

**BACKGROUND RESEARCH ON
GENDER AND VOLUNTEERISM**
Terms of Reference
(TOR)

BACKGROUND

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development 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 volunteerism for peace and development by advocating for volunteerism globally, integrating volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing people, including experienced UNV volunteers, throughout the world. UNV embraces volunteerism as universal and inclusive, and recognizes volunteerism in all its diversity as well as the values that sustain it: free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity.

Fundamental to the human development paradigm is the ensuring/enlarging of all people's choices, women and men, and in doing so, building human capabilities to exercise these choices is essential and forms the core of capacity development. The UN system seeks to address specifically the most vulnerable and marginalized groups to improve inclusion and equal participation. These elements are also central to the concept of Volunteerism for Development (V4D).

On this basis, mandated by its Executive Board, UNV has developed a Gender Action Plan covering Gender mainstreaming in UNV Projects, volunteer management and recruitment of both volunteers and staff. ***With the final goals of strengthening inclusive, gender-sensitive programming of all V-related initiatives, and eventually of elucidating the actual and potential contribution of V4D to the UN mandate of gender-equality***, one of the envisaged outcome of the Plan is to develop ***a clear understanding of the relations between Gender and Volunteerism***.

Gender and Volunteerism includes, but it is much wider than, an analysis of the ratio of women and men involved in volunteerism. In general, it can be about understanding the relative practical and strategic needs of both women and men in relation to any volunteer infrastructure project; about the expected and unexpected impact of volunteering actions on either group; and finally about its implications in terms of reinforcing or challenging gender roles traditionally assigned to either men or women.

Gender and Volunteerisms is a new and vast field of research, whose exact scope and key issues still need to be clearly defined. Assumptions need be clearly spelled out, and re-examined; hypothesis formulated; before practical solutions to promote gender equality in volunteerism and voluntary actions be proposed. *Some initial issues which have been discussed for consideration in a study on Gender and Volunteerism are included in Attachment 1.*

OBJECTIVES OF BACKGROUND RESEARCH:

Based on the context described, this consultancy will identify the 3-5 key issues which shall define the scope of the subsequent Gender and Volunteerism research. It will as well identify NGOs, GOs (including other UN agencies), Universities and other VIO stakeholders with the skills and interests of partnering / participating in the current initial scoping process and in the subsequent research.

ACTIVITIES:

This consultancy will:

- Conduct a desk review of existing academic materials and practices on the relations between Gender and Volunteerism;
- Identify, compile and analyze current and recent experiences and projects in UNV related to Gender and Volunteerism;
- Based on the desk reviews findings, identify 3-5 key issues on Gender and Volunteerism through a consultative process involving UN and external gender specialists/experts, academics, VIOs and UNV Gender specialists as appropriate. It is envisaged that, as part of the consultative process, the consultant will:
 - Conduct a survey (online and/or phone) to refine the initial finding (participation in the survey and consultations can include all the relevant gender and volunteerism experts and practitioners);
 - Organize a workshop to validate the key issues and defining/refining further research objectives (limited to 15-20 selected key participants);
- Based on the consultative process above, come up with a concept paper on Gender and Volunteerism (as specified in "Expected Outputs").
- Through the same process, identify and initiate partnerships on the identified issues for further research on Gender and Volunteerism.

METHODOLOGY:

It is anticipated that the consultancy will be conducted by a gender researcher / practitioner with international gender expertise and knowledge of volunteerism for development.

The consultant(s) will identify and engage diverse qualified experts within and outside UNV to gather data, brainstorm and finalize key issues on Gender and Volunteerism.

The starting point for this background research lies between the field of gender in development studies and volunteerism for developing, scoping the gender literature for interfaces with volunteerism, and viceversa.

The consultant(s) will be responsible for the final concept paper.

The consultancy shall be based in UNV HQ (Bonn, Germany), although provisions for it to take place at the consultant(s) site can be made. In this second case, it is still expected that the consultant(s) will travel to UNV HQ for an initial briefing, interviews of

HQ staff and regular updates as appropriate. The envisaged workshop shall take place in Bonn, provided that this is the cheapest and most convenient option.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS:

- A concept paper on Gender and Volunteerism including desk review analysis and main issues and hypothesis which shall require further investigation; Each issue will be well documented in terms of the rationale for selection; the related assumptions; and the indicative hypothesis for future investigation; The issues should also be of relevance for UNV, in support of a better understanding of the relations between V and Gender and its implications on development; Ideally 3-5 key issues should be prioritized.
- A research proposal on Gender and Volunteerism that will include:
 - The research question/issues or hypothesis to be further investigated (based on the key issues specified in the Concept Paper),
 - The methodology and scope,
 - The list of institutions and experts (from civil society, UN agencies including UNV volunteers, VIO stakeholders and academia) which, consulted in the initial scoping process, shall be involved in the subsequent research (and how in terms of participation / partnership). A list of suggested partners / participants is included in Attachment 2;
 - The suggested timeframe
- A separate report focusing on the process/description of the consultancy.

TIMELINE:

Nov 2008:	Request for Proposal, Deadline, and Consultant Selection Process
Dec 2008:	Completion of Consultant, Briefing of Consultant, Start of Project
Feb 2008:	Submission of first draft
March 2008:	Finalization. Final approval by UNV.