



Harnessing Volunteerism for Sustainable Environment and Natural Resources Management

A Practice Note for the Energy & Environment Practice

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Executive Summary (1 page):

Summarizes the essential points with emphasis on the operational implications.

I. Introduction (less than 1 page):

The overarching challenges facing developing countries, developed countries and international organizations are framed by the eight Millennium Development Goals. Managing energy and environment for sustainable development remains a core MYFF goal that is fundamental to UNDP's mandate.

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will require the ingenuity, solidarity and creativity of many millions of ordinary people through voluntary action. Efforts on the part of governments, supported by the international community, can only complement what ultimately will depend on the full involvement of people all over the world. Recognizing this fact is the first step on the road towards harnessing this vast resource in a global effort to meet the MDG targets. At the country level, achieving the MDG targets requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach, involving multiple partnerships with (central and local) governments, the private sector, NGOs and civil society groups, including volunteer-involving and community-based organizations and self-help groups. Harnessing volunteerism for sustainable environmental management is, in essence, a good environmental governance practice.

The purpose of this Practice Note is to raise awareness and provide guidance to environment practitioners on involving individual volunteers and volunteer-driven organizations and groups for sustainable environment and natural resources management. It advocates for the inclusion and promotion of volunteerism in the design of environment policies and projects. It will provide some resources to consult for Practitioners who wish to involve volunteers and volunteer organizations in environment programmes.

In fact, UNDP is already engaging individual volunteers and developing partnerships with Civil Society Organizations to support voluntary efforts of community-based organizations to conserve the environment while ensuring sustainable livelihoods. The point of this Practice Note is to develop greater awareness about the added value of volunteerism in such partnerships, and to provide suggestions for possible additional voluntary resources UNDP and other environment practitioners could draw on.

II. The issue and its dimensions (2 pages)

This section develops the substantive context and background including the conceptual underpinnings and definitions needed to address the topic. How it is presented and what sub-headings are chosen will depend much on the specific issues.

Volunteerism¹ is a cross cutting social phenomenon that involves all groups and all aspects of human activity. "Expert international volunteer specialists" constitute only a small proportion of the total global volunteer workforce. Volunteerism finds expression in volunteer service, mutual aid and self-help, campaigning and advocacy and many other forms of voluntary participation by people to give freely of their time, mostly out of a sense of solidarity. Civil society members participate in the design of strategies, as service providers through national and local NGOs and CBOs, and as watchdogs to ensure government fulfillment of commitments. The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro marked the entry of CSOs into the arena of international advocacy and intergovernmental negotiations. In 2002 civil society organizations campaigned actively for the rights of people at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development,

"At the heart of volunteerism are the ideals of service and solidarity and the belief that together we can make the world better."

Kofi Annan, Secretary General, United Nations

¹ The concept is quite well defined on page 2 of the UNDP Evaluation Office's publication Essentials. See at http://www.unv.org/infobase/volunteerism/volunteerism_and_development.pdf

leading the fight to preserve the principles of Agenda 21, the Rio Programme of Action. Similarly, the Millennium Development Goals owe a great deal to the sustained mobilization and networking of CSOs and the involvement of many volunteers to encourage governments to pay special attention to the plight of poor and marginalized people. The benefits of volunteering extend beyond the immediate product of voluntary efforts to the larger impact of creating social cohesion, empowerment, awareness and very often large and strong advocacy networks.

The above notwithstanding, the contribution of volunteers is often underestimated, undervalued, or not consciously considered and supported in the design of programme initiatives and policies.²

Box 1. BARRIERS TO VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

From the practitioner's perspective, these are some of the perceived barriers to volunteer involvement sometimes cited:

- Volunteers (particularly young, low-skilled volunteers) may not possess enough expertise in energy and environment issues to provide technical support in programmes/projects.
- (The flip side of the same coin:) Some aspects of energy and environment work requires great experience working with local communities, which is rare with most volunteers who tend to have the technical expertise.
- Lack of host agency capacity/time to direct and manage the work of volunteers effectively.
- Mismatch between volunteers' skills & abilities and host agency expectations.
- Lack of funding to finance the costs of volunteers and provide needed support for their work. Even volunteers who do not receive an allowance may need funding support for transportation and sometimes food.
- Potential lack of continuity in the case of short-term volunteer engagement for long-term projects.
- Potential lack of long-term commitment by volunteers, particularly unpaid volunteers.
- Lack of enabling local or national policies (e.g. national volunteer schemes); lack of political will and interest by authorities.
- Weak civil society, and restrictions on "political" activities (advocacy, lobbying) in some countries.
- Difficulties adjusting to a new cultural/work environment; lack of knowledge of the local situation; language barriers; perception of the volunteer as an outsider by local community (mainly for international volunteers).
- Coordination challenges with community-based volunteers, particularly for regional projects with transboundary activities.
- Volunteer status may limit the ability to effectively get the message across. Volunteers are sometimes not taken seriously ("only a volunteer") or viewed with suspicion ("why are they working for free?").
- Low stipends/allowance levels sometimes do not attract well-qualified volunteers.
- National volunteers are often from wealthy groups in urban areas, whereas much environment work takes place outside of urban areas.

