summary of the methodology to be used during the mid-term review of the NYVS project. The review team will try to apply it to the extent possible, considering the time limitations and other constraints that may apply to the field trips. In general, there should be some flexibility and common sense to judge whether and how the tools can be used.*

*The MTR programme consists of meetings in Monrovia with the project team, UNDP, ILO, UNESCO and government stakeholders, as well as field trips, where the review team will meet NUNV volunteers, NYVS volunteers, health/ education local authorities and community members. The methodology for the field trips is divided in four “packages”, each one covering one specific stakeholder group. Guidelines have been prepared for each proposed tool. All tools (questionnaires, interview protocols, etc.) have been built based on other tools already used by UNV (previous evaluations, VRS, V4D workshops, etc.), simplified to the purpose of a mid-term review.*

##### Package 1. NYVS volunteers:

There will be some group meetings and some one-to-one conversations with NYVS volunteers (approximately 65 volunteers). Duration of the meetings varies in the different field trips, as it depends on the local agenda, structure and conditions, and even on the conditions of the roads through which the review team will travel, which may leave more or less time to interact with the NYVS volunteers.

For this group, we have designed the following tools:

* Survey questionnaire: all NYVS volunteers will be asked to fill in the survey questionnaire, and return it to the NUNV project officer in their county, in a sealed envelope, by 7 July. The NUNV project officers will send the questionnaires to Bonn.
* Timeline tool for use in focus group meetings: time permitting, a timeline tool can be used with groups of NYVS volunteers.
* Interview protocol: for one-to-one interviews or in the case of group meetings with very limited duration. The protocol builds on and expands the questions from the MTR TOR for the specific audience, focusing on particular areas where information should come from this stakeholder group.

##### Package 2. NUNV volunteers/ project officers:

There will be one-to-one meetings with all NUNV volunteers/ project officers (total of 4). We have designed the following tools to support these conversations:

* Survey questionnaire: all NUNV volunteers have received the questionnaire beforehand by e-mail, and have provided answers in advance. The answers to the questionnaires will be the basis for further discussions during the one-to-one meetings.
* Interview protocol: based on the original questions of the TOR, adapted to the audience, the protocol brings questions that provide an opportunity to investigate further and to obtain more qualitative answers to the questions in the survey.

##### Package 3. Local health/education authorities:

There are meetings planned with groups of local authorities and one-to-one conversations, varying in duration.

For meetings with groups averaging one hour in duration, we have prepared the following plan:

20 minutes: introductions

10-15 minutes: application of survey

30 minutes: discussion

We have designed the following tools:

* Survey questionnaire: a very short questionnaire (12 questions), to be applied during focus group meetings. If time does not permit, the questionnaires will be left with the authorities and will be collected by the NUNV project officers by 7 July, to be sent to Bonn.
* Interview protocol: questions adapted from the TOR, which can stand alone and be used in one-to-one or group meetings with very limited duration. The protocol can also serve as a guide for a discussion following the completion of the survey during the meeting, if this is the case.

# Package 4: Community members

There will be group meetings and one-to-one visits to the community members. The tools prepared are:

* Interview protocol: a set of questions adapted from the TOR to the audience that can be used in one-to-one conversations, to guide group discussions or as guiding questions in the application of the practical tools.
* Practical tools: a set of instructions on participatory tools has been prepared, for use with communities, considering possible illiteracy and other constraints of this stakeholder group. The guiding questions for the application of the tools can be taken from the interview protocol.

## Annex 4: NVs aggregated survey results

**Mid-Term Project Review of the**

**National Youth Volunteer Service Pilot of Liberia**

Survey Questionnaire: National Youth Volunteers

58 completed questionnaires out of 67 NVs

# Section 1: Personal information

1. I am a National Youth Volunteer, serving in a:

(62% ) school

(38%) hospital/ clinic

2. I am:

(72%) a man

(28%) a woman

# Section 2: Recruitment and selection

3. I decided to apply to the NYVS:

( 34%) after I saw an announcement on the newspaper

( 31%) after I heard an announcement on the radio

( ) after I heard about it on TV

(35% ) after someone I know told me about it

( ) other: through a notice sent to University

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. The application process to the NYVS was:

( 89% ) very simple and clear

( 11% ) not so simple or clear

( ) complicated

5. I feel that the recruitment selection was transparent and fair:

(70% strongly agree

(28% ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

(2% ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

6. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about the recruitment and selection process, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* Selection process should include nurses, agricultural/vocational training
* Recruitment process should be decentralized at county level.
* Need to include high school graduates

# Section 3: Orientation, briefing and induction course

7. The induction course I received before my assignment was useful. During my assignment, I apply the different things I have learnt:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | To a great extent | To a lesser extent | To a limited extent | Not at all |
| A history of change in Liberia leading to the era of conflicts and wars and a need to mainstream peace in development programming and implementation | 75% | 23% | 2% |  |
| Youth and reconstruction of Liberia, a “youth view” | 89% | 9% | 2% |  |
| National Youth Policy Framework for Liberia | 91% | 7% | 2% |  |
| Millennium Development Goals, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for Liberia and Human Development Report | 81% | 17% | 2% |  |
| Volunteerism for Development | 98% | 2% |  |  |
| Gender and Development and its linkages to Millennium Development Goals | 87% | 11% | 2% |  |
| Leadership | 77% | 16% | 5% | 2% |
| Community Participatory Approaches | 86% | 12% | 2% |  |
| Project Cycle Management | 42% | 50% | 6% | 2% |
| Peace Building | 88% | 11% | 1% |  |
| Civic Education | 61% | 24% | 9% | 6% |

Other: Suggestion to include more training on ALP, Gender Based Violence, Counseling and therapy for traumatized people, HIV/AIDS Awareness

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Only for volunteers working in education:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | To a great extent | To a lesser extent | To a limited extent | Not at all |
| History of ALP in Liberia | 67% | 11% |  |  |
| Teaching Methods | 98% | 2% |  |  |
| Management Skills in teaching (Effective management skills) | 92% | 8% |  |  |
| Testing and Evaluation | 88% | 12% |  |  |
| School – Community relationship | 89% | 11% |  |  |
| Teaching demonstration | 81% | 19% |  |  |
| Micro teaching sessions | 50% | 38% | 12% |  |
| Effective Facilitation Skills | 63% | 32% | 5% |  |
| Effective Time Management | 75% | 22% | 3% |  |
| Student Centered methodology | 76% | 17% | 7% |  |
| Service Learning approaches | 52% | 36% | 12% |  |

Other: \_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Only for volunteers working in health

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | To a great extent | To a lesser extent | To a limited extent | Not at all |
| Community Entry techniques | 100% |  |  |  |
| HIV/AIDS with focus on behavioral change | 100% |  |  |  |
| Malaria facts and campaigns | 100% |  |  |  |
| Communicable diseases and campaigns against such diseases with focus on cholera and TB | 96% |  | 4% |  |
| How to identify sick persons in the communities and referring them to health facilities | 92% | 8% |  |  |
| Basics of child health | 92% | 8% |  |  |
| Basics of rational drug use | 86% | 14% |  |  |

Other: Need for more training on family planning, \_ psycho-socio counseling, First Aid, teenage pregnancy

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8. In my opinion, NYVS should improve the induction course to new volunteers.

(45% ) strongly agree

( 42% ) agree

(9% ) neither agree nor disagree

( 4% ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

9. Before my assignment, I received a briefing from the project manager. The information included in the briefing was clear and complete:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| My responsibilities | 81% | 16% | 2% | 1% |  |
| Performance evaluations | 87% | 13% |  |  |  |
| Insurance coverage | 16% | 28% | 26% | 20% | 10% |
| My entitlements | 78% | 22% |  |  |  |
| Transportation to duty stations | 40% | 37% | 7% | 13% | 3% |

Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

10. In my opinion, NYVS should improve its briefings to new volunteers.

( 53% ) strongly agree

( 40% ) agree

(7% ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

11. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about the orientation, briefing and initial training, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* Training course to last for 1 month instead of 3 weeks and improve the timing for the training
* NYVS Pos to be involved in the NVs training and provide a briefing on each county
* Financial management courses to be provided to NVs
* Need to focus more on project proposal writing
* Need for training on conventional learning programmes rather than on the accelerated version

