

Evaluation Report

Evaluation of UNV's Project “UNV Support to ‘Delivering as One’ through Integration of Volunteerism for Development”

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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a review of the project titled "UNV Support to 'Delivering as One' through Integration of Volunteerism for Development". The project was funded through the UNV Special Voluntary Fund and executed by UNV from April 2008 to March 2011. It deployed volunteers to integrate volunteerism and to augment the capacity of Resident Coordinator Offices in the eight "Delivering as One" (DaO) pilot countries – Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay, and Vietnam.

The evaluation took place from December 2010 to February 2011 and included documentation review and interviews with key stakeholders, both in project countries and at UNV Headquarters.

Findings

In terms of relevance, the project generally aligned with priorities of key stakeholders. It addressed capacity shortcomings of RC Offices in the early phases of DaO. Interviews confirm that project capacities have fulfilled important functions for UN coordination and harmonization. While the project found relatively few entry points for the integration of volunteerism in development planning, this area is receiving growing attention from RC offices in light of UNGA Resolution 63/153 and the 2009 UNDAF guidelines.

The project was consistent with UNV's overarching objectives, but its design incorporated a conceptual tension between assisting Delivering as One initiatives and promoting volunteerism as a goal in itself. It also betrayed a tension between reaping the strategic benefits of DaO countries and promoting UNV's substantive goals. These tensions made it more difficult for UNV to identify what specific advantages it sought through its engagement with the DaO countries. Since they were not resolved, probably due to a rushed project roll out, they continued to hamper the project.

In terms of effectiveness, the project displays wide geographic variation. While implementation has been slow on average, some countries report achievements on a majority of outputs, and others none at all.

For output 1 (provide capacity to integrate Volunteerism for Development in joint programmes), four project countries have been able to position volunteers to contribute to the effectiveness of joint programmes that incorporate volunteerism in some form. Individual countries, such as Cape Verde and Uruguay, have been able to make greater progress, including piloting initiatives that may function as best practices for the future.

Only two (Uruguay and Vietnam) out of eight countries implemented output 2 (multi-stakeholder consultations), but the good results achieved in these countries underline the importance of advocacy and proactive sensitization for UNV's ambition to integrate volunteerism in development.

Under output 3 (support to RC offices to implement DaO), the project has provided tangible support to monitoring and evaluation (Mozambique), communications (Albania, Mozambique, Vietnam), and reporting and monitoring (Pakistan). Interviews with UNDP/RCs indicate that while the project found few entry points for the integration of volunteerism in development, it has made positive contributions to specific functions under the Delivering as One umbrella.

In terms of efficiency, the project was on budget, but nearly all outputs were delayed. Measured against the original budget of USD 2.6 million, the project delivered an estimated USD 682,000 for an overall delivery rate of 26%. Expenditure under the project increased from around USD 93,578 in 2008 to USD 289,782 in 2010, increasing the delivery rate from 11.3% to 92.8%, when measured against the drastically reduced budget. In 2009, delivery rates stretched from 0%

(Rwanda and Tanzania) to 71.8% for Cape Verde, 74.9% for Uruguay and 86.7% for Vietnam, which reflects the geographic variation in activity.

While the project has not met its all its goals, interviews indicate that it has expanded UNV's position in some of the eight pilot countries, which is potentially an important strategic gain. The contribution of the project, and of UNV more generally, to the Delivering as One agenda has been recognized in interviews with local beneficiaries. While UNV's increased presence in DaO countries has been recognized locally, it has failed to leave a mark in UN system reports. The three most recent UNDG reports on progress in the eight pilot countries¹ do not include any references to volunteers or "Volunteerism for Development", and on only one occasion mentions UNV in a context of relevance for Delivering as One. This indicates that UNV is yet to receive the recognition to which it aspired in the project document.

Factors that contributed to successful implementation include:

- Proactive approach by volunteers and Programme Officers to find entry points for project.
- Active communication and sensitization of UN agencies and development partners to facilitate buy-in and receptivity for integration of volunteerism.
- Volunteers placed in other UN agencies functioned as linkage points to the project.
- Country context conducive to volunteerism.

The most important implementation challenges include:

- Lax monitoring and severely inadequate communication from Headquarters.
- Inadequate routines for handover and backstopping.
- Mix of competencies not ideal for the promotion of integration of volunteerism.
- Ambiguities in results framework.
- External view of UNV as an "employment agency".
- Low awareness of UNV strategic objectives and the concept of Volunteerism for Development (this has particularly impeded integration of volunteerism).
- Pilot nature of project and heterogeneity of DaO countries.

Future options

There is a growing strategic rationale for UNV to put more emphasis on the mainstreaming of volunteerism into development planning and policies: the growing focus on coherence and coordination in international aid, UNDP's move upstream, and the increasing recognition of civil society as a driver of development. Further, a second phase of the project will need to be calibrated to the conditions of the Special Voluntary Fund. This implies a clearer focus on the promotion of community mobilization and the integration of volunteerism in development planning, rather than the provision of general technical expertise.

The report provides two options for how UNV may structure a second phase of the project:

¹ UNDG (2009) "Delivering as One: Lessons Learnt from the Pilot Countries", (2010) "UNDG Delivering as One: Stories and Testimonies from Eight Programme Pilot Countries", UNDG (2010) "Stories from the Delivering as One Pilot Countries".

Option 1: Build on current project

Building on the footholds established in the first phase, the second phase project continues technical support to DaO countries, with a clearer focus on providing capacities that can integrate volunteerism into local development plans, policies, and joint programmes. It will require comprehensive training of existing and new human resources.

Pros: (a) Promotes sustainability of results achieved in the first phase; (b) DaO countries bring strategic advantages for UNV and may be more open to new development approaches; (c) Continuation of project risks fewer reputational costs. *Cons:* (a) Tension between mobilization of technical capacity and integration of volunteerism may remain; (b) DaO countries not necessarily the most receptive to mainstreaming volunteerism; (c) Expectations about project may be “locked in” and difficult to change.

Option 2: Overhaul and Reconceptualization

Through a substantive overhaul, the project is geared toward leveraging UNV expertise more directly to UNDAF and development planning processes, so as to integrate volunteerism for MDG achievement. This approach consciously focuses on the integration and advocacy aspects of UNV’s strategic agenda, and conditions the mobilization of capacity more narrowly to expertise on community mobilization and civic action. Project personnel should combine expertise, understanding of UN planning tools, and a degree of seniority, so as to allow them to engage with RCs, UNCTs, governments and development partners. While DaO countries should be considered, the project is focused to countries that are ‘most-likely cases’, i.e. countries with a profile that makes them fertile ground for integrating volunteerism and align with UNV’s other strategic activities, such as IYV+10 and SWVF.

This option could potentially be merged with the other, MDG-oriented project currently in preparation at UNV Headquarters.

Pros: (a) Strategic clarity, through narrow focus on mainstreaming of volunteerism; (b) Opens for positioning UNV as UN system’s focal point on civil society; (c) Geographic flexibility. *Cons:* (a) Some of the achievements and entry points established in the first phase of the project may be lost; (b) Critical that UNV’s image is changed through awareness-raising and sensitization, to facilitate receptivity for mainstreaming of volunteerism; (c) Pulling out of DaO countries (if that is decided) may have reputational effects, as well as strategic costs.

General Recommendations

For any future project, the following recommendation applies:

- Review and strengthen routines for handover and backstopping, both in field and in HQ.
- Improve routines for reporting and monitoring between project countries and Headquarters, so as to maintain consistent communication.
- Review project management arrangement at HQ, so as to decrease the fragmentation of managerial responsibilities.
- Undertake country situation analysis to clearly identify the needs and interests of RC Offices in project countries. Dialogue with RCs before second phase.
- Since “you become what you measure,” UNV should develop the operationalization of the concept of ‘Volunteerism for Development,’ including measures and verifiable indicators.

- Include Programme Officers in the design of next phase so as to (a) build better understanding of country contexts; (b) target needs in country; and (c) build local ownership and engagement with project.
- Arrange workshops for project volunteers and Programme Officers at Headquarters, to develop areas critical for the project's success (awareness of 'Volunteerism for Development', UNRC system and UN planning tools such as UNDAF) and to share best practices across countries.
- Incorporate promotion of volunteerism as a substantive task in TORs of volunteers mobilized to project countries, wherever realistic. This means devoting a substantives share of the work (20-35%) to this task and negotiating tailored solutions with the requesting agencies.
- Develop UNV's external communication to facilitate a fertile ground for the project, through (a) Aligning UNV strategic communication with project objectives and raise awareness of UNV's ambition to mainstream volunteerism; (b) Supporting launch of second phase with high-level UNV visits; (c) Organizing in-country sensitization workshops for RC offices and UNCT; (d) Exploiting synergies with International Year of Voluteers +10 and State of World Volunteerism Report.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report presents the findings of a review of the project titled "UNV Support to 'Delivering as One' through Integration of Volunteerism for Development". The project was funded through the UNV Special Voluntary Fund and executed by UNV, from April 2008 to March 2011.

Ongoing initiatives to strengthen UN programmatic and operational coherence, especially efforts to promote "Delivering as One", provided the context for the design of the project. Guided by the development concept of 'Volunteerism for Development' and the three activity areas identified in the UNV Business Model, the project deployed volunteers to integrate volunteerism in development and to augment the capacity of Resident Coordinator Offices in the eight "Delivering as One" pilot countries – Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay, and Vietnam.

