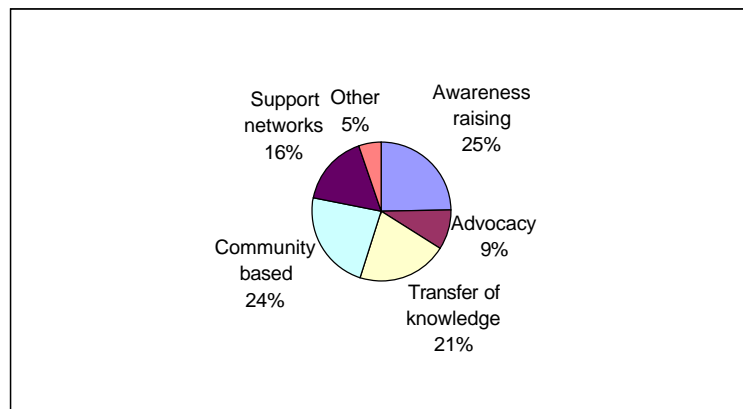


Evaluation of Questionnaire on Volunteer Involvement in Energy and Environment programs

The UNV environment focal point launched a questionnaire (see Annex) on volunteer involvement in energy & environment programmes, which was circulated among members of the UNDP Energy & Environment Practice Network on 12 April 2005.

40 responses were received in response to this questionnaire.

1. Most respondents believed that volunteers can and do usefully engage in awareness raising, transfer and exchange of knowledge and community based initiatives. What is interesting is that respondents for the most part did not view advocacy/lobbying for policy change as a useful way for volunteers to engage in energy and environment programmes. This contradicts evidence of successful lobbying efforts of volunteer advocacy groups such as Greenpeace, to name only one. It may be an indication that practitioners do not automatically connect the notion of volunteerism with such groups.



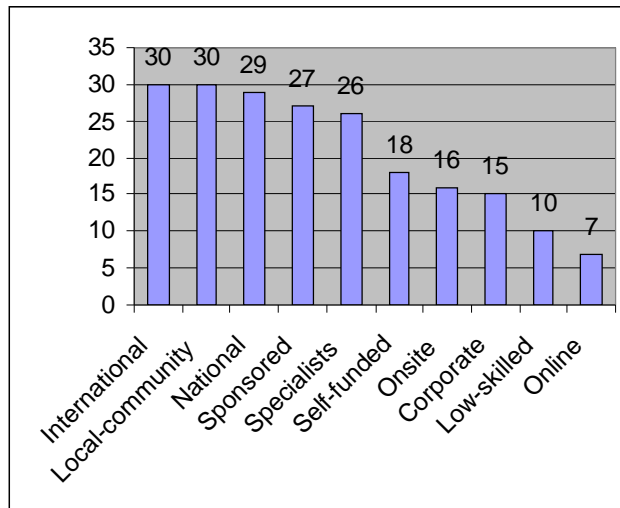
In the “other” category, respondents specified that volunteers could be usefully involved in implementing environmental education, data collection (e.g. bird census, tiger census etc), research and assist in portfolio management.

2. The majority of respondents (83%) thought that volunteers play an important role in getting results for environmental sustainability goals. Only 17% thought that they do not.

Respondents who answered “yes” to this question were asked why they thought that volunteers played an important role. They provided the following answers:

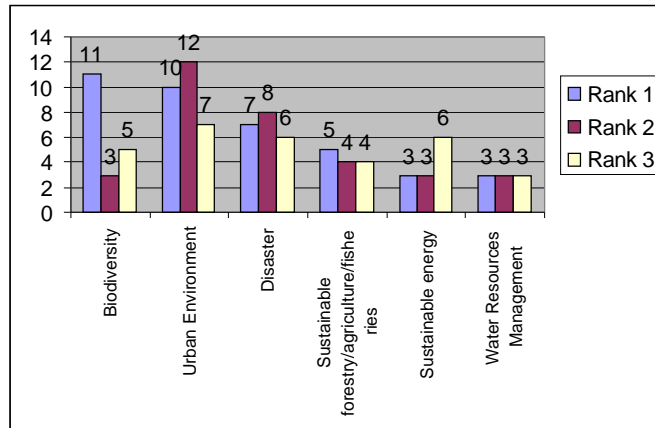
- Volunteers bring new experience, new view points, and practices.
- They can dedicate time for focused activities, whereas most organizational staff have to monitor a broad and diverse number of activities.

- Environmental sustainability is a complex issue, so there is a need for volunteer contribution at all levels.
 - Volunteers have expertise, enthusiasm and eagerness to contribute to a global cause.
 - They generally have competency and capability and bring important issues to people.
 - They are useful where financial/time resources are scarce.
3. Most respondents were aware of ongoing energy & environment projects which involve volunteers. Only 22.5% were not aware of any project involving volunteers.
 4. 57% of respondents had involved volunteers in their projects/programs.
 5. Most respondents said they are most likely to involve international, national and local volunteers in energy and environment programs. One participant chose other and specified that he/she is most likely to choose a fully-funded UN Volunteer (sponsored by donor governments through UNV Bonn).



