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UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS

Report by the Administrator

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INTRODUCTION

1. At its twenty-second session the Governing Council, following consideration of the item on the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) and related reports contained in documents DP/180 and DP/208, requested the Administrator inter alia to assess UNV activities and UNV's capacity to respond effectively to requests for assistance from developing countries, in particular from least developed countries (LDCs), and to submit an evaluation report to the Governing Council at its twenty-fourth session.
2. The present report is submitted in the light of experience gained in the relatively short period in the implementation of the United Nations Volunteer programme since full operations commenced in 1972. In this context, UNV has since the beginning monitored and evaluated the work of its volunteers through regular performance reports and field visits to complement the on-going evaluation carried out by UNDP Resident Representatives and by the agencies of the United Nations development system. This evaluation is also based on responses to detailed questionnaires circulated in November 1976 by the UNV Co-ordinator to participating United Nations organizations, Resident Representatives, agency Chief Technical Advisers (CTAs) and United Nations volunteers currently serving in the field. As of 31 March 1977, UNV received completed responses from 9 United Nations organizations, 73 Resident Representatives, 104 CTAs and 166 serving United Nations volunteers.
3. The questionnaires were designed to elicit first-hand views from those directly involved in administering and implementing the programme both at the field and at the agency headquarters level. The Administrator considers that the replies of Resident Representatives have taken into account the views of the host Governments. Such diverse issues were covered as the assessment of the basic concept, structures, implementation and qualitative aspects of UNV, the positive and negative factors affecting the use of United Nations volunteers, the effect of IPF financing of in-country costs of volunteers on future growth of UNV, the essential role, functions and utilization of United Nations volunteers, level of volunteer contribution and accomplishments in projects, and relative assessment of UNVs compared to other inputs such as experts, Associate Experts and bilateral volunteers. The present report contains a review covering the more pronounced and identifiable trends emanating from the replies.

I. BACKGROUND

4. UNV was established under General Assembly resolution 2659 (XXV) of December 1970 on the basis of detailed proposals contained in the Report of the Secretary-General on the feasibility of creating an international corps of Volunteers for Development (E/4790). The Feasibility Study, prepared in consultation with the Administrator of UNDP, provided extensive guidelines on the concept, policy, framework, programming and implementation of the

United Nations Volunteer programme. Among the basic objectives listed for the programme in the study were: to give youth a constructive opportunity to use its talents and skills in the implementation of national development plans and in carrying out programmes of international co-operation; to provide a new source of manpower for development projects which could help train local personnel and fill the gap of middle-level personnel; to improve international understanding through an exchange of young people thereby building an international network of professionals with inter-cultural experience; and to create a broader public participation in development by the youth of the developing countries.

5. The terms of reference for the operations of UNV were clearly defined by the General Assembly in its founding resolution. They provide that:

- (a) UNV service should be well planned and directed, utilizing volunteers recruited on an as wide a geographical basis as possible;
- (b) Volunteers would possess the technical and personal qualifications required for the development of recipient countries, including the transfer of skills; and
- (c) Volunteers would not be sent to a country without the explicit request and approval of the recipient Government concerned.

6. There has been a subsequent shift in emphasis towards least developed countries, stemming from a decision by the Governing Council at its sixteenth session (see paragraph 10 below). Also, the programme's mandate has more recently been expanded to promote the participation of youth in domestic development programmes within developing countries (see paragraph 71 below).

II. EVOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

(a) Nature and scope of UNV activity

7. In the initial stages the scope of activity of United Nations Volunteers was confined to the placement of technically qualified personnel at the intermediate level in technical assistance projects of the United Nations system. Under the over-all direction and support of the UNV Co-ordinator, the primary responsibility for identifying and programming suitable volunteer assignments in partnership with agency field personnel has resided with the UNDP Resident Representatives, who also administer the programme at the field level. The task of providing the necessary professional and technical supervision and back-stopping required for the proper execution of volunteers' functions normally rests with field personnel of the agency to which the volunteer is assigned.

8. The creation of voluntary service in the framework of the United Nations development assistance calls for a pragmatic and flexible approach. Considerable efforts have been expended during the initial phase on several important issues relating to the proper development of the programme. These have covered such questions as disseminating information about the concepts of UNV; promoting the acceptability of the new input both among Governments and within the United Nations system; exerting special emphasis on placement in least developed countries; establishing provisions for funding; planning and programming of the volunteer component and selection of suitable projects and posts with due regard to the special nature of voluntary service and motivation; collaborating with volunteer sponsoring organizations and developing recruitment capacities for UNV in both developed and developing countries; formulating uniform and acceptable conditions of service for United Nations volunteers; setting up in-country training and orientation programmes in selected countries; and establishing suitable administrative frameworks within UNDP Resident Representatives' offices for support of programmes at the field level.

9. The formal initiation and acceptance of the services of large numbers of professionally qualified and skilled young persons in the mainstream of the technical assistance activities of the United Nations system has been more difficult than envisaged in the first projections. It was found that the projections of approximately 1,300 United Nations volunteers as made in the Feasibility Study, were unrealistic given the level of financial resources available and other constraints inherent in utilizing an untested input in traditional technical assistance activities.

10. In recognition of these considerations, the Governing Council at its sixteenth session endorsed a target of 500 volunteers in the field, with concentration on least developed countries and an increase in the relative number of volunteers from developing countries. The programme had 296 volunteers in 52 developing countries by the end of March 1977 with a further 46 en route; of these 67 per cent were assigned to LDCs. These volunteers were recruited from a total of 48 countries out of which over 50 per cent came from developing countries (see annex I for countries of origin and placement). Currently, UNV is recruiting for 219 posts among which 184 are for assignment in LDCs. The major placements have been made in projects implemented by FAO/WFP (33 per cent), UN/OTC (15 per cent), UNESCO (11 per cent), ILO (9 per cent), WHO (7 per cent), UNICEF (7 per cent) and in UNDP offices and programmes (7 per cent). More recently a beginning was made to place United Nations volunteers in national projects outside the framework of United Nations system-assisted projects where suitable financing and proper logistic and supervisory support could be ensured.