It is true that these barriers exist. Nevertheless, it is usually possible to involve volunteers or volunteer-involving organizations in programmes if such involvement is planned for (and budgeted for as necessary) at the programme design stage. To harness volunteerism as a resource, environment practitioners and policy makers need to be familiar with its various expressions and attach importance to it. Factoring volunteer-involvement into their development policies and programmes goes beyond the placement of individual (UN or other) volunteers in UN Agency offices and projects, although these of course have an important role to play.

When does an activity actually qualify as a form of volunteerism? In most cultures voluntary action is embedded in long-established traditions of sharing, expressed in different ways, such as: philanthropy or service to others (which is what probably comes to mind most readily when people think about volunteers); mutual aid or self-help (e.g. formation of a community-

² Responses from a survey launched on the UNDP Energy & Environment Practice Network in April 2005 indicate strong interest in the contribution of volunteers. Some of the barriers to volunteer involvement were also pointed out. Survey results are available in a summary report from the author of this Note.

based water users self-help group which manages its own water supply); participation or civic engagement (e.g. public participation of local communities with the responsibilities to manage their environment and natural resources); and advocacy or campaigning (e.g. *Greenpeace* or the US-based *Environmental Defense Fund*). Among service volunteers we can distinguish, for example, international/national, on-site/online, and private/corporate volunteers. These are not mutually exclusive categories, and in fact often there are overlaps. Service volunteers may engage in awareness campaigns, and self-help groups may participate in dialogue with their local government, for example. What all these have in common, and what qualifies them as volunteer action, are the key universal principles of volunteerism:

- actions are carried out freely and without coercion;
- financial gain is not the main motivating principle; and
- there is a beneficiary other than the volunteer.

The contribution of volunteers to development has been recognized in several General Assembly resolutions, which call on the international community to “integrate volunteerism in its various forms into their policies, programmes and reports”.

Voluntary action can offer people from all social groups an opportunity to engage purposefully and constructively in sustainable development initiatives, which can provide a sense of satisfaction to the volunteers, contribute to social cohesion while at the same time making an important economic and social contribution. And, while it should not be a primary motivation for involving volunteers, it is also true that volunteers can constitute a cost-effective development resource that can have a sort of “multiplier effect” of sometimes limited resources.

III. UNDP’s niche and possible entry points (1 page)

This section delineates UNDP’s niche, and suggest entry points where UNDP can make a difference. The section should make references to the relevant approaches and tools explained in the following section.

Through its United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV), UNDP is already connected to the volunteer sector. UNV aims to assist environment practitioners within UNDP (and elsewhere) to draw on this resource systematically. Furthermore, as a globally networked organization, UNDP is in fact able to mobilize volunteer-involving organizations such as NGOs, civil society organizations, community organizations, etc.

What distinguishes UNDP from other agencies is its signature approach: i) a human development approach – pro-poor, pro-women, and pro-environment, taking into account the long term; ii) a human rights approach – based on the principles of equality, participation and accountability; iii) a holistic approach – multi-thematic, multi-actor, multi-level, multi-functional, and yet, offering flexibility in points of entry and modalities; and iv) a participatory dialogue and process consulting approach.

“...In looking to the future, there can be no doubt that if we are to achieve the MDGs, we have to find ways to tap the solidarity and creativity of the millions of ordinary women and men who volunteer every day..”

Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator, UNDP

UNDP recognizes CSOs as a crucial resource, constituency and partner in advancing sustainable human development goals and principles. UNDP has made significant progress in both broadening and deepening its interaction with CSOs at all levels of its work. Thus UNDP’s approach and policies provide opportunities for and indeed point to the requirement to consult and partner with CSOs which

share UNDP's philosophy and values, many of whom involve volunteers in their activities, and some of whom are fully staffed by volunteers.

