

interested in promoting volunteerism in Lesotho. The Forum has engaged in various efforts towards reviving volunteer momentum in the country, through the organisation and celebration of 2007 Lesotho International Volunteer Day, information sharing and cooperation in volunteer activity. A second Forum, focusing on youth empowerment, Lesotho Youth Volunteer Forum has also recently been put in place, to draw on the life experiences and expectations of Basotho youth for the promotion of volunteerism.

Lesotho Youth Volunteer Forum brings together diverse youth groups such as OlympiaAfrica Youth Ambassadors Programme, Crossroads, Kick 4 Life and Boys and Girls Education Movement and draws on existing members of the Lesotho Volunteer Forum such as Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association, Lesotho Girl Guides Association and Lesotho Workcamps Association. The purpose of this Forum is to give youth a cohesive voice in development, to present their unique perspective and to give them their own platform for youth issues. In time and given sufficient organisational development support, this Forum will be well placed to design and deliver on youth focused development projects.

Both Lesotho Volunteer Forum and Lesotho Youth Volunteer Forum provide a structure and methodology to access quality information on and support for volunteerism in Lesotho, which will prove useful in establishing and developing the National Volunteer Corps.

Among reasons stated by some Basotho for not volunteering is the belief that it is for students and retirees who do not need an income; that volunteering is not rewarding; that it can be done only on a part-time basis; that it is for non-professionals and will not enhance job prospects; that volunteering is for people who 'can't get a better job'; that the benefits of volunteering are not clearly stated and that there is no understanding of the concept of volunteerism. We know, on the contrary, that volunteerism enhances an individual's personal growth and development. It anchors their unique contribution to the world, allowing them an opportunity and an outlet to contribute to addressing the most pressing problems of their society in a tangible and concrete manner. Each volunteer placement offers both the volunteer and the host organisation the potential for enormous developmental gains. In countries such as Mozambique and Liberia where volunteerism and civic engagement have a long tradition, the drive for development is manifest from the individual at local level right to the heart of government. In Mozambique, plans are firmly underway to establish a national volunteer scheme and Liberia has enjoyed the benefits of its National Youth Volunteer Service since 2007. In Lesotho, the most effective and efficient way of dispelling myths around volunteerism is to establish the National Volunteer Corps and to show, through its volunteers and its host organisations, the power of volunteerism for development. UNV Lesotho has an extensive database of callers to UN House, including graduates, that can be readily deployed to harness their expressed interest in volunteering.

The setting up of a Government led National Volunteer Corps programme will present a number of challenges. However, it can easily and as much as possible, build upon existing experiences of on-going volunteering in-country, through volunteer involving organisations such as, Peace Corps, SkillsShare International, DFD, NAC, Lesotho Workcamps Association, Lesotho Red Cross and UNV, that could contribute substantially to the success of the programme in many aspects, including selection, training, monitoring and evaluation, and the identification of host organisations and volunteer posts. It is also worth bearing in mind that the quality of a volunteer's experience in the National Volunteer Corps will be enhanced by clear Terms of Reference, coaching and guidance before, during and after their placement. Each volunteer will bring their own particular competencies and college experiences to bear in their placement. The placement, in turn, will act on the volunteer, developing their capacity to contribute to society, giving them an understanding and appreciation of what it means to be a volunteer and the benefits that accrue

Taking into account the high number of unemployed graduates and their awareness that work experience would improve their opportunities, it is expected that many of them will apply for a volunteer post. A well designed database and transparent selection procedures, with the full participation of host organisations, will be required to match requirements of the different posts with skills of the candidates. The unemployment rate is high among both men and women graduates. Therefore, the National Volunteer Corps programme will promote a gender balance and where possible, implement a targeted recruitment campaign in order to fulfill the gender aspect.

The National Volunteer Corps will promote volunteering and mobilise unemployed young graduates as volunteers to support development activities and the delivery of services, placing them in projects managed by government, international and national NGOs, the private sector as well as potentially within the UN system. Additionally, by serving in the National Volunteer Corps, the graduates will be exposed to relevant work experience. The work experience and training received will improve their prospects for job opportunities. During the first years, at least 100 graduates will have the opportunity to enrol in the National Volunteer Corps for a one-year period, to gain experience and to contribute to the development of Lesotho. The total number of graduates at any point in time may vary but it is anticipated that the Corps will have an average of 100 serving volunteers in a given year.

