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**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Mid-term review of UNV AIM Programmes**

### Background

**The UNV Programme**

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. Volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for recognition of volunteers, working with partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing an increasing number and diversity of volunteers, including experienced UNV volunteers, throughout the world. UNV embraces volunteerism as universal and inclusive, and recognizes volunteerism in its diversity as well as the values that sustain it: free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity.

**Background**

Responding to UNDP’s Executive Board encouragement, and guided by results-oriented approaches, UNV undertook to appraise and express the distinctive nature of its activities. The UNV Business Model (BM) and accompanying Results Framework emanated from this undertaking and were approved by the Executive Board in 2006.

The UNV BM reflects on what UNV does in order to deliver on its mandate. Its elements are three interrelated and mutually reinforcing dimensions of work:

(1) Advocating for volunteerism and development globally: Advocating for the contribution of volunteerism as a sustainable, cost-efficient and culturally adapted development asset.

(2) Integrating volunteerism into development programming: Engaging in efforts to factor volunteerism into programmes and activities of the UN System, Governments and other key stakeholders that contribute to achieving the MDGs.

(3) Mobilizing volunteers for development and peace: Placement of a diverse range of professionally qualified and committed women and men as UNV volunteers in UN system-supported programmes and projects and the mobilization of ordinary citizens as volunteers associated with UNV or the UN’s programmes for that matter.

The BM provides a framework for actions to be taken to mainstream volunteerism into development and peace, as well as for the assessment of UNV’s performance, thereby facilitating planning, monitoring, performance assessment and reporting. The BM supports UNV to become, more than ever, a strategic resource and part of UNDP’s global development network, and for the UN System as a whole.

The Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean (ARLAC) Section of UNV developed its strategic planning with the purpose of aligning the section’s work and programming initiatives to achieve UNV’s key results as outlined in the BM. As a result, ARLAC is rolling out UNV’s business model with a pilot AIM programming approach in its sub-regions, from the late stages of 2007 and through 2009. Adopting this approach, ARLAC intends to operationalize the BM directly, with the three AIM dimensions serving as the main organizing factor for ARLAC’s work during that period.

ARLAC’s approach entails three programmes, one for each area of AIM intervention, under which a number of initiatives are carried out. These are aligned to specific key results and indicators as defined in the Business Model. A diverse array of initiatives are included in the programmes, ranging from on-going ones to new concrete, hard and soft proposals, reflecting the rich fabric of AIM-related work to be supported and identified in the ARLAC countries.

To support the implementation of the programmes, three AIM teams were created, using a networked structure and modus-operandi to best support individual initiatives.

### Justification

The three programmes (Advocacy, Integration and Mobilization) require a review after more than one year of implementation, as stipulated in the three programme documents. A review at this stage is also relevant to better understand how they can feed into the draft PDOG Strategy.

The Advocacy programme initiated implementation in January 2008 while Integration and Mobilization, which were approved at a later stage, started implementation in July 2008. Considering that the three programmes have different programme results frameworks but that they are following the same process, the AIM Programmes Board approved, on 13 January 2009, the request made by the Programme Manager to have one joint review.

The results of the review will help ARLAC to assess the relevance of the programmes to the PDOG Strategy, the progress achieved, and if any impact has been achieved so far. They will also provide inputs to improve the second year of the programmes’ implementation. The review will also be an important contribution for UNV’s ongoing discussion on its organizational business processes, particularly for its programming approach.

### Objectives and Scope

The general objective of this review is to:

Assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the AIM Programmes, draw lessons and make recommendations on how to improve the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency for the subsequent years of implementation. The review will also inform on the potential to scale up or to replicate this approach within other UNV geographical sections.

Specific objectives of this review are to:

* suggest ways to improve the design, management and performance of the AIM Programmes;
* generate knowledge and document good practices;
* identify ways to maximize positive effects/impacts;
* assess the value of a programming versus a project approach to implement UNV Business Model;

The Scope:

This review will include the three AIM Programmes from the start of implementation of each programme until the date of the review.

### Key Areas /Issues to be addressed

**Coherence and relevance**

External coherence

The extent to which the objectives and design of the project are suited to locally defined stakeholders’ needs and priorities, to government policies, civil society partners and to other development agencies’ efforts, as well as country programmes.

Internal coherence

The extent to which the objective and design of the project are suited to UNV’s strategic goals and priorities, as well as its global programme objectives and priorities.