For the Energy & Environment Practice, these will come mostly from the environmental movement in programme countries, but given the crosscutting nature of energy and environment programmes will also include NGOs and CBOs from other sectors. Numerous good environment practice examples exist of the contribution voluntary action makes to environment and development at all levels (and some good examples are provided in the annexes).

There need to be more programmes that encourage local level volunteers and promote their status as important actors in developmental activities. In some cultures, prizes and awards are used to show recognition of volunteers, while in others, faith-based organizations provide support. What is most appropriate and effective will probably be culturally specific, but once programmes are implemented the volunteers will more than repay the limited investment involved. There is an added gain from supporting volunteering in that it spreads capacities further than a small number of people. The possible impact of developing the capacities of large numbers of volunteers is that it aids capacity retention, a perennial problem in traditional development programmes. An increased spread of capacities also adds to the multiplier effect of the initial capacity development programme.

IV. Operational implications (including examples) (max 6 pages)

The section on operational implications is the practical core of practice notes. Suggested proposals, approaches and techniques need to be practical and concrete as much as possible without being prescriptive; the four subheadings require a certain rigor and discipline:

A first step would be for environment practitioners to identify areas where volunteerism can contribute to successful outcomes of planned projects for the achievement of national environment and sustainable development goals. This should ideally start with the UNDAF results matrix, continue into the country programme preparation process and into the design, implementation, and evaluation of individual projects.

Successfully "mainstreaming" volunteerism into energy and environment programmes should include (a) establishing specific outcomes for promoting volunteerism for sustainable development; as well as (b) identifying entry points within the areas of cooperation, programmes and projects and the contribution volunteers could make to planned outcomes. Moreover, resource requirements for the various volunteer-involving activities should be identified. Of course the outcomes and indicators for specific volunteerism activities will depend on the context and the activity itself. For example, in cases where support is provided to a volunteer-involving environment NGO, indicators may be related to increased effectiveness of the service provided by the organization.

The contribution of volunteerism can be achieved through two basic approaches:

- 1 Promotion of environmental volunteerism by **strengthening the capacity of volunteer-involving environmental organizations and local networks**. Related activities could include facilitating environment networks to share good practices and advance collective endeavors; providing access to information on environmental issues to local volunteer groups, including youth groups; and encouraging corporate volunteering for environment.
- 2 **Engaging individual volunteers** (national/international; private/corporate; sponsored/self-funded; specialists/youth volunteers; on-site/online volunteers) and **volunteer-involving organizations** as actors in carrying out specific activities within

UNDP-sponsored energy and environment projects. This might involve partnering with existing volunteer-involving organizations that are active in relevant areas of activity; mobilizing individual volunteers or volunteer groups to provide needed capacities and skills; identifying and building on efforts of self-help and mutual aid groups; cooperating with advocacy groups in cases where information, awareness raising and policy change may be an aspect of programme objectives.

1. **Lessons and principles for action:** The section should present lessons in a nutshell that can be linked to documented cases (see annex 3). The principles provide signposts and safeguards in terms of Dos and Don'ts as starting points. While action needs to be customized to any given situation, these principles represent starting propositions or signposts that help establish the right perspective. Exceptions to the rule need to be carefully considered and argued and should be obvious to the stakeholders rather than decided unilaterally.

Some lessons learned through evidence-based evaluations of volunteer-involving initiatives show how people's voluntary engagement directly supports UNDP's approach:

Lesson 1: Volunteerism can reduce dependency and promote empowerment.

Empowerment begins with a rediscovery that the seeds of a solution lie within. This creates confidence, which, in turn, leads to recognition that self-help is not only possible but also essential. Voluntary action by individuals and groups is therefore an integral part of this learning and awareness process. Participation is not unique to voluntary action, but there is a strong symbiosis between community voluntary action and participation. Participatory programmes can use the empowering nature of participation and its capacity to strengthen the autonomy of a community.

What you can do:

- Find out what local volunteer groups are operating in your country. Support mutual interaction among community environment volunteer groups as a strategy for fostering social cohesion and synergies. Note that sometimes the mere mapping of voluntary organizations can be a major task in itself. Such exercises can form a prelude to capacity-building programmes and offer opportunities to further encourage voluntary groups, or identify which ones are willing and able to participate in specific developmental activities.
- Be aware that environmental activism is a powerful and vital force, an expression of a desire for change generated when like-minded people come together to achieve a common goal, and see how you can build on it strategically for your programmes. Support volunteers as agents for constructive change. See also how your programmes could publicize such efforts where this will lead to greater impact.
- Consider the demonstration effect of volunteerism as a catalyst for change. Observing the efforts of local, national and international volunteers towards sustainable development can stimulate increased interest in discussions about environmental concerns and stimulate increased participation.
- Contribute to the promotion of volunteer awards and prizes as a way to recognize and value volunteer achievements.