(b) Evolving programming concepts

11. Programming of United Nations volunteers into the development projects of the United Nations system was undertaken on the premise that the volunteer would possess a high degree of professional and technical qualifications to meet well-defined and specific manpower requirements within individual projects. It was generally accepted that technically qualified United Nations volunteers working

under the supervision of more experienced experts would usefully fill a gap at the intermediate level by helping to carry out a broad range of duties within the field of their competence. Since a frequent source of difficulty in project implementation is a shortage of qualified national personnel at the intermediate level, the additional input of a complementary nature, which qualified volunteers could provide at modest cost, was seen as an inherent advantage for the successful implementation of United Nations development system projects. In particular, it was evident that developing countries, especially least developed countries, could best utilize the help of well-qualified young people prepared to devote two or three years of their lives in contributing to development, while at the same time gaining valuable experience in development work.

12. As was perhaps inevitable with a programme so novel and different from the traditional United Nations concept of technical assistance, certain difficulties were experienced by UNV. At the beginning there was insufficient awareness and knowledge of the underlying motivations of volunteer service among project personnel entrusted with supervisory functions. Experience has revealed that receptivity and proper involvement of CTAs and supervising experts in particular were essential factors in the success ratio of volunteer postings.

13. Many problems during the early phase of UNV's operations can be attributed to the practice of adding volunteer posts to on-going projects with no clear understanding of volunteer potentials and shortcomings. This resulted in programming volunteer posts with unrealistic specifications; requesting volunteers and Associate Experts simultaneously for the same posts, with preference going to swiftness in recruitment; or requesting volunteers in lieu of experts solely for financial reasons when project funds ran low - all factors which have tended to restrict development of the programme.

14. Furthermore, some of the initial projects and posts selected proved to be ill-suited for volunteer assignments. Frustration was especially felt when volunteers were assigned to desk jobs where the routine and the lack of measurable accomplishments suppressed their natural spirit of initiative and impatience to get things done and to work directly with local populations. Moreover, a few volunteers tended, at times, to become overly concerned with their junior status and prevailing disparities - e.g. scales of remuneration, and privileges - within the hierarchy of CTAs, experts, Associate Experts, international staff, advisers and senior national counterpart staff. In some cases, volunteer services were not fully utilized or properly supervised, while in other instances volunteers found themselves performing tasks which were not sufficiently rewarding or properly in line with their qualifications and experience.

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15. It is becoming increasingly apparent that volunteer inputs must be planned with special care to ensure optimum utilization in areas well-suited for volunteer work. The ideal times for programming them are during the country programming exercise and at the project formulation stage. With growing experience and awareness of UNV operations, both at headquarters and at the field level, programming concepts are being refined and rational planning has progressively begun to be reflected in new project formulations. As will be seen later in this paper, the responses to the questionnaires reflect growing recognition that the needs and opportunities for using young, skilled people in UNDP and other United Nations system-assisted projects should ideally emerge as an integral part of the project formulation process through a detailed formulation of the personnel inputs - by not only technical field but also by level of the experience needed - required for the project.

16. Such questions as the possibility of avoiding the inclusion of more expensive senior expertise to cover functions which could be adequately performed by volunteers are also being explored more fully. There is also greater understanding about the nature and fields of activity in which volunteer utilization is most efficient and where volunteer potential can be tapped to maximum advantage (see section on sectoral distribution below).

(c) Volunteer qualifications, level and range of activity

17. United Nations volunteers are, generally, younger persons between the ages of 23 and 35, with an average age of 29. Among the present 296 volunteers of whom 28 per cent are women, 215 have university degrees. 75 per cent of these possess post graduate qualifications while the remainder have mostly attended specialized institutions and thus possess diplomas in a variety of technical fields. Largely middle-level specialists, they make up a broad category of professions and skills, e.g. agronomists, geologists, engineers, economists, veterinarians, architects, horticulturalists, teachers, draftsmen, surveyors, nurses, electricians, mechanics, etc. The range of experience has varied considerably anywhere from newly graduated professionals to those with 10 or more years of experience.

18. Experience has proved that three basic types of manpower have been made available under the UNV programme:

(a) The "generalist" who is used as complementary inexpensive manpower for miscellaneous activities in projects. This category generally includes persons with non-specialized university degrees (examples of UNV posts within this category include administrative and field assistance posts in WFP, UNICEF and UNDP programmes). They make up 9 per cent of UNV's present placements;

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(b) The "assistant expert" type who has expertise in a specific field or profession and can thus work effectively alongside experts and complement their work. These volunteers often possess Masters' (or above) degrees and specialization and/or appreciable professional experience. (Examples of these include agronomists, architects, economists, engineers, veterinarians, etc.);

(c) The "expert-calibre" person who can be assigned to handle duties and responsibilities for which an expert would normally have been recruited. This kind would usually possess appropriate academic or professional qualifications and training (MA, MSc, PH D) plus practical experience.

19. Currently, the largest concentration of volunteers is under type (b) above, although the classifications are not mutually exclusive. The middle-level "assistant expert" type of volunteer performs a variety of technical functions. In some instances, as in agricultural extension and rural development projects, such volunteers working closely with local people, enable the work of the experts at the centre to be extended geographically and substantively to the direct beneficiaries of development programmes. In other cases, as in the supervision of students or trainees in laboratories or workshops, the use of volunteers frees the expert from repetitive, time-consuming but essential tasks, thereby ensuring greater usage of the level of expertise. In yet other assignments, the volunteer may be involved in translating the results of research projects into technology appropriate to the local conditions. There are many examples of United Nations volunteers assuming major responsibilities in project implementation; in several cases their performances have received due recognition by concerned United Nations agencies through appointments to regular expert posts following completion of their volunteer assignments.

