**Minutes of Project Appraisal Committee - 14 April 2011**

**Projects Reviewed:**

1. Swaziland – Strengthening the Capacity of National Volunteer Infrastructure for HIV and AIDS Response in Swaziland
2. Haiti - Community Centered Sustainable Development through Volunteerism

**Participants:**

Naheed Haque PAC Chair

Allen Jennings Development Division, DD

Benjamin Kumpf UNV Gender Action Team

Deborah Verzuu Partnerships and Communications Division, PCG

Edmund Bengtsson Quality Assurance Unit, QAU

Ghulam Isaczai Development Division, DD

Kevin Gilroy Peace Division, PD

Mae Chao

Marlyse Brenner Volunteer Resources and Recruitment Section, VRRS

Moraig Henderson Peace Division

Robert Palmer Development Division, DD

Tapiwa Kamuruko Development Division, DD

Svend Amdi Madsen Management Services Division, MSD

Veronique Zidi-Aporeigah Peace Division, DP

Jocelyne Patel PAC Secretariat

Written comments/endorsements received from the following: Mae Chao, Edmund Bengtsson, Marlyse Brenner

General: The PAC chair opened the meeting by welcoming participants and requested that the two presentations be limited to 10 to 15 minutes to allow sufficient time for questions and clarifications. She thanked those who had provided comments in writing prior to the meeting and encouraged others to do so in future to facilitate the PAC review process.

**1. Swaziland – Strengthening the Capacity of National Volunteer Infrastructure for HIV and AIDS Response in Swaziland**

1. **Presentation:**

The Chief of the Development Division followed by the Portfolio Manager introduced the project framing it within the context of the Swaziland UNDAF 2011-2015. The UNDAF singles out HIV and AIDS as the greatest development challenge facing the country and is one of the five key priority areas of the UN system interventions.

The national response mechanism has noted that volunteerism could be one of the practical means to mitigate and fight HIV and AIDS through community engagement and participation. However, there is a lack of coordination of volunteer activities in the country due to a weak enabling environment for volunteering and the absence of a capacity building strategy for CSOs who are at the forefront in promoting volunteering activities in Swaziland.

Relevance to Programme strategy: The project falls under the priority area of “Delivery of Basic Services” by building local capacity to deliver services in primary health care and HIV/AIDS.

 Programme development started in 2008 under PRODEFA funding but suffered delays due to various changes at senior management level in UNDP Swaziland office.

The project has three outputs:

1. Management and coordination systems and structures of CSOs in Swaziland are enhanced for improved response to HIV and AIDS at all levels (national, regional and local) in line with the National Strategic Framework on HIV and AIDS and the Decentralization Policy
2. The environment for community-based volunteering for fighting HIV/AIDS is strengthened;
3. The capacity of national volunteer infrastructure for HIV and AIDS response in Swaziland is strengthened

Sustainability: The project builds on existing infrastructure and institutions and will provide training-of-trainers (ToT) at national, regional and community levels. Staff of a number of CSOs and VIOs will be trained and senior beneficiary partners, including NERCHA, will see their management coordination capacities enhanced.

Funding: Total budget: $989,835 of which 250,000 from UNDP; $250,000 from UNV/SVF; estimated $300,000 for 2 Fully-funded UN Volunteer and $111,600 in-kind contribution from NERCHA. Unfunded budget: $78,235

Project duration**:** Three years

Implementation: NIM - National Emergency Response Council for HIV/AIDS (NERCHA).

A team of two international and four national UN Volunteers will support the project management unit. They will be involved in capacity building and training activities with government entities and the CSOs/NGOs and will perform specific activities in the management of the project, such as M&E and communications. The two International UN Volunteers will be placed at the NERCHA office in Mbabane while the four National UN Volunteers will be placed in the four NERCHA regional offices (Nhohho, Lubombo, Manzini and Shiselweni regions).

1. **Discussions and Recommendations:**

The project was commended for its emphasis on capacity building of implementing partners, CSOs and VIOs to enhance their operational and management skills - including in the mobilization and management of volunteers - for improved HIV/AIDS service delivery.

Volunteerism: It was felt that the concept of volunteerism for development and community mobilization was not sufficiently developed in the document and that the linkage between volunteerism and HIV/AIDS would need to be more strongly articulated.

Lessons learned: UNV in collaboration with UNDP has a long and extensive involvement with both capacity development, governance and direct alleviation programmes on HIV/AIDS globally, in Africa, and more specifically in Southern Africa stretching back more than ten years. This has led to a number of evaluations, lessons learned papers and discussions. It was recommended to add a section on lessons learned and how prior experience has informed the current project by adopting/adapting good practices identified.

More generally, it was recommended that future project documents include a section on lessons learned from previous assistance and how those informed the development of the project.

Gender:

Training approaches for men and women are quite different and ideally, different training modules, for both male and women should be developed. It was recommended that this be taken into consideration when developing training modules for CSOs and VIOs.

Training : The basic premise of the project is that volunteers involved through community-based groups will enhance HIV/AIDS response. The indicators for Output 2 (pp21) focus on counting organisations trained and implementing. It was suggested to add indicators related to the volunteers – number recruited, number retained length of engagement. In addition, it would be useful to assess the effectiveness of volunteers as service providers and for this it would be important to have baselines in terms of number of HIV/AIDS cases, level of service delivery and initial participation levels.

It was also suggested to add an indicator or a paragraph that would explain how training will lead to capacity building and the empowerment that would result from such training.

