GUIDANCE NOTE

Establishing a Youth Volunteer Scheme:
Guidance note based on UNV experience
The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development worldwide. Volunteerism can transform the pace and nature of development and it benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for volunteerism globally, encouraging partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing volunteers.

UNV is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
Preface

UNV is proud to share with you its guidance note on Establishing Youth Volunteer Schemes. Since 1976, UNV has been actively partnering with national authorities, civil society organisations and UN agencies to support youth engagement. In this guidance note, we have looked into our collective experience and lessons learned. We expect to use this note to develop new youth volunteer schemes under the aegis of our recently approve youth programme.

Youth volunteering engages, activates and mobilizes young people for the cause of peace and development. By giving them a clear role, volunteering helps overcome feelings of marginalization and exclusion. It also helps young people to develop their professional and personal skills while giving them voice and unleashing their boundless energy and creativity. Allowed to play a positive and constructive role in society through youth volunteering, they can make a major contribution to sustainable development, social cohesion and stable. Youth volunteerism is of great value for young people and society as a whole.

I would like to thank all volunteers, national partners and stakeholders who, through their stories, reports and documented experiences, shared their knowledge and helped develop this guidance note. We hope that many colleagues and partners will be inspired by the examples shared, use some practical ideas to develop or enhance their own youth schemes, and continue to engage youth in peace and development activities.

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The United Nations defines youth as people between the ages of 15 and 24. However, UNV adopts and respects national definitions of youth when partnering with member states for local and national youth volunteering initiatives. The precise definition of youth varies also by social, cultural, historical and political context.

In 2013, there were 1.8 billion people between the ages of 15 and 24, the largest group of young people in history.

Youth, however, are not a homogenous demographic; youth includes people from a wide range of geographical, social and cultural backgrounds who share one defining variable - the experience of being in transition from adolescence to adulthood. This is the phase of life when young people complete their education, enter the workforce and begin to plan their own futures, moving from dependence to independence.

Youth in general, and girls and young women in particular, are disproportionately affected by extreme poverty, unemployment, social exclusion and lack of access to education. To date, policy interventions that specifically address youth issues have been limited.
For more than four decades, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme has been promoting youth participation in global peace and sustainable human development through volunteerism. Working in more than 140 countries, UNV acts in partnership with United Nations entities, governments and civil society organizations.

UNV directly mobilizes national and international youth as on-site and online volunteers. In addition, UNV engages in the following youth-related interventions:

 técnicas and financial assistance to governments and civil society partners to establish national volunteer schemes

UNV supports partners to draft policy frameworks and establish national volunteer schemes that mobilize young people to work towards the achievement of the development goals in education, health, environment, economic development and other areas. In many countries including Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cabo Verde, China, Indonesia, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Peru, Senegal and Togo, UNV has collaborated with national partners to pilot innovative schemes that have mobilized large numbers of national youth volunteers, such as the ‘Youth for Participation’ programme in Bolivia, the ‘Eco Volunteer’ programme in Guatemala and the ‘National Development Volunteer Service’ in Nepal.

regional youth volunteer initiatives

UNV provides technical and financial assistance to regional partners in the process of designing and scaling-up their own initiatives for youth volunteering, such as the Volunteers Programme of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union’s ‘Youth Volunteer Corps’ and the Regional Integration through Volunteers Exchanges for Reconciliation of South East Europe (RIVERSEE) Programme.

The ‘Arab Youth Volunteering for a Better Future’ project builds on existing traditions of self-help, solidarity and reciprocity in the Arab region to empower young people and harness their energy for productive ends. Being implemented in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen, the project strengthens the capacity of young people to participate in civic action and sustainable community-centered development and helps them build their own professional and life skills.

national youth volunteer mobilization

UNV has mobilized thousands of young volunteers to work in their own countries. National UN Volunteers often serve in mixed teams with international UN Volunteers on United Nations-led initiatives and community-based development projects using participatory approaches.

UNV has been engaging with youth since its inception in 1970. In 1976, the United Nations General Assembly specifically mandated the organization to promote and advance the role of youth in development through volunteerism.1

In 2012, UNV was again called upon to support youth initiatives as a driver of development; the United Nations Secretary-General announced his Five-Year Action Agenda pinpointing addressing the needs of youth as a priority over the coming years. Following on UNV’s successful engagement of youth around the world, the agenda explicitly calls for the creation of a United Nations youth volunteer programme under the umbrella of UNV. Member States further confirmed UNV’s mandate to promote volunteerism in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 67/138 Integrating volunteering in the next decade, adopted on 20 December 2012.

In response to these recent developments, UNV took the opportunity to link with youth, youth-led organizations, volunteer-involving organizations, governments and United Nations entities to analyse advances and best practices in the field of youth volunteering and to identify UNV’s key action areas for the immediate future. This analysis is captured in the UNV Youth Volunteering Strategy: 2014-2017. The strategy document will guide UNV work with youth volunteers over the next four years and lays the foundation for a targeted United Nations Youth Volunteer Programme.

With the United Nations Youth Volunteer Programme, UNV is consolidating its work on youth under a single programme. The programme will both scale-up existing initiatives and introduce special measures to ensure that young people are utilized and empowered in such a way that best cultivates their abilities and potential.

As part of this effort, UNV has reviewed its institutional knowledge and experiences with youth volunteerism and gleaned from it the best practices that can help inform future projects on youth, for both the UNV and other stakeholders. This particular document shares some of the lessons learned in the establishment of national and regional youth volunteering schemes.

1 UNGA 31/131.  
Defining ‘volunteerism’

The United Nations General Assembly defines volunteerism as undertaken of free will, for the general public good, when monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor. Different forms of volunteerism include mutual or self-help, philanthropy or service to others, and advocacy or campaigning.

Youth volunteerism

Youth volunteerism is a means for engaging young people in a range of activities that bolster their constructive participation in society and harnessing their energy and enthusiasm to contribute to local, national and global development.

Involving youth and affording them leadership experiences through volunteerism generates stronger ownership by their generation of development and peace processes and outcomes. It can foster greater social cohesion, more active young citizens, better and more sustainable collaboration between communities and governments, improved health and education and increased employability of youth. Volunteerism provides youth with the tools to make the most of the important transition from adolescence to adulthood in a healthy, stable and balanced manner.

Youth volunteerism contributes to broader societal well-being as well as to the development of the young volunteers themselves. Below are some of the main benefits of youth volunteerism.

- **Youth volunteerism elicits a sense of responsibility** towards others, builds inter-generational cooperation and learning and gives young people a feeling of belonging to and respect for their community. In making a positive contribution to society, young people gain a sense of self-worth and confidence, reducing negative behaviours. In turn, volunteerism fosters a better understanding of the younger generation as an asset to society.

- **As studies in China and Australia have shown, volunteerism can impart hard and soft job skills**, thereby increasing the employment prospects of young people. Volunteering can also introduce young people to various fields of work or study, enabling them to explore different types of occupations and allowing them to make better informed decisions about their future.

- **By widening participation, youth volunteerism addresses social exclusion** while building a sense of ownership and community. Youth volunteerism also helps to bring about innovative, cross-generational solutions, and ones that are locally-appropriate and culturally-sensitive.

- **Volunteerism supports young people to become active leaders and citizens** and serves as an important tool for their engagement in society. Studies in developed and developing regions have found that former volunteers have an increased sense of connection with their communities and feel more empowered to participate in community life even after the volunteerism experience is completed.

- **By enlisted youth as volunteers harnesses the energy, creativity, interconnectedness, fresh perspectives and flexibility of young people and channels these towards the realization of innovative and sustainable methods of improving our world. In order to fully and responsibly capture the potential of youth volunteerism, it should be coordinated in an inclusive and empowering way that complements formal education, allows youth to take on leadership responsibilities, encourages youth ownership, is inclusive and is respectful of diversity.**
Young people’s approaches to volunteerism are changing and becoming more diverse, primarily due to the widespread availability and use of social media and the Internet. Whatever its specific form, there is growing recognition of the value of youth volunteering for achieving global peace and sustainable human development and greater acknowledgment that volunteering represents an important means for young people to meaningfully participate in society. Around the global, and within the United Nations itself, demographic, technological and institutional changes are giving rise to greater and more varied opportunities for young people to volunteer.

Despite the capacity and willingness of young people to volunteer, many barriers to youth volunteering exist, and advocacy is needed so that youth volunteerism is more fully understood. Challenges include restrictions on freedom of movement, security issues and lack of access to information about volunteering and volunteering opportunities. There is also a shortage of easily accessible and comprehensive tools, methodologies and guidelines for the effective and efficient management of volunteers and volunteer opportunities. Opportunities for capacity development through training, coaching and mentoring are limited. Access to funding for youth-specific work, including volunteering, is a well-known challenge. Marginalized youth, especially ethnic minorities and youth with disabilities, young women, may find it particularly difficult to access volunteering opportunities due to social and economic exclusion.

A youth volunteer scheme is a programme for youth volunteering through which young people can contribute to positive sustainable change in their own or host communities, build their professional skills and competencies and promote a culture of volunteerism and reciprocity through leading by example. Such schemes are one of many possible approaches for engaging young people as volunteers to contribute to development and peace in their communities.

Governments, international organizations, civil society organizations, youth networks, universities and schools can provide the institutional structure and support for youth volunteer schemes. The type of youth volunteer scheme discussed in this document focuses on the placement of young volunteers by an organizing entity with different host organizations.

A wide range of factors need to be in position in order to guarantee that volunteer experiences facilitate learning for young people, including easy access to volunteer opportunities, effective volunteer management, training, volunteer policies and legislation, encouraging youth leadership and wide stakeholder participation.

Several important steps must be taken to establish a youth volunteer scheme, including: planning, research, development, implementation and evaluation. Access to information about best practices and similar projects can be invaluable resources. To succeed, volunteerism schemes must meet high standards of programme management. The specific needs and competencies of young people should also be carefully considered.

The good practices and recommendations in this document draw upon successes and lessons learned from UNV’s projects and programmes, and were collected through interviews and from reviewing programme records. This document highlights and assesses outstanding aspects of UNV programming that are particular to volunteer schemes for youth. The information herein is neither exhaustive nor universal and must be adapted to the local context.

This document was developed to support UNV’s field units and/or partner organisations that are interested in working with national partners to set up youth volunteer schemes and is in line with the outcomes defined in the UNV Youth Volunteering Strategy: 2014-2017.

**Youth volunteer schemes**

**FURTHER READING**


- New Economics Foundation. The (un)happy planet index 2.0: Why good lives don’t have to cost the Earth. London, UK: 2009.
Stakeholders in Arab regional youth scheme

The ‘Arab Youth Volunteering for a Better Future’ project channels the momentum gained by youth during the Arab spring into participation and inclusion in development in the region.

This regional initiative of UNV takes place in five Arab states. Stakeholders in the programme were identified through a series of UNV-facilitated national consultations that brought together youth, civil society, government and United Nations partners to discuss issues affecting youth in each country and to create an enabling environment for establishing the regional youth volunteer scheme.