(d) Sectoral distribution

20. The largest sectoral activity of UNV has been in FAO-implemented projects relating to agricultural development and extension services. These have covered such fields as agricultural research and demonstration, veterinary services, fisheries and forestry development. Other important areas of activity have been under United Nations projects, in such areas as urban planning and housing development, natural resources development, community development, rural public works, water resources development and public administration; in UNESCO-implemented projects of adult education and teacher training; in the ILO projects dealing with vocational training, rural crafts and establishment of Youth Training Centres; in WHO projects on health manpower training and supervision, rural water supply and hospital work. A few volunteers are also attached to telecommunications projects of ITU. Some UNVs are also serving in UNDP offices and WFP and UNICEF projects, as administrative and field support officers.

III. PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT

21. In the light of UNV experience gained through on-going appraisal and on the basis of responses to questionnaires, several key elements determining the programme's effectiveness and impact have been assessed below. These include:

- (a) The acceptability of United Nations volunteers, utilization and effectiveness of volunteer contribution in the implementation of projects;
- (b) The effectiveness of UNV's recruitment, placement and training programmes;
- (c) Financial considerations;
- (d) The appropriate role for UNV in domestic development services and youth programmes.

IV. ACCEPTABILITY OF UN VOLUNTEERS

22. Among the more positive factors promoting utilization of UNV services, the majority of Resident Representatives, in responding to the questionnaires, cited the possibility of programming UNVs as integral project inputs and as part of the over-all United Nations development effort, low cost of volunteers, offering potential of substitution of expert posts by UNVs in specific areas, positive previous experience with UNVs and bilateral volunteers, high level of professional and technical competence and willingness of volunteers to work in isolated and hard-ship posts. In many instances, active recruitment from other developing countries in the region, with its practical expression of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC) in action, figured as an important reason for participation in UNV. Expressions of commitment by Governments to volunteerism and encouragement for youth participation in development activities were also seen as positive factors.

23. Among factors discouraging utilization of volunteers, many Resident Representatives and CTAs cited expressed reservations by Governments to the use of volunteers, shortage of funds to meet in-country costs, and objection in principle to utilizing IPF and project funds for UNV in-country costs; adequate local supply of middle-level technical manpower; and ready availability of volunteers and associate experts under bilateral sources at no cost to project budgets and IPFs. Other limiting factors mentioned were lack of proper understanding and information on various aspects of UNV among agency field personnel, unfortunate previous Government experience with volunteers under bilateral arrangements, slowness in recruitment by UNV, slow clearance of candidates by Governments and logistic difficulties of supporting UNV at the field level. The difficulty in providing housing for volunteers was also acknowledged as an inhibiting factor, while, in a few cases, language incompatibility was also mentioned.

24. The replies generally indicated that while some Governments seemed to have an adverse initial attitude to the acceptance of volunteers, this can be overcome by proper information and knowledge about UNV which would remove any preconceptions of inexperience and immaturity frequently associated with the term "volunteer". Indeed, several instances were described by Resident Representatives where United Nations volunteers had succeeded in markedly upgrading their image in the eyes of the Governments.

V. UTILIZATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF UN VOLUNTEERS

25. While the impact of individual projects to which volunteers are assigned is assessed at the project formulation and operational stages, the more general and typical appraisal and comments received from the agencies, CTAs, Resident Representatives and United Nations volunteers are reflected below.

(a) Agency views

26. Broadly, the major agencies participating in the programme have commented favourably on the concept of UNV and the mode of its implementation. The level of performances have in the majority of cases been noted to be high and contri-

butions to projects significant. FAO headquarters observed that the performances in their projects have been rated from satisfactory to excellent and outstanding. Most UNVs were considered by FAO to be technically competent and well-motivated. UNESCO noted that the role of UNV on their projects is supplementary to other inputs and a very high level of performance is expected of them; so far they have in general performed well. The ILO commented that while continued vigilance will be required to ensure a high level of technical experience among United Nations volunteers, implementation was satisfactory and showed constant and encouraging improvement. The ILO expects to increase the number of UNVs in its projects. WHO's limited experience had indicated that volunteers can provide valuable support to its technical co-operation projects, particularly where there are serious national staffing gaps and need for the on-the-job training of large numbers of national personnel who require daily demonstration and supervision. In some cases volunteers carried out specialized work in WHO projects. The United Nations replied that while it did not yet have sufficient experience with UNVs to fully appraise their quality, they seemed to be performing well in the projects to which they were assigned.

(b) Comments by CTAs and United Nations volunteer role and performances

27. Sixty-one CTAs described their experience in utilizing services of UNVs on their projects. Of these, 58 were generally positive, while 3 were by and large negative. Among representative views expressed were the following:

28. "UNVs can be extremely effective in practical demonstration work and extending the range of an expert team. Volunteers are particularly effective in small-scale leadership roles calling for continued day-to-day concentration upon the development and completion of particular tasks."

"Volunteers are able to extend the activity of a project to a more remote area. From a Project Manager's point of view they increase the project's manpower. In view of their professional qualification combined with their ability to speak the local language they play an important role in transmitting technical knowledge to the grass-roots level. Their main strength is their knowledge of the local language and their adaptability to more remote duty stations. Coming from developing countries they are able to communicate successfully with the community in which they are living. Utilization of UNVs as demonstrators and translators in a national training course provide an excellent opportunity for the UNV to brush up or to acquire the necessary skills while assisting the expert in the preparation for the course."

