Q 1 a) What is the advantage of deploying UN Volunteers as compared to other flexible workforce categories/affiliates and staff?

A: Among others, because:

- Globally, the typical UN Volunteer is an experienced, mid-career professional, with an average age of 37 years, and approximately 5-10 years of prior professional experience, who combines technical skills and professionalism with motivation and dedication. However, UNV offers a wide menu of UN Volunteers Integrated Talent Solutions (link) for different contexts (national, international, community, refugees, online, youth, expert, etc.).
- UNV provides a unique window for non-traditional staffing, opening up the UN System to interested global citizens and complementing the diversity of UN workforce (in terms of age range, gender, candidates from the Global South, diversity of backgrounds, etc.). UNV enables people from all walks of life to volunteer and contribute their skills and experience to the work of the UN (inclusion).
- The use of UN Volunteers does not create long-term staff liabilities.
- Operational backstopping of UN Volunteers, i.e. the bulk of day-to-day administration, including contractual and entitlements management and volunteers’ wellbeing, is handled by a UNV Field Unit, which helps alleviate stretched programme, administrative and HR resources of the host organization.
- UN Volunteers, being volunteers, are perceived as politically and socially neutral and non-threatening to stakeholders, especially at community levels. They typically have a light footprint and are close to the
communities they work with (often recruited from those communities); they tend to not have a negative impact on the local economy/culture.

- Volunteerism enables women (and other vulnerable groups) to participate in development processes. It promotes inclusion.
- UN Volunteers can be recruited for any assignment length between a few weeks and 4 years (flexibility).
- UNV has a large Global Talent Pool with 100 different professional areas serving over 30 UN entities, active candidate outreach, ability to recruit hard-to-find competencies, in large volume.
- UN Volunteers are a cost-effective talent solution (inclusive package of allowances and entitlements); UN Volunteers are well-covered by health, emergency, and life insurances and their living allowance ensures a safe, adequate and modest standard of living for themselves and eligible dependents.
- UN Volunteers are well-integrated into the United Nations system for non-staff personnel such as the United Nations Security Management System and other duty of care protections.
- Pools of skilled volunteers who contribute to national and sub-national capacity development at core of UN’s mandate.
- UN Volunteers impact the scale and scope of the intervention by mobilizing local community volunteers and by setting local volunteer schemes.
- National UN Volunteers and local volunteer schemes in projects assure ownership and sustainability beyond project cycle.
- Resilience: through volunteering, ordinary people become key drivers of the development process, volunteerism strengthens social cohesion and swift intervention and recovery after conflicts/disasters.
- Volunteers can be a powerful means to localize the SDGs/2030 Agenda.
- UN Volunteers are well integrated into the United Nations system for non-staff personnel such as the United Nations Security Management System and other duty of care protections.

Q 1 b) What is the true sense of the UN Volunteers?

A: Volunteerism is one of the most vital delivery mechanisms for social, environmental and economic transformation, ensuring a lasting impact with its ability to change people’s mindsets, attitudes and behaviors. People become actors of change (e.g. refugees, people from the communities, PWDs, Online Volunteers) and equal partners in the attainment of local, national and international progress towards sustainable human development and global peace. UNV recognizes the shared universal values underpinning volunteerism – free will, commitment, equity, engagement, solidarity, compassion, empathy and respect for others.

2. UNVs Candidate Pool

Q 2 a) How big is UNVs candidate Pool?

A: As at Feb. 2019 UNV has a Pool of 258,405 candidates (see Infographic here including the top 10 areas of expertise) representing well-qualified potential Volunteers from over 190 countries, between 18 to over 70 years of age, 59% male, 41% female, with an average working experience of 8.8 years, in over 100 different professional areas. The pool includes youth candidates, senior candidates, persons with disabilities and 212,000 candidates from the global South.

Q 2b) When does UNV advertise assignments?
A: The majority of assignments are filled from UNV’s talent pool. Based on the description of assignments provided by the host agency, UNV searches its talent pool for profiles that match the requirements listed therein. Identified candidates are contacted and assignment details are shared with them in order to confirm their interest and availability. Candidates are then short-listed for the final selection process which is conducted by the host agency.