"UNV Support to Delivering as One" was formulated as a pilot project for UNV. As such, it has functioned as a preliminary exploration of the feasibility of an approach, focused on the integration of volunteerism for development and support to Delivering as One initiatives. The project aimed not only to implement programmatic activity, but also to provide insights that may guide future projects and activities of a similar nature. More specifically, it aimed to provide insights into UNV's engagement with the UN's coherence and harmonization agenda. It should be noted that the project was not only a pilot, it was also implemented in eight countries with dramatically different contexts and cultures, spanning four continents, and with varying intensity of UNV activity. These non-standard circumstances should be kept in mind when reading the report.

1.2 Purpose

The main purpose of this evaluation, as stated in the terms of reference, is to assess the contributions made by the project to the Delivering as One pilot countries in terms of promoting volunteerism for development and integrating volunteerism in UN joint programmes. The evaluation has the following specific objectives:

- (1) Determine the relevance and effectiveness of the project vis-à-vis the Delivering as One agenda;
- (2) Evaluate the management, governance, and implementation of the project;
- (3) Identify challenges confronted by the project at the field level as well as HQ;
- (4) Provide recommendations and lessons learnt for the next phase.

In consultations with UNV management the evaluator was also instructed to include in the report a discussion of how the project could be positioned within the larger strategic perspective of UNV, with specific focus on integrating volunteerism in development policies, strategies, and planning tools.

1.3 Methodology

The evaluation has evolved through four stages: (a) Desk review; (b) Interviews with UNV staff and stakeholders; (c) Report drafting and presentation; (d) Finalization of report.

During the course of the desk review, numerous documents were reviewed, including project

documents, other UNV project documents, UNV reports, and selected UN documents deemed relevant to assess the strategic position of the project in the context of ongoing UN reforms. A list of documents reviewed is provided in Annex 2. The initial desk review led to the development of a preliminary overview of the project, which functioned to structure stakeholder mapping and interviews.

Interviews were carried out at UNV Headquarters during a visit 15-16 December, 2010. Stakeholders in field locations were interviewed via telephone in December 2010 and January-February 2011, including project volunteers, UNV Field Units (FUs), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Resident Coordinator Offices (UNRCOs). While data gathering was generally qualitative (semi-structured interviews and documentation analysis), it also included some quantitative budgetary analysis, as well as comparison of project results across countries.

At the end of the evaluation, the evaluator developed a draft report incorporating the main findings, conclusions, and recommendations, presented to UNV on 2 February 2011. This was to provide key stakeholders with an opportunity to comment on the main findings, conclusions, and recommendations, prior to development of the final report.

2. Assessment of Project 'UNV Support to DaO'

2.1 Introduction

This section reviews the extent to which the project meets a set of evaluative criteria, judged along a qualitative scale. Whereas the criteria of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency are treated in separate sub-sections, the assessment has taken into consideration the combination of criteria laid out in the terms of reference. Some of the criteria for which assessment tends towards the unproblematic may not be mentioned in this section so as to prepare room for adequate coverage of the more problematic or critical issues.

Some factors that have complicated the assessment deserve mentioning. First, vaguely formulated results indicators, combined with mismatched results reporting from field locations, made it difficult to assess the degree of progress on specific targets as well as the overall objectives of the project. Second, the implementation of the project across a wide range of country contexts posed a challenge not only for project implementation, but also for the evaluator, in that each country situation presented idiosyncracies that made the application of standard evaluation methods difficult. A detailed understanding of the success of the project would require efforts – including missions to project countries to evaluate their specific contexts – which have not been possible within this limited evaluation. These two factors should be taken into consideration when studying the report and judging the validity of the evaluator's findings.

2.2 Relevance

This section reviews the relevance of the project by assessing the extent to which it is aligned with the priorities and policies of key stakeholders, including RC offices, UNCTs, and civil society organizations. This section also assesses whether the project's design and strategy is consistent with the overall project objectives, and how they relate to UNV's strategic agenda.

As was noted in the project document, there were capacity shortcomings in RC offices in the initiating phase of Delivering as One. Since the project specifically aimed at helping addressing

such capacity gaps (output 3), it clearly aligned with the priorities of RC offices. This has been corroborated by interviews, which indicate that RCs and staff in RC offices have been generally satisfied with support provided through the project, especially in the areas of communication and monitoring. The project must therefore be seen as aligning well with the priority of the UN system, under the guidance of the RCs, to move towards greater integration and coordination.

In interviews, RCs and RCO staff have reported that there is need for continued project support, especially in the area of communication. While this further supports the conclusion that the project is relevant to its beneficiaries, it is unclear whether the previously identified shortcomings persist at a systematic level. Further assessment, taking into consideration support provided by other actors, as well as a global comparison between RCOs, would be required to assess the needs from 2011 and onwards.

As to the objective of integrating volunteerism, the relevance of the project for RC offices could be regarded as growing, but relatively low during the project period. In the absence of substantive UN mandates, policies and planning tools that call for the integration of volunteerism in development planning, RC offices appear to have regarded it as less than a top priority. Adding to this is a lack of awareness and knowledge about the practical implementation of this concept, which may have lowered the perceived relevance.

This situation has partially changed since the initiation of the project. With the passing of UN General Assembly Resolution 63/153, the 2009 UNDAF guidelines, and other documents that call for the integration of volunteerism in development planning, one expects that there will be an increased prioritization of this on the part of RC offices. The evaluator therefore concludes that there is growing relevance of this type of activity.

It may further be noted that interviews indicated that the presence of the project, or UNV more generally, has allowed at least one UN Resident Coordinator to maintain a dialogue with national governments on volunteerism, which would have been difficult to maintain otherwise. That is, in some instances, the project may have had strategic relevance for the UN as a whole.

Interviews with UNV personnel indicate that project was largely relevant for civil society organizations, specifically volunteer involving organizations. Aiming for the promotion of volunteerism and national volunteerism infrastructures, the project aligned with the priorities of the majority of civil society organizations in the project countries. Further study would be needed to establish the exact scope of such relevance.

As for UNV, one must consider the question whether the activities and outputs of the project were consistent with the overall goals of the organization. While this is clearly affirmed by the project design, in that it seeks to promote two of UNV's central objectives, it also betrays a tension, or a set of conflicting priorities, which were not adequately resolved before the project started. Rather, it appears these tensions have continued to conflict and confound staff, field personnel and management through the entire duration of the project.

First, there is a tension between supporting Delivering as One, defined as UN coordination, and the promotion volunteerism as a goal in itself. The project sought to unite the two, but the exact nature of the connection between volunteerism and Delivering as One was never adequately conceptualized or clarified. To some extent, this appears to stem from not keeping separate different definitions of volunteerism – between volunteerism as direct capacity provision, i.e. mobilization, and volunteerism as an indirect development strategy, i.e. integration. (These two definitions overlap with the 'M' and 'I' of the UNV Business Model). While both are valid definitions when kept separate, the project design muddled this separation. It appears to the evaluator that these two models of volunteerism also overlap with "camps" within UNV Headquarters, with staff preferring to focus on one or the other definition, and to interpret the goals of project from his or her preferred perspective.

Second, there appears to have existed a tension between furthering UNV's strategic position in the UN system and its substantive objective of promoting volunteerism. Being present in the DaO pilot countries certainly strengthened UNV's strategic situation, but did these countries present unique opportunities for volunteerism as such? While similar tensions are common in any project, it appears that the relative weights of strategy and substance were not accurately estimated in this case.

Interviews have indicated that these tensions were apparent at an early stage of the project. Despite such premonitions, the project was rolled out, reportedly in haste, as UNV did not want to miss opportunities that it identified as existing in the Delivering as One pilot countries. This caused the aforementioned uncertainties and tensions to continue to influence the project. It may also have accounted for the inadequate operationalization of the volunteerism component, as well as the fact that UNV Field Units were not included in the design phase.

2.3 Effectiveness

This section analyzes the effectiveness of the project by reviewing the implementation of its four outputs. It covers results overall and highlights *some* particularly representative or noteworthy examples from the project countries.

Output 1: Enhance programme capacities to apply 'Volunteerism for Development' in joint programmes in eight pilot countries.

Planned activities: The project document planned for five targets under this output, including (1) Application of 'Volunteerism for Development' in joint programmes; (2) Implementation and monitoring of 'Volunteerism for Development' in joint programmes; (3) Develop e-forum for knowledge sharing on 'Volunteerism for Development'; (4) Documentation of role played by volunteers and 'Volunteerism for Development'; and (5) Develop a gender sensitive training module on 'Volunteerism for Development'.

Findings: The evaluation finds that modest progress has been made towards achieving targets (1), (2) and (4), whereas target (3) was minimally achieved, and target (5) not achieved. There is wide geographic variation, with some countries reporting achievement on most of the targets and others reporting none at all.

In a few instances, particularly Cape Verde, Vietnam, Albania, and Uruguay, UNVs mobilized under the project have been able to contribute to the effectiveness of joint programmes that incorporate volunteerism in some form.

A good example is a joint project in Uruguay, where project volunteers have initiated and coordinated (with six other UN bodies) a national award for youth together with workshops on volunteerism, sexual and reproductive health, climate change and labor.

However, many of the results reported under this output are (a) not funded through the project, but belong to other projects; (b) are based on an interpretation of 'Volunteerism for Development' that does not correspond to the one laid out in the project document or other UNV documents; and (c) tends to identify results as the provision of human resources, which on several occasions do not have the professional profile or training required for the tasks (i.e. specialist competencies in the area of community mobilization and civil society engagement).

The greatest achievements have come in Cape Verde, where the project has allowed UNV to make progress on a number of fronts in mainstreaming Volunteerism for Development. These are worth mentioning in greater detail, as they may supply elements of best practices for the future. First, the UNV Programme Officer in Cape Verde (partially financed through the project)

managed to get volunteerism incorporated as one of the cross-cutting issues, to be reported on by each of the sub-programmes in the Cape Verde One Programme. This is a significant achievement.