6. This question asked respondents to rank the areas in which they thought that volunteer involvement is most important. Only 31 respondents answered this question, which seems to be an indication that such a ranking does not make sense. In fact, those who chose not to rank stated that volunteer involvement is important in all the areas listed, or that the list did not cover all the areas where volunteers should be involved, and some respondents specified that the degree of importance varies and depends on geographical region/country. Indeed among those who did rank the areas there is great diversity, which seems to indicate that respondents tended to select those areas which are of greater concern in their countries as the ones where volunteers could make the most contribution.

The graph below shows the diversity of answers, which does not really lend it to easy analysis. Blue indicates that first priority was given to this area, red that it was ranked as second most important and yellow that it was ranked as third most important. Thus, for example, 11 respondents felt that volunteers could make the most useful contribution to biodiversity conservation, and 12 respondents felt that the second most important area where volunteers could play a useful role are urban environmental issues.



7. This questions asked respondents to specify the barriers for volunteer involvement in energy and environments programs.

The respondents cited the following potential barriers:

- Lack of qualifications/experience as some aspects require greater experience
- Lack of appropriate knowledge on environment and energy issues
- They might not be able to commit for long term. Even short term projects require follow up or monitoring, for which volunteers might not be available
- (Government) restrictions on lobbying
- Lack of knowledge about region, country where posted, language problems
- Lack of acceptance of outsiders in indigenous community
- Some cultures don't take volunteers seriously
- Preconceived notion that it takes too much time to organize/supervise volunteers
- Some volunteers might be too "green" or narrow minded to work with government projects

8. Only a few respondents had questions to ask about volunteers. The questions asked were:

- Is it possible to have UN Volunteers sponsored by Government?
- Where do we get the volunteers from?
- How will the expenses be covered?

- How long does it take to process a request for volunteer as support staff and to actually have the volunteer among our team?
- Is it easy to get experienced volunteers with specific experience?

(These questions were privately answered by the UNV Environment Focal point.)



ANNEX
QUESTIONNAIRE
on
VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT IN ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM S

This short questionnaire will provide valuable inputs for a Practice Note on volunteer involvement in energy and environment programmes. It is meant to assess current attitudes towards and needs for volunteers as perceived by environment practitioners on UNDP's Energy & Environment knowledge network.

Even though this questionnaire is being launched by the UN Volunteers programme, please do not think we are interested only in UN Volunteers! Our mandate is to promote volunteering for development globally. Volunteering is multifaceted and can fall into one or more of four broad types of volunteer activity: philanthropy or service to others (which is what probably comes to mind most readily when people think about volunteers); mutual aid or self-help; participation or civic engagement; and advocacy or campaigning. Among service volunteers we can distinguish, for example, international/national, on-site/online, and private/corporate volunteers.

1. Please check all purposes below for which you believe volunteers can/do usefully engage to achieve environmental sustainability goals:
 - Awareness raising
 - Advocacy/lobbying for policy change
 - Transfer and exchange of knowledge
 - Community-based environment initiatives
 - Support networks
 - Other (Please specify.)

2. Do you think volunteers play an important role in getting results for environmental sustainability goals?
Yes No

If you answered yes, why do you think so? (or why not?)

3. Are you aware of ongoing energy & environment projects which involve volunteers (on a full-time or part-time basis)?
Yes No

4. Have you ever involved any type of volunteer in your projects/programs?
Yes No

5. Of the various types of volunteers, which would you be likely to involve in energy & environment programs (check all that apply)
- International Volunteers National Volunteers Local/community volunteers
 Self-funded Sponsored Volunteers (with stipend/allowance)
 Specialists Low-skilled Volunteers (e.g. youth volunteers)
 Onsite Volunteers Online Volunteers
 Corporate/private sector Volunteers (i.e. short -term "free" consultants, paid by their companies)
 Other (Please specify.)
6. Please rank the areas below in terms of where you think volunteer involvement is most significant/important (1, 2, 3, etc., with 1 being the highest). (If you feel that ranking does not make sense, please explain why.)
- Biodiversity Conservation
- Water resources management
- Sustainable forestry, agriculture and fisheries
- Sustainable energy programmes
- Urban environment issues
- Disaster risk management and disaster response
- Other (Please specify.)
7. What do you think might be some barriers for volunteer involvement in energy & environment programs?
(Please insert your answer into this form field.)
8. Do you have any questions about involving any type of volunteers? (Feel free to ask, and we'll get back to you.)
(Please insert your answer into this form field.)