Relevance

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

Useful questions:

* Do the AIM Programmes meet beneficiaries’ and countries’ needs?
* Are the AIM Programmes in line with global priorities and PDOG’s focus areas?
* Do the AIM Programmes meet partners’ and donors’ policies?
* To what extent are the outputs and outcomes of the programme still valid?
* Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the overall goal?
* Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the intended outcomes?
* Was the project developed to address a particular need and did the three programmes implement the right approach?
* What are the constraints under which the pilot initiative functions?

**Effectiveness**

Effectiveness: a measure of the extent to which the project is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives.

Effects: the positive and negative changes produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. Considering that the AIM Programme actions started implementation in the course of 2008, it would be very difficult at this stage to measure programme impact at the country level. The programme actions impact will be looked at during the later evaluation. What will be considered in the framework of this review is the effects of the processes, as well as progress towards the achievement of the expected longer term results/impacts.

Useful questions:

* What results have been achieved so far and what is the progress towards the expected long term results/impacts?
* Did the AIM Programmes have any negative effects/impacts?
* To what extent are the objectives likely to be achieved?
* What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

**Efficiency**

Efficiency: a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results. Efficiency measures of the outputs - qualitative and quantitative - in relation to the inputs and usually requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.

Useful questions:

* Was the programme or project implemented the most efficient way compared to alternatives?
* Do the programmes provide clear programming focus to our Country Office Teams (COTs)?
* Are the programmes facilitating the work of UNV COTs in programming?
* Did these programmes benefit from the AIM teams and did the AIM team members benefit from this experience?

**Partnerships and coordination**

An analysis of the external institutional relationships developed throughout the project/programme and the extent to which they have contributed to the achievement of results, as well as an analysis of the internal coordination mechanism.

Useful questions:

* Who were the partners involved in the design and implementation of the project/programme (UN, government, international NGOs, local organizations, etc)?
* How well were those partnerships managed and how could they be strengthened?
* To which extent did the UNV internal AIM teams support the implementation of the AIM Programmes’?
* Are there ways to improve UNV’s internal coordination mechanism?
* Is the management structure used for the AIM appropriate for this type of initiative; are the levels of delegation of approval authority appropriate?

**Knowledge management**

An analysis of the effectiveness of knowledge creation and transfer within UNV.

Useful questions:

* What can we learn from this first phase with regards to UNV’s internal coordination, information sharing and knowledge building mechanism?
* What should UNV consider if the AIM programming approach is to be replicated within other geographical sections?

**Focus areas and cross-cutting pillars**

The AIM Programme Approach was designed as a way to operationalize the UNV Business Model and not to pursue specific thematic areas. As the draft PDOG Strategy considers nine focus areas and the cross-cutting pillars of gender, youth and marginalised people, the review is expected to suggest ways in which the AIM Programmes can take these dimensions more systematically into account.

Useful questions:

* Which practical measure has been taken or could be included in the future to guarantee an adequate treatment of the PDOG focus areas in the programme initiatives?
* How can the three programmes practically integrate and promote the cross-cutting pillars of gender, youth and marginalised people?

### Process and Methods to be used

The review process will be divided into four distinct stages over a period of 20-25 working days. These stages reflect the necessary progression for achieving the goals of the review.

Preparatory Stage, during which the consultant will conduct the following main activities:

* Receive appropriate briefings from the ARLAC team and other UNV HQ stakeholders;
* Conduct a desk review of the existing materials - the UNV Business Model, the ARLAC AIM Programmes (Programme documents, Programme Progress Reports, Programme Actions proposals and progress reports, Pipelines, etc);
* Prepare and finalize with the AIM Programme Manager, and the ARLAC team as appropriate, an “Inception Report” including the detailed workplan for the consultancy, the final report outline, a review matrix. The review matrix will provide the framework for the final report and will specify, for each review criteria, the key questions, the indicators, the sources (including respondents for interviews / consultation stages, and participants for the validation stage) and collection method.

Interviews / Consultation Stage, during which the consultant will conduct the following main activities:

* At HQ level: group and individual discussions with AIM teams’ members, AIM project board members, with other geo-section chiefs, with senior management, and other UNV staff as identified in the preparatory stage;
* At country level: phone conferences with UNV programme officers, their supervisors (DRRs), and Resident Coordinators; with key partners from civil society and government; with UNV volunteers specifically involved in AIM Programme Actions. A total of 20-30 respondents from 8-10 countries should be contacted among the different categories, ensuring gender balance. The detailed list of respondents should be specified in the Inception Report. The countries selected should cover a range of profiles and experiences of the AIM Programmes’ involvement:
* Countries where many and/ or few AIM Programme actions are taking place;
* Geographical coverage (Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean);
* Conflict and not-conflict countries;
* Middle-income and low-income countries.