30. "UNVs have helped substantially with the implementation of the soil conservation programme, the running of the project's workshop and training local technicians and farmers on the repair and maintenance of equipment."

31. "Activities of UNVs were largely responsible for the successful establishment of over 100 farmers in dairy farming, staff training and planning. UNVs were able to make considerable impact on the farming communities they dealt with and were a great asset to the project. Their enthusiasm ensured that at no time they were unemployed."

32. "Volunteers have shown great adaptability and possessed the same qualifications and experience as associate experts. Proper selection of the required UNV, adequate

programming for the utilization of their efforts and consideration of language and cultural barriers will overcome most of the constraints experienced in the past. Technical supervision and guidance by senior experts is required for proper utilization of United Nations volunteer services."

33. "UNV contributions to the project activities have been substantial due both to project requirement (field work and follow-up activities) and volunteers' motivation. The vast impact of UNVs is in situations where they can work with national counterparts and have face to face relationships rather than desk work and planning type activities."
34. "The United Nations volunteer in this project is the sole agent of development of local technology and facilities, demonstrating the feasibility of ceramic production at rural areas. She is not only fully employed but is invaluable for her positive influence over the rural artisans whom she also assists in their struggle to produce their own food, collect firewood, and other chores required for the betterment of their living."
35. "UNVs are engaged in teaching and/or maintenance work in departmental institutions and thus contribute to one of the objectives of the project to develop and/or consolidate established training programmes."
36. "The Telecommunications Training Centre is fortunate in having a UNV who is keen and full of initiative. As a qualified electronic technician, he maintains the most complex electronic equipment. Besides this, he assists with the teaching of electronic subjects."
37. "UNVs make a considerable contribution to the meeting of project objectives. There is no doubt that without their assistance it would be impossible to continue the project at its present level."
38. "Most volunteers are usefully employed in the training of local personnel in the related activities, e.g. design and construction of highways and buildings, maintenance of repair and construction equipment and planning."
39. "The contribution of volunteers is significant: they do the same work as the associate expert field geologists."
40. "UNVs have won the confidence of local people by devotion to their work and rapid integration in rural areas and adaptability."
41. "In the Strengthening of the Rural Water Supply Department project, the UNVs' contributions are significant. They have carried out such activities as field surveys, project design, preparation of drawings, over-all supervision of constructions, development of training programmes and other assignments."
42. "In the WHO-executed project 'Hospital Administration and nursing services', the UNV contribution is fairly valuable in meeting project objectives. They train local staff and nursing students, improve nursing techniques, setting an example

of better patient care. When volunteers adapt well and have good professional experience, they are greatly appreciated by national co-workers, experts, associate experts and Government personnel."

(c) General assessment by Resident Representatives

43. Of the total of 73 completed questionnaires received from Resident Representatives, 33 assessed the role and performance of United Nations volunteers in their respective countries of assignments as a positive and useful one, while 3 saw it in a negative light; a further 37 Resident Representatives were not in a position to provide any definitive views because of a lack of sufficient experience of UNV operations.

44. One Resident Representative stated that the majority of UNVs so far recruited have been well motivated and of high calibre, serving their basic objectives to the credit of the United Nations system and to the advantage of the recipient Government; however, personal behaviour and discipline required and expected of volunteers may need to be stressed more vigorously by the Organization. In the experience of another Resident Representative, UNVs have been very effective technically: among them, two volunteers have made a particular impact - they have performed at such a high level of competence that their CTAs have requested that they be promoted to full experts under the United Nations system. Because of their proven impact, it is intended that more be recruited under a funds-in-trust programme financed by the Government.

45. A Resident Representative stationed in an LDC with a large programme noted that the relations between experts and volunteers are excellent. The volunteers work very closely with experts, not as assistants but as colleagues doing well-defined jobs. UNVs in both educational and professional ranks compare well with experts. In many cases, their motivations are superior. Another Resident Representative stated that there is no formal Government policy regarding UNVs. High-ranking officials tend to consider UNVs as technicians with lower qualifications than experts. However, work done so far by UNVs has proved to be useful and upgraded their image. Excellent relationships have been established between UNVs and their counterparts. A viewpoint by another Resident Representative is that UNV is making considerable progress, although they should not be promoted as cheap experts.

46. The responses also highlighted the difficulties associated with UNV operations. A few Resident Representatives cited a low level of professional experience and technical competence as characterizing volunteers in their countries of assignment. They referred to the high, often unrealistic, level of expectations among volunteers. In this context, it was claimed that while many enter the programme as true volunteers others tend to serve on false motivations and for far less altruistic reasons. Examples of excessive preoccupations with higher remuneration and material considerations, resulting in problems, were also noted.

(d) Volunteers' assessment of utilization

47. Although some volunteers - a small minority - still complain about lack of sufficient interest and involvement by CTAs and other supervising personnel in their

problems and work, the responses to the questionnaires reflect undoubted progress in the over-all appreciation and understanding among United Nations system field personnel about United Nations volunteers. Out of 160 responses from United Nations volunteers, approximately 125 (74 from developing countries and 51 from developed countries) claimed to be fully occupied and constructively employed; 16 (4 from developing countries and 12 from developed countries) claimed to be fully occupied but not constructively employed and 19 (13 from developed countries and 6 from developing countries) maintained that they were under-utilized. The latter cited such factors as lack of proper or undefined work plans, inadequate project support, lack of interest and guidance by agency personnel and experts, and unsympathetic environment for volunteer participation for the difficulties arising in their assignments. The great majority of volunteers indicated, with differing emphasis, that the motivations which promoted them to become UNVs were to gain experience in development work in a developing country, to serve others without regard to financial benefit, and to respond to career expectations and to augment means of furthering careers.