**(a) Project approach and national strategy**

**E. STRATEGY**

- A. Establish a National Volunteer Corps for young graduates from university and third-level technical training
- B. Mobilise unemployed young professionals to support Lesotho's development efforts and to improve their job prospects by obtaining work experience and training
- C. Complement ongoing efforts by the Government of Lesotho, UNDP and other national institutions to the implementation of development programmes, including the Millennium Development Goals
- D. Promote coordination among Volunteer Involving Organisations in the management of volunteers and their contribution to defined development priorities.

Specifically, the project will strive to achieve the following:

The Government of Lesotho has placed employment creation as a top priority in its poverty reduction strategy. This project will contribute towards increased employment opportunities, household security, and enhanced sustainable livelihoods, focusing on the youth, which constitutes more than 40 percent of the population.

**D. PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

from volunteerism for development. Post-placement, graduates who have served with the National Volunteer Corps will be supported in planning their career, through CV writing workshops, interview training and practice and exposure to employment opportunities through a job fair. Post placement, volunteers from the National Volunteer Corps will be in demand as well-rounded individuals who can usefully contribute to the social and economic development of their country.

In the area of technical support, UNDP will provide one International UNV Specialist in volunteer schemes and two National UNV specialists: One of the support, equipment and part of the cost during the first 3 years, especially related to training and monitoring.

### (c) UNDP/UNV support

Many students receive bursaries from the government in support of their studies, which are repaid within a specific timeframe after graduation. As an incentive, the government may consider possible ways to postpone these re-payments by graduates when they are serving as a volunteer in NVC.

The National Volunteer Corps Steering Committee will meet quarterly to discuss plans and reports of the NVC. Such meetings may be held to coincide with existing schedules on the Youth Employment Project, as it is envisaged that the same departments may be represented at both meetings. More frequent meetings may be required and will be convened as the Steering Committee sees fit. The Steering Committee will establish a technical committee of organisations and individuals with experience around volunteering, which will support the NVC with coordination and the identification of volunteer posts and host organisations. The technical committee will draw on its members' existing experience in relation to the management of volunteer schemes. See the organisation chart in Annex 3.

gender and rural/urban nature of the population of Lesotho. Sports and Recreation. It is anticipated that membership of the Corps will appropriately reflect the National Volunteer Corps members. Graduate Basotho volunteers serving with the National Volunteer Corps will be contracted to the Corps through the Ministry of Gender and Youth, are in place under the Youth Employment Project, which will serve as a guide to agreements for formalise their status as volunteers of the National Volunteer Corps. Similar formal arrangements However, they will require a written agreement between the Ministry and each volunteer to Ministry guided by a Steering Committee. The volunteers will not have the status of civil servants. administration and bureaucracy, the NVC will be managed as a separate programme within the volunteers (for instance, in case of emergencies) to ensure accountability toward future donors and to minimise any potential constraint on delivery that might arise due to the demands of However, as dynamic and quick responses will be required for the mobilisation and training of

The Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation will promote and manage the National Volunteer Corps programme by providing office space and personnel, including the newly appointed National Volunteer Corps Coordinator. The coordinator of the Corps will report direct to the Ministry.

### (b) Organisation of the National Volunteer Corps (NVC)

The success and sustainability of the National Volunteer Corps will depend very much on the capacity of the programme to identify appropriate host organisations, the ability to manage and supervise the volunteers, and the provision of posts in which graduates can achieve measurable results. Clear job descriptions, comprehensive procedures for monitoring and evaluation and when required, support and training of host organisations in the management of volunteers, will be implemented.

Already, several donors have expressed interest in this programme, most notably, Irish Aid. The demand driven approach, through which, in principle, the host organisation covers the costs of the volunteer, offers several modalities for donors to support the programme. They may do this direct to the programme or by providing funds to host organisations for volunteer posts.