Report Writing and Validation Stage, during which the consultant will conduct the following main activities:

* Analysis of the results from the previous stages;
* Feedback on the analysis of information provided by respondents, as appropriate;
* Drafting of the report;
* Presentation of the draft report to ARLAC team, the Programmes Board and to UNV Senior Management, including country aide-memoire in annexes
* Identification of other good practices and ways to maximize the learning from the review (e.g. presentations to other geo-sections, dissemination of the report, other recommended next steps for knowledge management).

Final Submission Stage, during which the consultant will conduct the following main activities:

* Incorporating - as appropriate- of UNV’s comments on the draft report and preparation of the final report;
* Preparation of a two page “evaluation brief” following a standard UNV format; preparation of recommendation matrix and executive summary
* Submission of final report, executive summary and recommendations matrix and Evaluation brief.

Below are the tentative timeframe for the conduct and completion of each stage:

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| **Stage** | **Estimated consultant workdays** |
| Preparatory stage | * Desk review: 2 days * Briefing: 2 days (in Bonn) * Preparation and consultations for the Inception Report: 3 days (of which 1 minimum in Bonn)   *Total: appx 7 days* |
| Interviews / Consultation stage | * Interview preparation: 1 days * HQ level – conduct and documentation: 2 days * Country level – conduct and documentation: 2 days   *Total: appx 5 days* |
| Report writing and validation stage | * Consultant analysis: 3 days * Preparation of draft report: 3 days * Presentation: 2 days (in Bonn) * Feedback: 1 day   *Total: appx 9 days* |
| Final submission stage | * Revision and submission: 2 days * Preparation of “evaluation brief”, executive summary and recommendation matrix: 2 days   *Total: appx 4 days* |

Considering that some internal and external factors could impact on the development of the consultancy, a maximum of 5 contingency days could be authorized by ARLAC section Chief based on a strong justification.

The review should be consistent with the UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) Norms and Standards (Annex), and the consultant should sign the UNEG Code of Conduct for evaluation consultants (Annex)

### Expected Outputs

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| **Outputs** | **Description** | **Time line** |
| Inception report | The selected consultant is expected to provide an inception report including:  1. detailed methodology  2. review matrix  3. workplan with outputs for the review process |  |
| Aide-memoire of each countries contacted and one for HQ meetings | Each aide-memoire should include:  1. List of people contacted and organization  2. Brief description of initiatives included in the analysis  3. Summary and main findings |  |
| Draft review report | Draft review report should be presented following UNV’s standard format for evaluation report. Format provided in annex. |  |
| Final review report with executive summary | Final review report should be presented following UNV’s standard format for evaluation/review report. Format provided in annex. |  |
| Recommendations matrix | Recommendation matrix should be presented following UNV’s standard format. |  |
| Evaluation brief | Evaluation brief should be presented following UNV’s standard format. |  |

### Management of the Review

The evaluation will be overseen by the AIM Programme Board, who will delegate day-to-day management of the review to the ARLAC Section, in close collaboration with the Evaluation Unit. All outputs produced by the consultant will need to be validated and cleared by the AIM Programme Manger who reports to the AIM Programme Board.

### Requirements of contracted company/consultant

The assignment will be contracted to a company/consultant with experience in the substantive area and knowledge of volunteerism. The company/consultant should have:

* University degrees at the post-graduate level in the social sciences, management or other relevant field of study
* Ten years of relevant experience of which at least three are in evaluations
* Knowledge of UNV is an asset
* Knowledge and experience of volunteerism with its diverse manifestations and cultural settings
* Knowledge of gender mainstreaming an asset
* Excellent analytical and report writing skills
* Excellent people and communication skills
* Fluency in English
* Fluency in Spanish and/or Arabic would be an asset.

### Annexes

* UNEG norms and standards for evaluation (available from EMS-evaluation intranet space)
* UNEG Code of Conduct for evaluation consultants (available from EMS-evaluation intranet space)
* Template for evaluation report and executive summary
* Template for recommendations matrix/management response matrix (to be developed)
* Handbook “A participatory methodology for assessing the contribution of volunteerism to development” (draft, available from EMS-evaluation intranet space)