VI. RECRUITMENT, PLACEMENT AND TRAINING

(a) Recruitment and placement

48. In accordance with the UNV mandate, recruitment was designed to attract the widest possible geographical participation. Since June 1974, when an agreement under which International Secretariat for Volunteer Service (ISVS) served as a recruiting agency and clearinghouse for UNV was terminated, the programme has assumed full responsibility for its own recruitment as an integral part of its over-all operations. For this purpose, it established close working contacts with national Government agencies and volunteer sponsoring organizations in both industrialized and developing countries.

49. Considerable progress has been achieved in realizing a wide spread of volunteers coming from various regions and countries. Recruitment from developing countries has continued to gain momentum with the establishment of formal channels and willingness of a number of Government departments and volunteer agencies in developing countries to recruit for UNV. As a result, the number of qualified and experienced nationals from developing countries has grown steadily from a total of 33 volunteers (37 per cent) serving in December 1972 to over 150 (54 per cent) in March 1977. It is noteworthy that since UNV is the only sizable international volunteer programme offering qualified younger persons from developing countries an opportunity to participate in development activities in other countries, there is considerable enthusiasm to serve under it. It is clear that certain developing countries do have a surplus of qualified manpower with skills in particular fields which can meet the technical needs of other developing countries, thus complementing their gap in skilled manpower resources. While the number of applications from these countries is growing as UNV becomes known, so far the corresponding limitation in the number of UNV vacancies does not allow for the possibility of placements on a larger scale. However, in the light of growing participation of developing countries as a source of volunteers, UNV is becoming an effective instrument for the promotion of TCDC.

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50. With respect to recruitment from industrialized countries, under existing arrangements only those candidates who have sponsorship - covering travel cost predeparture training and repatriation allowances - from accredited volunteer agencies can serve under UNV. The programme thus remains totally dependent on the degree of co-operation extended to it by these agencies. While most sponsoring organizations have shown a significant degree of commitment, others have found it difficult to recruit actively and give sufficient support. Since they administer and recruit for their own programmes, UNV needs tend to take second place to their own requirements. In this context, too, some sponsoring organizations in developed countries have expressed reservation and difficulty in locating candidates for more specialized UNV vacancies requiring high levels of experience. UNV has also experienced difficulties in meeting linguistic requirements: for example, in locating qualified French-speaking candidates.

51. The programme has also experienced difficulties in obtaining prompt clearance of submitted candidates. This has resulted frequently in the loss or withdrawal of candidates who could not withstand lengthy periods awaiting a decision on final acceptance. Since younger volunteers, unlike experts, are not generally in a position to wait for months and to forego alternative job opportunities, this problem had an adverse effect on UNV's operations. Much effort was therefore made to emphasize to Governments, Resident Representatives and CTAs the importance of expediting decisions on clearance and final acceptances to the maximum extent possible. Some progress has been made, and UNV has been keeping this issue under constant review with a view to improving procedures.

52. Responses to the questionnaires indicate, however, that there is further room for improving and refining recruitment. While some agencies felt that the UNV recruitment time is satisfactory for their sectoral needs, certain others considered that the time for recruitment was unduly long. One agency suggested that the recruitment structure might be simplified and recruitment speeded up if UNV reduced its reliance on the national voluntary agencies and undertook its own direct recruitment. Similarly, certain Resident Representatives proposed that a factor which might help promote utilization of UNVs would be better and quicker methods of selection, pre-submission, tighter screening and more severe standards of interviews, and timely arrival of accepted candidates in the country of assignment. In particular, it was suggested that fuller assessment of candidates should be made on such questions as the technical qualifications, suitability, language proficiency and motivation of candidates.

53. On the other hand, several replies indicated that UNV's rate of delivery was satisfactory and in effect better than recruitment time for experts and Associate Experts.

54. Experience clearly indicates that effective response, speed and quality of recruitment under UNV is dependent greatly on the type of qualifications and level of experience and expertise required. It does remain true that certain scarce, sophisticated skills, more in line with expert posts, are difficult to fill in short periods. Concerning proper interviews and screening, predeparture briefing and

and training, UNV has under its recruitment procedures relied largely on co-operating agencies and organizations to undertake this responsibility. In developing countries, where no proper Government machinery exists for these purposes, the Resident Representatives' offices have already arranged appropriate orientation programmes.

55. Generally, the quality of United Nations volunteers recruited so far has been very satisfactory. There have undoubtedly been certain cases where individual volunteers have not measured up to expectation. While this is to some extent inevitable and can also characterize other forms of project inputs, there has perhaps been undue temptation to assess UNV negatively on the basis of a few experiences with unsuccessful individual volunteer cases.

(b) Training and in-country orientation

56. UNV policy is to encourage language training and orientation and briefing for all new volunteers in the country of assignment. The importance of in-country briefing and training for the success of volunteer assignments was acknowledged in questionnaire responses by most Resident Representatives. Language training was seen to be especially necessary for those required to work in rural areas at "grass-roots" level activities. The organization of training courses - with few exceptions where the Host Government has provided full facilities - on a formal basis has hitherto proved difficult in the light of several constraints. These have included such factors as the arrival in general of volunteers at various periods of time in a particular country and the consequent difficulty to synchronize with the commencement dates of a course; insufficiency of funds to provide the setting-up of formal training courses; absence of proper facilities and specialized institutions to conduct effective language training; and difficulties in releasing volunteers from their formal duties for extended periods of training.

57. Plans are being developed to provide orientation and language training at the outset for groups of volunteers or individuals, either on a formal basis or under private arrangements, as appropriate. Additionally, briefings on project and technical questions at major United Nations agency headquarters and regional offices have been introduced recently, while in some cases regional training centres, administered by Governments or bilateral volunteer agencies, are being used for language training.