Only difficult, highly specialized or high-volume assignments are advertised on the UNV website, social media and with professional associations. For posted assignments, candidates still need to be registered in the talent pool, if not already registered. The assignment code can then be selected in the candidate profile to express her/his interest in the advertised assignment.

Through outreach efforts, UNV ensures to attract candidates from underrepresented nationalities as well as diversity of its talent pool (e.g. inclusion of ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, indigenous groups, LGBTQ, etc.).

3. UN Volunteer Integrated Talent Solutions

Q 3 a) What are the different UN Volunteer Integrated Talent Solutions (categories/modalities) that UNV offers, what are the main parameters and what is each category of Volunteer meant to be engaged for/supposed to offer a solution?

A: UNV has created a public website page for its UN partners here entitled: “Information for UN entities: Host a UN Volunteer” with useful information related to recruitment of UN Volunteers and with many links. This page also includes a short description of each UN Volunteer category as well as a link to an Infographic on UN Volunteer Integrated Talent Solutions here reflecting the main parameters for each category:

- National and international UN Volunteers (Specialists)
- UN Youth Volunteers (Youth and University)
- UN Community Volunteers
- Online Volunteers
- UN Expert Volunteers (under pilot)

Main parameters for each category are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Assignment Duration</th>
<th>Annual proforma cost (global average in US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **UN Expert Volunteers (under pilot)** |     | Pilot being conducted on exceptional basis; minimum justification to be provided:  
   - Context-specific rare skills critical to UN  
   - Expertise (generally 10+ with masters, 12+ Bachelors) | 3-48 months         | $73,000                      |
| National                            | 25+ |                                                                              |                     | $26,000                                    |
| **UN Volunteers (formerly “Specialists”)** |     | At least 2 years of experience                                               | 3-48 months         | $57,000                      |
| International                       | 25+ |                                                                              |                     | $20,000                                    |
| National                            | 22+ |                                                                              |                     |                                           |
| UN Youth Volunteers - Youth | International | 18-29 years | 0-2 years | 6-24 months | $48,000 |
| UN Youth Volunteers - University | International | 18-29 years | 0-2 years; students or recent graduates | 3-6 months | $18,000 |
| UN Community Volunteers | National | 18+ years | Basic education “maximum” | 1-48 months | $7,300 |
| Online Volunteers | Global | 18+ years | Opportunity specific | 1-26 weeks | From $1,950 for 1-5 opportunities to $126,000 for 200+ opportunities |

Q 3 b) For which type of assignments can UN Youth Volunteers can be deployed?

A: UN Youth Volunteers are ideally suited to areas where there is a need for innovation, community outreach, youth engagement, social media or work with marginalized communities. UN Youth Volunteers have less than two years of work experience, are between 18 and 29 years of age and can serve up to a maximum of 2 years. For a two pager on this category see [here](#).

Q 3 c) What are UN Community Volunteers and what differentiates them from national UN Volunteers?

A: UN Community Volunteers are part of an integrated talent solution to bring local expertise to development and peace solutions. UN Community Volunteers work where they live on projects that impact their own community. UN partners can mobilize UN Community Volunteers in large numbers from the communities where they will be assigned, bringing direct impact and resilience building to UN initiatives. Combined with the expertise of international and national UN Specialist Volunteers, there is great potential to transfer knowledge and build capacity at the local and national levels with this community-based volunteer solution. UNV suggests, in the recruitment of UN Community Volunteers, to invest in a UN Community Volunteer Coordinator, who will coordinate and support recruitment, onboarding, learning, contract management and volunteer well-being for the community volunteer initiative. UNV recommends that these coordinators are National UN Specialists.

National UN Volunteers are generally nationals of the host country but may also be recognized refugees and stateless persons within the country or even under certain circumstances non-nationals with legal residency. National UN Volunteers are recruited locally. Like UN Community Volunteers they often live and work in their own communities and have “at minimum” a high school diploma. However, some assignments require national UN volunteers to have professional and technical skills and a bachelor’s degree or equivalent professional experience. Other assignments require national UN Volunteers who can bring a strong community connection, local knowledge and networks.