Two well-known examples of successful community activist campaigns and grassroots mobilization are the movement against the Narmada dam in India, and the Kenyan Greenbelt Movement, which are briefly described in Annex 3 [\[INSERT HYPERLINK\]](#).

Lesson 2: Volunteers are valuable knowledge brokers, linking know-how with community needs.

Information empowers people. For example, information about sustainable use of natural resources or the consequences of proper waste handling for people's health can be key to furthering people's well being and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. Local or national volunteers form the backbone of most civil society networks, so any information strategy needs to look closely at how volunteers can be integrated and how their efforts can be engaged and multiplied. Volunteers can be a community's information brokers on proven or new technologies, on environmental health issues, in biodiversity friendly farming methods, etc. Online or "virtual" volunteers also play a part in disseminating information and promoting sustainable development.

What you can do:

- Include volunteers as equals in the information sharing process in order to empower them to use their knowledge, creativity, and potential to the full. Community volunteers are frequently not fully briefed with regard to the aims of development interventions. Ensure they have the opportunity to feed back their expertise and opinions.
- Harness the ability of volunteers, particularly local volunteers, to act as knowledge interfaces between communities and their needs and the wider possibilities inherent in the knowledge economy. Broker volunteer involvement at the project design stage in order to ascertain the information needs of disadvantaged groups.
- Involve volunteer groups in celebrations of special days, such as World Environment Day, and use the opportunity to get your message out.
- Think creatively about how volunteers and new technologies together can assist projects in reaching their objectives. Although there are many who are interested in volunteering their services online, managers rarely succeed in tapping into this vast resource.

See Annex 3 for an example of online volunteer involvement for producing a research document on sustainable shrimp farming and mangrove management.[\[INSERT HYPERLINK\]](#)

NEED EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS IN ENVIRONMENT

Lesson 3: Volunteers can develop capacity

In the context of current debates on the future of technical cooperation for capacity development, it is important to bear in mind that there is considerable benefit to be gained from the multiplier effect of engaging and supporting volunteering at all levels in sustainable development programmes in general, and for capacity development in particular. Given the spontaneous involvement of volunteerism in development, capacity acquired by volunteer groups in generating visible results becomes a strong element of attraction for new membership. When such a process is tangible enough to others in surrounding areas, it provides a fertile ground for replication through imitation by comparable groups. This phenomenon is well illustrated in different countries with large networks of volunteer groups that have benefited from capacity development programmes initially launched with only a few groups.

Volunteerism can reinforce capacity development processes by facilitating community ownership and participation, exchanging skills and experiences, and by mobilizing local rather than external resources. The training of individuals has been the mainstay of many volunteer service programmes, in the form of traditional teaching in formal and informal settings. There are numerous volunteers working at the community level, on the basis of both formal volunteering arrangements and informal local mechanisms, engaging in capacity development, advocacy and environmental awareness raising activities. At the organizational level, volunteers can reinforce and develop the capacity of environmental NGOs, making them more effective and linking them up with other like-minded NGOs.

What you can do:

- Focus on the ability of volunteer capacity-building placements within environmental organizations to produce a multiplier effect. Volunteers who provide organizational development advice or management assistance heighten the efficiency of an organization.
- Encourage capable and motivated local, national and international volunteers working in environment-related placements or roles to act as change agents by mainstreaming environmental awareness activities throughout their communities. Effective training and screening are needed to ensure that volunteers are both willing and empowered to carry out this task.
- Design energy and environment projects in such a way that they provide funds where necessary to allow the full potential of volunteers to be realized, and to break “bottle necks” and other constraints on the development of volunteerism, for example, through local authorities.
- Ensure that the government agencies you work with recognize and value the contribution of voluntary action to the strengthening of civil society and building of social capital.

