

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Background to the UNV Programme

The United Nations Volunteer (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.

1.2. Background to the project/country programme/issue/ partnership to be evaluated

The situation of Roma and marginalized groups has been chosen as a priority area of joint collaboration under the One UN programme. The project "Empowering the Vulnerable Communities in Albania: Support to the Implementation of the National Strategy for Improving Roma Living Conditions (April 2008-April 2010)" coordinates the activities of agencies working with vulnerable minorities and provides direct assistance to the poorest and most marginalized Roma communities at the local level (villages and quarters). The project assist this vulnerable population through community-level mobilization to plan and participate in the upgrading of their communities and in accessing their rights to public and social services through civic registration, prioritization and implementation of infrastructure development projects, community mediation on health, education and child protection issues as well as by enhancing through vocational training.

At the regional level, the project empowers vulnerable ethnic minorities to partner with relevant organizations and government institutions in facilitating access to social and economic aid programmes with the registration of marginalized communities. Minority communities will further establish partnerships with local government to address urgent development priorities in the poorest areas, supporting Roma to assume property rights and receive documentation of land ownership. Community members participate in on-the-job training, vocational education and courses on education, health and child protection. A network mediators is established to further secure the well-being of the Roma and Egyptian population.

At the central level, the project support the Government's work on social inclusion and improved governance, placing Roma issues on the national development agenda, and bringing minority rights in line with similar proactive courses of action taken by neighbouring Eastern European states.

The project engages national UNV volunteers to facilitate community-led activities at the local level. This project has formed the basis of the recently approved joint UN programme on social inclusion.

The project is running for two years, 2008 – 2010, financed mainly by the funds from UNV Special Volunteer Fund with contributions from UNDP Country Office, One-UN and in kind from UNICEF, WHO, and NGOs.

2. JUSTIFICATION

As the project is coming to an end, it is time for a final evaluation. The final evaluation of projects is a UNDP/UNV requirement. It will also provide vital information on project progress and results for the main national and local partners in Tirana, Fier and Elbasan and future joint UN programme on social inclusion. The timing of the evaluation, at the end of the project, is crucial to the future of the newly approved One UN join programme Empowering Vulnerable Local Communities. It will provide much needed qualitative



and quantitative data on achievements, strengths, weaknesses of the existing project and recommendations for future directions of the new programme.

3. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The aim of the final evaluation of the project “Empowering the Vulnerable Communities in Albania” is to make an objective assessment of the relevance, performance and success of the project. It will draw lessons learned and make recommendations for ensuring sustainability of project results and facilitating information and knowledge sharing thereby contributing to similar development initiatives in the future.

- To assess the achievement of project outcomes and results as indicated in the project document.
- To assess the impact of the project on the lives of the vulnerable Roma/Egyptian communities in Tirana, Fier and Elbasan
- To identify best practices and lessons learnt for information sharing purposes and ways to maximize positive impacts for the new EVLC project
- To assess the contribution of volunteerism to achieving the project objectives
- To make recommendations for priorities and directions of the new project cycle

The evaluation will focus on how the project addresses and respond to the 6 key intervention areas. When assessing that response, the evaluation will analyze the implementation of the project expressed in the 6 activity areas, namely —Registration, CBOs, Mediators, The period under evaluation should cover activities implemented from April 2008 up to February 2010.

4. KEY AREAS /ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

4.1. 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, to other development agencies’ efforts.

Internal coherence: The extent to which the objective and design of the project are suited to UNV’s strategic goals and priorities, to the country programme, to regional strategy.

Questions to be asked:

- To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?
- To what extent does the project address the locally defined stakeholders’ needs and priorities, is it suited to UNV strategic goals and does it implement the right activities to address these?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the intended impact and effects?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the objectives and missions of the different partners involved?
- How coherent is the project with the development agendas of the different institutions involved and how does this affect the project/programme (positively and negatively)?
- What relevant lessons emerge from this project can inform future projects in similar areas?

4.2. Effectiveness

A measure of the extent to which the project has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives.



Questions to be examined:

- To what extent are the objectives of the project achieved or are likely to be achieved? What indicators demonstrate that?
- What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

4.3. Efficiency

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

Questions to be examined:

- Are the activities cost-efficient?
- Are objectives achieved on time?
- Is the project implemented the most efficient way compared to alternatives?

4.4. Impact/ Effects

The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators. The examination should be concerned with both, intended and unintended results and must also include the positive and negative impact of external factors, such as changes in terms of trade and financial conditions.

Useful questions:

- What has happened and is happening as a result of the project?
- What real difference have the activities made to the beneficiaries? What are the most significant changes that this project has helped and is still helping to generate?
- How many people have been affected?

The evaluation of effects and impact needs to be and keeping in mind that UNV works in collaboration with other partners in the field. While the added value of UNV and volunteerism can and should be highlighted in this evaluation, it is important that the report takes into consideration and credits others' inputs as well as UNV's.