# Section 4: Support during the assignment

12. When I have questions or doubts, I mostly seek orientation from:

(18%) my supervisor

(61%) the NYVS project officer in my county

(15%) other NYVS volunteers

( 2%) community members

(4%) other colleagues in the school/hospital/clinic where I work

13. When I have a significant problem or concern, I mostly seek help from:

(11% ) my supervisor

(82% ) the NYVS project officer in my county

( 7% ) other NYVS volunteers

( 4%) community members

( 6% ) other colleagues in the school/hospital/clinic where I work

14. In general, I feel that I receive good and useful support from:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | To a great extent | To a lesser extent | To a limited extent | I never seek support from them |
| My supervisor | 60% | 32% | 8% |  |
| The NYVS project officer in my county | 71% | 25% | 4% |  |
| other NYVS volunteers | 71% | 13% | 16% |  |
| community members | 60% | 35% | 5% |  |
| other colleagues in the school/hospital/clinic where I work | 63% | 33% | 4% |  |

15. I have had problems, when seeking support from:

( 4% ) my supervisor

( 29% ) the NYVS project officer in my county

( 6% ) other NYVS volunteers

(21% ) community members

( 4%) other colleagues in the school/hospital/clinic where I work

(35% ) not applicable – I have never had problems when seeking for support

16. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about the support received during your assignment, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* Need to meet regularly and more often with other NVs and the NYVS PO.
* Lack of support in terms of materials delivery
* Need to increase volunteer allowances
* Need to revise the accommodation issue with hosting communities
* Need for petty cash to conduct activities
* Better preparation and information sharing on NYVS with communities and hosting institutions

# Section 5: Results achieved during the assignment

17. In my assignment, I do the following activities: (check all the activities that you do regularly as part of your work):

( 100% ) a. provide direct services in the school/ clinic/ hospital

(82%) b. provide management support in the school/ clinic/ hospital

(100% ) c. organize awareness campaigns

(64% ) d. produce information material

(64%) e. provide training to the community

(99%) f. mobilize community volunteers for various activities

(92%) g. organize meetings and discussion groups involving the community

(49% h. organize events (fairs, camp fires, celebrations, etc.)

(94%) i. help the community develop projects that support their interests

(26% ) j. other:

* Conflict resolution with communities
* Family planning
* SEA training
* Cultural dances
* Awareness on Diarrhoea, and sexual reproductive health in Liberia
* Train communities on development issues
* Plan the celebration of the ‘Day of the African Child’ in Bong county
* Agricultural projects (peace gardens)
* Awareness on positive self-esteem
* Intellectual Fora
* Youth Volunteers Clubs
* Voluntary Adult Literacy classes

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18. If you checked point f (“mobilize community volunteers for various activities”): how many community volunteers do you think you have helped to mobilize so far?

0 – 50 (13)

51 – 100 (4)

101- 200 (12)

201 – 300 (8)

301-500 (11)

501 – 1,000 (6)

> 1,000 (2)

19. If you checked point f (“mobilize community volunteers for various activities”): the majority of these volunteers are:

(73%) men

(27%) women

20. If you checked point f (“mobilize community volunteers for various activities”): the majority of these volunteers are:

(4% ) children

(92% ) youth

(4% ) adults

( ) older persons

21. If you checked point i. (“help the community develop projects that support their interests and needs”), please choose below the statements that you think apply to these community projects: (check as many statements as you think apply):

( 93%) the project was prepared in a participatory way, including the interests of both men and women

( 86% ) all the people who participated in the project formulation had the opportunity to speak, and they spoke freely

(32% ) the discussions were mostly dominated by community leaders

(6% ) there may be disadvantaged groups that were not considered in the formulation of the project

(93% ) the project is in line with the needs and interests of the community

(32% the community has the tools and conditions to implement the project

(90%) I believe that the project will result in long-term benefits to the community