Gender-balanced and inclusive National Advisory Committees were then created in each country to serve as a sounding board for project activities. The advisory committees meet regularly with national project focal points so that project activities are aligned with the expectations and needs of the stakeholders.

1. Creating an enabling environment

Well before the start of implementation, the foundations for creating an enabling environment for a successful volunteer scheme should be put into place.

This initial phase revolves around:
1. Involving stakeholders, and
2. Conducting needs assessments and feasibility studies.

A helpful resource to consult during this phase (as well as in later phases) is the handbook Assessing the Contribution of Volunteering to Development, published by UNV and the International Forum for Volunteering in Development.

Involving stakeholders

Youth volunteer schemes present an opportunity for forging strong partnerships with a wide variety of stakeholders, including governments, United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations, schools and universities, youth networks, philanthropic organizations, private sector corporations, media outlets (such as youth-targeted magazines or youth television programmes), trade unions, local communities and other national and international volunteer organizations. Engaging the right people in the right way can significantly increase the potential for success of a youth volunteer scheme.

Ascertaining appropriate stakeholders is the first step in the process. This is done through a stakeholder analysis. A stakeholder analysis seeks to identify all persons, institutions, authorities and organizations that are relevant to the scheme. The analysis should determine the target
group, the implementing agency and the host organization and evaluate the expected contributions of each of these to the initiative. Ideally, the group of stakeholders is diverse, representing different sectors of society. The stakeholder analysis can be done as a workshop or group brainstorming exercise.

The elements below may be useful to consider when drawing up a list of potential stakeholders and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses.

1. Youth. It is important to consider youth as the main stakeholders in the scheme, establishing their leadership and ownership of the process from the onset. Young people know best the types of activities and outreach their peers respond favorably to, what the needs of youth are in their communities, and how best to capture their interest. Their perspectives are crucial to developing a youth volunteer scheme that is engaging, attractive and relevant to youth. In addition, encouraging youth to take on leadership roles and participate fully and meaningfully in decision-making empowers them, brings legitimacy to the scheme, facilitates youth ownership of the process and promotes inter-generational collaboration.

2. Stakeholders with international, policy and legal links to youth volunteerism. It is also vital to engage early on those actors whose involvement is necessary to satisfy legal requirements, guarantee legitimacy, or place the youth volunteer scheme within an existing development plan, e.g. government officials and ministries, United Nations agencies.

3. Stakeholders located within the target region. Another key group of stakeholders will be authorities and institutions located in the region where the volunteers will be serving and who will be affected by the scheme, such as local leaders, civil society organizations, youth groups or networks, universities, community representatives and entities with language, tribal or religious relevance.

4. Experts on the issues being addressed by the youth volunteer scheme or experts on youth volunteerism and volunteerism in general. It is important to make connections with organizations and agencies that conduct similar activities in the same region, have expertise in the issues being addressed and the type of work the volunteers will be doing. These will include, for instance, the United Nations, civil society organizations, trade unions, schools, hospitals and others.

5. Public figures, celebrities and other influential persons. A useful tactic is to gain the interest of respected individuals from politics, media, sports or entertainment. In particular, those with a strong following among young people and influential youth themselves are especially beneficial to help promote the scheme among youth.

6. Suppliers of funds and resources. Any existing and potential funders should be brought into the loop early on, as well as companies and institutions that can provide required materials and resources, such as foreign governments, philanthropic organizations, foundations, think tanks and private sector companies.

7. Potential leadership and administrative structure of the youth volunteer scheme. It will be expedient to enlist the help of individuals with the credentials, interest and availability to go beyond an advisory role to actual participation in the day-to-day leadership and management of the scheme when it begins implementation.

8. Private sector, including chambers of commerce and business representatives, to enhance perspectives of employment for the youth ending their assignment.

9. Academic institutions, to collaborate on the feasibility study and further research on the impact of the service on the volunteers themselves, on the beneficiaries and on development at large.

All stakeholder partnerships must be carefully managed, responsibilities clearly allocated and relationships frequently evaluated and assessed. Hold regular meetings to update the stakeholders on progress and get their feedback on the initiative. Technologies such as Skype and Google Hangouts can be used to organize meetings online for little or no cost.

In the preparation phase of establishing a youth volunteer scheme, it can be worthwhile to organize a stakeholder meeting for all interested parties to share their insights and ideas, delineate responsibilities and discuss different points of view. In this way the stakeholders will be encouraged to jointly establish priorities, identify gaps, outline funding and communications strategies and define common goals. In addition, it will ensure that stakeholders take ownership of the initiative from the very beginning, which solidifies their commitment to the youth volunteer scheme and increases their long-term, active involvement. The initial group of stakeholders can eventually transition into a formal advisory board for the youth volunteer scheme.
Regular reporting to stakeholders on the impact and outcomes of the youth volunteer scheme is extremely important, and the data from monitoring and evaluations should be collected and analyzed frequently. Facts and figures about the on-the-ground effects and benefits of the volunteer scheme can be very useful, not only for maintaining stakeholder involvement, but for fundraising, community outreach, media strategizing and promotion of the initiative. Youth volunteers themselves can provide useful feedback and evaluation, and promoting their efforts through news and media stories can further lay the foundations for stakeholder interest and commitment and create a general respect for the value of youth volunteerism.

Needs assessment and feasibility study

Needs assessment

A needs assessment is a systematic approach to identifying social problems, determining their extent and accurately defining the target population to be served and the general nature of their needs. It draws a picture of the status quo that the youth volunteer scheme will be designed to address and places it in an overall development context. It includes a mapping exercise examining the historic, geographic, social, economic, political and cultural situation in the target region.

What international and national development goals apply?

The first step is to consider overall development priorities of the community, how youth are featured in them and how youth volunteerism can contribute to their attainment. The youth volunteer scheme should be in line with United Nations, national, regional and international development goals and plans.

In UNV’s experience, in most cases the best source of information on national development goals is the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is a programme document between a government and the United Nations that describes the collective actions and strategies of the United Nations to achieve national development goals. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework has its own set of outcomes, activities and responsibilities that should be complemented by the goals and outcomes of a youth volunteer scheme. Any other relevant national and United Nations development plans, peace agreements as well as post-2015 agenda, should be considered also, especially as these may contribute to an enabling environment for the success of the youth volunteer scheme and give legitimacy to the initiative, especially when convincing stakeholders and funders to support the scheme.

What is the national and local context?

General information about the historic, geographic, political, cultural and socio-economic situation in the target area is important for determining the needs to be addressed by the youth volunteer scheme and will inform the creation of strategies and activities, pinpoint potential challenges and contribute to interventions that are holistic and well-informed. Research can be compiled to present a brief but comprehensive overview and situational analysis of the places where the youth volunteer scheme will be functioning.

What is the situation of youth and youth volunteerism in the country and region?

The needs assessment will, in broad terms, outline the issues that specifically affect youth in the country, such as poverty, unemployment, health risks, education gaps, social exclusion, gender discrimination and gender-specific needs, lack of participation in civic life, and so on. What are the existing traditional and modern forms of youth volunteering? Do coordination mechanisms exist? How is youth volunteerism defined by the key stakeholders? Depending on the availability of statistics, specific figures should be used to strengthen the depiction of the realities of youth in the area. It is important to take into consideration the views of trade unions who might perceive the establishment of the Youth Volunteer Scheme as cheap labor that competes with civil service jobs.
Feasibility study

Based on the needs assessment, a broad programme outline is laid out, which guides the feasibility study. The feasibility study aims to determine whether the establishment of a youth volunteer scheme and its planned activities can successfully address the needs determined in the assessment. A feasibility study is more in-depth and comprehensive than a needs assessment, as it employs facts and demographics to analyze whether the prescribed programme can meet the assessed needs effectively, the challenges that might arise and what alternative solutions may be available. The feasibility study must solidify the case for implementing the proposed youth volunteer scheme. It also uncovers the type of infrastructure required based on local realities and the objectives of the key stakeholders.

A technical team or partnerships with academic institutions often conducts this feasibility study. It might be beneficial to conduct a joint feasibility study with outside experts who have specific experience with youth volunteerism and local expertise with familiarity of the region, its traditions, culture and perceptions of youth and volunteerism.

The feasibility study will ask:

- Is it feasible to create and maintain a youth volunteer scheme in the target area of the scope and purpose defined by the needs assessment that responds appropriately to the needs of the community and uses resources well?
- Is there an enabling environment for this youth volunteer scheme? Who initiated the scheme? How does the scheme fit in with national development plans?
- Why are youth the best demographic for addressing the identified needs? What specific talents, abilities, insights and strengths do they bring to the assignment?
- What would it take, in terms of time, resources and actions, to make this volunteer scheme successful and beneficial to both the volunteers and the recipient country and communities?
- What conditions need to be in place for the scheme to succeed, including legal and policy frameworks?
- Are there examples of comparable efforts elsewhere and what can be learned from those?
- Are there examples of comparable efforts in the same country or region implemented by United Nations entities, governments, non-governmental organizations or the private sector, and how would this youth volunteer scheme fit in with or complement those?

As there is no standard blueprint for a successful youth volunteer scheme, the results of the feasibility study will provide the information necessary for defining the key elements of the particular youth volunteer scheme and

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<th>Who will the volunteers serve?</th>
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<td>Youth volunteer schemes can be designed to impact different recipients. Geographically, for example, volunteers can serve in their own cities, towns and villages. Or volunteers can conduct national outreach campaigns or participate in international campaigns aimed at achieving global development goals. The scope of the initiative begins to take shape here, underpinned by an estimate of how many people the volunteers will reach. Since the volunteers will be youth, a special opportunity arises for integrating peer-to-peer outreach and activities, by incorporating youth in the target population.</td>
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<th>What are the needs of the beneficiaries?</th>
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<td>Once the target population has been clearly identified, the precise nature of its needs should be defined. These can range from infrastructure requirements (such as roads, schools and wells), service delivery issues (such as a lack of nurses or educators), environmental hazards (litter and pollution in parks or natural disasters), information access problems to skills deficiencies. It is important to examine both the ‘big picture’ needs (e.g. high HIV infection rates) and the direct needs (e.g. access to contraception and information about safe sexual practices).</td>
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<th>How can these needs be met through youth volunteerism?</th>
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<td>Once the needs have been identified and discussed with the communities and stakeholders, a plan can be devised for how the volunteers can contribute to addressing them and what kinds of knowledge, preparation, tools and resources are required. This exercise will lead to an initial determination of the profile of the youth volunteers that the initiative will engage. It is important to take the needs and profiles of the communities served into consideration when training and preparing the volunteers. Often, determining the needs of a community and the situation of youth in the community will require more than basic research. Site visits are recommended that include consultations and interviews with youth, school administrators, community leaders, non-governmental organizations and local government. It is imperative that all the stakeholders are on the same page about the needs and proposed solutions, so that the activities of the youth volunteer scheme won’t be viewed as infringing upon, or competing with, existing government or other programmes.</td>
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moving into the development phase. The baseline information in the needs assessment and feasibility study is designed to measure the impact of the volunteer assignments and of the scheme as a whole.