4.5. Sustainability

A measure of whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable. Factors (political, institutional, economic, technological, socio-cultural and environmental) affecting sustainability should also be considered.

Useful questions:

- To what extent do the benefits of the project continue after the project comes to an end?
- What are the major factors which influence the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the project?
- Is there a clearly defined exit strategy and to what extent does it contribute to sustainability?

4.6. Volunteerism



UNV recognizes that volunteering means different things to different people and that there is a wide range of ways to promote volunteerism. Within this context, the evaluation should cover different aspects of volunteering.

- What is the distinctive contribution or added value of the UNV volunteers and the promotion of volunteerism to the outcomes of the project?
- Without the involvement of the UNV volunteers what would have been different? Would the outcome be the same, slower, negative, not happened at all?
- How do UNV and the UNV volunteers in the project contribute to stimulating local volunteerism?
- What are the helping and hindering factors to the stimulation of volunteerism in the project?

4.7. Other evaluation criteria

As part of UNV's strategy, the project is done in partnership and coordination with other development actors, includes gender and human rights perspectives, and has strong participation and capacity development elements.

Partnerships

An analysis of the institutional relationships developed throughout the project and the extent to which they have contributed to the achievement of results.

- Who are the partners involved in the design and implementation of the project (UN, government, international NGOs, local organizations, etc)?
- What value do the different partners add?
- What are the key factors contributing to building good partnerships?
- How can partnerships be strengthened in the future?

Gender

Whether and to what extent the project took the gender dimension into account and whether it promoted a gender sensitive approach to formulation and implementation. It also involves practical measures to guarantee an adequate treatment of gender issues in the project, beyond equal participation by men and women, and addressing changes in attitudes and behaviours.

- Does the project follow a gender sensitive approach?
- What is the level of participation of men and women in the project?
- Does the project work specifically with women's groups and organizations and is this an effective approach?
- Are there any changes in attitudes and behaviors towards gender relationships among the beneficiaries that can be noted, and to what extent does the project contribute to these changes?
- Are there any actions promoted by the project that demonstrate that volunteerism can support changes in gender relationships?

Coordination

Whether and to what extent the actions of different development actors were coherent in relation to each other, and whether this had a positive, negative and neutral effect on the project.

- Are there specific actions to promote the coordination among different development actors in the context of this project? Which ones?
- Are there examples of good coordination practice emerging from this project that can inform future actions?



Human Rights

Whether and to what extent the human rights dimension was taken into account, and if the project promoted a rights-based approach to formulation and implementation.

- What are the practical measures taken by the project to guarantee a human rights perspective? Was this approach effective?
- Does the project have a specific inclusion approach?
- Are there any actions promoted by the project that demonstrate that volunteerism can support inclusion?

Capacity Development

This criterion measures the extent to which the project has supported the creation and/or development of national, local, organizational and individual capacities.

- Does the project have a specific capacity development approach? What are the key elements of this approach?
- Who is the target group of the capacity development approach? Are the capacity development actions adequate to the needs and expectations of these target groups?
- What are the specific capacity development activities promoted by the project? What are the most significant results of these activities?
- To what extent does the volunteer element of actions promoted by the project influence the development of capacities?
- At what level are capacities developed (e.g. national, regional, local, organizational, individual)? What are the main challenges and constraints to developing capacities in the different levels?
- Are there any lessons emerging from the project on how to promote a capacity development approach linked to volunteerism?

Stakeholder involvement and participation

This criterion measures the extent to which the project has promoted participatory approaches, used participatory tools or other means to promote the involvement of stakeholders at different levels and stages of the project cycle.

- What is the strategy used by the project to engage and involve stakeholders in the different stages of the project? Is this strategy effective? Does it have a positive, negative or neutral effect on the achievement of results?
- Is it possible to establish a link between volunteer actions promoted by the project and more/ better stakeholder participation in other areas (e.g. in activities of other partners, more participation in public spaces promoted by the government, etc.)?
- Are there any participatory tools used in the project that are worth being considered for future UNV interventions?

5. METHODS AND APPROACHES

The evaluation should be done in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, using a mixed method approach and a variety of participatory tools, with a focus on triangulation. The evaluation design needs to take into consideration the different stakeholder groups, their specific needs and inputs, in order to avoid biases in the overall analysis. On the other hand, it needs to be adequate to the scope and context of the evaluation, to the availability of resources, and to the needs of each particular project.

Methodology:



- Desk review
- Stakeholder mapping
- Briefing meetings and interviews with key project informants
- Interviews with key stakeholders, representatives of the different partners, and volunteers in the field; phone-interviews may be used if deemed necessary.
- Focus groups meetings with stakeholders. One good practice is to have small groups, with a configuration that allows participants to speak as freely as possible, e.g. treating donors and beneficiaries, men, women and school children as separate groups.
- Site visits to areas where the project is implemented (Tirana, Fier and Elbasan)
- De-briefing meetings or workshops with stakeholders
- Presentations of final evaluation to UNV, UNDP and project team.