58. Several Resident Representatives' offices have initiated in-country orientation and briefing programmes for newly arrived volunteers. Under new instructions, all Resident Representatives will be asked to earmark one week to 10 days for such programmes to be organized in collaboration with representatives of respective United Nations agencies. The in-country orientation and briefing programme is expected to cover the following main areas:

- (a) Orientation on the country's social and economic development, its political structure and the Government's long and medium-term development programmes and policies;
- (b) Briefing on the country's culture, traditions and customs;
- (c) Briefing on the United Nations system and other international assistance programmes, their objectives and relationship with national plans and programmes;

- (d) Briefing on the conduct and responsibilities of international personnel with special reference to United Nations volunteers;
- (e) Detailed briefing on the respective project to which the volunteer is assigned: its objectives, structures, inputs and the volunteer's specific role and functions;
- (f) Briefing on general procedures, administrative arrangements and entitlements. Acquaintance with UNDP and the United Nations agency office, structure and personnel.

VII. FINANCING

59. From the outset, funding arrangements for UNV operations have been somewhat complex and diversified and have thus had an important bearing on the extent and scope of the programme's activities. In the first years of its operations, UNV activities were financed under the following diverse arrangements:

- (a) UNV administrative support budget - from UNDP resources;
- (b) Recruitment, travel and related costs of United Nations Volunteers
 - (i) For volunteers from industrialized countries - national sponsoring organizations;
 - (ii) For volunteers from developing countries - the UNV Special Voluntary Fund;
- (c) In-country costs
 - (i) Least developed countries - from UNDP Programme Reserve and Special Voluntary Fund;
 - (ii) Other developing countries - from IPFs or, exceptionally, Government funds;
- (d) Youth programme and domestic volunteer service activities
 - from Special Voluntary Fund and special contributions.

60. It will be recalled that the Governing Council decided at its twenty-first and twenty-second sessions in 1976 that the UNDP Programme Reserve financing would be phased out and cease to be the primary source of funding in-country costs of volunteer assignments in LDCs. Thus, all in-country costs in LDCs will be required to be financed under the respective country IPF by 1 January 1979. At the same time the Council authorized, during the phase-out period, the continued use of the Special Voluntary Fund to provide funding for in-country costs in LDCs and for newly independent countries meriting special consideration.

61. While the underlying purpose of the Fund established by the General Assembly was to finance external costs of volunteers from developing countries lacking sponsor-financing, the Fund has increasingly been called upon to support wider fields of activity in more recent years. In this context, the terms of reference of the Fund were recently expanded by the General Assembly to include the receipt of additional contributions for the purpose of implementing programmes aimed at encouraging youth participation in development projects. Also envisaged for financing under the Fund are programmes in the field of domestic development services and publication of relevant material, approved by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the recommendation of the Governing Council during its June 1976 session (see paragraph 71). The status of contributions to the Fund is contained in Annex II.

62. Since the programme's main thrust of activity in the future is envisaged in the least developed countries, the new proposals to charge in-country costs to IPFs raise uncertainties concerning the growth of UNV operations in these countries and the attainment of the Governing Council's target of 500 volunteers in the field. The initial reactions from LDCs raise grounds for serious concern. Several potential requests for United Nations volunteers in LDCs have had to be turned down recently, owing to a lack of funds, while the number of new requests have tended to slow down from lack of available resources under strained IPFs and the absence of alternative provisions for funding UNV costs. This point has also been clearly underlined by the majority of agencies and Resident Representatives whose views and reasons are provided in the following paragraphs. The acceptability of UNV under these conditions is vitally affected by other related considerations, especially by the fact that other similar inputs - associate experts and bilateral volunteers - are available to United Nations system-assisted projects free of any cost to IPFs and project budgets.

63. Out of 57 responses from Resident Representatives received on this specific point, 39 indicated that objections in principle to using IPF and project funds for UNV in-country costs and shortage of funds to meet in-country costs constitute an important factor in discouraging utilization of UNVs. Among LDCs, out of 21 replies from Resident Representatives, 16 felt the new proposals would have negative effects on volunteer requests from LDCs. Several agencies and field staff also noted financial constraints as a major handicap. It was observed by FAO that the use of volunteers was governed largely by the availability of funds which had now become the most important single constraint. The United Nations, UNESCO, the ILO and ITU also see the shortage of funds and objections in principle to utilizing IPF and project funds for UNV in-country costs as major constraints.

. A general view expressed by Resident Representatives in LDCs was that, in the light of the newness of the programme in some countries, insufficient acceptance had developed to be able to argue convincingly that the IPF should be charged for in-country costs. In their view, the Governing Council decision requiring IPF financing of UNVs in LDCs had decreased the chances for the programme to grow and to make the kind of impact that otherwise would have been possible. It was stated by some Resident Representatives that in a scarce resources situation the decision would have a serious effect to the extent that it will place UNV at a major disadvantage vis-à-vis bilateral agencies and associate expert programmes who supply at no cost to IPFs. It was claimed that under such circumstances it would require a clear show of sustained interest by all concerned at the field level to maintain the momentum reached in recent months. The point was also made that so long as the programme would not secure its own resources, or at least have access to specially earmarked funds, its development and flexibility will be too limited as compared with the real needs for technical personnel at the volunteer level. Financial constraints were also attributed as a limitation by several Resident Representatives from non-LDCs. For example, one Resident Representative noted that in 1974 there was a considerable demand for United Nations volunteers which was not followed up for financial reasons. Another Resident Representative maintained that the low level of UNV inputs would seem to be clearly related to the method of financing. He felt that each UNV represented a charge, however modest, against the IPF, whereas most other volunteer agencies did not present this difficulty. In his view, an important breakthrough for UNV would be the expansion of the capacity of UNV to pay for its own personnel from funds maintained under its own account.