Policy framework

The feasibility study must consider the legal and policy framework necessary for a youth volunteer scheme and evaluate what policy and legislation is already in place to support volunteerism. Legislation can provide a commonly-accepted definition of volunteerism, determine the norms guiding volunteerism, outline the terms of the volunteering opportunity and guarantee the rights of volunteers. This protects volunteers from being exploited to do the work of paid employees and from undertaking volunteer assignments which do not support their personal development, among other things.

National, as well as organizational volunteer policies, are critical in guiding the activities of volunteer-involving organizations. Youth volunteer policies are generally designed to encourage youth volunteerism, delineate the requirements for youth volunteer participation in any initiative and define safety and supervisory requirements. In many instances, volunteer policy and legislation can help stimulate youth involvement in volunteering, ensure that volunteering opportunities benefit both communities and the volunteers themselves, facilitate inclusion and promote gender equality. Legal frameworks can also include mandatory requirements that volunteer-involving organizations undertake systematization, and have control and evaluation mechanisms.

In some cases, youth volunteer schemes can advocate for the adoption of national legislation or policies on youth volunteerism, the inclusion of volunteerism in national youth policies, and the enhancement of existing legislation by adding provisions for youth volunteerism. Activities to support such efforts may include writing letters to government officials, conducting awareness-raising events in communities or drafting proposed legislation and presenting it to the government.

The UNV Guidance Note Drafting and Implementing Volunteerism Laws and Policies is a useful reference for information on the development of policies and legislation supportive of volunteerism.

2. Planning a scheme

Once the outcomes of the needs assessment and feasibility study have been analyzed, an initial group of stakeholders is assembled, a basic conceptual outline of the scheme is in place and the legal and policy framework is understood, it is time to move into the planning phase. In this phase, the programme strategy is defined in terms of goals, structure, support and activities. (See Annex 1 for more information on writing a programme document.)

In broad strokes, the planning process first defines the results to be achieved through the youth volunteer scheme then develops concrete indicators that measure progress. The planning phase could take anywhere from a few months to a year or more.

Establishing expected results

Defining an overall aim of the youth volunteer scheme allows you to state, in general terms, the end results of the scheme. The individual goals of the scheme should be defined in terms of short-, medium- and long-term expected results and their measurements. The needs assessment and feasibility studies will be the baseline on which the impact and results can be measured.

Most schemes supported by UNV begin with a two- to three-year plan. The plan defines the results that are expected from the scheme. The expected results and their measurements should be broken down by year, as well as by the duration of the scheme or at least by the timeline of UNV’s planned involvement. (Generally, the idea is for the scheme to continue in perpetuity as a self-sustaining initiative, unless the scheme has very specific end goals with strict deadlines).

A Youth Volunteer Scheme will have several different types of expected results, both short and long term, and affect different stakeholders differently, such as the young volunteers themselves, the beneficiaries, the implementing partners, the community at large and the national volunteer landscape.

The beneficiaries (the population benefiting from the work of the volunteer scheme) should be defined in terms of how their livelihoods and wellbeing will be affected by the youth volunteer scheme, and how this can be measured in concrete terms. Schemes involving multiple implementation partners might have different expected results for each partner. It is important to list the volunteers themselves as a beneficiary group and determine respective results, indicators and outcomes. (See Annex 1 for a sample logframe and work plan.)
Sample expected results and measurements:

1. **Peaceful coexistence of competing communities is promoted through youth volunteer action.** This can be measured by conducting pre-programme and post-programme surveys of the target population in relation to their awareness of the sources of the conflict, conflict resolution skills, etc.

2. **Increased awareness of health issues and access to health services for the target population (people living in rural areas).** This can be measured by the number or increased percentage of people receiving medical care, the pre- and post-programme knowledge of issues such as HIV prevention, number of awareness-raising workshops held, number of people exposed to information campaigns about health issues, etc.

3. **Growth in awareness of the role and benefits of volunteerism and strengthened national legislation.** This can be measured by percent increase in local volunteers, politicians supporting volunteer legislation, actual changes in legislation, etc.

4. **Enhanced skills and employability of youth through volunteer training and experiences.** This can be measured by skills questionnaires, post-service employment statistics, post-service further education statistics, etc.

**Identifying partners and delineating roles**

As mentioned in the section above, a committed, active and diverse group of stakeholders is essential for the legitimacy and success of a youth volunteer scheme. In the planning phase, it is important to consider the outcomes of the exploratory stakeholder meeting and assess who is on board. Stakeholders can include both implementing partners, as well as advisors, funders and other supporters.

The roles of implementing partners are generally devised based on the type of expertise that each partner brings to the table, their internal capacity and resources, what they can best contribute and what the interests are of their institution. Some specific roles of implementing partners could include hosting volunteers, provision and management of support staff, logistical support, providing office space, fundraising, outreach and media relations, evaluation, facilitating connections with local communities, organizing meetings with government officials, recruiting and training volunteers, providing expert knowledge on issues addressed and planning activities.

A youth volunteer scheme is usually implemented in collaboration by a number of partners. It tends to be most beneficial to have a manageable size of partners, usually between three to six, each playing a very specific role that matches their strengths and expertise. The roles and responsibilities of each partner should be formulated in a legally-binding memorandum of understanding or partnership agreement.

Besides their role, the length of time for the involvement of each partner should also be determined during the development phase. Often a youth volunteer scheme is established with several partners, but the ultimate intention is to leave a well-functioning and self-sustaining initiative in the hands of just one or two of the main partners.

The stakeholders in more advisory roles usually form an advisory board, which plays an important role in the oversight of the youth volunteer scheme and guidance of its leadership and staff. Usually, boards meet on a regular basis. The composition of the board should represent all sectors, consider gender balance and include youth. Generally, a formal advisory board will have by-laws or some similar legal document outlining composition, structure, duties and powers.
Selecting host organizations

A host organization is a partner institution (often a non-governmental organization, government focal point or university) located in the host community receiving the services of the volunteers. The host agrees to designate a focal point for the youth volunteer scheme and is responsible for providing practical assistance to the volunteers (such as finding housing and acting as an emergency contact), local oversight, identifying local partners (such as clinics or schools), community outreach, training, guidance, information, mentoring, recognition and motivation, mediating conflicts and reporting to scheme staff. This type of partnership with a local host puts the youth volunteer scheme in the hands of the communities that it serves and is a good sustainability solution.

There can be more than one host organization, especially if the youth volunteer scheme is implemented in multiple regions or communities. In some cases, if resources are available, regional volunteer centres can be established to serve as hubs for volunteer orientation, training, resources and activities.

Host organizations can be identified either by developing criteria and then approaching potential candidates or by issuing a call or competition for interested organizations to apply to be hosts.

Orientation should be given to host organizations about volunteer management, youth volunteer scheme and how to monitor and report on volunteers, as well as the host organization’s responsibilities and rights. Host organizations should be encouraged to maintain weekly contact with the youth volunteer scheme team. If multiple host organizations are working within the same scheme, the methodology that is followed for orientation, dialogue and decision-making should be synchronized among all hosts.

Sample criteria for selecting a host organization

1. Relevance – Does the host have access to/the acceptance of the beneficiary population and potential volunteers? Does the host have a physical presence in the community? Does it have relationships with important partners and other stakeholders? Does it work with youth specifically?

2. Capacity – Does the host have the necessary physical infrastructure (e.g., office space), staff support, funding and material resources (e.g., computers, software, telephones) needed to manage the volunteers and sustain the youth volunteer scheme?
Leadership, staff and administrative support

Strong leadership and support are important practical considerations for the long-term sustainability of a youth volunteer scheme. In the design phase, general staff requirements should be determined, their duties described and their related expenses and logistical needs established. Recruitment, training (including determining who will fund and implement the training), volunteer support, oversight and evaluation processes should be put in place. Establishing a permanent administrative structure to manage and oversee the youth volunteer scheme greatly contributes to long-term sustainability and success. It will also facilitate the set up and implementation of a proper monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

The basic functions to be performed by staff are usually:

- participating in preparation activities: needs assessments, writing programme documents and conducting site visits;
- overall management of the scheme, including coordination with partners and the advisory board;
- facilitating the recruitment of youth volunteers;
- orientation of host communities;
- designing and implementing communication and fundraising strategies;
- providing administrative support;
- designing and conducting volunteer orientation, training, evaluations and feedback;
- establishing and managing relationships with partners and host organizations;
- coordinating with and mentoring the youth volunteers in the field;
- managing the budget;
- monitoring, evaluating the scheme and reporting to stakeholders; and
- post-assignment support to volunteers and facilitating networking.

Leadership and staffing of the youth volunteer scheme should be in place ideally at least six months before the expected implementation start date.

Resources and budget

A fundraising plan and budget will help to gauge the resource needs of the youth volunteer scheme, guide their acquisition, serve as a basis for reporting and enhance transparency and accountability. In the case of volunteers who receive subsidies, having a well-pre-established pro forma cost for each volunteer can help define the host agency’s financial contributions. Resources necessary for at least the first full year of activity should be in place before beginning implementation.

Potential funding sources can be:

- national governments, either the host government or governments with vested interests in the host country (often government grant application processes can be time-consuming, tedious and difficult to manage but the grants can be for very large sums);
- international organizations and non-governmental organizations with related priority areas;
- private foundations with an interest in youth;
- private sector companies; and
- individuals who want to promote youth engagement.

Ideally, the host government makes a financial commitment to the youth volunteer scheme and institutionalizes it through regulations or legislation to guarantee the sustainability of the initiative.
In-kind donations, such as equipment, infrastructure, expertise, materials, housing and meeting rooms are also important resources and can vary greatly depending on the needs of the youth volunteer scheme. In-kind contributions may be donated by different funders, contributors, partners and stakeholders, and need to be included in the fundraising plan and budget and acknowledged.

One important type of in-kind support to be aware of is online volunteering. Online volunteers can contribute a wide range of skills to organizations to set up youth volunteer schemes or support the activities of an existing scheme. They can, for example, help with digital marketing, website development, translation, editing volunteer newsletters or addressing other needs. Organizations managing a youth volunteer scheme can collaborate with online volunteers, to strengthen their outreach and multiply the impact of their work. Online Volunteers can be mobilized through the UNV managed service on onlinevolunteering.org.

The budget of a youth volunteer scheme is essentially a numeric representation of the project, including costs for both administrative overhead and activities, as well as indicating in-kind contributions received. One important consideration is to include a reasonable living stipend and health and other relevant insurances for full-time youth volunteers, especially if they must live away from home.

If the youth volunteer scheme is government-supported and funded, establishing permanent recognition for it within the government’s overall budget is a crucial factor for long-term sustainability. Formalizing a permanent budget within the government’s resources can be a long and complex process, so it is something that should be attended to and discussed among the stakeholders in the earliest stages of preparation.