The main distinction between UN Community Volunteers and national UN Volunteers is that the first have “maximum” a high school diploma and the latter have this as a “minimum”. Therefore, the costs of UN Community Volunteers are also lower than those of national UN Volunteers.

Q 3 d) Can UN Community Volunteers serve on a part-time basis?
A: Yes, they can serve on a part-time or full-time basis. In both cases the UN Community Volunteer receives a living allowance, though if working on a part-time basis the allowance is reduced.

Q3 e) Can the UN partners recruit refugees as UN Volunteers and if so, under which modalities?

A: Yes, refugees can be recruited under the national COS, under the Refugee UN Volunteer COS (under pilot), and under the UN Community Volunteer policy, which will in March be fully integrated into the national UN Volunteer Conditions of Service.

Q3 f) Can UN Volunteers be recruited for UN entity headquarters and other H-Duty station locations?

A: Yes, but all H-duty station-based UN Volunteers are considered “international” irrespective of their nationalities and are recruited under the international COS¹. This is in line with the principle of UN Staff Rules and Regulations for internationally recruited staff in H-Duty Stations.

4. Recruitment time

Q4 a) What is the average recruitment time for UN Volunteers for national and for international UN Volunteers?

A: The recruitment time for national or international UN Volunteer normally ranges from 6-12 weeks from approval of the Description of Assignment until arrival at the duty station. The time between expressing interest in engaging UN Volunteers and their arrival at the designated duty station varies and depends on the urgency of the request, the availability of talents required, the chosen category and the turnaround time on required inputs on the part of the requesting agency. Some of the reasons that can influence the time the recruitment processes take are: the need for quality oversight (role of the Affiliate Partnership Unit in Budapest), the shortlisting process (e.g. delays in shortlisting by involved UN partner COs will also lead to delays in recruitment), medical clearance required and visa delivery.

Q4 b) What is the UNV accelerated deployment protocol/fast track workflow?

A: The accelerated deployment protocol refers to simplified recruitment procedures under a single decision-making authority. A host entity may request UNV to recruit candidates for emergency or crisis operations by skipping steps of a standard recruitment process and on the request of an approving authority for an emergency operation. Multiple mechanisms are followed to speed up the recruitment process such as a single source recruitment, desk reviewed candidates’ CVs, and UNV fast track workflow. Specific requirements of a host entity are followed by UNV upon requests for emergency protocols activation.

5. UNV’s new cost recovery methodology for onsite Volunteers

Q5 a) Why has UNV introduced a new cost recovery mechanism for UN Volunteers (onsite)?

A: UNV has revised its cost recovery mechanism to ensure cost recovery simplification, to safeguard UNV’s financial sustainability, and to continue harmonizing cost recovery mechanisms with all UN partner entities.

¹ UN Community Volunteers could serve in H-Duty Stations in appropriate community-based projects.
Furthermore, the UNV proforma costs have been updated to reflect internal workload attribution over the lifespan of on-site UN Volunteer assignments.

Q 5 b) What new cost recovery mechanism was introduced and what explains the approach taken?

A: To arrive at a uniform cost recovery approach that is transparent and easy to apply, UNV’s new cost recovery mechanism introduces a three-tiered methodology, applied to all UN partners, as follows:

- **A one-time Deployment Charge**: this is a charge aimed to recover the on-boarding costs for deploying the UN Volunteers and was introduced to better reflect the UNV internal workload attribution independent of the volunteer contract duration. The initial workload of identification, rostering, selection, etc. up to the point of deployment is namely the same, regardless of how long the UN Volunteer remains under contract. These Deployment Charges for each category are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Charge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International UN Volunteer</td>
<td>$4,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Youth Volunteer (international)</td>
<td>$4,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National UN Volunteers</td>
<td>$1,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Youth Volunteer (national)</td>
<td>$1,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN University Volunteer (international)</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN University Volunteer (national)</td>
<td>$ 990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Community Volunteer</td>
<td>$ 650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Recurring Charge**: this is a percentage charge (13%) applied monthly, aimed at recovering the recurring maintenance cost for administering the UN Volunteers once deployed. In brief, the Recurring Charge is introduced to cover UNV’s staffing, and other related, costs spent on volunteer contracts and entitlements management and support (e.g. hiring UN Volunteer in Atlas; global payroll administration, contract extension or reassignment etc.)