## F. DONOR COORDINATION/RESOURCE MOBILISATION

Learning from existing UNV supported national volunteer schemes will be facilitated as required by UNV, whether through virtual pairing or exchange missions between UNV personnel serving on the National Volunteer Corps and UNV personnel supported in countries where such schemes are operative, for example, Liberia and Burkina Faso.

Synergy will be sought with other programmes/projects related to youth employment and volunteering within government institutions, UN Agencies, donors, volunteer sending agencies, national and international NGOs and especially with the UNDP funded youth employment project.

Technical support to the NVC will be coordinated with UNV, the UN programme specialised in volunteering.

The National Volunteer Corps project will be implemented under the National Implementation (NIM) modality by the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation to enhance and ensure ownership of the programme by the Government of Lesotho. For several of the inputs direct support from UNDP will be provided to facilitate the implementation.

In order to ensure sustainability of the National Volunteer Corps, the programme will have a demand driven approach, in which each host organisation will provide funding for costs related to the fielding of the volunteers they require. However, the first phase of the programme will benefit from 'seed capital' to facilitate placement of volunteers in 'pilot posts'. See Annex 4 for a short description of the rules and procedures of the NVC.

For the implementation of the training aspect of the programme, trainers in specific job related subjects will be hired on an *ad hoc* basis. The enterprise development trainers based at the UN Youth employment project services will be used to deliver enterprise trainings. Training will be two-fold: (i) training will be provided to the graduate volunteers after selection and before their volunteer placement in the different posts and; (ii) training will be provided to volunteer involving organisations in relation to the management of volunteers. After a successful assignment, where required, the graduates will be supported in follow-up courses to improve their employment opportunities. See Annex 4 for a short description of the modus operandi of NVC.

There will be close linkages with the ongoing UN Youth employment project especially on training, monitoring enterprise start ups and providing market linkages. Both projects are based at the MGYSR and therefore close coordination will be required to promote employment amongst youth in Lesotho.

National UNV specialists will support the organisation of training for volunteers and host organisations and the other will support the identification of volunteer posts and host organisations and monitoring and evaluation element of the programme, including the setting up of a data base. UNV volunteer personnel will be contracted to UNV-UNDP under the standard Letter of Commitment and UNV Conditions of Service. See the organisation chart in Annex 3.

While the Lesotho National Volunteer Commission (LNVC) has deployed volunteers in the past, Lesotho has no experience of a fully-fledged government managed volunteer programme. Therefore, a variety of expectations may arise among the different stakeholder. Clear procedures, good coordination and an information strategy will be required. The advisory role of the Steering Committee will be very important in this respect.

Institutional level  
Ownership by the Government of Lesotho, as well as good coordination with the different development partners, including civil society, will be important to ensure sustainability of the National Volunteer Corps. Therefore, the provision of office space and administrative support will be preconditions for the start of the project.

## H. SUSTAINABILITY AND RISKS

Overall, development in Lesotho will be the ultimate beneficiary of this project. Whether that development takes place within the individual, i.e. the unemployed Basotho graduates or within the host organisations, the gains made across Lesotho will be substantial. For the first time, a structured, targeted volunteer placement initiative will have been put in place, delivering on development objectives in an organised and sustainable way and providing a solid platform on which to build a long-term Government supported and resourced Lesotho National Volunteer Corps.

Initially, the most visible beneficiaries of the project will be the unemployed graduates, who will have the opportunity to work as volunteers in support of Lesotho's development efforts, to receive training and to improve their employment chances in the labour market. At least 100 of them will be placed in relevant volunteer posts, trained and supported during their assignment. After a successful assignment and subject to positive performance, the programme will then support the ex-volunteers in career planning towards enhanced employment opportunities.

The host organisations, government institutions and projects, and NGOs will benefit from the support of the volunteer graduates who will enable them to improve or increase the coverage of their programmes. When required, these host organisations will receive support and training on the management of volunteers, thereby enhancing their own development. Host organisations, in turn, will be required to conduct training of Corps volunteers to facilitate their best contribution to the volunteer placement and to enhance the volunteers' personal development. And, of course, the target groups of the different programmes of the host organisations will be the ultimate beneficiaries.