Maimounata Ouedraogo has been one of five UN Volunteers managing the National Volunteer Programme (PNVB - Programme National de Volontariat au Burkina) in the field. Her role was to manage the PNVB project within a pilot region in the north, and sensitize people to the power of volunteerism. She was based in Yako, but the region she covered was huge, but she managed to visit field projects travelling by motorbike. (Kerstin Gossé/UNV, 2009)

Global Youth Service Day in Peru

In April 2013, UNV in Peru, together with partners, organized a Global Youth Service Day to recognize the labours of youth volunteers working towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The event was supported by a creative online communications campaign targeting diverse audiences.

A logo was created for the campaign and a Facebook events page set up that had over 4,000 invitees. A promotional video featured a famous football player and a short, captivating YouTube promotional video featured UN volunteers declaring: “I volunteer. And you?”
Communications and outreach strategy

A successful communications and outreach strategy attracts attention and generates discussion about the youth volunteering scheme. The strategy crafts a representation of the youth volunteer scheme that is instantly recognizable and forms its identity. It should clearly recognize the efforts of youth volunteers, while at the same time acknowledging donors and partners.

Communications and outreach are important tools for attracting new resources and funding and for creating awareness of volunteerism. A good strategy distinguishes the youth volunteer scheme from other similar initiatives. In short, the communications and outreach strategy should buttress the success and sustainability of the youth volunteer scheme by telling its story, motivating partners to join and mobilizing support and resources.

Youth must be made aware of the existence and benefits of the youth volunteer scheme in order to participate. Therefore, it is essential to reach out to youth through communications channels with which they are most familiar, such as social media, television, radio and public events. Communicating in language that speaks to their generation is also important. Youth tend to appreciate creativity, directness and clear, concise communications.

The youth volunteer scheme should craft a visual identity that is approachable, interesting and resonates with youth and their culture, including elements such as a logo, social media strategy, website, brochure, branded clothing and other items and a unified design on all correspondence. It should be unique to the youth volunteer scheme, attract attention and make a good first impression.

Youth volunteers themselves are the best spokespersons for any scheme. Volunteers should be appropriately guided and empowered to use available (and approved) digital and traditional media and promotional materials to share their stories and transmit the message of the scheme.

Strong national ownership

In UNV’s experience, a strong national ownership is key in ensuring the sustainability of a youth volunteer scheme.

In Togo, volunteerism was explicitly included and integrated in national plans and there was a clear government ownership and championship of the case of the Programme for the Promotion of National Volunteering in Togo (PROVONAT). PROVONAT is a flagship programme within the Ministry of Local Development, Manual Trades, Youth and Youth Employment, involving five other ministries through the National Council for Volunteerism. The government had a vision for a large-scale project.

A recent evaluation of PROVONAT concluded that government championing of the scheme and the development of favourable policy and regulatory framework were marks of success.

Partners and stakeholders can play an important role in the development and execution of a marketing and communications strategy. Examples include:

• stakeholders who work closely with the media can use their resources and contacts to promote the youth volunteer scheme in the media;
• educational partners could reach out to youth in their schools or grant access to the students by allowing youth volunteer scheme staff to visit schools and make presentations about the scheme;
• non-governmental organization partners could reach out to their networks and include information about the youth volunteer scheme in their newsletters and websites;
• corporate partners can provide technology and equipment; and
• government partners can promote youth volunteer schemes through public advertising and importantly by promoting such schemes in public statements and events.

As part of the communications and outreach strategy, partners and donors should be regularly and creatively publicly recognized for their engagement with and support for the scheme.
If suitable, equipment such as cameras, laptops and mobile phones can be provided to volunteers during their assignments so they can document their work and communicate with one another. Gathering photos, videos, anecdotes and research help record and communicate the impact that volunteers are making.

The youth volunteer scheme may want to incorporate initiatives such as volunteer magazines or regular Skype calls, through which volunteers can share experiences with one another and with other stakeholders, and easily ‘check-in’ with scheme management. Consideration should also be given to creating communication platforms such as online groups and discussion boards through which alumni volunteers can stay in touch with one another, mentor new volunteers online and keep up with developments within the youth volunteer scheme even after finishing their assignment. Many tools are available online, for free or a nominal fee, which allow for exactly this type of youth-targeted interactive communication.5

Defining youth volunteer assignments

The process for recruiting, placing, managing and evaluating youth volunteers should be carefully devised and outlined in a policy or conditions of service document before implementation begins.

There are a number of factors, discussed below, to consider when determining what type of assignments the youth volunteers will undertake.

Home vs. away

Generally, in a national youth volunteer scheme, youth volunteers are assigned to serve in their home community or in a host community in a different part of the country. Both types of assignments offer benefits. Staying local helps volunteers bond with their community, is easier to organize logistically and financially (as volunteers can live at home), encourages social integration, develops lasting relationships with sectors of the community to which they otherwise might not have been exposed, lays the foundations for civic engagement at the local level, and makes it easier for youth volunteers to continue actively engaging with their host community after their assignment is completed.

Traveling to a host community, on the other hand, brings with it the opportunity to meet new people and learn about different cultures, keeps the focus of the volunteer primarily on the assignment goals (without familiar distractions), gives an unprecedented opportunity for a young person to step out of his or her comfort zone and into a new community and learn how to live independently (possibly for the first time) while still being in a safe and structured environment.

University vs. non-formal education

The demographic of the youth volunteers should be established based on the needs of the host community that were determined through research and site visits. The types of education level is required? Do they need to have specific academic training (e.g., accounting, engineering, medicine, or teaching)? What skills do they need to possess in order to implement certain activities? Even if the volunteers are required to have a university degree, which is often the case, it is recommended to explore how marginalized youth who do not have a formal educational background can also be given a chance to participate. Youth from diverse backgrounds, whether they have formal higher education or not, have varying strengths and skills, and can complement one another’s knowledge.

Of course, many different models exist. It is possible to combine local and visiting youth volunteers in one team. However, it is important to be sensitive to the perceptions of, and interactions between subsidized volunteers and community volunteers who are not subsidized. In order to avoid potential enmity and misunderstandings that can undermine the volunteer spirit in a community, it is a good idea to choose subsidized volunteers who are familiar with the community, but not part of it. It is also important to conduct sensitivity training, conflict management and community orientation for volunteers prior to their assignment (detailed in the implementation section of this document). Subsidized volunteers can be paired with local advisors from the host organization to help them navigate potential conflicts or misunderstandings.

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At a health facility in a remote area of Liberia, a volunteer with the National Youth Volunteer Service advises a patient on the administration of his prescribed medication. (Harald Franzen, 2009)

Group vs. individual volunteers

The structural system of volunteers should be determined based on the needs and capacities of the host communities and host organizations and the nature of the activities. The advantage of volunteering in groups is that it reinforces collaboration and teamwork, puts together volunteers with complementary skills to address a need from multiple angles and promotes cultural exchange among volunteers with different backgrounds.

Individual volunteers may be more immersed in the life of their host communities and will need to rely more on their own skills and capabilities. Ultimately, whether working alone or in a group, it is important to create an environment that enables the volunteer to develop a sense of belonging to the host community and to have a space for youth volunteers to collaborate with one another and with partners, such as community leaders, in order to maximize the experiences of both the volunteer and the beneficiaries.

Short-term vs. long-term assignments

Generally, volunteers undertake either a long-term (one year or more) assignment or multiple short-term ones. Long-term assignments can require more commitment on the part of the volunteer but also offer more reward in terms of accomplishments, knowledge and curriculum vitae enhancement. Longer-term assignments also facilitate a more profound understanding of a volunteer’s host community.

Multiple short-term assignments can expose a volunteer to a wider variety of activities and different organizations. Either way, a balance must be struck between giving volunteers enough time to adapt to new environments, learn and apply new skills, gain confidence and establish relationships with their communities, while not requiring a time commitment that is unrealistic or that impedes the volunteer’s ability to move into full-time employment or continue his or her education.

One option is to organize an arrangement in which volunteers work for some hours per week or a number of days per month. This is particularly relevant when volunteers do not receive an allowance. Some youth volunteer schemes are open to employees and part-time workers who wish to devote personal time to volunteering or to students interested in social service-related careers.

Safety measures and minimum living standards

Youth volunteer schemes must meet standards of safety and basic levels of comfort in each assigned location. Each host community will be different and have varying standards of living and levels of security, so every assignment should be examined individually. Long-term
assignments when the volunteer is living away from their home come with the most complex safety considerations, but even short-term activities, especially if conducted in public, must be assessed for safety.

Below are some examples of general safety measures to protect the mental and physical health of volunteers and facilitate their placement in host communities.

- Every volunteer signs a code of conduct that prohibits harmful activities, such as illegal drug use, violence, discrimination or bullying and sexual harassment. A code of conduct sets non-negotiable standards for volunteer behaviour.

- Safety guidance should be given with respect to the local context and culture. It should include how to avoid risky situations, using common sense in emergencies and learning basic emergency-related phrases in the local language. In addition, information about local weather, geography, culture, customs and dress codes should be provided so the volunteers can understand what is appropriate and can represent themselves in a culturally-acceptable manner.

- Training on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) prevention should be provided to all volunteers.

- One useful precautionary measure to avoid unexpected health problems during assignments is to recommend that longer-term volunteers get a general physical examination by a doctor prior to their assignment and receive all necessary immunizations.

- Volunteers are requested to limit their personal belongings and avoid carrying valuables during their assignments. They should have an emergency kit.

- Volunteers should be provided with safe housing (or if they choose their own, there should be an approval process), nutritious meals, the necessary technology to communicate with the implementing organization and information about local police and hospitals.

- It is useful to assign local mentors to each volunteer so that someone is checking on them on a regular basis, and they have someone to turn to when needing help. The staff from the implementing agency should communicate regularly with volunteers in the field.

- During their mid-term and final evaluations, the volunteers can be asked to assess their sense of security, efficiency of communication, dependability of local mentors and responsiveness of youth volunteer scheme management during their assignments. This information can be used to improve safety measures for subsequent volunteers.
Entitlements and conditions of service

Basic entitlements that should be provided to a youth volunteer for the duration of their assignment include health care, life and third-party liability insurance (as applicable), accommodation, food and transportation (or these costs should be figured into a grant or stipend). Accommodation in university housing or with host families can be considered, as these arrangements have the added benefit of providing a safe and supervised environment. However, if families are hosting youth volunteers it must be clarified that rent cannot be collected from the volunteers, or if the host family’s expenses are to be covered, it should be done directly by the youth volunteer scheme.

Volunteers should be given a grant, stipend or cost of living allowance that is enough to cover those basic needs not provided.

The conditions of service are outlined in a document for the volunteer to read and sign, and should include any provisions necessitated by national or institutional legislation on volunteerism and be approved by the relevant stakeholders.

Sustainability and risks

Environmental, financial, organizational, political, operational, regulatory and strategic risks or events that may impact achievement of the youth volunteer scheme’s objectives should be identified, assessed and recorded in a risk management plan. For instance, if legislation related to volunteerism is not passed or if no qualified host organizations are identified, this may affect the safety or quality of the volunteer experience. Potential risks should be predicted based on studies of the assignment location and the nature of the planned activities, and responses should be planned for every projected scenario.