22. I feel that my contribution as a volunteer has helped to improved the education/ health services in the community.

(84% ) strongly agree

( 16% ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

23. I feel that, as a volunteer, I have also contributed to stimulate community volunteerism.

(84%) strongly agree

( 16%) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

24. I feel that serving as a volunteer has helped to improve my skills

( 91% ) strongly agree

( 9% ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

25. Overall, I feel that the NYVS project is making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities

(88%) strongly agree

( 12%) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

26. Overall, I feel that the NYVS project has made a positive difference in my life

(95% ) strongly agree

( 5% ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

27. Optional: Please share any additional comments you may have about the results achieved during your assignment, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* ‘The NYVS project needs to expand to as many parts of the country as possible.’
* ‘Need for NYVS PO to have access to transport & petty cash to help fund activities’
* ‘Include vocational training into the recruitment of NVs (e.g. carpentry, masonry, sculpture, etc.). Would impact on youth’
* Mis-perception of NVs as UN staff

# Section 6: Monitoring, appraising and improving performance

28. I feel that the regular feedback that I receive from my supervisor/ NYVS project officer has been useful to improve my performance:

(69%) strongly agree

(25%) agree

( 3% ) neither agree nor disagree

(3% ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

29. Overall, I feel that the monitoring and appraisal of my performance has been transparent and fair

(77% ) strongly agree

(23% agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

30. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about performance monitoring, appraisal and improvement, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* ‘The appraisal forms for NVs need to be more specific. Community forms should be filled up monthly instead of bi-monthly’
* ‘The NYVS PO should do a weekly check-in with NVs to know how they are doing. Have a talk with heads of host institutions. Brief better the hosting communities on NVs role/status’
* ‘The NYVS project team should give us feedback on our appraisal forms for improvement’

# Section 7: Looking forward

31. If possible, I would like to extend my volunteer assignment by a few more months.

(84%) yes

(1%) no

(15% ) I don’t know

32. I feel that working as a volunteer has increased my chances of finding a good job in the future.

(76% strongly agree

(17% ) agree

(7%) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

33. I feel that, in the future, I will continue to promote the values of volunteerism, even when I have a different job

(88% ) strongly agree

(12% ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

34. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about future perspectives, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* ‘Give the option to NVs to serve as IUNV’
* ‘There is a risk if the project is extended to high school graduates’
* Need for NYVS PO to have access to transport + petty cash to help fund activities
* ‘The development of Liberia requires volunteerism spirit at all levels’
* ‘I love being a volunteer, whether in my country or abroad’
* ‘I am proud to be one of Liberia’s first NV. Being a volunteer has been a great challenge and has improved my mind greatly.’
* ‘I am proud to be a NYVS in my country’
* ‘The development of Liberia requires volunteerism spirit at all levels’
* ‘The future perspectives of the NYVS programme is great to change the perception of Liberian youth. But strengthening the government capacity for a smooth transition is important to arrive at the desired results. Therefore, I suggest UNDP support be extended from 2 to 4 years’
* ‘I have trained 35 persons in GBV, SEA, domestic violence; 20 youth in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and 10 community leaders in leadership.’
* ‘I am now aware of the rapid spread of HIV and I have learned how to write projects and manage them’
* ‘I helped in conflict resolution between families; talked to girls on family planning’
* ‘The spirit of volunteerism that has developed in my life and the powerful experience received.’

## Annex 5 - Survey results – NYVS Project Officers

**Mid-Term Project Review of the**

**National Youth Volunteer Service Pilot of Liberia**

Survey Questionnaire: NYVS Project Officers (NUNV volunteers)

# Section 1: Personal information

1. I am:

(50% ) a man

( 50%) a woman

# Section 2: Organization of your assignment as a project officer

2. When I was selected and deployed as a NUNV volunteer, I received briefing and training.

( ) yes, both

(100%) only briefing (reading materials, meetings, etc.)

( ) training (initial course, workshops, coaching, etc.)

( ) I didn’t receive any orientation

3. The briefing and training that I received helped me to:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| Understand my job description and responsibilities | 67% | 33% |  |  |  |
| Understand the conditions of service of a national UNV volunteer | 33% | 67% |  |  |  |
| Feel prepared to face the challenges and hardships of my duty station | 67% | 33% |  |  |  |
| Understand volunteerism for development and how to promote it | 33% | 67% |  |  |  |
| Understand gender issues and how to address them | 67% | 33% |  |  |  |
| Understand the NYVS project, its purpose and expected results | 67% | 33% |  |  |  |
| Understand the support I would need to provide to NYVS volunteers in my duty station |  | 100% |  |  |  |

Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Overall, I feel that the briefing and training I received helped me with practical tools to perform my job better.