- **Country Office Support Cost**: this is a monthly percentage charge (2.5%), aimed to cover the costs of transactions performed in the UNDP Country Offices towards recruitment, deployment and administration of UN Volunteers. The amount collected is fully distributed to UNDP Country Offices once a year.

Q 5 c) What is the difference between the old (before 2019) and the new (as of beginning 2019) cost recovery charge for on-site UN Volunteers?

- The old average UNV cost recovery charge for onsite international UN Volunteers was 15% and the new average cost recovery charge is 18% for the first year of the assignment. For the second and subsequent years new average cost recovery charge is 13%.

- The old current average UNV cost recovery charge for onsite national UN Volunteers was 18% and new average cost recovery charge introduced in 2019 is 20% for first year assignments. For the second and subsequent years new average cost recovery charge is 13%.

Therefore, UN Volunteer assignments become more cost effective after year one of the assignment.

Q 5 d) Why is the overall proforma costs for year two and year three of the assignment lower than the proforma costs for the first year?

A: The proforma costs decrease from the second year of the assignment onwards. This is because the proforma cost for year one includes the one-time deployment charge and other initial/one-time
entitlements such as the applicable Settling-in Grant and assignment travel costs (excluding repatriation lumpsum travel which is applied in the final year of the assignment). For following years (after year one) and for extensions only the Recurring Charge of 13% and the Country Office Support Cost of 2.5% are applied.

Q 5 e) At which stage of the recruitment process will the Deployment Charge introduced in 2019 be charged to the UN partners and does the UN partner pay this charge if a recruitment is not completed successfully?

A: The Deployment Charge will be charged to the UN partners through the monthly Service Clearing Account (SCA) at the start of the assignment. If a recruitment request is cancelled or not completed successfully, the charge will not apply. However, if this were to happen excessively, meaning that recruitment requests are cancelled or that no successful candidates are selected despite several submissions of candidate profiles, the UN partners is asked to explain the rationale for this and UNV would need to discuss with the UN partners that a specific charge be levied to cover UNV’s staff time spent on such recruitments. Once a UN Volunteer is deployed, the Deployment Charge will apply, even in cases where UN Volunteers may leave prematurely it will not be reimbursed.

6. Cost elements included in the UNV pro-forma cost estimates, cost recovery charges, and entitlements/allowances for the UN Volunteers

Q 6 a) How are the proforma cost estimates for UN Volunteers structured, what are the cost recovery charges included therein, what are the entitlements and allowances for UN Volunteers in the proforma cost estimate and what is the “take home” pay for UN Volunteers?

A: The proforma cost estimates that UNV shares with UN partner COs upon request are structured in three parts/ columns: the left part is the Volunteer Entitlements, the middle part the Volunteer Assignment Costs and one right part are the UNV Volunteer Managements costs.

Volunteer Entitlements: included is, as per the applicable COS, Monthly Living Allowance, Family Allowance, Settling-in-Grant (SIG), Well-being differential and Resettlement Allowance.

Volunteer Assignment Costs: included is, as per the applicable COS, Insurance, Learning, Travel and Sundries.

UNV Volunteer Managements costs: included is the (one-time) Volunteer Deployment Charge, the Recurring Charge and the Country Office Support Cost as explained in the above question on cost-recovery charges for onsite UN Volunteers:

The “take home” pay for the UN Volunteers is primarily the Monthly Living Allowance (MLA). One does however need to take into consideration the overall “package” of MLA, other entitlements as well as travel (pre-departure entitlements, assignment and repatriation travel lumpsums), family-, resettlement-, learning allowances, insurance- and medical/security evacuation coverage.