Sustainability refers to the long-term maintenance of the youth volunteer scheme. At the earliest stage of the process, stakeholder participation, including the length of their involvement, must be defined. A useful measure to encourage sustainability is to include a plan for transfer of control of the initiative to local implementing partners and host organizations.

Sustainability also has a financial implication. Usually, a scheme receives sufficient initial funding from a few sources, such as the government or a foundation grant, but eventually the funders expect the scheme to support itself without their continued reinvestment. This could be done either through diversifying the fundraising strategy and reaching out to new funders so that a few generous donors are not expected to carry the scheme, or through other income-generating activities, such as fundraising events.

Finally, sustainability also refers to the human resource and leadership capital of a youth volunteer scheme. A succession plan must be in place for staff and advisory board members so that the momentum of the scheme does not slow down when individual involvement ends. This is especially relevant when dealing with youth, because they are in a transition period in their lives.

A succession plan will also facilitate the transfer of institutional knowledge from departing staff to their successors. Records should be kept of all relevant contacts and communications and there needs to be a clear understanding of the substance of the role of each staff and leadership member. A mentoring system might be helpful to lay the foundations for staff transitions, in which a new volunteer has a sufficient crossover period with the existing staff or leadership member in preparation for taking on their new role. Often the pool of former volunteers provides a good source of new staff and leadership for youth volunteer schemes.
Ideas for activities

The types of activities that youth volunteers can engage in are practically limitless. However, several factors must be considered when embarking on activity design. These include the:

- goals and objectives of the scheme;
- needs of the communities served;
- skills and qualifications of the volunteers - do they need to have specific expert knowledge (e.g., health and nursing, education and teaching, agriculture, engineering, law)?
- age range of the volunteers;
- level of involvement - the programme staff could either give the volunteers specific direction for activities, invite the volunteers to propose activities themselves, or a combination of the two;
- best practices from other volunteer initiatives; and
- capacity and budget for proposed activities; many activities can be conducted with little or no extra cost, but some activities are rather costly and might require additional fundraising. Sometimes, micro-grants can be provided to the volunteers for the implementation of their own projects.

Below are some ideas for activities culled from different projects that UNV has supported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of health services</td>
<td>Child and maternal health care, nutrition counseling, nursing, reproductive rights, health education, HIV/AIDS awareness, sanitation, assisting at health centers and clinics, prevention of alcohol, tobacco and drug abuse through campaigns, role-playing activities to prevent bullying, setting-up hotlines for rape or abuse victims, providing mental health counseling, distributing bed nets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster prevention and recovery</td>
<td>Rebuilding, provision of food, water and blankets, sand bag placement, organizing events for children displaced by disaster, fundraising to help victims, organizing clothing and food drives, distributing tents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention of discrimination and exclusion</td>
<td>Organizing activities to make a change in the lives of marginalized and vulnerable individuals, such as those with disabilities, orphans, vulnerable women, the elderly or minorities. Campaigning against discrimination and gender-based violence, organizing games with street children, organizing social events at old age homes, helping pensioners write their stories holding awareness-raising talks at schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaigning</td>
<td>Campaigning for national legislation on volunteerism, supporting a youth delegate to the United Nations General Assembly, organizing social media campaigns on peace and development issues, undertaking activities to promote the millennium development goals and dialogue about the sustainable development goals, publishing information in brochures and writing articles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness-raising</td>
<td>Promoting peace and development through sports events, concerts and art exhibits, student competitions, public speeches, creating awareness videos and commercials, children’s rights campaigns, working with kids to paint murals or posters about the millennium development goals or the post-2015 planning process, the sustainable development goals, peace and environmental issues, celebrating Global Youth Service Day, youth volunteerism fairs where volunteer organizations can present their work and recruit volunteers, television and radio programmes run by volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Community gardens, park clean-ups, recycling programmes, education about climate change and carbon footprint calculation and reduction, helping farmers learn more sustainable farming practices, waste management, rehabilitating a polluted area, animal welfare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Training of election monitors, disseminating information about democracy and voting, translating national legislation into indigenous languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Example</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peacebuilding</td>
<td>Conflict resolution training, bringing together youth from different sides of a conflict, mobile peace caravans, rebuilding a community affected by conflict, raising awareness about child soldiers, organizing community roundtables with peacekeepers, organizing activities for refugees and internally-displaced children and families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and training</td>
<td>Mentoring teens, organizing Model United Nations conferences, teaching at a school, assisting teachers, planning cultural activities and after-school activities for kids, skills training, training of trainers, public debates, essays or video competitions, setting-up video conferences with schools in other regions or countries, teaching about the United Nations, teaching computer literacy and other technical skills, teaching music and art, training on video editing and filmmaking, teaching a language, creating educational materials, soliciting donations for school supplies, hosting webinars on topics of interest to youth and other, online volunteering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity-building</td>
<td>Building local organizational capacity, working with non-governmental organizations and youth groups to help them improve their human resources, marketing, fundraising and communications, entrepreneurship training for local farmers, income-generating activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building infrastructure</td>
<td>Participating in programmes that build or improve roads, schools, hospitals or community centres, advising on planning parks or playgrounds, community development, renovating or repainting schools and community spaces, mobile libraries.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Certainly not all volunteer activities require specialized skills. Many things can be done with preparation and appropriate training. However, it is essential that activities requiring specialized skills are only conducted by qualified volunteers or a team of volunteers that includes at least one expert. For example, youth volunteers who have relevant studies in psychology or a related health field are the only volunteers who should provide counseling to refugee children. However, other volunteers with different skills could also help with well-being services to the refugee children by, for instance, organizing sporting events and games or teaching children artistic skills.

Youth volunteers promote a culture of volunteerism through their commitment to, motivation for and performance of their assignments. In addition, to complement their activities, volunteers can also give talks about volunteerism at schools, religious institutions and community centers.

Many inspiring youth volunteer activities and experiences are described in UNV’s 2010 Annual Report Inspiring Youth and on the UNV website.

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Rokia Sissoko (left) is a volunteer nurse with the National Centre for Promotion of Voluntary Service. She works in maternal and child health in the town of Kende in Mali. Rokia trains health care providers, thus helping improve maternal health. (Larsan Traore/NCPV, 2012)

National Volunteer Marzoe Momo, part of the National Youth Volunteer Service (NYVS), briefs students at WVS Tubman School in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, Liberia before a parade. The event is one of many organized in the country to raise public awareness on gender equality and women’s empowerment issues. The Liberian NYVS was a two-year pilot initiative, aimed at providing young university graduates with opportunities to support public education and health services for communities in remote areas, while addressing youth employability and labour market accessibility and contributing to national economic development. The NYVS project, initiated by the Liberian Ministry of Youth and Sports, was supported by UNV. (Harald Franzen/UNV, 2009)

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3. Implementing a scheme

When considering the creation of a new youth volunteer scheme, the cases analyzed show that it is prudent to start with a small-scale pilot programme with a definitive end date. If the pilot proves successful, the structures and lessons learned are used to roll out a full-fledged youth volunteer scheme. International Volunteer Day or other important international or national events can be a great platform for launching a pilot scheme.

Recruiting volunteers

Distributing information on volunteer opportunities will take some time, so it is important to plan promotional activities several months ahead of the recruitment deadline. The call for applications should be easily accessible to youth, it should follow the communications plan and be distributed by partners and stakeholders, especially at universities, youth clubs, community centers, radio and online. Special consideration should be given to reaching marginalized youth.

The selection process can take many different forms and is usually conducted by the leadership team in collaboration with local partners. A selection process could include two rounds: first, candidates submit their curriculum vitae and a motivation letter or a personal essay. Based on an initial evaluation of applications, successful candidates are interviewed either in-person or online (ideally through video). It is also important as part of this process to check the references of candidates (i.e., by contacting former teachers, guidance counselors, employers and personal referees).

A more flexible selection process might work better for some contexts, and can include activities such as soliciting project or campaign proposals, short videos submitted by the candidates, an academic competition (such as essay writing or poster design), volunteer sign-up kiosks at community centers, or selection events on television or radio. Candidates can also be recruited directly from schools or youth-led organizations through partnerships.

Criteria for recruiting youth volunteers should be based on volunteer demographics defined in the plan of the youth volunteer scheme (e.g., age, credentials, education level, area of expertise), as well as social competencies, practical skills, languages spoken, personal interests, motivations to volunteer, references, health and other factors that can influence the successful completion of the specific volunteer assignment.

Going beyond filling immediate volunteer vacancies, it is useful to maintain a database of potential qualified volunteers that can be drawn upon for future activities, upcoming assignments and to mobilize volunteers in emergency situations, such as responding to a natural disaster. It is a good idea to include on the volunteer application form a question regarding the willingness of the candidate to be considered for future, short-term or emergency assignments, so that they can be contacted in case these arise.

Once candidates are recruited they can be given an information packet and preparations for their assignment can commence. The time line for recruitment and volunteer service should take into account factors that influence significantly the audience, such as the academic calendar, if many of the volunteers are students/graduates, harvest periods, major traditional or religious festivals or accessibility during rainy season.

Training and capacity building

Training is critical. It prepares young volunteers for their assignment by building social and professional skills, technical know-how, understanding of the local context and instills the confidence necessary for them to successfully implement their work during their assignments. Training helps to level the playing field in terms of preparedness and encourages a high level of professionalism and competence. Ideally, the knowledge and skills that youth volunteers develop through training, and that are solidified in practice, will later be transferable to regular employment, in this way contributing to their employability and future wellbeing.
Training in Papua

As part of the training for the University Volunteer Scheme in Papua, Indonesia, volunteer recruits travel to the villages where they will be placed and organize a town hall meeting with community representatives to get a better understanding of the local needs and context before beginning their work.

The recruits also participate in sensitivity training, including on gender education. They receive training in various skills, such as project management, and have a formal handover process during which the outgoing volunteers share their outcomes, insights and experiences with their replacement. Acting volunteers benefit from periodic refresher training and orientation sessions throughout their service.

Newly-recruited volunteers should participate in several training and orientation sessions both in preparation for and during their assignments.

Training should cover a broad variety of areas, including thematic/assignment related information (e.g., HIV/AIDS, climate change), technical skills (e.g., capacity building, campaigning, reporting), inter-personal skills (e.g., gender awareness, cross-cultural communication, conflict resolution) and volunteering skills (e.g., leadership, health and safety in the field, participation and engagement, promoting volunteerism). The training plan should have both general components and units imparting skills and information specific to the types of activities the volunteer will be expected to perform.
be given a written strategic plan at the training and orientation that clarifies the objectives they are expected to pursue, the results that are hoped for, and upon what indicators their performance evaluation will be based. They should sign all necessary documents, such as the Code of Conduct and the Conditions of Service before commencement of their assignment. Orientation is a good time for volunteers to ask questions and discuss any concerns they may have.