## G. INTENDED BENEFICIARIES

Additionally, World Bank Lesotho has pledged support to the scheme, in principle.

UN and bilateral donors may consider the funding of a number of posts in support of their programmes. UN Agencies in Lesotho have a long history of recruitment and placement of International UNV volunteers on their programmes. Moreover, the promotion of volunteering and especially, of national volunteering is a priority for UNV. Therefore, UNV will consider financial and technical support to the NVC.

Limited experience in management activities by civil servants of the Ministry, especially in relation to volunteer activities and bureaucratic procedures are potential risks for the success of the programme; therefore the National Volunteer Corps will be organised as a separate programme of the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation with a multi-sectoral Steering Committee.

Without overview and management software in the Ministry, for example, The Balanced Scorecard, realising the benefits and coordination of the various aspects of partnership have been identified as potentially problematic.

#### Policy Level

A demand driven approach, identification of appropriate posts and host organisations, training before fielding and monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the volunteers will contribute to 'fruitful' assignments, to the benefit of the volunteers in gaining invaluable work experience and to the host organisations in improving and/or extending their programme reach. Successful assignments will certainly contribute to sustainability of the National Volunteer Corps programme.

Volunteer involving organisations in Lesotho have spoken of 'volunteer poaching' as a negative factor in successful and continuous volunteer placement. This arises where volunteers, impacted by the socio-economic reality of unemployment, move between volunteer opportunities, choosing the host organisation that offers the highest level of support for travel, meals and accommodation. It is hoped that the volunteer placement within the National Volunteer Corps programme, secured through a formal signed contract and offering a high level of training, monitoring and evaluation and post-placement support, will discourage random movement between volunteer involving organisations. In this way too, the National Volunteer Corps programme will provide a structure to the volunteer movement in Lesotho and a model for best volunteer placement and management practice.

#### Financial level

There is a risk to sustainability of funding for the National Volunteer Corps post-project. To mitigate that risk, during the course of the project, extensive and committed partnership building will be actively pursued across all sectors, including the private sector.

A further risk may arise in relation to funding of host organisation posts for National Volunteer Corps placements. To offset that risk, every support will be sought during the course of the project, to create a basket of funding to which host organisations can make application. Target contributors to that basket will be pan-sectoral, including the private sector.

There is a risk that volunteers might dishonour and fail to finalise their contracts because volunteering is generally considered as a very informal engagement. Therefore, formal contracts indicating rights and obligations must be signed before placement, for a period of six months, renewable with a maximum service period of two years. The six-month aspect will provide some flexibility in situations where the volunteer secures a permanent job during the period of the volunteer placement. It is envisaged that placements will, in general, be for a one-year period.

#### Other

Prior assessment of volunteers, their interest areas, their skills capacity and their personal career preferences is required to ensure maximum value of placement with the host organisation. In Lesotho, there is no career guidance either at second- or third-level and this project does not make provision for such assessment. Without it, successful matching between volunteer and host

This project is designed to support, in the long-term, the establishment of a National Volunteer Corps for Lesotho. Within the boundaries of the project, focus will be on unemployed Basotho graduates, placing 100 of them as volunteers within host organisations where, through their volunteer effort, they can enhance their own development and the development of their country. At project end, volunteer placement may be considered as an option for all Basotho, graduate and

#### (a) Establishment of the Lesotho National Volunteer Corps under statute

### J. EXIT STRATEGY

UNDP/UNV will have regular coordination meetings with international volunteer organisations, which may lead to a more structured involvement of the international organisations in support of the NCV and national volunteering in general.

Several international volunteer sending organisations are interested in supporting the NVC. Once operational, Peace Corps would consider fielding an experienced volunteer in support of the scheme. Lesotho Red Cross and SkillsShare International are willing to explore possibilities for synergy and support. DED is considering placement of young German volunteers and there may be scope for coordination in relation to the training of volunteers and host organisations.

The project will be implemented in coordination with other UN agencies in the context of the "One UN" approach. UNV will provide technical support towards the smooth management of the proposed programme. Additionally, UNV will mobilise and field an international specialist, experienced in the management of volunteer schemes and in management.