2. **Approaches and practical guidance:** This section highlights and develops the relevant approaches and techniques useful to address the specific issues. There is no point restating those that are commonly used. For instance a reference to CCA or UNDAF with the specific relevance should suffice rather than re-explaining what they are. This section should include brief examples with links to fully documented cases. (Also listed in annex 3). This section entails any practical guidance including on process and particularly relevant considerations for interaction with counterparts and partners and delivery systems. The programming cycle, as generic framework, is familiar to every development practitioner and thus facilitates communication among stakeholders. Opportunities can be highlighted for policy dialogue and partnership building; programming, including analysis of options and formulation; Implementation; and monitoring and evaluation, learning and other accountability issues. (See also annex 1)

• **Involvement of individual volunteers (service volunteering)**

- **International Volunteers:** The international UN volunteer is perhaps the volunteer modality that is best known within UNDP, as it is administered by UNV and many UN Volunteers are currently working in UNDP and other UN Agency offices around the world. UN Volunteers are qualified professionals with expertise in their field. Candidates are drawn from the UNV roster or are sometimes locally identified. They work both in offices and in community-based projects. UN Volunteers receive a monthly living allowance. They can serve anywhere from a few months to several years. The proforma cost for a UN Volunteer varies from one country to another – contact your local UNV office or UNV Headquarters for information. UNV also provides a limited number of fully funded UN Volunteers (funded by donor countries) at no financial cost to the host agency.

Apart from UNV there are several other volunteer service agencies in a number of countries, most of them providing their own national with overseas volunteering opportunities.

- **National Volunteers:** Similar to international UN Volunteers, except that these are national volunteers working in their own countries. Most countries have an established national UN Volunteer scheme. Where this does not exist, it can be set up if there is sufficient demand in the country.

- **Self-funded volunteers** (international or national) – sometimes designated “UNV Associates” or interns. These are people who volunteer because they want to make a contribution for a certain period of time or because they want to gain work experience (or both). Because they are self-financed they often work for shorter durations of assignments than sponsored volunteers. A number of organizations, including your local UNV office, can broker the services of self-funded volunteers to work on environmental issues in your offices or programmes.
- **Online Volunteers:** Online volunteering is on the increase, thus enabling volunteers – at almost no cost – to reach a far greater number of people than would be possible through the traditional face-to-face working. The on-line volunteering system is developing its potential to develop the social capital in areas where previous gaps between the educated and the poor were seemingly insurmountable and where information was inaccessible to all but a few. Online volunteering has created a space for the involvement of people who find it difficult to engage in on-site volunteering such as those with home-based obligations, people with disabilities, and people living in remote areas, all of whom may wish to make a contribution. To sign your country office or unit up as a host of online volunteers and then post assignments go to www.onlinevolunteering.org . There is no financial cost to the host organization associated with hosting online volunteers, other than the time needed to manage the volunteers once they are engaged. NGOs can also sign up to host online volunteers. Frequently asked questions on the online volunteering service are answered here: <http://www.onlinevolunteering.org/faqs/index.htm>
- **Corporate/private sector Volunteers:** These are usually sponsored by their employers for short-term punctual volunteering activities, similar to short-term consultants, at no financial cost to the hosting organization other than provision of local travel. Contact your UNV office or UNV HQ if you have a request for this type of “volunteer consultancy”, and they will try to match your need with the appropriate expertise from a number of partner companies.

Please keep in mind: Making use of volunteers requires a careful plan of action. While they may or may not receive an allowance or stipend, volunteers do often require training, mentoring and direction – especially in the early phases of their volunteership.

- ***Partnerships with volunteer-involving organizations, groups and networks:***
 - **Volunteer-involving NGOs and CBOs/Self-help groups:** Through the direct involvement of local and other volunteers with poor people, communities and organizations, problems of hosts failing to own the capacity development processes can be avoided. At the same time, supporting these NGOs and CBOs with qualified national volunteers can develop their capacity and strengthen their ability to engage in sustainable development initiatives. Consider and enable volunteer-involving organizations to be a permanent and effective mechanism for the design and implementation of sustainable development programmes.
 - **Volunteer networks:** Networking among volunteers and volunteer involving organizations is a critical factor in the scaling-up and replication of experiences across communities and national frontiers. Targeting such networks strategically and supporting them to collaborate on your environment programmes can provide these programmes with greater outreach while strengthening the capacity of environmental networks.
 - **Formal volunteering structures,** often operated by government agencies. These tend to mobilize large number of local volunteers, such as youth volunteers. Where

possible, consider entering into Memoranda of Understanding with such bodies to further your and the country's energy and environment goals.

V. Partners and resources (knowledge and financial) (1 page)

This section guides the reader to key resources that are available to seek support. It can include the UNDP tools, websites and funding channels. But it can also refer to partner resources. References should contain the relevant URL for easy access. It provides an orientation with more details available in annex 2.