Training and orientation should also be provided for the volunteer host organizations and the staff managing the youth volunteer scheme on issues such as the goals of the scheme, relevant legislation, the role of partners, evaluation methods, reporting standards, financial management and expectations. It is helpful to prepare a written manual of procedures for administrative and financial procedures to streamline and regulate these processes.

In addition to training, it is important to build the capacity of the host organizations, especially if they are expected to take over full operations of the youth volunteer scheme after the first few years. Capacity building means providing the necessary resources (technical, physical and financial) and training (for instance on managing a budget, programme evaluation, communication strategies, building partnerships, etc.) for effectively managing the scheme.

Finally, when a youth volunteer scheme has built up a useful portfolio of training materials, if they can publish and share this material it would be extremely useful for other organizations and networks that might be interested in adopting the scheme’s good examples and building their own capacity to engage youth volunteers or start a youth volunteer initiative. As very few such resources are currently available, any new publications arising from youth volunteer schemes, especially in local languages and relating to national contexts, would be highly valued. In addition to helping external partners, such training resources contribute to the sustainability of the scheme by maintaining and organizing important materials for the scheme’s own future management and training.

**Community orientation**

In addition to preparing the volunteers through training and orientation, it is essential to visit host communities well in advance of programme implementation and brief local leadership and community members about the purpose and function of the youth volunteers, what to expect of them and how best to provide support. Orientation and preparation of the host communities should be an ongoing process that will enable them to be most receptive to the volunteer interventions and support the scheme’s growth.

As a youth volunteer scheme continues and evolves, refresher orientations should be conducted and feedback collected regarding the value of the volunteer interventions. Sometimes it is useful if the host organization provides community facilitators who can guide the community sensitization and orientation process.

Finally, it must be noted that it is essential to encourage the continuous exchange of ideas and open dialogue with host communities as well as a bottom-up approach in which the needs and expectations of the communities are carefully assessed before a project is implemented. Indigenous knowledge and traditions, cultural and economic context, community values, political situations, capacity, infrastructure and other factors must be carefully considered. Volunteer interventions should serve the community holistically and respect and contribute to its development in a way that is not intrusive or forceful, but that builds dialogue and awareness about volunteerism and lays the foundations for the scheme’s sustainability and a culture of volunteerism.
Volunteer management tools

Managing and overseeing the volunteer experience is important both for the well-being and efficacy of the volunteer, as well as the impact and legitimacy of the youth volunteer scheme itself. Management tools have already been touched on in previous sections, such as training and orientation. Several resources should be elaborated to guide youth volunteer scheme management, including those listed below.

- **Briefing and monitoring of the scheme’s field offices**: briefing and monitoring forms.
- **Selection and monitoring of host organizations**: guidance notes covering criteria and selection processes for host organizations; agreement templates for host organizations; budget templates for host organizations; evaluation forms of the host organizations.
- **Volunteer recruitment**: application forms, descriptions of assignments, information on the cost of volunteers, volunteer agreements (between the youth volunteer scheme, host organization and volunteer), guidelines for recruitment interviews, interview report templates, application acceptance and rejection letters, code of conduct for volunteers, information sheet about what volunteerism is, to-do-list for the first day as a volunteer.
- **Volunteer monitoring and support**: monitoring forms for meetings with volunteers, reporting forms for the volunteers, leave application forms, database of potential mentors and matching criteria of current volunteers with their contact details, evaluation forms to be filled out by the host organizations, certificates of service.
- **Managing the youth volunteers**: a manual for host organizations and communities on how to manage youth volunteers.
- **UNV Volunteer Toolkit**: a good general resource that features useful tools for volunteers before, during and at the end of their assignment.
- **Civic education and career guidance**: list of potential partners for civic briefings and for career advice.

As part of the management of the volunteers, regular meetings can be organized that bring together scheme staff, host organizations and volunteers serving in different areas. This allows volunteers the opportunity to participate in refresher training, exchange ideas and experiences, touch base with scheme management and ask questions, give feedback and build support among themselves.

Special considerations should be given to managing youth volunteers in remote areas, such as potential challenges with dispatching materials, payment delays and transportation issues.
4. Learning from the experience

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) serve several purposes. In the absence of effective monitoring and evaluation, it would be difficult to know whether the intended results are being achieved as planned, what corrective action may be needed to ensure delivery of the intended results and whether initiatives are making positive contributions towards development. Monitoring and evaluation are based on the goals and outputs indicated in the logframe and work plan, which were developed and agreed to prior to the scheme’s implementation. In addition to these goals, the scheme should also be evaluated in terms of its linkages and contributions to the national development plan and relevant youth policy.

The information collected during the needs analysis and feasibility study represents a relevant baseline in measuring the achievement of the objectives and the impact. Partnerships with academic institutions can be beneficial in the analysis of data collected. Data collection and analysis for monitoring can be done in several ways. Volunteers and host organizations can be required to send regular weekly or monthly reports indicating their progress and summarizing their experiences. Simple forms and templates can be created to support this process, but it is also worth considering more creative options such as reporting through blogs, video, photos or social media. Occasionally, scheme staff should make site visits and conduct their own data collection.

It is effective for reporting purposes to be able to present volunteer impact in terms of the number of people affected (for example, “250 youth educated about HIV/AIDS”), or the percentage of change (such as, “school attendance increased by 150 percent”) and observations on the change (“the relations between community members seem more peaceful since the volunteer started the service”).

Volunteer Passport in Cabo Verde

The Volunteer Passport is an official certification of the service rendered by volunteers, and which, under the Volunteer Law 42/2010, enables volunteers to obtain recognition and have access to some support. As such, the ‘passport’ becomes an important element of the volunteer’s CV, documenting the skills acquired, when looking for their first job, and enabling the volunteer to have access to support, such as scholarships, tuition reduction, ease of access to certain health services, law materials such as books and training in order to equip them for volunteer assignments.

In Cabo Verde, Volunteer Passports are tools for documenting the volunteer experience and for recognizing the service. (UNV, 2013)

Detailed formal reports should be required from the volunteers at least twice – mid-term and end-of-assignment.

Data should be collected from the volunteers, from the scheme staff/host organization as well as from people with whom the volunteers engage in the community. This can be gathered by the volunteers themselves and/or by their host organizations, by asking people to participate in video interviews, provide testimonials or complete surveys at the end of their participation in an activity conducted by the volunteer. For more accuracy and reliability in the impact assessment, it is important to maintain contact information (if available) for community members participating in surveys and testimonials, so that they can be approached for follow-up. Regularly collecting and analyzing data will show the impact of volunteers on the community and the sustainability of their actions. This will help inform the specific volunteer service as well as the scheme itself and, in a broader frame, national policy.

Information should also be compiled to assess how participating in the youth volunteer scheme influenced the host organization and built its capacity to sustain volunteers and carry out community activities in the long-term. Another

In Nepal, a high number of volunteers ending their service, found employment at increasing levels of responsibility, in sectors directly related to their volunteering experience. In Lesotho, 25% of volunteer alumni were in full-time employment six months after ending their service.
aspect to be monitored and evaluated is the impact of the volunteer service on the actual volunteer, on a short and mid-term. In that sense, knowledge and skill development, as well as future employment prospects and success can be assessed.

Like monitoring, evaluation is an integral part of scheme management and an essential management tool. Evaluation complements monitoring by providing an independent and in-depth assessment of what worked and what did not work, and why this was the case. After implementing and monitoring an initiative for some time, an important management discipline is to take stock of the situation through an external independent evaluation. A useful M&E resource is the handbook on Assessing the Contribution of Volunteering to Development, which includes a set of impact assessment tools for use in participatory workshops involving stakeholders at different levels.

Partnerships with academic institutions can be beneficial in the analysis of data collected.

Data collection and reporting for monitoring can be done in several ways. Volunteers and host organizations can be required to send regular weekly or monthly reports indicating their progress and summarizing their experiences. Simple forms and templates can be created to support this process, but it is also worth considering more creative options such as reporting through blogs, video, photos or social media. Occasionally, programme staff should make site visits and conduct their own data collection.

Data should be quantitative and qualitative whenever possible and in line with agreed international standards and best practices. It is effective for reporting purposes to be able to present volunteer impact in terms of the number of people affected (for example, “250 youth educated about HIV/AIDS”), or the percentage of change (such as, “school attendance increased by 150 percent”). Detailed formal reports should be required from the volunteers at least twice – mid-term and end-of-assignment, including an exit interview.

Data should also be collected from the people with whom the volunteers engage in the community. This can be gathered by the volunteers themselves by asking people to participate in video interviews, provide testimonials or complete surveys at the end of their participation in an activity conducted or organized by the volunteer. Regularly collecting and following-up on this kind of data will help to show how the volunteers affected their community and whether those changes are sustainable. For this reason, it is important to ask for contact information (if available) for community members participating in surveys and testimonials so that they can be approached for follow-up to see if they continued their engagement.

Information should also be compiled to assess how participation in the youth volunteer scheme influenced the host organization and built its capacity to sustain volunteers and carry out community activities in the long-term.

Another aspect to be monitored and evaluated is the impact of the volunteer service on the actual volunteer, on a short- and if possible mid-term. In that sense, knowledge and skill development, as well as future employment prospects and success can be assessed.

More often than not, governments invest in these schemes if they prove to be actual investment in the youth as well. They expect that to be demonstrated by the project. For that and many other reasons M&E should include data on the volunteer’s personal and professional development.

Like monitoring, evaluation is an integral part of scheme management and an essential management tool. Evaluation complements monitoring by providing an independent and in-depth assessment of what worked and what did not work, and why this was the case. After implementing and monitoring an initiative for some time, an important management discipline is to take stock of the situation through an external independent evaluation.

In addition, scheme staff and the host institution, through mid-term and final evaluations, should evaluate the performance of volunteers. Evaluations are useful for giving volunteers constructive feedback that they can use to improve their professionalism, practical skills and inter-personal relationships.

Evaluation criteria should be developed before implementation and shared with the volunteers during orientation so they can understand how they will be evaluated and what is expected of them. Evaluations go both ways - volunteers should be invited to share their thoughts on improving the youth volunteer scheme for future rounds of volunteers.

A useful M&E resource is the handbook on Assessing the Contribution of Volunteering to Development, which includes a set of tools for use in participatory workshops involving different stakeholders at different levels.
Volunteer recognition, succession and continued engagement

Knowledge transfer and hand-over are necessary considerations at the end of volunteer assignments. Youth volunteers should be available to prepare and train the local counterparts taking over the work or their successors, to ensure sustainability and pave the way for a smooth transition. All reports, contacts and other written analyses of volunteer work should be handed over from one volunteer to the next, as well as archived properly by scheme staff. Ideally, volunteers can also be available to their successors as peer mentors, at least online, in an informal capacity.

Former volunteers are a great resource for the growth and sustainability of the youth volunteer scheme. Maintaining and nurturing an alumni network can be simple and very rewarding. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, can facilitate the continued interaction of volunteers with each other and with new rounds of recruits. Many potential roles for former volunteers can evolve from their involvement with the youth volunteer scheme, such as becoming mentors, staff or serving as leadership of the youth volunteer scheme.