( ) strongly agree

(100%) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

5. Overall, I feel equipped and prepared to carry the responsibilities that my assignment entails.

(33%) strongly agree

( 67%) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

6. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about the organization of your assignment, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* Possibility for NUNV volunteers to take up Intl. UNV assignments
* Need for NYVS Pos to go through an intensive training similar to the one for the NVs.
* Need to be part of the NV training.
* Need for a refresher course/meeting with NYVS project management team at least once a month to identify gaps and provide new approaches/lessons learned .

# Section 3: Support during your assignment

7. When I have questions or doubts, I mostly seek orientation from:

(67%) the NYVS project manager

( ) the UNDP country office

( ) UNV headquarters in Bonn

(33% ) other NUNV volunteers

( ) community members

( ) Other: Colleagues at the UNDP/Zwedru Office

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8. When I have a significant problem or concern, I mostly seek help from:

( 67% the NYVS project manager

( ) the UNDP country office

( ) UNV headquarters in Bonn

(33%) other NUNV volunteers

( ) community members

( ) Other:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

9. In general, I feel that I receive good and useful support from:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | To a great extent | To a lesser extent | To a limited extent | I never seek support from them |
| the NYVS project manager | 33% | 33% | 33% |  |
| the UNDP country office |  |  | 33% |  |
| UNV headquarters in Bonn |  |  | 33% |  |
| other NUNV volunteers |  |  | 33% |  |
| community members | 33% |  |  |  |

Other: Colleagues at the UNDP/Zwedru Office

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

10. I have had problems, when seeking support from:

(33%) the NYVS project manager

( ) the UNDP country office

( ) UNV headquarters in Bonn

( ) other NUNV volunteers

(34%) community members

( ) Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

( 33% ) not applicable – I have never had problems when seeking for support

11. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about the support received during your assignment, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* Lack of support in terms of logistics/transportation and scratch cards.
* need for petty cash to solve emergency problems in the field

# Section 4: Results achieved by the NYVS project

12. In your county, the NYVS project includes the following activities: (check all the activities that you do regularly as part of your work):

(100% ) a. direct services in schools

(100% ) b. direct services in clinics/ hospitals

(67%) c. management support in schools

( 33% ) d. management support in clinics/ hospitals

(100% ) e. organization of awareness campaigns

(100% f. production of information material

( ) g. training to the community

(100% ) h. mobilization of community volunteers for various activities

(100% ) i. organization of meetings and discussion groups involving the community

( 67%) j. organization of events (fairs, camp fires, celebrations, etc.)

(100%) k. helping the community develop micro-projects that support their interests

(67% ) l. other:

* Supporting communities in the establishment of a NYVS community peace garden and community sports activities
* Trauma, psychosocial counselling

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

13. If you checked point h (“mobilization of community volunteers for various activities”): how many community volunteers do you think have been mobilized in your county so far? \_

Approx. 200 (Maryland)

> 1000 (Bong, Grand Gedeh)

14. If you checked point h (“mobilization of community volunteers for various activities”): the majority of these volunteers are:

( 33% ) men

(67%) women

15. If you checked point h (“mobilization of community volunteers for various activities”): the majority of these volunteers are:

( ) children

(100%) youth

( ) adults

( ) older persons

16. If you checked point k (“helping the community develop micro-projects that support their interests and needs”), please choose below the statements that you think apply to these community projects: (check as many statements as you think apply):

( 100%) the micro-projects were prepared in a participatory way, including the interests of both men and women

(100%) I believe that all the people who participated in the formulation of the micro-projects had the opportunity to speak, and they spoke freely

( 67%) I believe that the discussions were mostly dominated by community leaders

( ) there may be disadvantaged groups that were not considered in the formulation of the micro-projects

(100% ) the micro-projects are in line with the needs and interests of the community

( 33%) the community has the tools and conditions to implement the micro-projects

(100%) I believe that the micro-projects will result in long-term benefits to the community

