

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Evaluation of UN Volunteers intervention (2007-2009) in the Tonle Sap Conservation Project

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 component to be evaluated

The UNDP/GEF-supported Tonle Sap Conservation Project (TSCP) is a seven year (2005-2011) NEX modality project aimed at increasing capacity for management of biodiversity in the Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve (TSBR) through (i) enhancing the capacity for management of biodiversity in the TSBR Core Areas; (ii) developing systems for monitoring and management of biodiversity; and (iii) promoting awareness, education and outreach on biodiversity conservation in the TSBR.

The UNV Programme, with funding support from the Japan Trust Fund (JTF) has managed and staffed the Alternative Livelihoods component of the TSCP from 2007 to end 2009. The objective of UNV involvement in the TSCP is to promote, through community volunteerism, alternative "biodiversity-friendly" income-generating activities among communities living in and around the three core biodiversity conservation areas.

The UNV component falls under Activity 3.1.4 "Identification of income-generating activities that directly threaten biodiversity in the Core Areas, and development of alternative livelihoods to modify these activities" of the TSCP.

2. JUSTIFICATION

This evaluation is required under JTF funding of UNV activities, and will serve as a basis for determining whether or not to terminate, continue, or scale up the intervention and as a basis for broader organizational learning. The main stakeholders of the evaluation are UNDP, UNV, JTF, the Royal Government of Cambodia Ministry of Environment, the Cambodian National Mekong Commission, the Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve Secretariat and the TSCP.

3. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

General Objective: Assess the results and contribution which volunteerism brings to development efforts in the area of environmental conservation and rural poverty alleviation. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the UNV component of the TSCP, draw lessons and make recommendations for future projects in similar sectors (e.g. should it be scaled up and/or replicated and if so, how).

Specific objectives:

- To generate knowledge about best practice integration of UNV into similar projects
- To identify ways to maximize positive impacts of volunteerism in case of replication in other projects, countries or geographical areas

Scope: This evaluation will focus specifically on the UNV component of the TSCP from 2007 to 2009. Links to relevant aspects of the TSCP project (eg. Community environmental education) will be explored, however non-UNV work falls outside the scope of this evaluation and will not be assessed.

4. KEY AREAS /ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

This evaluation must address the following criteria:

4.1. Relevance

- B. External coherence:** The extent to which the objectives and design of the project are suited to locally defined stakeholders' needs and priorities, and to government policies.
- Was the project developed to address and did it implement the right things?
 - Does the project implementation and management benefit community members in the target areas?
 - To what extent are the objectives and outputs of the project still valid?
 - What activities are recommended to continue, strengthen, adapt after the UNV project ends?
 - Are the activities and outputs of the UNV component consistent with the overall TSCP goal and the attainment of its objectives?
 - Which are the constraints under which the pilot initiative functioned?
- C. 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.
- What relevant lessons emerged from this pilot can inform future UNV projects in similar areas/ countries?

4.2. Effectiveness

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

- To what extent were the objectives of the project achieved? What indicators demonstrate that?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
- Is community volunteerism an effective approach/mechanism to promote bio-diversity conservation and alternative livelihood activities in the Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve? Why or why not?

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.

- Were the activities cost-efficient?
- Were objectives achieved on time?
- Was the programme or project implemented the most efficient way compared to alternatives that do not include UNV participation?

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 during the intervention.

- What has happened as a result of the project?
- What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries? What were the most significant changes that this project has helped to generate? Include perception and behavior of communities who generate income from biodiversity resources close to Core Areas.
- How many people have been affected?
- What types/kinds/groups of people have been affected and may be impacted after the project?

The evaluation of effects and impact needs to be realistic take into consideration that most development interventions have an attribution challenge, as development results and changes can very rarely be attributed to the actions of one particular actor. In the case of UNV, this is very often the case, as UNV works in collaboration with other partners in the field. While the added value of UNV and volunteerism can and should be highlighted in

every 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 defined activity is likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn and the project has ended. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable. External factors (political, institutional, economic, technological, socio-cultural and environmental) affecting sustainability should also be considered.

- To what extent are the benefits of the project projected to sustain after donor funding ceases?
- What are the major factors which influence the sustainability of the project?
- Is there a clearly defined exit strategy and to what extent will it contribute to sustainability?
- What are the arrangements, implications and considerations which GEF/UNDP/TSCP need to make in regards to the sustainability of the livelihoods and volunteerism activities?

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 UNV volunteers to the outcomes of the project?
- Without the involvement of UNV volunteers, what would have been different? Would the outcome/ impact have been the same, slower, negative, not happened at all?
- How did UNV in the project contribute to stimulating local volunteerism?
- How did the project contribute to community empowerment and civic engagement of peoples living in the TSBR?
- What were the helping and hindering factors to the stimulation of volunteerism in the project?
- How did the project promote different aspects of UNV's business model?
- Are there any lessons emerging from the project that can inform future UNV interventions on how to implement the UNV business model?

4.7. Other evaluation criteria

There are other themes and areas that are commonly included in project design, and should be taken into consideration during evaluations. For instance, as part of UNV's strategy, projects and programmes are usually done in partnership and coordination with other development actors, include gender and human rights perspectives, and have strong participation and capacity development elements. These topics should to the extent appropriate be part of the evaluation and specifically included in the evaluation report.