See below example for a 12 months’ assignment of an international UN Volunteer for Cameroun.
7. UNV’s Online Volunteering service and the introduction of cost recovery and new pricing model

Q 7 a) What is Online Volunteering and what is UNV’s role?

A: UNV manages the Online Volunteering service, which connects UN entities and other development organizations with Online Volunteers. Besides managing the platform, UNV provides expert advice to help UN entities translate their needs into conducive online volunteering opportunities. Unlike on-site UN Volunteers, Online Volunteers contribute their skills and talents from wherever they are, working from a computer, tablet or mobile phone. They help UN entities achieve their goals by completing concrete, time-bound tasks/opportunities in support of peace and development. Online Volunteers are not “UN Volunteers” and do not benefit from this status. They, together with all users of the Online Volunteering website, are governed by the Terms of Use (here).

Q 7 b) What are some of the types of assignments that Online Volunteers usually carry out?

A: Online Volunteers come from a broad range of backgrounds and can help with any task that meets the service’s opportunity criteria. Typically, tasks relate to writing and editing, art and design, translation, outreach and advocacy or research. Read about success stories on the Online Volunteering blog or browse current opportunities for inspiration.
Q. 7 c) Why has UNV introduced cost recovery for the Online Volunteering service?

A: Only in 2019, after 18 years, UNV introduced a cost recovery model for the use of the Online Volunteering service that UNV manages. More than 45 UN entities have engaged Online Volunteers via the internet over the past 18 years to support implementation of their mandates for peace and development. With the increased demand for the service, and to ensure enough dedicated capacity as well as to invest in further service innovations, UNV has started recovering costs for its advisory services, user support and the service’s state-of-the-art IT infrastructure.

Q. 7 d) How is the new OV pricing model structured and what explains this approach?

A: UNV developed the below pricing model, based on the total number of opportunities/tasks (i.e. Descriptions of Assignments). The pricing model is based on the anticipated number of opportunities a UN entity plans to publish during a calendar year. The UN entity can choose one of 6 “bands” and decide whether it wants to pay centrally, regionally or country by country. The lowest band covers 1-5 opportunities and the highest, most flexible band covers any number of opportunities exceeding 200. UN entities can authorize additional funds throughout the year if their use of the Online Volunteering service exceeds the selected band. Should actual consumption remain in a band below the one selected, UNV will credit the difference toward the UN entities fee for the following year. Through one “opportunity” the UN entity can involve as many volunteers as needed to complete the task.

Q. 7 e) What does the fee for OV use include?

A: The service fee covers all account management services, access to volunteer and opportunity management tools, and expert advice on OV opportunity/task design. Through each opportunity, UN partners connect to UNV’s community of over 650,000 online volunteers and can mobilize as many volunteers as they require for the specific task to be completed.

Q. 7 f) How are recipient organizations charged for use of the Online Volunteering service: globally, regionally or at country level?

A: Recipient organizations can choose how fees will be charged: globally, regionally or at country level. This flexible approach takes into account diverse preferences and budget owner practices that exist in the UN System. Organizations will be able to monitor consumption in real time through their Online Volunteering account. As 2019 is the first year of UNV’s Online Volunteering cost recovery model, we welcome partners’ feedback!

Q. 7 g) What billing system (globally, regionally or at country level) is easiest?

A: Administratively, a central billing process is easiest – and usually most cost effective especially if global consumption reaches band A (more than 200 opportunities). Through one payment (band A) at the beginning of the year, the UN partners could give all its country offices the possibility to create an unlimited amount of opportunities. Regardless of whether fees will be paid centrally or country by country, it is recommended to select a higher volume to avoid the need for obtaining further authorizations during the year. If necessary and as stated above, unused funds can be carried forward towards payment of the following year’s fee if consumption remains in a band below the one selected.
Q 7 h) Where can we find the Online Volunteering pricing?

A: OV pricing and other relevant information is publicly available at https://www.unv.org/host-a-un-volunteer.