Second, the UNV Field Unit in Cape Verde managed to incorporate the promotion of volunteerism as a substantive and sizeable (i.e. in the order of 20-35% of the work time) task in the TOR of UNV volunteers mobilized to the country. This involved active negotiation with and sensitization of the requesting agencies, as well as finding creative solutions to how Volunteerism for Development could be implemented in the particular area of expertise at hand.

Third, the UNV Field Unit has made efforts to change the perception of UNV solely as an “employment agency”, e.g. through awareness raising and through responding to HR requests by sharing information about UNV mandate and role, and then negotiating TORs with a clear aim of including the task of promotion of volunteerism wherever suitable. All in all, the number of volunteers mobilized to Cape Verde has increased from 4 to 12 during the project period.

In Albania, the project has provided extensive support to the One UN Joint Programme on Roma, highlighting its volunteerism components in several communication products. Project volunteers also produced a television commercial promoting volunteerism among youth in Albania, indicating an ambitious and creative approach to their job description.

Apart from this, interviews indicate that project personnel or UNV Programme Officers have participated in UN development planning at the country-level (e.g. UNDAFs), but tangible results – in terms of getting volunteerism incorporated at the planning level – are relatively few.

The planned training module on Volunteerism for Development has not been developed, neither has the e-forum for knowledge sharing. Volunteers and Programme Officers have made contributions to existing practice networks or developed web sites with volunteerism components, but they have not been a meaningful replacement for the type of functions that target (3) aimed to achieve. This is a significant shortfall, since many of the weaknesses and complaints voiced in interviews could have been ameliorated through better training, communication and lateral information sharing.

Output 2: Multi-stakeholder consultations on integration of ‘Volunteerism for Development’

Planned activities: The project document planned for three targets under this output, including (1) Country-level multi-stakeholder consultations with the participation of UNRCs, UNCT members, national governments, volunteer involving organizations, and other civil society organizations; (2) Regional and global multi-stakeholder consultations; and (3) Development of new partnerships to further the role of ‘Volunteerism for development’ at the country-level.

Findings: The evaluation finds that minimal progress has been made towards target (1), whereas (2) was not achieved. Target (3) has not been included in results reporting.

Uruguay and Vietnam are the two countries that have organized multi-stakeholder conferences wholly or partially funded by the project. In Uruguay, project volunteers organized three consultations in different parts of the country, concluding with one apex consultation in Montevideo. About 400 people participated, with representatives from UN system, government, local government, civil society, etc. Interviewees report that these consultations have had a positive impact on the understanding and interest in volunteerism as a force for development, as well as highlighting the role of UNV in the UN system.

Albania and Pakistan have also organized conferences or consultations that included themes of volunteerism, but they were not funded under this project.

Output 3: Supporting UN Resident Coordinator Offices to implement ‘Delivering as One’ initiatives.

Planned activities: The project document included one target under this output: (1) Implementation of ‘Delivering as One’ is supported through integration of ‘Volunteerism for Development’ supported by UNV volunteers. In later project documentation (results reporting framework), the target has been modified to (1) Number of UNV volunteers directly supporting UNRCO/UNCT functions (financed by this project), which has been the basis of reporting.

Findings: The evaluation finds that modest progress has been made towards target (1) overall, with some countries managing greater achievements. Interviews with UNDP/RCs indicate that the project has made positive contributions to Delivering as One and UN coordination and coherence. The project has been a much appreciated value-added for several RC Offices and the skill and capacity of individual volunteers has been praised on several occasions.

Provision of technical expertise under the project has made a tangible contribution to monitoring and evaluation (Mozambique), communications (Albania, Mozambique, Vietnam), and reporting and monitoring (Pakistan).

Of these, a noteworthy example is Vietnam, where the project has financed one National UN Volunteer and one International UN Volunteer placed in the One UN communications team. The capacity provided through the project has been instrumental in establishing a One UN internet in Vietnam, which been recognized locally and internationally, e.g. the communication team was invited by DOCO to present its work in New York.

Another noteworthy example is Albania, where UNV been able to provide very substantive support to “Communicating as One”. Capacities provided under the project have been central to the development of communication plans and strategies for “One UN”, in addition to production of video shorts, maintenance of the “One UN” website in Albania, and other public relations activities.

Besides the provision of technical capacity, the impression is that RCOs are not fully aware of the project’s objectives or the ambition of UNV to integrate volunteerism at a deeper level. Further, the mix of expertise has not been perfectly matched to facilitate the promotion and integration of Volunteerism for Development. According to the project document, promotion and utilization of Volunteerism for Development should be “integral” to all placements of volunteers in UNRCOs. It calls for the incorporation of this ambition in individual TORs as well as the development of performance indicators that make Volunteerism for Development measurable. While the evaluator has not had access to the documentation that would have enabled an examination of how this ambition has been realized, the general impression is that job descriptions have neither adequately incorporated Volunteerism for Development components, nor incentivized it through performance indicators, with the exception of the already mentioned example of Cape Verde.

Therefore, while the technical expertise provided under the project has doubtless been useful to RCOs, it may have diverged from the conditions for funding under SVF.

Output 4: Monitoring and documentation of ‘Volunteerism for Development’ contributions.

Planned activities: The project document specifies the following four targets for this output: (1) Development of work plans and annual targets for each UNV Field Unit; (2) Development of ‘Volunteerism for Development’-relevant performance indicators; (3) Regular monitoring and performance review is undertaken; and (4) Joint review meetings and reports, ‘Delivering as One’

publications, annual reports, etc, give due recognition to the role played by volunteers and 'Volunteerism for Development'.

Findings: Since no reporting has been done on this output, the evaluator cannot fairly assess the extent to which it has been achieved, but just indicate some general impressions.

As to target (2), the development of performance indicators related to 'Volunteerism for Development', the indication is that this has not been achieved. The lack of such performance indicators may function as a partial explanation to why some targets under output 1 and 3 above were not fully realized.

As to (4), some recent UNDG reports on progress in the eight pilot countries² do not make reference to any of the project activities, and only mentions UNV in general terms. It should be noted, though, that the design of the project (dispersed over eight countries; functioning through indirect support) makes it more difficult for UNV to claim results achieved at country level. Where UNV supports a joint UN effort or general UN process, it may therefore be the case that UNV involvement does not get noticed to the extent that it should.

2.4 Efficiency

This section briefly evaluates the efficiency of the project by assessing outputs in relation to inputs. Primarily, it reviews the relationship between budget and expenditure for the first three outputs in the years of 2008 to 2010, for which such data is available.

The original project budget was USD 2.6 million for the total project period. It is estimated that at most USD 682,000 will be spent by project closing in March 2011³, making the overall delivery rate 26 percent. The actual delivery rate may diverge somewhat from this, depending on actual expenditures for 2010 and 2011 (data for these years were not available to the evaluator).

UNV made several reductions of the project budgets. Taking these adjustments into consideration, the below graph (figure 1) displays the relationship between budget and expenditure between 2008 and 2010. Expenditure under the project increased from around USD 93,578 in 2008 to USD 222,672 in 2009, pushing delivery rate up from 11.3% to 47.5%. This is a substantive improvement, which reflects that the project was getting up to speed in 2009, after a slow first year. In 2010, delivery rate increased further, to 92.8%. However, the increased delivery rates in 2009 and 2010 must be viewed in context of the drastically reduced budgets those years (original budget similar to blue bar in 2008).

² UNDG (2009) "Delivering as One: Lessons Learnt from the Pilot Countries", UNDG (2010) "Delivering as One: Stories and Testimonies from Eight Programme Pilot Countries", UNDG (2010) "Stories from the Delivering as One Pilot Countries".

³ Data provided by Project Manager in February 2011.

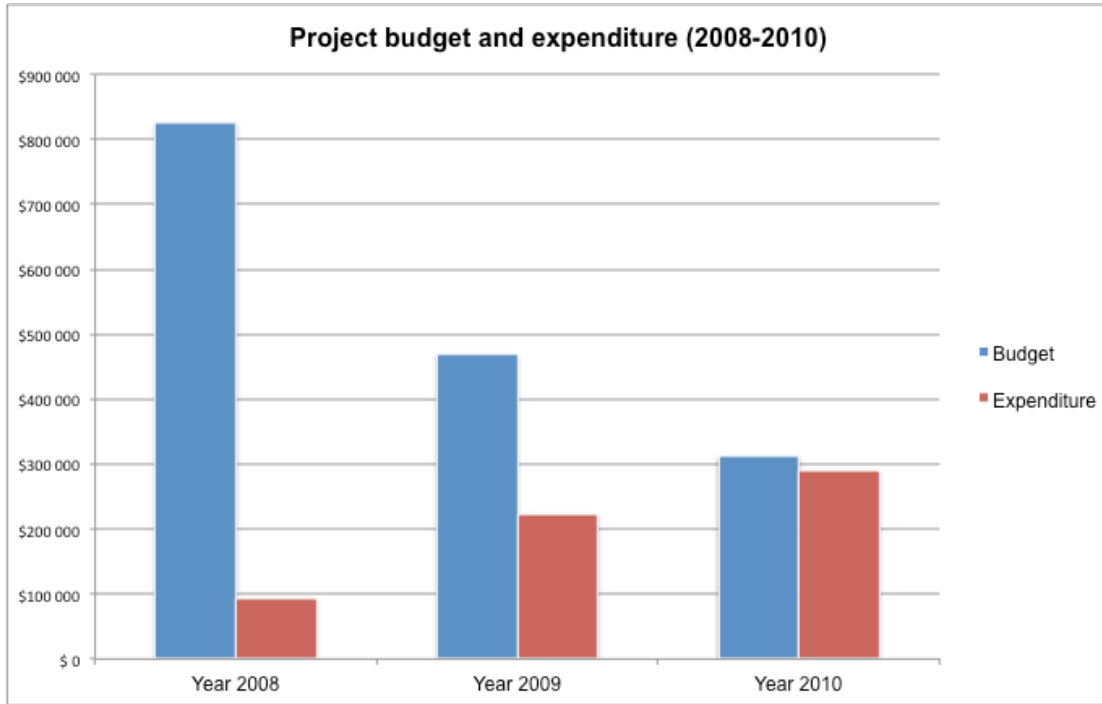


Figure 1

The following two graphs (figures 2 and 3) make evident some further nuances in the delivery pattern. First, data confirm the impression that implementation was slow in the first year, but caught up somewhat with the timeframe in 2009, as the project started to get rolled out in several countries. Second, we note that there was wide geographic variation in terms of delivery for both years. In 2008, it stretched from 0% (for three countries) to 34.9% for Albania, indicating the degree to which various Country Offices managed to initiate the project. In 2009, delivery rates stretched from 0% (for two countries) to 71.8% for Cape Verde, 74.9% for Uruguay and 86.7% for Vietnam. This is a clear indication that some countries managed to increase delivery quite drastically between the first and second year of the project.