VIII. COMPARISON OF UNVs WITH OTHER INPUTS

65. As noted earlier, as a broad rule UNV inputs are programmed to fill posts at the middle and intermediate level where they can complement and extend the work of experts. To a lesser extent, volunteers have been recruited to fill expert level posts, while in other instances their performances have exceeded expectations and thus they have carried out project responsibilities at expert levels without much direct supervision. Depending on the nature of the posts, volunteers have on the other hand performed tasks requiring close technical supervision by senior experts.
66. Generally, the responses from Resident Representatives, agencies and CTAs on a comparative evaluation of the relative strengths and weaknesses of United Nations volunteers with other inputs such as experts, Associate Experts and bilateral volunteers in terms of qualifications, experience and adaptability were differing in emphasis and qualifying in character in light of varying experiences obtained from utilization of UNV service. Some replies indicated that it was obviously difficult to draw valid conclusions from such comparisons since individual cases and performances varied.
67. There was wide acceptance among them, however, that experts generally possessed a higher level of qualifications and greater field experience, whereas the essential strength of volunteers lay frequently in their enthusiasm, better adaptability to local conditions and greater ease in relationships with counterparts and local people.
68. With respect to the Associate Experts, the majority view was that there was little difference between them and UNVs in terms of qualifications. One agency did say, however, that there was a tendency within the system to equate volunteerism with amateurism and hence to prefer regular experts or Associate Experts to volunteers, particularly if there is a technical job to be done. Since there is a considerable difference in emoluments, this has led in practice to obvious difficulties when Associate Experts and UNVs are assigned to the same project performing largely similar tasks. In terms of financial attractiveness, Associate Experts have a decided advantage, since their services are provided at no cost to the recipient country's IPF. One agency felt that the selection procedures for Associate Experts have been made stricter and they had fewer problems. Another agency considered UNVs to be less homogeneous than Associate Experts, a factor which was both positive as well as negative.
69. On the question of bilateral volunteers, the feeling was that while their ready availability at no cost to project budgets was a positive factor, the multinational concept of UNV and the possibility of using it as an integral input in United Nations-assisted projects at the project formulation stage were attractive features. It was also noted that certain Governments welcomed receiving mature volunteers under UNV from other developing countries possessing necessary experience and adaptability to work under similar conditions.

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IX. YOUTH AND DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

70. Parallel to the primary preoccupation of expanding its volunteer programme activity, UNV has, in keeping with the spirit of the General Assembly resolution for a broader involvement of youth in development, continued to explore the possibility of assisting and co-operating with domestic youth and volunteer services aimed at enlisting local volunteers for self-help projects, initiated and executed by local people themselves. In this context, a unit within UNV to deal with domestic volunteer services was established under a Governing Council decision in 1975. While in the past such projects were relatively limited to UNV's participation in certain specific youth training programmes assisted by UNDP as well as advisory services to interested national volunteer programmes, the scope of the programme's activity in this field has received formal recognition and been further strengthened by resolutions adopted at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.
71. Under resolution 31/131, the General Assembly designated UNV "as a major operational unit of the United Nations for the execution of youth programmes, especially of pilot projects to increase youth participation in development activities and training programmes for youth workers, such programmes to be undertaken only after consultation with the Government of recipient countries concerned". Again, in resolution 31/166 of the General Assembly, the Administrator of UNDP was requested "to develop further and expand the activities of the United Nations Volunteers programme actively promotes the formation of regional advisory groups for domestic development services and subsequently co-operates to the possible extent with such groups; and to ensure that the United Nations Volunteer programme prepares and publishes relevant material on volunteer and domestic development service activities".
72. While it is somewhat premature to evaluate and assess fully this important aspect of UNV's activity, certain programmes in this area were initiated last year and reported on fully in the Report of the Administrator for 1976 (DP/155).
73. An Asian and Pacific Forum of Domestic Development Services was established during 1976 at UNV's initiative. The Forum, involving the participation of several Governments and non-governmental organizations in Asia, is intended to promote programmes in the area of applied technology, training of volunteer trainers, methods and strategies for social mobilization and domestic development service activities in the Pacific Islands. These programmes, based on mutual technical assistance, will receive necessary support from UNV and selected interested donor countries and organizations.
74. Similarly, a regional project on "Promotion of Youth Participation in Latin America" with the participation of eight Governments was initiated with the joint support of UNV and UNDP. The regional project is designed to strengthen youth programmes at the national level, thus increasing opportunities for the participation of youth in productive economic activities and also promoting co-operation among Governments at the regional level on youth questions and fostering youth action f

development among non-governmental organizations. Specifically, the project's objectives are to:

- (a) Assist Governments to elaborate youth policies, strategies, programmes and institutional arrangements to increase youth participation in development;
- (b) Contribute to the establishment and strengthening of youth enterprises and other programmes of productive employment of youth, particularly of the economically disadvantaged;
- (c) Upgrade professional competence of administrators of programmes of youth participation in development, with special reference to the design, monitoring and evaluation of the programmes;
- (d) Establish a channel for the exchange of experience and knowledge among national experts in the youth development service field in the spirit of United Nations policies relating to technical co-operation among developing countries.

75. Other UNV activities include the publication of an International Directory, which will list major national and international volunteer and youth organizations involved in development. The periodic UNV Newsletter, covering a broad range of volunteer news and activities, is also being published and widely circulated on a quarterly basis.

X. MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

76. From the foregoing, the Administrator concludes that:

(a) The UN Volunteer programme has become an important source of multilateral technical assistance by providing young technically qualified persons of many nationalities willing to serve and share their experience and expertise with others. Working in close association with nationals they have succeeded in extending the impact of projects and programmes substantively to the actual beneficiaries of development programmes. Many of the aspects of the manpower provided through it are not normally available through other United Nations programmes.