17. I feel that the NYVS project has helped to improved the education/ health services in the county where I work.

( 100% ) strongly agree

( ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

18. I feel that the NYVS project has also contributed to stimulate community volunteerism in the county where I work.

(100% ) strongly agree

( ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

19. I feel that the NYVS project has helped to improve the skills of the NYVS volunteers.

(100% ) strongly agree

( ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

20. Overall, I feel that the NYVS project is making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities.

(100%) strongly agree

( ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

21. Optional: Please share any additional comments you may have about the results achieved by the NYVS project, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* ‘The NYVS project has brought some positive change in the lives of community dwellers in the county. In areas of education and health, the project has closed gaps of staffing in these institutions’
* ‘Community members have gained a sense of volunteerism due to the role of activities conducted by NVs (community garden, clean up campaigns)’
* ‘Need to provide adequate and durable sporting materials, educational games for youth and children; to include awareness on HIV/AIDS, STDs, MDGs’.
* ‘Gender issue visual aids and awereness materials would help.’
* ‘Need for petty cash’

# Section 5: Monitoring, appraising and improving performance of NYVS volunteers

22. I provide regular feedback to the NYVS volunteers

(100%) yes, at least on a monthly basis

( ) yes, at least once every two or three months

( ) I have provided feedback once

( ) no

23. I feel that the regular feedback that I provide to the NYVS volunteers has been useful to improve their performance:

(100%) strongly agree

( ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

24. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about performance monitoring, appraisal and improvement of NYVS volunteers, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* ‘NYVS PO should be part of the induction course of NVs.’
* ‘Need to allocate for overnight stays at community level in order to conduct monitoring and appraisal of NVs’ contributions to the communities. DSA implications’

# Section 6: Project management

25. I think that the current project management structure is working well.

( 33%) strongly agree

(33% ) agree

(33% ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

26. The roles and responsibilities between volunteer, project officers, host organizations and the project management team are clearly defined

(67%) strongly agree

( 33% ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

27. Overall, I think that the project implementation is efficient

( ) strongly agree

( 67% ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( 33% ) strongly disagree

28. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about future perspectives and sustainability, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* ‘Need for an increase in the allowances of the NVs’
* ‘Need for improvement in terms of training for field staff and logistical support.
* Issue of accommodation to be clarified for NVs and hosting communities.
* Need to extend the NV assignments to 12 months to complete the academic calendar.
* Increase no. of NVs and consider graduates from other discipline such as engineering, agriculture

# Section 7: Looking forward

29. I feel that the NYVS project has increased the chances of NYVS volunteers of finding a good job in the future.

(100% ) strongly agree

( ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

30. I feel that the NYVS volunteers will continue to promote volunteerism when they finish their assignments, even when they have new jobs

( 33% ) strongly agree

(33% ) agree

(33% ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

31. I feel that the NYVS project has sustainability and that the scheme will continue when the partnership with UNV finishes

( 33% ) strongly agree

( ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( 67% ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

32. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about future perspectives and sustainability, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* Concerns about the government taking over the project as they face financial constraints.
* Government should include NYVS in the national budget and NYVS to operate as an autonomous entity.

## Annex 6 – Survey results – Host Organisations

**Mid-Term Project Review of the**

**National Youth Volunteer Service Pilot of Liberia**

Survey Questionnaire: Local education and health authorities

11 Questionnaires completed out of 39 hosting institutions: 2 from Bong county, 4 from Grand Gedeh and 5 from Lofa

# Section 1: Personal information

1. I work in the area of:

(73% ) education

(27% ) health

2. I am:

(54%) a man

( 46%) a woman

# Section 2: Selection and preparation of NYVS volunteers

3. The NYVS volunteers working in my organization have been well selected

(91%) strongly agree

( 9% ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

4. I believe the NYVS volunteers were well trained and prepared for the responsibilities of their assignments

(73%) strongly agree

(27%) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

5. I think the training of NYVS volunteers should be improved

(27%) strongly agree

(46%) agree

(27%) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

6. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about the selection and preparation of NYVS volunteers, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* ‘We learned from them and they have also learned from us. NVs will need more training in order to improve their assignments.’
* ‘Number of NVs needs to be increased’
* ‘NVs assigned to clinics should have some medical knowledge or at least be a nurse aid or First Aid’
* ‘More female volunteers should be recruited and trained in the area of education and health’
* ‘NVs to be assigned from the beginning of the school year and provided with additional training if they do not have prior education/teaching background’