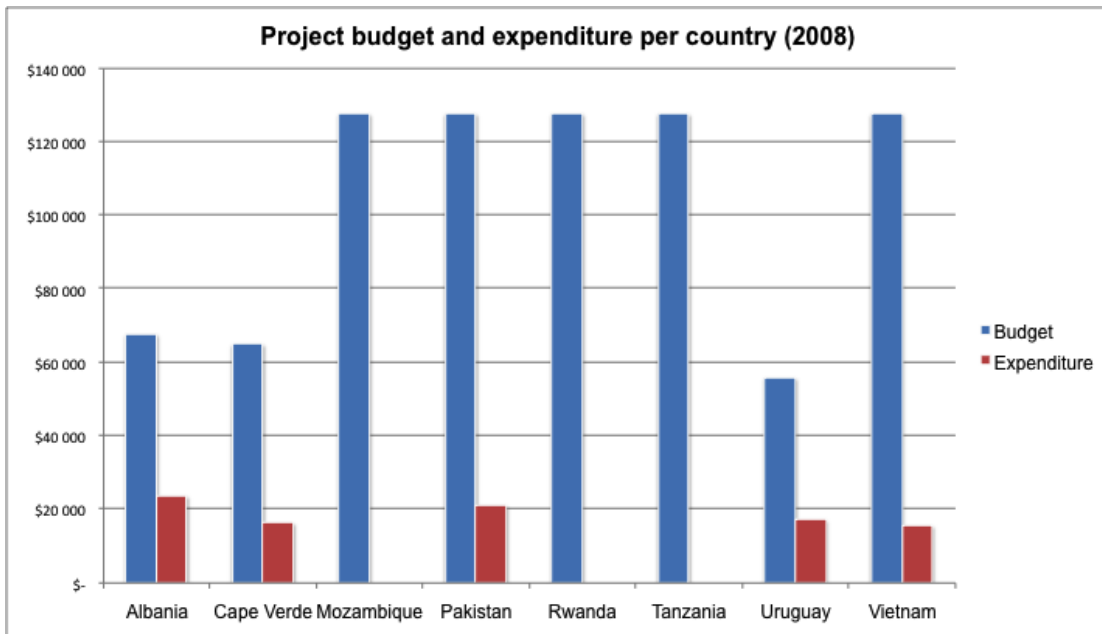


Figure 2

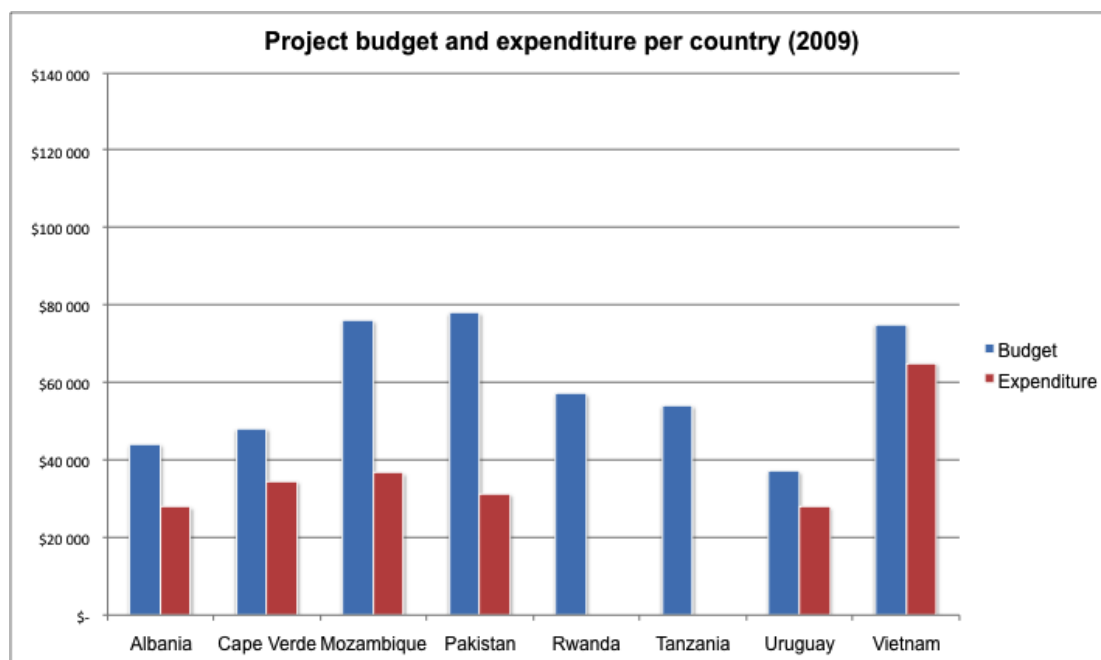


Figure 3

The improved expenditure from 2008 to 2010 corresponds to increased implementation of output 1 and 3 (no money was spent under output 2 until later in the project). As all the graphs make clear, much of the delivery under the project was delayed, leading to underutilization of funds. This trend appears to continue, as the project planned to use only about one third of the available funds in the last year of implementation, leaving a surplus of two thirds (or nearly USD 600,000).⁴

Given the geographic context of the evaluation, it has been difficult for the evaluator to assess the cost-efficiency of the project in any depth. This has been further complicated by the tendency to include in the results reporting activities that are funded through other projects. However, interviews and documentation do not point to any particularly wasteful or cost-inefficient practices.

Overall, the project is still on budget, but not on schedule.

2.5 Project Design and Management

This section reviews (1) the technical design of the project, some aspects of (2) management, and (3) communication that have appeared during the evaluation.

(1) The technical design of the project, the results and resources framework (and related budgetary and monitoring documents) is generally clear, with specified outputs, output targets and indicators, as well as an indicative timeline and deadlines for specific outputs. However, the previously discussed tensions and ambiguities are reflected in the formulation of outputs and indicators, which on a number of occasions lack the specificity needed for practical implementation. One example is output 2:3, which does not identify the type of relationships concerned. Further, outputs 1 and 3 partially overlap and have some conflicting indicators, as output 3 combines the dual goals of providing capacity to promote Delivering as One and integrate volunteerism.

⁴ UNV (2010) "Annual Work Plan and Budget 2010: UNV Support to DaO through V4D", UNV (2010) "Annual Work Plan and Budget 2011: UNV Support to DaO through V4D".

Such ambiguities may have caused confusion and diluted priorities, and could potentially explain the tendency to include indirect results in reporting, i.e. activities funded through other projects and only indirectly related to the outputs of this project. It may also have aggravated the tendency of UN volunteers to being assigned tasks outside their TORs (a risk identified in the project document). While this partly reflects the difficulty in separating activities in small offices, where personnel is often relied on for many parallel activities, it is also attributable to the design of the results framework. It caused some UNV Field Units to “artificially” insert results, as they reported it.

(2) The management arrangements of the project (presented on pages 14 and 15 of the project document), the first impression is that it has dispersed responsibilities and accountability, both horizontally and vertically. The PDOG Geographical Sections have carried the responsibility of regular monitoring and oversight, including communication with UNV FUs and deciding support levels and recruitment, while the Project Manager’s main function has been to channel information between them and the Project Director. It is possible that this dispersed structure has created vulnerabilities in terms of monitoring, communication and potentially made the project sensitive to staff rotation.

Interviews indicate that rotation of staff and other human resources is a critical explanation for slow implementation. Most importantly, the post of Project Manager was left vacant for nearly a year, from early 2009 to February 2010. Routines for handover and backstopping have not been sufficient to maintain steady implementation during times of shortage and change.

A few interviewees said that the governance structure of the project had not been conducive to creating ownership at the field level. There had been too little room for inputs from project countries in the design phase and continuously through the implementation phase.

It is specified in the project document that the project should provide funding for, or replace, regular Field Unit positions. It appears this has happened in at least a few instances, although the circumstances (e.g. Uruguay, where there was no UNV presence in country as the project was rolled out) may justify some of these decisions.

The evaluator made a number of observations relating to (3) communication, both internal (within UNV) and external (between UNV and other UN agencies or stakeholders). While field personnel voice strong support for management, they underline that the project was not properly communicated initially, both within Headquarters and to UNV Field Units, and it appears that a low quality of communication has been consistent for the project throughout its implementation. Several Programme Officers report feeling detached from Headquarters and from other parts of the project. Some Programme Officers even reported that they heard about the project for the first time when asked by HQ to report on its progress. It is likely that such lack of communication has contributed to uncertainty on behalf of field personnel and thereby to a diminished effectiveness.