- **The United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV)** www.unvolunteers.org

UNV, which is administered by UNDP, is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism for peace and development including through the mobilization of volunteers, can play an advisory role in helping to identify and facilitate such activities, ensuring that full advantage is taken of prospective volunteer contributions. The potential of the World Volunteer Web as a collective repository – and source – of good practices from all countries should also be taken into account here. UNV has both experience and a number of assets to draw on in helping to ensure that the power of volunteerism is recognized and acted upon in support of the MDGs, including:

- A global volunteer network of which the more than 7000 UN Volunteers – representing 160 nations and serving in 140 developing countries and countries in economic transition - themselves are only a part;
- A direct link to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), working through an extensive network of UNDP country offices;
- Close partnerships with the UN and most other UN system organizations, funds and programmes, as well as with international and national volunteer-involving organizations and volunteer networks;
- The capacity to seize opportunities, such as International Volunteer Day (IVD) on 5 December each year, and provide a rallying point for organizations and individual volunteers to express their support for the MDGs and consider ways to help achieve the targets;
- Experience in running a global campaign demonstrated by its recognized success as the focal point of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV 2001);
- The World Volunteer Web (www.worldvolunteerweb.org), a global volunteering portal, that serves as a knowledge resource base for campaigning, advocacy, information dissemination and networking;
- An active Online Volunteering service that more than 20,000 people have joined to work on the international development issues that are at the core of the MDGs. (www.onlinevolunteering.org)

In most UNDP programme countries with an active UNV programme, your first contact point is the UNV Programme Officer. In countries where there is no UNV office, there is at least a UNV focal point, usually a UNDP staff member. In case you cannot find the information you need at the country level, you can contact UNV Headquarter staff directly.

- **Other partners**

In addition to UNV, there are several volunteer-sending or involving agencies and organizations, both international and national, which practitioners can contact to enquire about the possibility of partnerships to achieve specific goals.

Most countries will also have a number of local environmental NGOs and CBOs who involve volunteers in their activities and who could benefit from the support a partnership for joint activities could yield to them. Some of them are listed in a recently compiled *Compendium of Volunteer-Involving Environmental Organizations* [INSERT HYPERLINK] prepared by UNV in collaboration with a team of several online volunteers.

[INCLUDE OTHER VOLUNTEER SERVICE AGENCIES, SUCH AS VSO, AVI, ETC?]

VI. ANNEXES

There are four mandatory annexes to any practice note; more can be added as pertinent. It should be kept in mind that all practice notes are underpinned by more resource material that would allow the interested reader to dig deeper as the need may be.

Please keep in mind:

- The annotated outline should help set and maintain a standard and ensure that the Practice Notes are easy to understand and relevant for action on the ground. The authors can take some liberty as the topic may require. The main headings should generally be followed to facilitate orientation for the user. The issues indicated should be addressed as adequate without becoming artificial.
- The prime target group for the PNs is UNDP staff. However, it is essential for colleagues in the field to have sound advice that they can readily use to communicate with partners and counterparts. Therefore it is to bear in mind secondary audience. Sections I, II and IV thus should be written in a generic way and without UNDP “PR” and jargon.
- Practice Notes should be as concrete and practical as possible without being prescriptive or patronizing. It is up to the stakeholders on the ground to find the most sensible solutions in a given situation.
- To keep the practice notes accessible the total length of the main body should not exceed 12 pages. Where needed additional content can be provided in complementary annexes and/or at a linked resources site.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 – Opportunities in Programming

Opportunities in programming (1 page): This annex presents a checklist with guiding questions that help the user to consider opportunities in particular during programming what arrangements are also defined for implementation and monitoring. It is closely linked with section III.3 but can afford to go in some more detail not elaborated there.

ANNEX 2 – Resources Index

Resources index: The resource index lists approaches and tools that may be useful to address the specific issue at hand. Each heading should have hyperlinks to lead the reader to more specific material on the selected approach. As such this annex summarizes but can also go beyond the content of section III.2. It is also likely that eventually links will lead to common resource pages (such as participatory monitoring) that are relevant to several topics.