Former volunteers can apply their experience and lessons learned by participating in activities such as running orientation and training sessions, refining training materials and guides, speaking about volunteerism at schools and community centers, giving media interviews about their volunteer experience and accompanying new volunteers on field missions.

As for offering continuing support to alumni, recognition of the service, of the skills acquired, employment counseling and services can be provided to graduated volunteers to support their transition to paid work. This could include keeping a roster of former volunteer resumes that can be made available to interested organizations, government agencies and corporations, organizing networking events and career fairs for alumni to meet potential employers and sending information about job opportunities to the alumni network.

Checking-in periodically with former volunteers after service and gathering information from them about their career progress can provide helpful data about how the volunteer experience contributed to their professional goals. These statistics can be used to report achievements of the youth volunteer scheme to stakeholders and donors. For example, it is helpful to know what percentage of former volunteers are employed after service compared to the national average, what percentage continue to be involved in volunteer service and what percentage are involved in local politics, among other things.

Exit strategy

In most cases, when UNV is involved in establishing a youth volunteer scheme, the ultimate administrative goal is to completely and sustainably transfer management of the scheme to a national implementing partner. An exit strategy can be based on the achievement of predetermined programmatic goals (e.g., exit after 500 volunteers have graduated), predetermined sustainability goals (e.g., core funding secured and leadership staff in place), or a predetermined timeline (e.g., exit after three years). The exit strategy needs to address a series of aspects, such as funding and activity sustainability, M&E findings, management tools, and should be based on formal, systematic capacity building throughout the project life cycle. It is important that, from the beginning of engagement, all stakeholders are aware of and understand the exit strategy and its implications for their own involvement.

In some cases, involvement with the youth volunteer scheme needs to be terminated before the planned exit. Such factors could include loss of funding, ineffectiveness, changes in political or security climates, corruption, lack of interest or resignation of leadership and personnel. In these situations risk analysis can be referenced and a proper exit planned, including saving any contacts and knowledge that can be helpful in a future revitalization or establishment of a new youth volunteer scheme.

Mitigating the failed outcome of a youth volunteer scheme is challenging and a plan should be in place in case such a situation arises, including how to report on it to stakeholders and the media, reconcile outstanding bills, end volunteer assignments prematurely and compile lessons learned from the process.

In Senegal, Ibrahim Sene (left), president of the Handicapped Association (Handicap Form’Edu) and Toufane Diouf teach others, including Bintou Mbodj (foreground), computer skills at the “Cyber El Hadj Mor Gaye Nayoobé”, a cyber-café run by the association. The café is a source of revenue for people with disabilities as well as a training center which aims to reduce the digital divide between people with disabilities and rest of the population. The project is financed by UNV through ACPROVE (Appui à la Coordination et Promotion du Volontariat au Sénégal). (Harald Franzes/UNV 2010)

30 Establishing a Youth Volunteer Scheme: Guidance Based on UNV Experience
Overcoming potential challenges

Misunderstandings about volunteerism

Unfortunately, skepticism and misunderstanding among youth and communities about the value of volunteerism persists. When youth are first introduced to a volunteer opportunity, they often present two concerns: first, they assume it is completely unpaid and worry about supporting themselves during service, and second, they do not see the value of volunteerism over paid employment with regard to advancing their professional career.

Prospective volunteers should be informed that they will be provided with either a stipend or grant that will enable them to complete their assignment without using their own savings or family resources. The benefits of volunteerism need to be explained, in particular in terms of practical skills, qualification for employment and personal growth. Some have found it useful to provide the volunteers with a certificate upon completion of service.

In some cases it has happened that at the end of their assignment, volunteers expected to get a job with the government or the United Nations. It is important to clarify expectations during orientation, including reminding volunteers about the volunteer spirit, which emphasizes benefiting others and not only volunteering for personal gain. Ideally, volunteers should regard their volunteer experience as an opportunity to learn about peace and sustainable human development, to help others, to gain personal and professional skills and to increase the chances of finding a good job in the future.

Hostile communities

Community members might be wary of youth volunteers. They might hold misconceptions that youth are violent, irresponsible, untrustworthy or that they abuse drugs and alcohol. They also might be skeptical about the motivations and about the value of the contributions that youth can make and reject the efforts of the volunteers. Communities need to be sensitized before the actual volunteer service, so that the efforts of the volunteers are appreciated and recognized by the members. Youth volunteers should address community groups directly, introducing themselves and explain what they will do and how they will work. Examples could be presented from previous youth volunteers or from youth volunteer schemes in other countries to show how young volunteers worked with and helped communities.

Inability to access target group

Reaching out to youth can be difficult, especially when trying to access youth in rural areas or those who are not attending formal educational institutions. There are at least three ways to approach this.

1. Leveraging partners can be helpful. Non-governmental organizations and youth organizations can promote the youth volunteer scheme to their networks through their websites, newsletters and other communications platforms. Schools and universities can reach out to students and alumni. The government can use relevant ministries to promote the youth volunteer scheme at public events and through publications. Media networks can place information in magazines, journals, radio and television programmes. Corporate partners can promote it through their staff and at sponsored events.

2. Staff of the scheme can promote the youth volunteer scheme at community centers, public events, sports events, in neighborhoods, as well as through radio and social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

3. Youth volunteers themselves are the best promoters. Encouraging them to wear scheme t-shirts and gear when conducting public activities, giving talks at schools about their work and experiences, and even simply reaching out to their friends and social networks and encouraging them to participate can spread information about the youth volunteer scheme to many young people.

Competing schemes

The youth volunteer scheme can be distinguished from similar schemes by establishing a unique identity, using creative youth-targeted communications and explaining the specific benefits and training opportunities that it offers. Sometimes, if goals and organizational cultures are similar, it might be worthwhile to consider partnering with or merging with other initiatives.
Special considerations

Youth leadership and meaningful participation

The creativity and enthusiasm of young people knows no bounds. Both as leaders and as participants in youth volunteer schemes, youth will benefit from clear expectations, adequate preparation, reliable support and oversight, helpful peer and adult mentors, honest evaluation and constructive feedback. A supportive environment can enable youth to use their knowledge and skills to create and implement activities that best achieve their volunteer goals and personal growth.

Youth leaders benefit both personally and professionally from being in leadership roles.

Opening up opportunities for young people, especially young women, to participate in the preparation, development and implementation of youth volunteer schemes has clear benefits for both the scheme and the young leaders themselves. Including youth in leadership brings legitimacy to the scheme and young people are able to make recommendations and decisions with personal insight into the situation of youth in their country. It is important for any youth leadership team to be diverse, gender-balanced and representative of all the participants in the scheme in terms of socio-economic and cultural background and education.

Many youth volunteer organizations and initiatives are still primarily managed by more experienced adults. Therefore, it is important to encourage a shift in thinking towards promoting youth leadership by making youth representation in the leadership group mandatory and delegating power to youth themselves. This kind of approach can bring with it funding opportunities, as many donors find youth leadership an attractive and necessary component of youth-targeted initiatives.

Unfortunately, there are many examples of youth initiatives (volunteer and otherwise) where youth involvement is more tokenistic and truly meaningful youth participation is not accomplished or even strived for. In these cases, adults lead and manage the initiative without accepting and empowering youth as equal partners or leaders. Instead, youth are treated as passive participants or recipients.

After experienced adults initiate youth volunteer schemes, they should eventually move to guidance roles and focus on creating an enabling and supportive environment for youth to take ownership and leadership over the process, participate wholly in decision-making, implement their own ideas (instead of being told by adults what they should be doing) and be creative and strategic in their own way. Although it refers primarily to children’s participation, a good reference that can be applied to meaningful youth participation is Hart’s Ladder.8

In addition to respecting youth as capable partners working towards peace and development, it is essential to recognize that young adulthood is a time of transition and that a youth volunteer scheme can suffer as a result of frequent shifting of staff and volunteers when young people move on to jobs, travel or other new opportunities. While this phenomenon is unavoidable, its negative implications can be mitigated with a suitable system of hand-over from one volunteer to another, a volunteer succession plan and a stable and reliable leadership and management structure. Integrating former volunteers into the leadership of a scheme as mentors and

managers seems to be an especially good way to maintain momentum, empower youth leaders and transfer knowledge from one round of volunteers to the next.

Gender

Effort should be made to consider different needs, in the project planning that depend on the volunteers’ sex, in order to involve girls and women in the youth volunteer scheme and its leadership and to achieve a gender balance in the volunteer corps. Young people can learn a great deal from each other by collaborating and interacting in a volunteer setting. Giving young women leadership roles and providing them with opportunities to volunteer side by side with their male counterparts builds mutual respect and understanding and generates a space for dialogue. Finally, women best understand the situation of other women and can open up pathways and opportunities for community service that might not otherwise be taken.

Respect for cultural diversity and gender equality are topics that should be covered in the training of youth volunteers, both in terms of their relationships to each other as well as their interactions with the people in the host communities. Youth volunteers can benefit from discussing and role-playing potential situations in which conflicts could arise and ways to respond to them with respect and understanding. Gender indicators need to be included in the project planning and monitored throughout the implementation.

If volunteers of different genders are sharing living spaces, it is important to make sure that appropriate accommodations are made, so that everyone has the necessary privacy for their comfort and security.

Youth with fewer opportunities

Youth living in poverty, conflict areas, lacking formal education or who face other challenges may find it particularly difficult to access volunteering opportunities. Whenever possible, communication and awareness-raising about the youth volunteer scheme should be conducted in rural areas, in local languages and using traditional media in addition to digital channels so that outreach can access vulnerable youth.

Few vulnerable youth may be able to afford to enroll in volunteering instead of taking up paid employment. Providing adequate housing (for volunteers away from home), stipends and other resources for youth volunteers and being realistic about how much time youth can devote to volunteering in addition to their personal responsibilities can help mitigate this challenge. Expectations should always be clear and fair. In addition, promoting an understanding of volunteerism and its benefits can help overcome obstacles to volunteering that may prevent some vulnerable youth from engaging in the process.

Persons with disabilities

Youth with disabilities can benefit greatly from, and be empowered by, participating in a youth volunteer scheme. However, their needs must be given due consideration and accommodation. Effort should be made to involve youth with disabilities as volunteers in activities as much as possible. If youth volunteers with disabilities are participating in activities, it is important to determine their needs in advance and to ensure that volunteers with disabilities are respected, safe and able to maintain their dignity at all times while conducting their assignment. This topic should be included in the volunteer orientation if the contingent of volunteers includes persons with disabilities.

Tolerance, diversity and cultural sensitivity

It is essential to emphasize cultural diversity when selecting volunteers and making up volunteer assignments. A good practice is to conduct training in intercultural communications to prepare youth for the potential challenges they might encounter in this regard.9 Not only do youth need to be knowledgeable about the local culture in their assignment location, but they must also respect and embrace one another’s diversity. Youth can learn a great deal from collaborating with peers from backgrounds that are different from their own and gain significant personal growth and insight.