Q 7 i) How is the billing for Use of Online Volunteering service handled?

A: The basic principle is that the UN partner (country office or other unit, as desired by the partner), during its annual budgeting process, estimates the volume of its OV usage during the next year, and authorizes UNV to charge the respective pricing band by sending a duly completed “Service Request Form” to their focal point in the Online Volunteering service team or to info@onlinevolunteering.org. During the budget year, UN partners have access to real-time data regarding their OV usage and can provide UNV with an additional Service Request Form authorizing additional funds in case they exceed the OV pricing band they originally opted for. Reversely, when the number of opportunities at the end of the budget period falls in a band below the one selected, UNV will carry over unused funds to the Partner’s service fee for the following year.

8. Flexibilization of VLA rates for national UN Volunteers

Q 8 a) What is the process to be followed if UN partner COs would like to request changes to VLA rates if deemed too low considering the costs of living and what is the flexibility range for different modalities?

A: With the decentralization process that has now been completed UNV has increased delegation of decision making on VLA rates for national UN Volunteers to its Regional Offices. Requests for adjustments to VLA rates should be directed to the UNV Regional Office. Adjustments will need to be made in agreement with the UNCT so that the revised VLA rate can be applied to all UN entities in the same country / duty station.

9. Other questions:

Q 9 a) Can the UN partner recommend candidates for UNV assignments (Locally Identified Candidates (LIC)) and how does this work?

A: Yes, provided that the LIC meets all qualification requirements in the DOA, has been formally (through a LIC request form) recommended by the hiring manager and is registered in the UNV Talent Pool prior to the issuance of an offer. For a LIC, if selected, a candidate interview report form/checklist will need to be submitted to UNV.

Q 9 b) Can UN Volunteers be sent on emergency missions?

A: UN Volunteers can be reassigned to another UN partner CO or UN partner emergency mission, with the consent of the UN Volunteer when the change will be longer than 3 months. Temporary assignment of international UN Volunteers for less than 3 months would be considered mission travel. Relevant changes to DOAs may be made when a UN Volunteer is reassigned, provided that the UN Volunteers meets all the qualification requirements in the revised DOA. There are no limitations on reassignments between types of assignments (national to international, youth to specialist etc), provided that the UN Volunteer meets all the requirements in the new DOA.
Q 9 c) How can the UN partner participate in calls for fully funded UN Volunteers?

A: The process for fully funded UN Volunteers is a donor driven and fully decentralized process. UN partners COs at the field level contact a UNV representative at the UNV Field Unit or Regional Office and expresses its interest in hosting a sponsored UN Volunteer. The UNV Field Unit or Regional Office will inform about the priorities of UNV’s funding partners with regard to country, UN partner or thematic focus, as well as the anticipated timelines for submission of Description of Assignment (DOA) for consideration. UNV launches a decentralized call for DOAs according to the timelines negotiated with the respective funding partners (this usually happens during the first half of the year). The UNV Field Unit or the Regional Office will then approach UN entities to support the development of DOAs in line with the priorities of the funding partners. The subsequent steps are further described in this two pager on fully funded UN Volunteers for hosting entities here.

Q 9 d) Are UN Volunteers provided with any pre-deployment training through UNV?

A: Fully funded or co-funded UN Youth Volunteers receive an Assignment Preparation Training (APT) at UNV HQs, normally prior to the beginning of their assignment. They learn about the UN Youth Volunteer Programme and its contribution to peace and development, reflect on the realities of living and working in a multicultural environment, understand practices of community engagement and promoting volunteerism, facilitate the personal and professional development inherent to the volunteer experience. The UN Youth Volunteers that are not Fully Funded (both national and international) are being invited to the UN Youth Volunteer Workshops (that are being conducted at Regional level twice per year in each Region). The scope of the workshops is focusing on leadership, skills building and career development as well as on the challenges and realities that are specific for a given region.

Other UN Volunteers receive a learning allowance (included in the proforma costs) that they may use for any training activities deemed relevant and in line with applicable policies, including but not limited to learning official UN languages, local or other relevant language.