Compendium of volunteer-involving environmental organizations, a reference compiled by the United Nations Volunteers programme with the help of a team of online volunteers. Although it is not a comprehensive reference, this document provides information on volunteer-involving NGOs who responded to a questionnaire listed by country. The compendium can be used to find potential country-level partners who work through volunteers for UNDP environment programmes. **[INSERT A URL]**

Latin American and Caribbean Directory on Volunteer Organizations
The Interamerican Development Bank (IADB) through the Interamerican Initiative on Ethic, Social Capital and Development and IADB Youth Program, has just launched the first ever Latin American and Caribbean Directory on Volunteer Organizations. The Directory, available only in Spanish, contains two sections: the directory itself and an analysis of current volunteering efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean. Please visit <http://www.iadb.org/etica/red/dirvoluntariado.cfm> to download the directory. For more information, contact Alan Wagenberg at alanw@iadb.org.

ANNEX 3 - Good practice examples

Good practice examples: As the practice note does not allow developing and expanding on selected case examples, this annex would provide links to relevant cases that are documented. Eventually, these good practice examples will be codified in a standardized way and will be searchable in a common corporate database.

1. **Grassroots opposition to the Narmada Dam in India**

Though not drawn from the UNDP experience, the story of the grassroots movement against construction of the Narmada dam in India provides a powerful example of what a group of volunteer activists can achieve if they organize and support one another. The struggle against the construction of mega-dams on the River Narmada in India is symbolic of a global struggle for social and environmental justice. The protest against the construction of a series of dams along the Narmada river, spanning three of India's largest states, was led by Medha Patkar and other unsalaried activists and employed non-violent tactics to raise awareness of their resistance to the proposals. Despite receiving no funds from outside India, the movement entitled *Narmada Bachao Andolan* (Save the Narmada movement) succeeded in achieving international publicity and support and was a founder member of the National Alliance of People's Movements. The latter organization is an alliance of autonomous groups and movements, which aims to bring a people-oriented development approach to public life and politics with an emphasis on ecologically sustainable policies. Today the movement has also found international support, for example through the *Friends of River Narmada*, which is an international coalition of individuals and organizations. They are a support and solidarity network and are entirely volunteer-based. In a major victory for the people of the Narmada Valley, the Supreme Court ruled recently that individuals and families displaced due to the Sardar Sarovar Project must receive adequate and acceptable rehabilitation. For more information see <http://www.narmada.org/> and <http://www.irn.org/revival/decom/orgs/NBA.html>

2. **The Green Belt Movement in Kenya**

The Green Belt Movement (GBM) is a grassroots non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Kenya that focuses on environmental conservation, community development and capacity building. Their mission is to mobilize community consciousness for self-determination; equity, improved livelihoods securities and environmental conservation- using tree planting as an entry point, guided by the values of volunteerism, love for environmental conservation, pro-action for self-betterment, accountability, transparency, and empowerment. GBM today has over 600 community networks across Kenya that care for 6,000 tree nurseries. Over the years these networks, along with individuals, have participated in planting more than 30 million trees on private and public land, protected reserves, sites with cultural significance and in urban centers. GBM's constituency and the general public have benefited from an empowered community and the fact that natural resources have been protected due to the tree-planting and civic and environmental education programs. For more information see <http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/aboutus.php>

3. **Capacity 21 in Mexico: creating a space for citizen participation and leadership**

Through the Capacity 21 programme in Mexico, UNDP, Government and civil society seek to integrate social issues with the production and conservation of natural resources, harmonize human issues with nature and local matters with national matters in a decentralized approach that advocates renewed citizen participation. Three key themes were thus prioritized in Huatulco and Sierra Gorda: NGO capacity development to decentralize power and resources, socialization of development and grass-roots leadership. In close partnership with the governments, civil society and grass-roots peasant-farmer communities, UNDP has nurtured an enabling, participatory environment for the adoption of national and local policies. Citizen participation in environmental management was strengthened through the national and regional consultative councils for sustainable development as well as technical councils in the fields of forestry, soils, protected natural areas and river basins. The Capacity 21 programme has contributed to the flourishing of NGOs and to the strengthening of their institutional and administrative planning, evaluation, information, resource management and consensus-

building capacities with the promotion of decentralized and inter-sectoral participation. For more information (in Spanish) go to

<http://www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Projects&page=Project&ProjID=686>

1. Volunteer research for UNDP/UNV Indonesia: Engaged through UNV's Online Volunteering service, a team of two online volunteers (from India and the USA) undertook web-based research into projects which demonstrated sustainable shrimp farming and mangrove management options. This research was used as a background document for the preparation of a related project for the Mahakam Delta (Indonesia), an area where mangroves have been severely decimated due to unsustainable commercial shrimp farming operations. An Indonesian online volunteer translated the research report from English into Bahasa Indonesian to make it accessible to a wider audience within Indonesia, and another Indonesian online volunteer edited the document. An on-site national UN Volunteer participated in the project formulation process, ensuring community involvement already at the project design stage.