In addition to general discussions about respecting diversity and being culturally sensitive and accepting, it might be helpful to include some practical conflict management exercises in the volunteer orientation to better prepare volunteers in the event they are confronted by a situation involving insensitivity, harassment or abuse. Sample scenarios of possible conflict situations and how to respond to them can be simulated through group exercises.

Social interactions between cultures promote feelings of respect, trust and goodwill and increase the likelihood that a volunteer will be satisfied with his or her placement. Since youth are setting examples for social behaviour standards of the future, it is essential that their volunteer experience instills a sense of acceptance, tolerance and respect.

Logframe and work plan samples

A Logical Framework (‘logframe’) can be used for the planning and evaluation of youth volunteer scheme activities. A logframe is a tool for improving the planning, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of projects. The logframe is a way of structuring the main elements in a project and highlighting the logical linkages between them. It is usually in the format of a table and includes all the goals and objectives outlined above. It is, in simple terms, a concise, visual and direct way of presenting the youth volunteer scheme.

UNV has paved the way and supported the launch of a National Volunteer Corps (CNV) in Cabo Verde. In 2013, the CNV assisted in the creation of three Volunteer Groups in Praia aimed at supporting the activities of local nursing homes. The volunteers trained by the CNV and the Red Cross assessed the needs of three local nursing homes and now develop recreational and social activities, organize family visits, help with administrative work, and provide psychological support and custodial care to the senior citizens. Here, a volunteer at the Red Cross nursing home in Praia, engages a resident in one of the occupational therapy activities he has developed. (Omar Camilo, 2014)
Sample logframe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Objectives and Activities</th>
<th>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</th>
<th>Means of Verification</th>
<th>Important Assumptions</th>
<th>Responsible Parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specific Objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expected Outputs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Activities</td>
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</table>

In addition to the logframe, an annual work plan details activities, indicators and outputs on a monthly and quarterly basis and identifies who is responsible for each activity and output. Monitoring and evaluating the work plan will require a regular update of the indicators every month. The progress made against each indicator should be presented to stakeholders every quarter and independent mid-term and final reviews of the youth volunteer scheme should be conducted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
<th>Planned Activities</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Planned budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4</td>
<td>Source of funds</td>
<td>Budget description</td>
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<td>Amounts</td>
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</table>
# Annex II

## Suggested checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Examples of materials/tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creating an enabling environment</td>
<td>Needs assessment</td>
<td>Researching the situation of youth and volunteerism in the country</td>
<td>Country/Regional reports on volunteerism, Draft or adopted legislation and policy relevant to youth and volunteerism</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Researching host community needs, including site-visit</td>
<td>Interview questionnaires</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feasibility assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Carrying out an internal and external feasibility study</td>
<td>Terms of reference for the feasibility study, Feasibility study report, including broad scheme outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder engagement</td>
<td>Holding (a) stakeholder meeting(s)</td>
<td>List of potential stakeholders, invitations, Background documents (e.g. research reports, feasibility study), Stakeholder agreements/memoranda of understanding (MOUs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and implementing volunteerism awareness campaigns</td>
<td></td>
<td>List of targeted audiences (e.g. community, employers, trade unions, Members of Parliament, Government officials), Campaign messaging adapted to each audience, Informational materials, such as good practice from other countries, Draft communications and outreach plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituting an Advisory Board</td>
<td></td>
<td>Invitations, Terms of Reference, By-laws or rules of procedure, First Advisory Board meeting agenda, CVs and applications of the candidates, Ballot papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying potential host organizations</td>
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<td>Call for expression of interest questionnaires</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning a scheme</td>
<td>Programme/project initiation</td>
<td>Defining the mandate of youth volunteer scheme and duration of the pilot</td>
<td>Advisory Board meeting minutes, Stakeholder consultation report, Programme/project initiation document (PID)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Defining the relation to national development priorities</td>
<td>National Development Plan, UNDAF PID</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Setting goals and expected outputs</td>
<td>PID</td>
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<td>Identifying the partners and agreeing on their roles</td>
<td>Logical framework</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Preparing the work plan</td>
<td>PID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase</td>
<td>Step</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Examples of materials/tools</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Selecting host organisations and agreeing on roles</td>
<td>List/database with future host organizations Agreements or MOUs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning the staffing needs</td>
<td>Organogram, including leadership, programme and administrative support Terms of reference for the posts Call for applications Application procedure/forms</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Planning financial resources</td>
<td>Project/programme budget Fundraising plan Financial management and accounting systems</td>
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<td>Recruiting (gradually) the staff</td>
<td>Interview protocols Contracts Training documents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Planning the establishment of regional volunteer centres (if applicable)</td>
<td>Advisory Board meeting minutes Planning document, covering: rationale, functions, budget, staffing, equipment, capacity building Host organization’s capacity questionnaires Terms of reference for the regional centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and outreach</td>
<td>Planning strategically communications and outreach</td>
<td>Planning strategically communications and outreach</td>
<td>Communications and outreach plan, with actionable objectives, specific actions, targeted audiences and responsibilities of stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Creating a visual identity</td>
<td>Logo and branding Promotional materials: fliers, brochures, t-shirts, lanyards Radio/TV advertisements</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Managing media relations</td>
<td>Database with media contacts (printed press, television, radio) Press release about youth volunteer scheme launch, press kit Social media kit</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Establishing and maintaining web presence</td>
<td>Text and images for the website Website features Social media posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer assignments</td>
<td>Agreeing on the scope of the scheme</td>
<td>Defining the foreseen volunteer assignments</td>
<td>Population statistics Demographic description of volunteers targeted (including number of volunteers)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Developing the policy and implementation guidelines</td>
<td>Terms of reference for the assignments Guidelines for host organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning local mentoring/suppor</td>
<td>Conditions of service for the volunteers Code of conduct Volunteer Agreement/Contracts Volunteer grant/stipend/allowance levels Housing contracts/agreements/leases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANNEX II: SUGGESTED CHECKLIST
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Examples of materials/tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability and risks</td>
<td>Developing a risk management plan</td>
<td>Matrix including risks and means of addressing risks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>management</td>
<td>Planning financial sustainability</td>
<td>Total budget</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning results/impact</td>
<td>Planning results/impact sustainability</td>
<td>Host organization succession plan</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>sustainability</td>
<td></td>
<td>Host organization succession agreement</td>
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<td>Leadership succession plan</td>
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<td>Volunteer transition plan (beyond the assignment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementing a scheme</td>
<td>Volunteer recruitment</td>
<td>Identifying suitable candidates</td>
<td>Call for applications</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Application forms</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Assessment criteria and methodology</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promoting the scheme</td>
<td></td>
<td>Poster, fliers, brochures, t-shirts, lanyards</td>
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<td>Social media posts</td>
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<td>Selecting the volunteers</td>
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<td>Confirmations of acceptance</td>
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<td>Volunteer agreements/contracts</td>
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<td>Community orientation</td>
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<td>Brochures about volunteering and youth volunteer scheme</td>
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<td>Meeting with local leadership</td>
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<td>Briefing community members</td>
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<td>List of suitable venues/environments, e.g. schools, community centres</td>
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<td>Brochures about volunteering and youth volunteer scheme</td>
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<td>Other promotional items</td>
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<td>Volunteer deployment/assignment</td>
<td>Training volunteers</td>
<td>Orientation/Training materials</td>
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<td>Training plan and schedule</td>
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<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Volunteer kits (with necessary paperwork, materials and equipment)</td>
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<td>Training plans/manual/agenda</td>
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<td>Training evaluation forms</td>
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<td>Survey questionnaire</td>
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<td>Meeting agendas for site visit</td>
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<td>Guidance notes on hosting volunteers</td>
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<td>Volunteer management and support</td>
<td>Putting volunteer management systems in place</td>
<td>Volunteer Management Manual Monitoring forms</td>
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<td>Database for volunteer management</td>
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<td>Volunteer reporting tool/template</td>
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<td>Other volunteer specific forms (as per administrative support needs)</td>
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<td>Putting oversight mechanisms in place</td>
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<td>Organizing regular meetings and</td>
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<td>refresher training</td>
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<td>Evaluation forms</td>
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<td>Knowledge sharing for peer support</td>
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<td>Platform for volunteers to communicate with each other</td>
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<td>Phase</td>
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<td>Supporting volunteerism promotion activities</td>
<td>Activity plans/proposals, Funding plans</td>
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<td>Learning from the experience</td>
<td>Monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td>Collecting data and periodic reporting</td>
<td>Reporting templates for volunteers, host organizations, partners and other stakeholders</td>
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<td>Data collection forms, Photographs, videos, testimonies, Media features/press clippings</td>
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<td>Evaluating the scheme</td>
<td>PID, Mid-term evaluation, Final volunteer evaluation, Meeting agendas, Survey questionnaires, Feedback forms, Stakeholder reports, Independent evaluation and audit</td>
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<td>Volunteer succession</td>
<td>Transferring knowledge and contacts</td>
<td>Handover report template, Mentoring programme</td>
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<td>Recognizing volunteer contributions</td>
<td>Certificates of service, Media features, Awards/ceremony</td>
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<td>Exit strategy</td>
<td>Implementing the Exit Strategy</td>
<td>Exit Strategy, Agreements/MOUs</td>
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<td>Setting up a volunteer alumni network</td>
<td>Online forum, Website, Alumni newsletter, Alumni reunions, Mentoring programme</td>
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<td>Providing post-assignment career support</td>
<td>Curricula vitae database, Networking events, Career training, Employment fair</td>
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<td>Doing research on the long term impact</td>
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<td>Terms of reference for the mid and long-term research impact</td>
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</table>

Incorporating youth in volunteer efforts and developing youth-focused programmes are clear priorities outlined in UNV’s strategic framework for 2014-2017. Youth volunteer schemes are a way to engage young people in the efforts to achieve development and peace in their communities. This guide compiles good practices from UNV field experiences in supporting national partners to establish youth volunteer schemes, and builds on these examples to describe the processes for establishing such schemes, including special considerations and ideas for activities.

This guidance note draws upon successes and lessons learned from UNV’s projects and programmes, and were collected through interviews and programme reviews. This document highlights and assesses aspects of UNV programming that are particular to youth volunteer schemes. The information herein is neither comprehensive nor universal and must be adapted to the local context.
Annex III

Bibliography

- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Inter-Parliamentary Union and UNV, 2004. Volunteerism and Legislation: A Guidance Note.
Thank you to the many individuals who made this publication possible

Fruzsina Molnar Straus for drafting the guidance based on initial work from Nelly Potevin and Stefania Sini. The review group from the field: Issoufou Boubacar, Jung Yuen Park, Myriam Montero, Noha Tarek and Bart Tilken and UNV HQ colleagues: Carol Atwell, Manon Bernier, Daniela Bosioc, Alba Candel Pau, Mae Chao, Marguerite Minani, Sasha Ramirez, Robert Toe. As well as Silvia Stuart for the editorial work.