Some particular findings on internal communication are:

- Inadequate communication has been a major reason for slowing down recruitment under the project. In some instances, recruitment processes have progressed quite far before being halted, leading to delays and disappointments, possibly worsening UNV’s relationship to other UN agencies.
- Many Programme Officers do not know the name of the Project Manager.
- Several interviews indicated that the undersupply of information from Headquarters has made UNV Field Units’ communication with development partners more difficult, in that

they cannot “give a clear answer” to queries related to the project, even including the future of existing contracts. This has potentially caused reputational costs for ‘.

- In some of the instances where quality of communication has worked well, it has largely depended on personal relationships. While this is positive from one perspective, it is also important to note that the lack of institutionalized communication routines makes a project vulnerable to shifts in staff and other disruptions.

The project document clearly underlines the importance of external communication for the project, e.g. “clear and constant communication” between UNV and UNRCs “on the underpinning principle and intention of UNV support which is integration of V4D”. The Management Arrangement (pages 14 and 15) identifies responsibilities for maintaining “close coordination with UNRCOs and UNDP senior management”. Based on interviews with UNDP/RCOs, it is questionable whether external communication about the project and its objectives has taken place in that way. One of the contacted RCs complained about not hearing enough from UNV Headquarters about the project or about UNV in general.

It is the view of the evaluator that communication weaknesses are partially attributable to indirect factors, such as the dispersed management structure, human resources rotations, and geographic/timezone distances. It may also be that communication deficiencies have resulted from overstressing of capacities in HQ, but the present evaluation has not included an analysis of this issue.

3. Conclusions

3.1. General Conclusions

Based on the assessment of the “UNV Support to Delivering as One” project, taking into consideration the above evaluation criteria and keeping in mind the difficulty of identifying corporate results from a project with such great geographic variation, the evaluator has come to the following general conclusions.

The project has made a contribution to both Delivering as One initiatives and the promotion of volunteerism. Interviews with beneficiaries support the conclusion that, disregarding geographic differences, capacities provided under the project has played a key role in several instances, supporting RC offices, One UN teams, and other UN coordination processes under the Delivering as One umbrella. Technical expertise fielded under the project helped address capacity shortcomings in the early phases of Delivering as One and interviewed beneficiaries report that they have continued to add value to Delivering as One.

The promotion of volunteerism has taken place mainly indirectly, i.e. through the example set by volunteers. The project found relatively few entry points for the integration of volunteerism in development planning, mainly due to the persisting view of UNV as an employment agency, the low awareness of the integrative strategy among UNV personnel, and the mismatched incentives presented by the reporting framework. However, it is judged that integration of volunteerism is an increasing priority for RC offices, in light of recent UNGA resolutions and the 2009 UNDAF guidelines.

The overall delivery rate of 26% implies that the project fell short of its planned scope. Greater results could have been realized, had the project been implemented in a more timely fashion, more evenly across countries, and with more guidance from Headquarters. Now, achievements under the project were concentrated to about half of the countries, which in turn spent about half

of the budget originally allocated to them. That left around three quarters of the original budget unused.

The activities and capacities of the project have expanded UNV's size and strategic position in *some* of the eight pilot countries, which is potentially an important strategic gain. This has been recognized, with some qualifications, in most interviews with beneficiaries, particularly in the countries that organized stakeholder consultations. While UNV's increased presence in DaO countries has been recognized locally, it has failed to leave a mark in UN system reports. The three most recent UNDG reports on progress in the eight pilot countries⁵ do not include any references to volunteers or "Volunteerism for Development", and on only one occasion mentions UNV in a context of relevance for Delivering as One. This indicates that UNV is yet to receive the recognition to which it aspired in the project document.

While the technical expertise provided has doubtless been very useful to RCOs and the DaO agenda, the fact that the project, in the end, was predominantly about human resources rather than about integrating volunteerism and changing the image of UNV – laid out as one of the ambitions in the project document –, is testament to conceptual tensions and conflicting priorities that were present from the start. Since these ambiguities were not resolved, but rather aggravated through consistently inadequate communication, they continued to confound staff and volunteers, hamper implementation, and potentially, reduce UNV's impact in DaO countries.

First, there was a tension between promoting Delivering as One, defined as UN coordination, and promoting volunteerism as a goal in itself. Second, there was a tension between reaping the strategic benefits of DaO countries and finding fertile grounds for the integration of volunteerism. These tensions arguably made it more difficult for UNV to identify what specific advantages it sought in its engagement with the DaO countries. Being confined to DaO countries, this evaluation has not involved any extensive analysis of the differences between DaO countries and non-DaO countries with respect to the opportunities they present to UNV. However, it appears that, while the DaO countries may come with unique strategic and operative advantages for UNV, there is little evidence that they provide better opportunities for promoting volunteerism as such.

The project illustrated some important lessons learnt and best practices, both for the mobilization of volunteers in support of UN coordination and for the integration of volunteerism in development.

As to the former, the project has shown how volunteers, and the skills they bring to the UN, can play an essential role in harmonization of the UN system at the country level. As to the latter, the integration of volunteerism in development, the project has illustrated how crucial it is to secure buy-in from beneficiaries, and to cultivate it where it does not readily appear. Throughout this project, proactive engagement and sensitization of stakeholders led to greater results. It also allowed project personnel to pilot some scalable innovations for how to mainstream volunteerism, for example inserting the promotion of volunteerism as a substantial task in the TORs of a majority of volunteers mobilized to a country.

3.2 Challenges and success factors

The performance of the project should be viewed in the context of a number of factors influencing its implementation, both negatively and positively. This section outlines the most important challenges confronted by the project, together with some of the factors that facilitated success.

⁵ UNDG (2009) "Delivering as One: Lessons Learnt from the Pilot Countries", UNDG (2010) "Delivering as One: Stories and Testimonies from Eight Programme Pilot Countries", UNDG (2010) "Stories from the Delivering as One Pilot Countries".

Implementation challenges included:

- **Lax monitoring and communication.** Consistently inadequate communication and guidance from Headquarters posed a serious challenge for volunteers in most project countries. Communication deficits aggravated the project's other weaknesses, e.g. ambiguities in the results and reporting framework.
- **Inadequate routines for handover and backstopping.** The project has been marred by high rotation of personnel, both in the field and at Headquarters. The loss of capacity has not been adequately compensated through clear and firm routines for backstopping and handovers. The lack of such routines has seriously interfered with the implementation of the project. It has created uncertainties among field personnel, contributed to passivity, and slowed down the integration of Programme Officers into UNCT and UN planning processes. Ongoing management and structural changes at Headquarters may have contributed to this problem, by consuming the attention and time of staff.
- **Low awareness of UNV strategic objectives and the concept of Volunteerism for Development.** Awareness of the concept of Volunteerism for Development among project volunteers and Programme Officers is often inadequate, which has made it difficult for them to find, or even articulate, entry points for the project. It can be noted that awareness of the concept is sometimes low among other UN agencies and often low among other stakeholders, judged from the evaluator's interviews.
- **Inadequate operationalization of 'Volunteerism for Development'.** Tools and policies to facilitate the integration of volunteerism into development plans and strategies are neither adequately developed at the conceptual level, nor adequately communicated (in the form they exist) to project volunteers, Programme Officers or other UNV personnel.
- **Mix of competencies not ideal for the promotion of integration of volunteerism.** While the capacities mobilized under the project suited the needs of RC offices, it may not have been the ideal mix to promote Volunteerism for Development. A related problem is the sometimes low understanding among project volunteers of the functioning of the RC Office and its role in the UN Country Team.
- **Ambiguities in results framework.** The operationalization of objectives through outputs and indicators in the results framework did not fulfill its role as guidance to project activity. Fuzzy indicators allowed for the reporting of indirect results.
- **View of UNV as an "employment agency".** Both within and outside UNV, the perception of the organization as a provider of human resources and technical expertise persists. This presents a serious challenge to making the conceptual shift to integrate volunteerism into development plans and policies.
- **Pilot nature of the project.** The exploratory character of a pilot project, aiming to get insights into the feasibility of an approach, necessarily implies additional transaction costs that may hamper implementation. For this project, such transaction costs could be identified at the conceptual, managerial and relationship level.
- **Rushed roll out.** Reportedly, the project was initiated to grasp strategic opportunities presented by the launch of the Delivering as One pilot countries. The fast initiation meant that key tensions inherent in the project's objectives were not resolved, and that there was inadequate time to facilitate ownership from project countries.
- **Diverse country contexts.** The project was rolled out under very non-standard circumstances, in that it was to be implemented in eight countries across the world, with

different profiles in terms of UN operations as well as socioeconomic and cultural aspects.

- **Inadequate human resources at the time of project initiation.** In some countries, the project was rolled out without adequate human resources in place. E.g. there was no presence in Uruguay prior to the project, which impacted implementation negatively during the first year.
- **Protocol issues?** It could be noted that some UNV personnel have not been invited to participate in UNCT meetings (e.g. Uruguay), assumedly for reasons of protocol. Needless to say, such marginalization does not facilitate the capacity of UNV to influence UNDAF and other joint planning tools.