2. UNDP Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE), Example from Chad

The UNDP LIFE programme provides support for small-scale activities that address local urban environmental problems. The UNDP LIFE Programme started back in 1992 to help developing countries improve their urban development, managed by UNDP and a global Advisory Committee. The principal objective of the LIFE Programme is to promote "local-local" dialogue and collaborative action amongst municipal authorities, NGOs and CBOs to improve the quality of the urban environment leading to sustainable human development. In landlocked Chad, UN Volunteers assisted communities to work up micro-projects to improve the urban environment. This helped to generate more than 100 permanent jobs by creating small-scale enterprises that provide essential services such as maintenance of drinking water fountains. The volunteer-based waste collection system evolved by the program, based on committees of local citizen volunteers, continues to operate effectively after project completion. For a related news article see:

http://www.afrol.com/News2003/cha001_ndjamena_waste.htm

3. Corporate Volunteering in Honduras

UNV and the French water and energy group SUEZ joined forces to provide volunteer expert advice in support of water sector development efforts in Honduras. The first missions took place in June/July 2002, after a cooperation agreement had been signed in September 2002 between the UNV programme and the large energy and water distributor to promote the use of volunteer services in support of industrial or commercial enterprises in developing countries. The mission brought to the people of the Higuito River basin practical energy solutions – a high priorities for development of the region. The Belgian Programme Director at Energy Assistance (the personnel division of SUEZ-Tractebel), traveled to Copán, western Honduras, where he helped the municipality develop an electrification plan which would provide much needed electric power to hundreds of communities within the region. The energy specialist advised on an energy network, including other sources of ecologically-sound energy, such as biomass. This is extremely important for Copán and its surrounding region, which is rich in natural resources but has recently suffered greatly from forest fires, air pollution and soil contamination.

4. Working with official national volunteer agencies (Youth Volunteering in Viet Nam)

A Cultural Heritage project was jointly developed by UNESCO, UNV and the Viet Nam Youth Union, based on the recognition that the countries important natural and cultural heritage sites were under threat. The project mobilizes the bay's youth population into action through providing awareness raising and concrete activities in support of Viet Nam's world heritage sites. Since the project started in early 2004, volunteers from the Youth Union have conducted a number of activities focusing on raising heritage awareness. In Ha Long Bay, for example, where the stunning natural beauty of this extraordinary seascape is under threat from pollution, facilitated by national UN Volunteers and local environmental NGOs the youth

volunteers are gaining a better understanding of the environmental issues facing by the bay, knowledge that they then pass on to their peers and local schools. Some of the already concluded activities include mangrove reforestation along the bay's shoreline with the collaboration of new partner organizations such as Red Cross; and clean up of two local beaches and the distribution of related brochures to the public. The national UN Volunteers and Youth Union partners as well as local NGOs have collaborated on providing environmental awareness training for a large number of youth volunteers who in turn share their knowledge with peers.

5. Annex 4 - Basic bibliography & acronyms

Basic bibliography & acronyms: Finally, this annex contains a selected bibliography with hyperlinks to web-based resources as well as a list of acronyms.

UN	General Assembly Resolutions on volunteerism (A/RES/57/106 and A/RES/56/38 and A/RES/55/57), available for download at: http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/policy/international/resolutions/index.htm
UNDP	UNDP and Civil Society Organizations: A Policy Note on Engagement http://www.undp.org/policy/docs/policynotes/UNDP%20CSO%20Policy.pdf
UNDP	Partners in Human Development: UNDP and Civil Society Organizations, in particular Chapter 2 – Sustainable Development: Communities Lead Partnerships http://www.undp.org/cso/partnershd.html
UNDP	Essentials: Volunteerism and Development http://www.unv.org/infobase/volunteerism/volunteerism_and_development.pdf or at http://www.undp.org/eo/publication/essentials.htm
UNDP	UNDP LIFE: Selected Local Initiatives for Improving the Urban Environment and People's Livelihoods in Tanzania
UNV	Caring Cities: Volunteerism in Urban Development and the Role of the United Nations Volunteer Programme
UNV	Volunteerism and Capacity Development http://www.unv.org/infobase/articles/2002/UNV_VCD_text.pdf
UNV	On Volunteering and Social Development http://www.unv.org/infobase/volunteerism/Volunteering_social_development.pdf