(b) While the programme has not met the numerical target anticipated in the original feasibility study as a result of a number of factors, including continuing difficulties in getting the programme accepted and recruitment and financial problems, it has sustained a steady growth, that the quality of the volunteers placed has on the whole been of a very high standard and that the programme has reached its objectives of recruiting more than half of its volunteers from developing countries and placing more than 60 per cent of the volunteers in least developed countries. Increasing efforts are being made to make the capacities of the United Nations Volunteer programme known to

Governments, agencies and Resident Representatives of UNDP and Chief Technical Advisers of the Participating and Executing Agencies, so that this important manpower resource can be carefully planned and its utilization expanded.

(c) The evaluation makes clear that certain problems still exist with respect to delay in nominations and proper screening of candidates. This is, however, a problem which affects most international programmes and can be overcome in time with greater knowledge about UNV operations among collaborating Governments, agencies and organizations. Recruitment procedures for UNVs will continue to be streamlined in all possible ways including the introduction of modern management techniques.

(d) The importance of training and orientation of volunteers in increasing their effectiveness is recognized. Though such programmes have been carried out in countries where large numbers of volunteers have been assigned, the wide geographical distribution of volunteers and individual placements as distinct from group arrivals have rendered over-all training programmes difficult to organize in the past. The Administrator is taking steps to extend the orientation and briefing programmes for all new United Nations volunteers.

(e) Replies from UNDP Resident Representatives, particularly those assigned to least developed countries, raise very serious questions about the present arrangements for the financing of in-country costs of United Nations volunteers. It is clear that the Governing Council's decision at its twenty-second session to phase in-country costs of United Nations volunteers in these countries onto the IPF is causing major dislocations. Even though a number of LDCs are requesting volunteers as a charge against their IPFs or their own governmental funds, this is only a partial solution and would not permit the realization of the stated objectives of the programme and a proper responsiveness to the expressed needs of the countries concerned for this type of manpower. In order to resolve the financial constraints in the use of United Nations volunteers by the least developed countries, the Administrator proposes:

(i) That LDCs be permitted to request funding of volunteers through the Special Measures Fund for Least Developed Countries. This possibility was not available in the past;

(ii) That the Governing Council agree to earmark US\$ 1 million for each of the years 1978 and subsequent ones until the end of the second cycle from the general resources of UNDP and establish a separate category along the lines used for Special Industrial Services;

(iii) That the Special Voluntary Fund continue to be available for financing of in-country costs in LDCs.

The above financial proposals are based on the premise that part of financing in-country costs would be borne by LDCs from their IPFs or from trust funds.

(f) The initial steps taken to establish the youth and domestic development

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services programme of the United Nations volunteers have been significant, considering the very short time since the commencement of this activity and the limited resources available to it. The Administrator proposes to expand the activities in the field of Youth and Domestic Development Programmes in accordance with the mandate of the General Assembly resolutions.

ANNEX I

UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS ASSIGNMENTS

Countries of placement and origin
as of 31 March 1977

TOTAL SERVING VOLUNTEERS - 296

Countries of placement

(a) Least developed countries (LDCs)

Afghanistan 5, Benin 4, Botswana 10, Burundi 3, Central African Empire 7, Chad 5, Ethiopia 1, Gambia 1, Haiti 3, Lao People's Democratic Republic 1, Lesotho 30, Mali 4, Nepal 2, Niger 6, Democratic Yemen 10, Rwanda 6, Somalia 3, Sudan 23, United Republic of Tanzania 6, Uganda 1, Upper Volta 9, Samoa 1, Yemen 57.

TOTAL 198

(b) Other developing countries

Belize 1, Bolivia 1, Cameroon 2, Cape Verde 3, Cook Islands 2, Costa Rica 2, Dominican Republic 1, El Salvador 2, Gabon 1, Ghana 1, Guinea-Bissau 4, Honduras 1, India 4, Indonesia 2, Iran 30, Ivory Coast 4, Jamaica 2, Kenya 1, Liberia 1, Mauritania 4, Nicaragua 1, Papua New Guinea 7, Paraguay 1, Sao Tome and Principe 1, Senegal 2, Swaziland 12, Zambia 5.

TOTAL 98

Countries of origin

(a) Developed countries

Australia 5, Austria 6, Belgium 11, Canada 9, Germany, Federal Republic of 14, Finland 2, France 7, Ireland 6, Italy 5, Japan 9, Netherlands 11, Norway 3, Sweden 4, Switzerland 7, United Kingdom 8, USA 29.

TOTAL 136

(b) Developing countries

Benin 2, Brazil 2, Chile 7, Colombia 2, Cyprus 5, Egypt 13, Ghana 1, Guatemala 1, Haiti 2, India 34, Jordan 1, Lao People's Democratic Republic 1, Madagascar 1, Malaysia 1, Mali 1, Nepal 6, Pakistan 13, Philippines 33, Senegal 1, Sri Lanka 14, Sudan 3, Thailand 3, United Republic of Tanzania 1, Togo 1, Tunisia 1, Uganda 2, Upper Volta 2, Uruguay 1, Zaire 1, Refugees 3, Other 1.

TOTAL 160

ANNEX II

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNV SPECIAL VOLUNTARY FUND

(IN U.S.\$)

1971/72	1973	1974	1975	1976
263,512	143,456	278,289	345,740	546,876

Contributions received in 1976

Belgium	27,027
Botswana	511
Canada	101,546
Denmark	14,601
Germany, Fed. Rep. of	121,951
Indonesia	1,000
Liberia	1,500
Netherlands	125,000
Switzerland	78,740
USA	75,000

TOTAL 546,876

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