Key factors that facilitated successful implementation included:

- **Proactive approach.** The common denominator for the most successful project countries is that project volunteers (and/or Programme Officers) adopted a proactive approach in implementing the project. They reported that when they presented partners with “concrete and thought-through proposals,” they were much more likely to get traction. For example, in Uruguay, multi-stakeholder consultations were held, predominantly as a consequence of a proactive and entrepreneurial approach on the part of project volunteers in the country.
- **Local communication and sensitization of UN agencies and development partners.** Experience from project countries show that active communication by UNV vis-à-vis UN agencies and development partners succeeded in addressing awareness gaps and sensitizing about Volunteerism for Development, preparing the way for more receptivity and constructive engagement in this area.
- **Right skills and training.** Some project volunteers and Programme Officers have succeeded better than others. It is clear that personnel who have had training on UN planning instruments (e.g. UNDAF), understood RC offices, and engaged with other stakeholders, were able to overcome some of the above challenges and more successfully implement the project in their countries. This underlines the importance of recruitment (identifying the skills critical to the project’s success), preparing volunteers and staff, and ensuring that relevant training is incorporated into a project.
- **UNV presence in country functioned as gateways.** Volunteers placed in other UN agencies functioned as linkage points to project volunteers and Programme Officers. This appeared to have increased the receptivity of these agencies to integrate volunteerism in planning or support such efforts.
- **Country context conducive to volunteerism.** Projects in countries that are more conducive to volunteerism and community based action have found that it facilitated implementation (e.g. Uruguay). In some instances (e.g. Cape Verde), ‘volunteerism’ has negative connotations, which naturally has presented an impediment for UNV activities in the country.
- **Clusters of personalized communication.** It appears that personal relationships have been one factor that helped overcome the communication challenges outlined above.

4. Future Options and Recommendations

4.1 Strategic context and considerations

This section provides some observations on the strategic context and considerations of the project's future, in light of ongoing UN reforms, development trends, and UNV's overarching objectives.

A number of trends in the world of development inform an analysis of a future project's strategic position. First, ongoing UN reforms for greater system coherence and coordination present opportunities for mainstreaming UNV's objectives into UN planning, as was clearly recognized in the launch of the present project. Second, UNDP is moving upstream, into policy advisory territory, leaving strategic space for UNV to fill, especially in the area of civil society mobilization and civic action. The ambition to refine the 'comparative advantages' of UN agencies, expressed in UN system policy and planning documents (e.g. UNDAF guidelines), supports a move for UNV to become the UN system's focal point for civil society. Third, there is a growing recognition, in social science research as well as in development policy, of the importance of the inclusion of civil society in development initiatives. This has been recognized at the UN system level, as witnessed by the UN General Assembly Resolution 63/153 and the 2009 guidance note on UNDAF, which includes mentioning of the role of volunteerism.

These trends arguably support the conclusion that there is a strategic rationale for UNV to put more emphasis on the integration of volunteerism, even more so than during the time of the launch of the first phase. Consequently, the overarching goal of the next phase should be to position UNV in support of the Millennium Development Goals through developing capacities of governments and other stakeholders to build local volunteer infrastructure and mobilize, manage, and finance communities for development. That is, the project should feed into the ambition to "transform development from an external intervention to a local accomplishment", as one recent UNV report puts it.

A further reason for a stronger emphasis on the integration aspect is financing. If the project will continue to depend on the Special Voluntary Fund, it will need to be calibrated to meet the particular requirements and conditions of the Fund. This implies a clearer focus on the promotion of community mobilization and the integration of volunteerism in development planning, rather than the provision of technical expertise.

This leads to a number of strategic considerations and questions.

First, an important question for the future is in what geographic location and context the above objectives are best served. This will need further analysis on the part of UNV, but the selection criteria may include: volunteerism is a national priority, UNV has a strong presence already, and openness among UN stakeholders for integration of volunteerism. Other criteria may be whether the country is a hotspot for climate change or environment, which Resolution 63/153 articulated as focal areas for volunteerism.

Needless to say, the key question to decide is whether the above objectives are best served in the Delivering as One pilot countries, or if there exist alternative locations that serve them as well or better? Since the project is currently engaged in the eight pilot countries, there is naturally an inclination to remain in those locations, and some good arguments to do so. Among these are, first, the great attention and resources directed towards the DaO countries; second, the fact that development models that prove versatile in DaO countries are likely to be scaled up and spread globally; third, in respect of being pilots, the DaO countries may have greater flexibility in terms of trying new models and solutions, to integrate new players, and potentially be more goal-oriented.

At the same time, one must remember that Delivering as One is a process – a model for future UN system cooperation – not something that makes these countries substantively different, or makes them – as if by some magic – more fertile ground for the promotion of volunteerism. For example, as of December 2009, 57 UNDAFs worldwide include some aspect of UNV collaboration or integration of 'Volunteerism for Development'. This indicates that receptivity to integration of volunteerism is quite much wider than the pilot countries. UNV must therefore systematically survey the terrain for the locations that provide the most fertile ground for a future project. Tools such as the measurement "tool-kit" developed by UNV may provide further insights into how to structure such an exploration.⁶

A second question is how to target UNV resources to optimize engagement with UN planning tools in project countries? The UNDAF process has four steps:⁷ (1) Road map; (2) Country analysis; (3) Strategic planning; (4) Monitor and Evaluation. UNV should seek to engage with this process at all stages, but particularly at the first two, since the fluid character of these stages presents opportunities to shape the debate and set the agenda. This is particularly crucial for UNV, since the organization is trying to change not only how it does business, but also how others view it. UNV should therefore seek to participate in planning, design workshops, and all other fora with a strong bearing on the following UNDAF process. It is therefore important that the next phase of the project aims to incorporate capacities that allow UNV to engage in this process with authority and influence, from the first meeting.

In this context, the importance of the country analysis process cannot be underestimated. If UNV can provide evidence that volunteerism and civil society engagements are opportunities, linked to national development priorities, it facilitates programming in the later stages. I.e., the second phase of the project should also try to incorporate capacities to contribute to CCA processes.

A third question is how to best facilitate buy-in for UNV's approach and how to sensitize UN agencies, governments and other development partners? A clear lesson from the first phase of the project is that the realization of Volunteerism for Development depends on the buy-in and support of other stakeholders, especially RC offices and UNCT members. Here, UNV may want to regard the next phase of the project as not only practical support, but also as part of its advocacy efforts. The project should function as the symbol of the new UNV. This will only be realizable if serious efforts are undertaken to raise awareness, train personnel, and sensitize other stakeholders, including through high-level visits to project countries. In this regard, the project should also aim to find synergies with activities undertaken under the International Year of Volunteering +10 project and the Status of World Volunteerism Report.

4.2 Future options

In the view of the evaluator, there are two basic options through which a second phase of the project can promote UNV's strategic objectives: (1) Build on current project and upgrade ability to focus on integration of volunteerism; or (2) Overhaul and reconceptualize to achieve strong focus on integration of volunteerism. This section outlines these two options and identifies their respective advantages and disadvantages. The next section contains recommendations that are general for both options, as well as some specific recommendations for each option.

⁶ UNV (2001) "Measuring Volunteerism: A Practical Tool-Kit".

⁷ UNDG (2009) "Guidelines for UN Country Teams on preparing a CCA and UNDAF"

Option 1: Build on current project

Strategy: Building on the footholds established in the first phase, the second phase project continues technical support to RC Offices in Delivering as One countries, with a clearer focus on providing capacities that can integrate volunteerism in joint programmes and local development plans and policies.

Location: Delivering as One pilot countries.

Profile: First, since this option would retain much of the human resources from the first phase of the project, it must seek to enhance the skills and tools available. Comprehensive training should therefore be rolled out as soon as possible (mainly for Programme Officers), to raise awareness about integration of volunteerism and share best practices on how it is best achieved. Second, future capacities mobilized under the project should, wherever feasible, be targeted to the skills needed to promote volunteerism (i.e. expertise on community mobilization, civic action, etc). The project may want to establish a threshold value (e.g. 50%) for the share of project volunteers that must fall under this category. Third, UNV should undertake – through the project and through other initiatives – awareness-raising targeted to Delivering as One countries, to sensitize other stakeholders about the concept of Volunteerism for Development in its integrative form. This would include realizing the multi-stakeholder consultations from the first phase, proactive promotion, and actively seeking synergies with IYV+10 and other UNV activities. Last, in order to focus resources and improve effectiveness, the project may consider introducing cutoff dates for countries where progress is not made within a specific time limit (e.g. within 12 months).

Pros:

- Promotes sustainability of results achieved in the first phase of the project.
- Delivering as One countries bring some specific advantages, including: (a) UNV can benefit from the strategic attention and resources directed toward the Delivering as One countries within the UN system; (b) Models and programmes that are successful in Delivering as One countries are likely to be scaled up globally; (c) Delivering as One countries, in their role as pilots, have been given a mandate to be more open to exploratory and innovative solutions, which means that they may be open to new models.
- Continuation of project risks fewer reputational costs with UN and other stakeholders.

Cons:

- The key tension of the first phase, reconciling mobilization of technical capacity with volunteerism promotion, will remain to some extent even if the project is better targeted toward the latter.
- Delivering as One countries may not necessarily be the most suitable for the promotion of volunteerism as an integrated aspect of development planning.
- Some Delivering as One countries (Uruguay, Albania) are on the verge of graduating to Middle-Income Country status. This may have effects on the flow of development funds to these countries, which may affect the project indirectly.
- First phase of project may have solidified expectations among stakeholders and project volunteers and Programme Officers about what the project is about, which may hamper training and awareness-raising.

Conditions: Recommendations 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 11 below are critical to ensure the viability of this option.

Option 2: Overhaul and Reconceptualization

Strategy: Through a substantive overhaul of its design and reconceptualization of its underpinning objectives, the project is geared toward leveraging UNV expertise more directly to UNDAF processes and other development planning tools. This approach consciously focuses on the integration and advocacy aspects of UNV's strategic agenda, and conditions the mobilization of capacity more narrowly to expertise on community mobilization and civic action. The goal of the project is to function as the spearhead of a paradigm change in how UNV works with UNCTs, governments, and development partners, while linking the project objectives with the International Year of Volunteers +10 and the State of World Volunteerism Report. This option could potentially be merged with the other, MDG-oriented project currently in preparation at UNV Headquarters.