“All evaluations in UNV should be consistent with the UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) Norms and Standards (annex to the TOR), and the UNDP Evaluation Policy. The consultant needs to sign the UNEG Code of Conduct for evaluation consultants (annex). After the evaluation is finalized, the project partners will be responsible for preparing a management response to the recommendations made (template is annexed to the TOR). All documents related to the evaluation (TOR, evaluation report, management response matrix) will be made available to the public through the UNDP Evaluation Resource Center (<http://erc.undp.org>)”.

6. EVALUATION PROCESS

Inception stage:

- Desk review of all relevant documentation related to the project including project document, progress reports, mid-term review report and other relevant literature and video shorts.
- Stakeholder mapping: Prepare a comprehensive list of different stakeholders in the 3 regions of the project activities and agree on the approach to be adopted to generate information.
- Briefing meetings and interviews to finalize evaluation design including the UNV country team, the project management team, key partners/ stakeholder representatives and others with an interest in the evaluation.
- Preparation of inception report.

Data collection and generation stage:

- Evaluation mission: visit to the locations where the project is implemented. During the mission, the following tools can be applied for data collection and generation:
 - Surveys with project stakeholders
 - Face-to-face interviews with selected project stakeholders.
 - Focus groups meetings with stakeholders
 - Stakeholder workshops
 - Site visits to areas where the project is implemented
 - Learning workshops with volunteers and partners
 - De-briefing meetings or workshops with stakeholders to report on initial findings from the data collection and generating stage, to correct errors, and to discuss ideas for



recommendations. When appropriate, a summary of conclusions in local language or pictorial format (for illiterate stakeholders) should be produced.

Analysis and reporting stage:

- Preparation of inception report with detailed description of work plan including activities to be carried out necessary to achieve the required results, people to be met and interviewed, focus group discussions to be organized and clear time frame. This will be consulted with the project manager, UNV programme officer and programme staff of the UNDP country office
- Preparation of draft evaluation report
- Feedback on draft evaluation report and evaluation brief from UNV, UNDP and selected stakeholders
- Presentation of final evaluation report at UNV and UNDP country office in Tirana

Steps in the evaluation process	Estimated # of working days	Deadline for completion
Desk review	3 days	
Briefing meetings and interviews	2 days	
Inception report	2 days	
Evaluation mission (including travel time)	6 days	

Preparation of draft evaluation report, debriefing and initial feedback	3 days	
Finalizing report based on feedback	3 days	
Presentation of final evaluation report at UNDP/UNV office in Albania	1 day	
Total:	Up to 20 days	

Once dates have been confirmed, a detailed plan for the evaluation mission will also need to be prepared in coordination with the country office team.

7. OUTPUTS

All expected outputs should be clearly identified, and a detailed description of the kind of report that is expected should be provided, including length, format, and language of main report and executive summary. Templates for the documents below are available in the UNV Knowledge Platform and in the Evaluation Unit intranet space and can be annexed to the TOR.

- Inception report including:
 - Evaluation matrix with key questions, indicators and means of verification
 - Detailed information on evaluation methods and tools to be used
 - Evaluation work plan
- Draft and final evaluation report with executive summary that can be used as stand-alone document

8. MANAGEMENT OF THE EVALUATION



The overall responsibility for managing the evaluation will be with the UNV programme section. It will ensure close collaboration with the UNV evaluation unit and other UNV stakeholders at HQ and the UNV Country Office. The continuous involvement of major stakeholders at the country level (including UNDP, government and others) should be ensured and maintained throughout the entire evaluation process.

9. REQUIREMENTS

The main responsibilities in this assignment will be contracted to a local consultant with experience in the substantive area of social inclusion, participation and promotion of volunteerism. The consultant should have:

- University degrees at the post-graduate level in the social sciences, management or other relevant field of study
- 8-10 years work experience of which at least five in the substantive areas
- Proven track record and experience in the substantive areas, possibly involving vulnerable Roma/Egyptian communities
- Knowledge and experience of volunteerism with its diverse manifestations and cultural settings
- Competence in sample survey techniques and computerized data processing
- Excellent analytical and report writing skills
- Good people and communication skills
- Fluency in English and ability to work in Albanian (desirable).

10. ANNEXES

- UNEG norms and standards for evaluation (available from EMS-evaluation intranet space and UNV Knowledge Platform)
- UNEG code of conduct for UN evaluators (available from EMS-evaluation intranet space and UNV Knowledge Platform)
- Template for evaluation matrix with key questions, indicators and means of verification (available from EMS-evaluation intranet space and UNV Knowledge Platform)
- Template for evaluation report and executive summary (available from EMS-evaluation intranet space and UNV Knowledge Platform)
- Handbook "A participatory methodology for assessing the contribution of volunteerism to development"