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 were the partners involved in the design and implementation of the project (UN, government, international NGOs, local organizations, etc)?
- What value did the different partners add?
- What were the key factors contributing to building good partnerships during implementation of the project?
- How can key partnerships, especially with Government, 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.

- Did the project follow a gender sensitive approach?
- What was the level of participation of men and women in the project?
- Did the project work specifically with women's groups and organizations? Was 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 did the project contribute to these changes?
- Are there any actions promoted by the project that demonstrate that volunteerism can support changes in gender relationships?
- Are there any generic lessons emerging from this project on how to address gender issues in UNV interventions?

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.

- Did the project consider a rights-based approach?
- What were the practical measures taken by the project to guarantee a human rights perspective? Was this approach effective?
- Did the project have a specific social inclusion approach?
- Are there any actions promoted by the project that demonstrate that volunteerism can support social inclusion?
- Are there any lessons emerging from this project on how to address human rights issues in UNV interventions?

Capacity Development

This criterion measures the extent to which the project has supported the creation and/or development of local, organizational and individual capacities in target/related project participants (including rangers, communities, NUNV volunteers).

- Did the project have a specific capacity development approach? What were the key elements of this approach?
- Who was the target group of the capacity development approach? Were the capacity development actions adequate to the needs and expectations of these target groups?
- What were the specific capacity development activities promoted by the project? What were the most significant results of these activities?
- To what extent did the volunteer element of actions promoted by the project influence the development of capacities?
- At what level were capacities developed (e.g. national, regional, local, organizational, individual)? What were the main challenges and constraints to developing capacities in the different levels?
- Are there any lessons emerging from the project into other components of TSCP 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 was the strategy used by the project to engage and involve stakeholders in the different stages of the project? Was this strategy effective? Did 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 will use the following methodology to generate evidence and to maximize learning from all relevant stakeholders and sources of information:

- Desk review
- Stakeholder mapping
- Briefing meetings and interviews with key project informants, including the UNV country team, the TSCP project management team, Government counterparts, local authorities, self-help groups , community leaders and key partners/ stakeholder representatives
- Site visit to areas where the project is implemented, and focus groups meetings with stakeholders.

- Presentation of final evaluation to UNV

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 policy and programmatic documents, and monitoring reports.
- Stakeholder mapping to determine who should be consulted, what evaluation questions should be addressed to them, and what tools are more effective to generate information with each different target group
- Briefing meetings and interviews with UNV country team and UNV project management to finalize evaluation design.
- Preparation of inception report: the inception report will take advantage of the consultant's experience in M&E, and will be based on the conclusions of the inception stage. It should particularly look at the evaluation questions (and refine them as appropriate), data sources and data collection methods.

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:
 - Focus groups meetings with stakeholders
 - Site visits to areas where the project is implemented
 - Interviews with key informants
 - Questionnaires

Analysis and reporting stage:

- Preparation of mission aide-memoire: a description of the evaluation mission including activities carried out, people met, and issues to be considered in the evaluation report
- Preparation of draft evaluation report, 2-page evaluation brief and recommendations matrix
- Feedback on draft evaluation report and evaluation brief from UNV
- Presentation of final evaluation report at UNV/UNDP country office, with participation of TSCP Project Board and possible representative of UNV HQ.

Steps in the evaluation process	Estimated # of working days	Deadline for completion
Desk review	1 day	
Stakeholder mapping	1 day	
Briefing meetings and interviews	1 day	
Preparation of inception report	2 days	
Evaluation mission (including travel time) to project sites	5 days	
Preparation of mission aide-memoire, draft evaluation report, 2-page evaluation brief and recommendations matrix	3.5 days	
Feedback from UNV to consultant on evaluation report, evaluation brief and recommendations matrix and necessary changes	1 day	
Presentation of final evaluation report	0.5 days	
Total:	15 Days	

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

7. OUTPUTS

Expected outputs for this evaluation are:

- 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
- Aide memoire of evaluation mission
- Draft and final evaluation report with executive summary that can be used as stand-alone document
- Two-page evaluation brief
- Recommendations/ management response matrix (for UNDP, UNV and the TSCP management).

8. MANAGEMENT OF THE EVALUATION

The overall responsibility for managing the evaluation will be with the UNV country office. It will ensure close collaboration with other UNV stakeholders including HQ. The

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 assignment will be contracted to a consultant team with experience in the substantive area and knowledge of volunteerism. The consultant team will include one international and one national (Khmer national) consultant.

The international consultant will possess:

- University degree at the post-graduate level in the social sciences, development, management or other relevant field of study
- 7 years work experience of which at least three in a developing country
- Proven track record and experience in evaluating development interventions
- Knowledge and experience of volunteerism with its diverse manifestations and cultural settings
- Excellent analytical and report writing skills
- Excellent people and communication skills
- Fluency in English

The national consultant will possess:

- University degree in the social sciences, development, management or other relevant field of study
- 7 years work experience
- Proven track record and experience in evaluating development interventions
- Knowledge and experience of volunteerism with its diverse manifestations and cultural settings
- Excellent analytical skills
- Excellent people and communication skills, especially in a community setting
- Demonstrated ability to effectively interpret and translate between both Khmer and English

Applications from individual international or national consultants will not be accepted ie. Only applications from a joint international-national team meeting the following criteria will be considered