Location: It may be the Delivering as One countries, but not necessarily. If the project should work as a spearhead for UNV's new model, it should focus more on the type of competencies it provides than the countries to which it provides them. The project should be focused to a limited number of countries that are 'most-likely cases', i.e. countries with a profile that makes them fertile ground for integrating volunteerism.⁸ Based on the findings of this report, this would include countries where: (a) there is a strong UNV presence already; (b) volunteerism is a national development priority and finds a resonance with national culture; (c) first phase of project have made substantive progress, indicating fertile ground; (d) there is a need for climate change and environment efforts (UNGA Resolution); or (e) countries with high rate of IYV+10 activities. Further analysis is needed to clarify criteria for selection of project countries. I.e., this could be a combination of DaO countries and non-DaO countries, or only DaO countries, or only non-DaO countries. The essence is that choice of location is based on an assessment of where the substantive objectives of the project are best served, when weighed against other UNV interests.

Profile: While it is possible that some elements of the first phase of the project could be retained, this option implies a fundamental overhaul and reconceptualization of the project for the next phase, including objectives, general project design, human resources, and location. First, in order to be able to leverage UNV expertise in UN development planning, recruitment must more clearly target skills and experience that allow project personnel and Programme Officers to both engage with RCs and Heads of Agencies and promote volunteerism as a development strategy. This implies that volunteers should combine expertise on community mobilization with a degree of seniority, which allows them to provide substantive advice to RCs, UNCTs, governments and development partners. Second, volunteers must have a very good understanding of UN planning tools (such as UNDAF) so as to be able to identify entry points for UNV, especially at the early stages (such as CCA). Third, the placement of volunteers must be considered in detail; whether in RC Offices or elsewhere.

It is suggested as an initial step that UNV develops a roster of 30-50 people (experts on civic engagement, participatory approaches, civil society mobilization, as well as senior NGO leaders with experience of community mobilization) that may be a pool of capacity. The exercise may attune UNV to the type of HR profiles that are relevant for this type of project. It may also explore countries where RCs are open to including this type of capacity in their offices or otherwise promote their inclusion in UN planning processes.

⁸ Some of these considerations are mentioned and elaborated in UNV (2009) "Programming Volunteerism for Development: Guidance Note"

Pros:

- In focusing clearly on promotion integration of volunteerism, some of the tensions in the first phase of the project can be avoided.
- Strategic benefit of positioning UNV as an agency with substantive expertise on integration of volunteerism; open for UNV to become the UN system's focal point on civil society in development.
- Allows for a more flexible targeting, geographically, of countries where the opportunities for integrating volunteerism are the greatest, as well as linking up with IYV+10 and SWVF activities.

Cons:

- Some of the achievements and entry points established in the first phase of the project may be lost. Pulling out of DaO countries (if that is decided) may have reputational effects, as well as strategic costs.
- Mainstreaming is a challenging enterprise and does not have a great track record in the UN system.
- Receptivity to integration of volunteerism among RC Offices and other stakeholder is essential for this approach to bear fruit. Without receptivity, there is a risk of misalignment of objectives (as in the first phase) or that provided capacities become redundant.
- It is possible that UNV's reliance on UNDP places limits on the implementation of this option and model of support.

4.3 General recommendations

Policy development

1. Since "you become what you measure", UNV should develop the operationalization of the concept of Volunteerism for Development. It will facilitate better project design, management, and awareness-raising and advocacy. Relying on appropriate expertise, UNV should seek to develop a conceptual report and tools on how Volunteerism for Development is to be understood at all levels of UNV activity, including measures and verifiable indicators.
2. To the extent that IYV+10 and SWVF activities contribute to the development of tools, policies and knowledge to facilitate the integration of volunteerism into development planning, these should be integrated into the project.

Project design and management

3. Include Programme Officers in the design of next phase so as to (a) build a better understanding of country contexts; (b) target needs in country; and (c) build local ownership and engagement with project.
4. Undertake country situation analysis to clearly identify the needs and interests of RC Offices in project countries, both as relates to requirements for capacity and for determining receptivity to integration of volunteerism in planning and policies.

5. Exploit synergies with International Year of Volunteers +10 and State of World Volunteerism Report. This may include (a) co-organization of events, wherever feasible (e.g. if stakeholder consultations are included in the second phase of the project, they could be co-organized with IYV+10); (b) Provide project volunteers with the opportunity and incentives to provide material to IYV+10 forums, e.g. www.worldvolunteerweb.org.
6. Strengthen routines for handover and backstopping, both in field and in HQ. This will facilitate a stronger institutional memory and maintain relationships to other stakeholders.
7. Incorporate promotion of volunteerism as a substantive task in all TORs, both of project volunteers and of UNV capacities mobilized, where it is relevant and realistic. This means devoting a substantives share of the work (20-30%) of the work to this task. The exact details of such arrangement would have to be negotiated between Programme Officers and requesting agencies.
8. Change template TOR for UNV volunteers to allow for a larger share of work devoted to promoting volunteerism for development. The current template stipulates that 5 percent of the work time should be used for this purpose, which is not enough if the objective is mainstreaming.
9. Incorporate performance indicators for proactiveness in project volunteer TORs. Most of the substantive results in the first phase resulted from cases where UNV personnel actively sought entry points for the project with other UN agencies. In order to remain flexible to the wide difference in local contexts and receptivity to volunteerism, UNV should consider incorporating the proactive approach into volunteer TOR for the second phase of the project.
10. Consider reviewing project management arrangements at UNV Headquarters. This may include focusing more managerial functions to the Project Manager, rather than with Portfolio Managers. A second phase also needs to ensure that capacities at HQ are not overstretched.

Results Management

11. Results indicators in the second phase need to be defined in a way that allows unambiguous results reporting. The conceptual development of 'Volunteerism for Development' suggested above should feed into this development.

Training

12. Arrange workshops for project volunteers and Programme Officers at Headquarters, to (a) build awareness on 'Volunteerism for Development' and its integration in development planning; (b) build awareness on UNRC system and UN planning tools such as UNDAF; (c) share best practices across countries (invite former volunteers and Programme Officers from successful countries if necessary); (d) build ownership and cross-country project identity.
13. Consider developing training module for RC Office staff on Volunteerism for Development, so as to facilitate their receptivity to its integration in UN development plans such as UNDAF.

Communication (internal)

14. Improve routines for reporting and monitoring between project countries and Headquarters.

15. Develop reporting capacities of project volunteer and UNV Programme Officers through training. This relates to improvements in results framework and improved results indicators.
16. Build e-community for sharing of information and best practices across project countries. While one can envision sophisticated solutions, it can be done relatively simply through setting up an emailing list with Programme Officers, project volunteers, and Project Manager (HQ) as members. Alternatively, set up a group on a social networking site or similar web function. Given the low level of communication, even small changes will have a big impact. This will also help build cross-country project identity and diminish the sense of detachment experienced by project volunteers and POs.

Communication (external)

17. Prepare the ground. Launch of second phase of project should be aligned with high-level UNV visits, to build support, awareness and buy-in from stakeholders. UNV needs to signal very clearly that it is changing its modus operandi and that it will play a somewhat different role in the future. Ensure that UNV is represented in key coordination meetings at country level.
18. Organize in-country sensitization sessions for UNRCO and UNCT to build understanding of, and receptivity for, integration approach. Articulate project objectives clearly to stakeholders in country.
19. Align UNV's strategic communication with project objectives. To change perceptions of its role within the UN system as an "employment agency," UNV may wish to consider developing its strategic communication plan to raise awareness of ongoing realignment and the goals of the Business Model. IYV+10 and SWVF have the potential to function as communication vehicles and thereby facilitate stakeholders' receptivity to activities of the second phase of the project. UNV may want to underline integrative volunteerism more clearly in IYV+10 activities. As the project document stands, it appears that the main tagline will be "IYV+10". Could it be combined with a slogan or motto which sensitizes stakeholders to the concepts and objectives of promoting the integration of volunteerism in planning and policies?

Annexes

A. List of people interviewed (in alphabetical order)

Ingrid Baken, Programme Officer, Albania

Ruby Banez, Programme Officer, Vietnam

Francisco Barreto, Programme Officer, Mozambique

Edmund Bengtsson, Head, Quality Assurance Unit

Manon Bernier, Portfolio Manager

Mae Chao, Head, Volunteer Knowledge and Innovation Section

Olga Devyatkin, Portfolio Manager

Caroline den Dulk, Manager, One UN Communications Team, Vietnam

Paola Foschiatto, Programme Officer, Cape Verde

Kevin Gilroy, Chief, Peace Division

Antonio Graziano, Coordination Officer, Uruguay

Naheed Haque, Deputy Executive Coordinator

Moraig Henderson, Deputy Chief, Peace Division

Ibrahim Hussein, Senior Portfolio Manager

Ghulam Isaczai, Chief, Development Division

Allen Jennings, Deputy Chief, Development Division

Stella Karegyesa, Programme Officer, Tanzania

Tapiwa Kamuruko, Senior Portfolio Manager

Naomi Kitahara, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative (P), Mozambique

Nora Kushti, Communication Specialist, Office of the RC, Albania

Petra Lantz, UN Resident Coordinator, Cape Verde

Svend Amdi Madsen, Chief, Management and Services Division

Susan McDade, UN Resident Coordinator, Uruguay

Mir Nadia Nivin, Programme Analyst, Development Division (Project Manager)