# Section 3: Management of NYVS volunteers

7. When the NYVS volunteers in my organization have doubts or significant problem, they seek orientation from me.

(63%) strongly agree

(19%) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

(18%) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

8. I provide regular feedback to the NYVS volunteers

(91%) yes, at least on a monthly basis

(9%) yes, at least once every two or three months

( ) I have provided feedback once

( ) no

9. I feel that the regular feedback that I provide to the NYVS volunteers has been useful to improve their performance:

(100%) strongly agree

( ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

10. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about performance monitoring, appraisal and improvement of NYVS volunteers, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* ‘The performance monitoring has been in line with our academic schedule and well done. We have not heard negative feedback about NVs in the community’.
* ‘NYVS performance monitoring is useful as it allows regular follow-up with NVs on their assigned duties’
* ‘Daily attendance should be part of the appraisal.’
* ‘The performance of the NVs has been very good in the sense that many changes have occurred in both schools and communities, as well as bringing peace and unity’
* ‘They put us together for group work and to make peace among ourselves.’

# Section 4: Results achieved by the NYVS project

11. In my county, the NYVS project includes the following activities: (check all the activities that you do regularly as part of the work of NYVS volunteers):

(63%) a. direct services in schools

(63% b. direct services in clinics/ hospitals

(45%) c. management support in schools

(45%) d. management support in clinics/ hospitals

(91%) e. organization of awareness campaigns

(45%) f. production of information material

(91%) g. training to the community

(82%) h. mobilization of community volunteers for various activities

(82%) i. organization of meetings and discussion groups involving the community

(54%) j. organization of events (fairs, camp fires, celebrations, etc.)

(82%) k. helping the community develop micro-projects that support their interests

(36%) l. other:

* Agriculture projects
* Awareness on personal hygiene and sanitation
* Improved our EPI section by introducing the ‘well babies day’
* Counselling and encouraging the less fortunate
* Encourage adult literacy programme )

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12. I feel that the NYVS project has helped to improve the education/ health services in the county where I work.

(82%) strongly agree

(18%) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

13. I feel that the NYVS project has also contributed to stimulate community volunteerism in the county where I work.

(63%) strongly agree

(19%) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

(18%) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

14. I feel that the NYVS project has helped to improve the skills of the NYVS volunteers.

(91% ) strongly agree

(9%) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

15. Overall, I feel that the NYVS project is making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities.

(100%) strongly agree

( ) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

16. Optional: Please share any additional comments you may have about the results achieved by the NYVS project, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* ‘Results were satisfactory. Need for more agricultural programmes’
* ‘With the introduction of NYVS project in Toe Town, many people have developed the spirit of volunteerism.’
* ‘I suggest that more NVs be assigned to the clinics’
* ‘I intend to keep PE as a permanent subject for my school’
* ‘The results achieved by the volunteers are significant to the community because it has changed their lives’
* ‘NVs have brought other achievements such as good health care delivery system, regular and actual learning processes ‘
* ‘Need to deploy more NVs to the health sector.’

# Section 7: Looking forward

17. I believe that the NYVS has sustainability and I hope that it will continue in my county

(82%) strongly agree

(18%) agree

( ) neither agree nor disagree

( ) disagree

( ) strongly disagree

18. Optional – Please share any additional comments you may have about future perspectives and sustainability, including areas and suggestions for improvement:

* ‘We believe that the perspective of sustainability of our own area for the future will be improved through the promotion of volunteerism at schools and communities’
* ‘Suggest to increase allowances/incentives for NVs for motivation purposes’
* ‘We will keep PE and cleaning campaigns as part of our permanent school programmes’
* ‘I believe that the sustainability of the NYVS project will be improved by the community dwellers’

1. http://www.lr.undp.org/UNDP-LIBERIA\_annualreport2005-web.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. http://www.icnyp.net/uploads/media/Bulletin\_February06\_04.doc [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Based on information gathered during focus group meetings with NYVS. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Africa/Liberia-POPULATION.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)