Monitoring, reporting, and evaluation: To the question on monitoring and reporting mechanisms in place, the Chief of DD responded that the Portfolio Manager for Swaziland will schedule monitoring visits to the project to support the Programme Officer. A Project Progress report concentrating on the volunteerism component is a requirement for all projects and is submitted on a yearly basis to report on progress reached and issues, as necessary. A mid-term and end-of project evaluations were also planned and budgeted for.

The PAC Chair emphasized that it was critical to ensure that UNDP incorporate in their annual reports results on volunteerism and that the M&E International UN Volunteer should provide the relevant inputs/material.

Project Resources and budget: The costing of the two Fully-funded UN Volunteers was noted. It was agreed that a separate column would be added under the budget in Annex 3 page 30 to indicate the funding source (UNDP or UNV, in-kind NERCHA and unfunded).

Conclusion: Based on the comments and responses received, the PAC Chair recommends the approval of the project document by the Executive Coordinator.

1. **Haiti - Community Centred Sustainable Development through Volunteerism**
2. **Presentation:** The Chair and the Chief of PD provided the background to this initiative. A year after the earthquake the situation in Haiti has not changed much with 1.3 million still living in temporary shelters in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area and over 500,000 people having left the disaster areas to seek refuge in the rest of the country.

The project Initiation phase is the product of a series of UNV-led consultations (VIKIS/PD) that took place during the course of 2008-2011. The scoping mission which took place in February 2011, after the elections, included meetings with UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, MINUSTAH Civil Affairs and the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Civil Action, MYSCA. The mission also engaged in a series of consultation with more than 30 CBOs, NGOs and VIOS in Leogane, Cap Haitien, and Port au Prince. The priorities that emerged were centred on the need to provide vocational training combined with civic action and engagement for the youth and marginalized populations, including the handicapped population.

 The proposed PID has 4 outputs:

1. Setting up of a project team – 1 international UN Volunteer (Project coordinator/Community Voluntary Action Specialist), 1 national UN Volunteer (Reporting and Communications Officer), and a community-centered sustainable development Advisor (consultant or International UN Volunteer to provide overall guidance to the project design and negotiation process with government, UN agencies and other partners;
2. Report of the State of Volunteerism in Haiti produced as an advocacy tool;
3. Sustainable Community-based model designed, aimed at addressing combined priorities of vocational training and civic engagement;
4. Project document developed.

Project resources: total resources required: $208,223 of which $80,000 from the SVF and the $128,223 to come from the contribution from the Government of Brazil of $600,000.

Implementation: UNV Direct execution (for the PID phase)

1. **Discussions and Recommendations**:

It was overall agreed that based on the extensive consultations that have already taken place and the expectations from the local communities, it was critical to focus the PID on programme development, advocacy and consultations with other UN partners in order to be able to launch the full phase as soon as possible and show results on the ground.

Cover page and Purpose section of the document: More emphasis should be placed on the cover page (brief description) and in the document on the development challenges we are trying to address and how our intervention would fit into the national priorities rather than the current emphasis on UNV and its role, especially if UNV is trying to interest other agencies in the initiative.

Report on the Status of Volunteerism in Haiti: As a follow-up to the many consultations already held, and in view of the country situation, PAC members felt that instead of a report on the Status of volunteerism in Haiti, a mapping of the organizations involved in volunteerism and how they are addressing the needs of youth, women and disadvantaged groups would be more appropriate.

 A full-fledged report on the Status of volunteerism in Haiti would represent a major undertaking based on experience in other countries and could be carried out in the context of the full phase, if deemed necessary at that stage.

Community-Centred Sustainable Development Plans: It was suggested to incorporate the development of such plans as an output of the full project document rather than the PID. Alternatively, some development plans could be developed and later further refined and presented for funding to government, donors and other partners right away.

Legal basis for operations in the country:

It was emphasized that in order for UNV to put personnel on the ground (UN Volunteers or staff) it needs other agencies, in this case UNDP which has the legal basis, hence UNDP should be fully consulted during the PID phase. UNDP which represents UNV at the field level will also have to sign the full scale project document.

Project Board: it was agreed that the Chief PD should be the only executive with the DEC to play the role of Senior Supplier. Regarding the function of Project Manager, while as a general rule, UN Volunteers should not hold fiduciary responsibility, in this particular case, since it is a PID and all transactions will be done at UNV Hqtrs, it was felt that the International UN Volunteer should occupy that function but limited to the technical/substantive aspects (DOA to be revised accordingly).

Management arrangements: The justification for the use of direct execution should be taken out as in the cases of the PID it is not necessary to justify the use of this modality.

Staffing: Regarding the staffing composition, in addition to the Project coordinator (International UNV) and the Communications and Results Reporting Officer (National UNV), as proposed in the document it was suggested to recruit a community-Centred Sustainable Development Advisor for a six-month period either on a continuous basis or on a retainer contract. The individual will project provide overall guidance to the project design and negotiation process with government, UN agencies and other partners;

 The Portfolio manager highlighted that since the UN Volunteers will be working at the community level they should be fluent in Creole to facilitate dialogue with the communities.

Project resources: Whereas the $80,000 in SVF funding was endorsed by the SMT at the time of the review of the concept note, it was felt that the project should tap the Government of Brazil funding of $600,000 allocated to UNV for Haiti back in 2010 and in UNV bank account.

The cost of the various scoping missions which have taken place so far were charged to the travel budget of the unit. It was clarified that in future this cost could have been charged to the PRODEFA (SVF-funded).

Conclusion: Based on the comments and responses received, the PAC Chair recommended the approval of the PID by the Executive Coordinator.

Prepared by: Jocelyne Patel, CPPU for PAC Secretariat

Approved by: Naheed Haque, PAC Chair