Flavia Pansieri, Executive Coordinator

Robert Palmer, Portfolio Manager

Robert Toe, Portfolio Manager

Mirela Zukanovic, Portfolio Manager

B. Documents reviewed

UNV (2001) "Measuring Volunteerism: A Practical Tool-Kit"

UNV (2009) "Results Framework and 2009 Expenditure: UNV Support to DaO through V4D"

UNV (2009) "UNV Support to Delivery as One Project: 2008 Narrative Report"

UNDG (2009) "Summary of Findings from Capacity Assessments in Delivering as One Pilot Countries"

UNDG (2009) "Delivering as One: Lessons Learnt from the Pilot Countries"

UNDG (2009) "Guidelines for UN Country Teams on preparing a CCA and UNDAF"

UNV (2009) "Programming Volunteerism for Development: Guidance Note"

UNV (2010) "Annual Work Plan and Budget 2010: UNV Support to DaO through V4D"

UNV (2010) "Annual Work Plan and Budget 2011: UNV Support to DaO through V4D"

UNV (2010) "UNV Support to Delivery as One Project: 2009 Narrative Report"

UNV (2010) "Project Board Meeting (no. 3): UNV Support to Delivery as One through Volunteerism for Development Project"

UNV (2010) "Marking the International Year of Volunteers plus Ten (IYV+10)" (Draft project document)

UNV (2010) "Delivery as One projects - Budget balance as of 05.03.10" (Excel file)

UNDG (2010) "Delivering as One: Stories and Testimonies from Eight Programme Pilot Countries"[No mentioning of V4D, one general mentioning of UNV contribution in communication]

UNDG (2010) "Stories from the Delivering as One Pilot Countries"

UN (2010) "United Nations Volunteers: Report of the Administrator" (DP/2010/28)

C. Evaluation Terms of Reference

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

Following the 2005 Summit highlighting the inadequacy of the UN system to deliver on its agreed upon mandate of taking the lead on development initiatives, a High Level Panel (HLP) was set up. The HLP reported that given the number of affiliate agencies within the UN System, the UN's work, as a whole, on development is often fragmented and weak, with policy incoherence, duplication, operational ineffectiveness and outdated business practices. It recommended ways to overcome systemic fragmentation and to change the way the UN operates at headquarters, in each region and in each country. Piloting "Delivery as One" initiatives at the country level is one of the key HLP recommendations. Eight countries - Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Vietnam –expressed interest to become "One UN" pilots and were selected, representing a wide range of economic, demographic, geographic and political situations. These countries began to pilot "Delivery as One" initiatives in 2007, capitalizing strengths of each of the participating UN entity. Each pilot country is responsible for defining the implementation modalities and models of the "Delivery as One" principles that are best suited to their particular context and local needs, under the overriding goal to allow the UN to deliver as one, by overcoming current fragmentation and differing headquarters' requirements. As such, they play an important role in testing different implementation modalities and providing feedback to ongoing inter-governmental discussions on structural reforms in the funding and governance of the UN system.

In this context, the project "UNV Support to Delivering as One through integration of volunteerism for development" was formulated, recognizing the need to support the DaO initiatives in these countries through harnessing the power of volunteerism. The project has been designed to position UNV as a partner entity serving the entire UN system and demonstrating that volunteerism adds significant value to efforts towards the achievement of the MDGs and human development. At the output level the project focuses on 1) Enhancing capacities and awareness in pilot countries toward better integration of volunteerism into joint UN programmes 2) Bringing volunteerism into UN RC Office efforts on aid effective and harmonization. 3) Capturing and documenting the contributions of volunteerism into the development initiatives in these pilot countries.

2. JUSTIFICATION

The project "UNV Support to Delivering as One through integration of volunteerism for development" is scheduled to end on March 31, 2011. A second phase of this project is envisioned that will include revamping the project design based on the experiences of the pilot countries, the current trends in UN Reform initiatives and the lessons learnt from the ongoing project. This evaluation is intended as the 1st phase project evaluation. Since it is expected that certain project components will continue into the

next phase, to ensure seamless transition, it is necessary to undertake the final evaluation at this stage to feed into the designing of the follow up project.

The current global project is SVF funded and managed by the development division at UNV HQ in Bonn. The in-house project board comprises representatives from various UNV divisions. The evaluation is, as such, requested by the project-board to assess the achievements/impacts and more importantly, to derive an understanding on the successful practices so that it may be carried forward onto the next stage.

The primary stakeholders would be the DaO pilot country offices, the beneficiaries and those involved in relevant joint programmes within the One Plans and the UNV management.

3. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The evaluation will critically assess the UNV contributions made through this project to the DaO pilot countries in terms of: 1) Promoting volunteerism for development 2) Integrating UNV initiatives within the joint programmes and 3) Assessing the relevance and effectiveness of the support provided so far and also the same in the context of the evolving UN Reform trends. The evaluation will also take into account the current project design

Specific objectives:

Based on these assessments, the evaluation will:

1. Determine the relevance and impact of the project vis-a-vis the DaO agenda in the pilot countries- not only in terms of promoting volunteerism as an end itself but also as a means to support the UN reform agenda.
2. Evaluate the management, governance and implementation of the project, its value addition to the pilot countries and to UNV.
3. Identify challenges confronted by the project both at the field level as well as HQ, (substance and processes)
4. Provide clear recommendations and lessons learnt for the next phase including entry points and areas where UNV can play a catalytic role. The recommendations will take into account the lessons learnt, current project design, the feedback received and evolving trends in UN reform

This is intended as the “1st phase project evaluation” and as such the scope will include evaluating all the outputs across all 8 pilot countries. The timeframe will be the entire project duration, i.e three years.

4. KEY AREAS /ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

As stated, the evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the project, drawing lessons and making recommendations geared toward the upcoming project revamping/replication.

The evaluation is expected to provide insight on aspects of the project that achieved the objectives and those that require reviewing. It will consolidate information from relevant stakeholders and provide clear details on the lessons learnt, spanning the design, implementation and output/impact of the project. In addition, three years into the DaO initiative, the pilot countries have also taken stock of their experiences to better address some of the initial challenges. In this context, it is also important to assess UNV’s support and how it may also be modified for enhanced effectiveness.

The following evaluation criteria are to be used to derive the objectives:

4.1. Relevance

EXTERNAL COHERENCE: THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN OF THE PROJECT ARE SUITED TO THE DEFINED STAKEHOLDERS’ NEEDS AND PRIORITIES.

INTERNAL COHERENCE: THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE OBJECTIVE AND DESIGN OF THE PROJECT ARE SUITED TO UNV'S STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

4.2. Effectiveness

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

4.3. Efficiency

A measure of how economically resources/inputs are converted to results. Efficiency measures the outputs – qualitative and quantitative – in relation to the inputs.

4.4. Impact/ Effects

THE EVALUATION OF EFFECTS/ IMPACT NEED TO BE REALISTIC AND TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE FACT THAT UNV WORKS IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHER PARTNERS AND UN AGENCIES IN THE FIELD.

4.5. Sustainability

A MEASURE OF WHETHER THE BENEFITS OF AN INITIATIVE ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE AFTER FUNDING HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN.

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.

4.7. Capacity Development

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

5. METHODS AND APPROACHES

The evaluation should be done in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, using a mixed method approach. The following is proposed as a methodology for the evaluation:

- Desk review
- Stakeholder mapping
- Briefing meetings and interviews with key project informants, including the UNV country team and HQ, and other stakeholder representatives with an interest in the evaluation
- In-depth telephone interviews with selected project stakeholders
- Presentations of final evaluation to UNV

6. EVALUATION PROCESS

Inception stage:

- Establishment of evaluation management team
- 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 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:

- Surveys with project stakeholders
- In-depth telephone interviews with selected project stakeholders.
- In-depth discussion with UNV COTs and HQ.
- De-briefing with stakeholders to report on initial findings from the data collection and generating stage, to correct errors, and to discuss ideas for recommendations.

Analysis and reporting stage:

- Preparation of draft evaluation report
- Feedback on draft evaluation report and evaluation brief from UNV and selected stakeholders
- Presentation of final evaluation report.

Approximate timeline of the evaluation

Stages in the evaluation process	Estimated # of working days
Inception	3 Days
Data Collection and generation	4 Days
Analysis and Reporting stage	5 Days
Total	12 Days
Expected duration (start date and end date)	25 October-9 November

7. DELIVERABLES

- Inception report including:
 - Evaluation matrix with key questions, indicators and means of verification
 - Evaluation work plan
- Draft and final evaluation report with detailed lessons learnt and recommendations for the designing of the next phase of the project.
- Two-page evaluation brief
- Executive summary that can be used as stand-alone document

8. REQUIREMENTS

The assignment will be contracted to a consultant with experience and clear understanding of UN Reform processes together with knowledge on volunteerism. The incumbent should possess:

- University degrees at the post-graduate level in the social sciences, management or other relevant field of study

- 7 years of relevant work experience including significant experience in the arena of project/programme evaluations
- Proven track record and experience in the substantive area
- Knowledge and experience of volunteerism with its diverse manifestations and cultural settings
- Excellent analytical and report writing skills
- Good communication and consolidation skills
- Fluency in English. Working knowledge in French and/or Spanish will be an added advantage.

Working at the UNV HQ in Bonn, Germany, the consultant is expected to commence the assignment on October 25, 2010.

The overall responsibility for managing the evaluation will be with the UNV Development Division. The consultant will also work in close collaboration with the evaluations unit.

All evaluations in UNV should be consistent with the UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) Norms and Standards and the UNDP Evaluation Policy. The consultant will sign the UNEG Code of Conduct for evaluation consultants. After the evaluation is finalized, the project partners will respond through management response to the recommendations made.