The National Volunteer Corps Steering Committee will be chaired by the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation and will include representatives of the Ministries of Finance and Development Planning, Public Service, Labour and Employment, (Health, Education and Agriculture), the National University of Lesotho, National Aids Commission, the private sector, UNDP/UNV, contributing donors, representatives of civil society and faith based organisations and both national and international volunteer involving organisations.

The support project will be implemented through the National Implementation modality by the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation. A Steering Committee will be set up to oversee the planning of activities of the National Volunteer Corps.

#### (a) In-Project partners, roles and responsibilities

### I. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

organisation will be more difficult. To address this risk, every effort will be made during the course of the project to develop pan-sectoral relationships to fund such assessments.

The concomitant interest and lure of crossing into neighbouring South Africa has always been a long-term ambition among young people from Lesotho and the region. A comprehensive advocacy campaign including high profile statements, preparation and launch of the programme will be critical to change this mindset. A detailed media plan will be put in place to support this.

non-graduate, employed and unemployed. Such decisions will be grounded in information and learning gained from implementation of this project.

During the course of the project, drawing on information gained from the mid-term review and from regular Steering Committee reporting, UNV-UNDP will support the Ministry in its aim of developing the Lesotho National Volunteer Corps as a long-term development tool for the country and its people. The Corps, as then established, will enjoy statutory protection, annual budgetary support and responsibility under a line Ministry.



**Part I b. RESULTS AND RESOURCES AND M&E FRAMEWORKS**  
**Results and Resources framework**

**Intended Output as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resource Framework:**

- 1) Strengthened capacity of selected government institutions and other public service providers to support delivery of public services.
- 2) National policies for employment adopted and implemented for youth in viable sectors.

**Output indicators as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:**

- 1) Provision of quality public services Baseline: Unequal access to quality services; Target: Accessibility of services to the community as a whole
- 2) Youth Unemployment Baseline 79%; Target 30%

**Partnership Strategy: The project will be implemented jointly with the Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sport and Recreation in coordination with other related Ministries and Government institutions, the National University of Lesotho, UN agencies, and NGOs**

Project title and ID (ATLAS Award ID): Support to the implementation of a National Volunteer Corps for young graduates	BASELINES and TARGETS	Activities	Responsible party	Inputs
<p>A. Lesotho Government supported in setting up a National Volunteer Corps Programme for young graduates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Youth Corps established and operational</li> </ul>	<p>Setting up of a Unit/Dept under the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision of office space by the Ministry</li> <li>- Selection and assignment of government coordinator</li> <li>- Selection and recruitment of UNDP/UNV support personnel</li> <li>- Elaboration of yearly operation plans</li> <li>- Elaboration of procedures, rules and COS –Conditions of Service-</li> <li>- Approval of operational plan, procedures and COS by Steering Committee</li> <li>- Procurement of 4x4 car</li> </ul>	<p>MGYSR-UNDP            MGYSR            UNDP-UNV            MGYSR-UNDP            MGYSR-UNDP            MGYSR-UNDP            MGYSR</p>	<p>Equipment            Technical assistance</p>
	<p>Baseline: 0            Target: 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of yearly award for outstanding volunteer activities</li> </ul>	<p>Explore and implement mechanisms and modalities for recognition of outstanding volunteer activities</p>	<p>MGYSR-UNDP</p>	<p>Technical and financial support</p>

	<p><b>Baseline:</b> no formal recognition of volunteer activity  <b>Target:</b> formal recognition of volunteer activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;E procedures designed and implemented</li> </ul>	<p>Design and implement M&amp;E procedures</p>	<p>UNDP</p>	<p>Technical assistance travel</p>
<p>B. Young unemployed Basotho professionals mobilised to support Lesotho's development efforts and to improve their job prospects by obtaining work experience and training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Database established of graduates Candidates for volunteer placements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information campaign on the national volunteer corps for young graduates</li> <li>- Design of database and training of personnel</li> <li>- Registration of candidates and updating of database</li> </ul>	<p>MGYSR-UNDP  MGYSR-UNDP  MGYSR-UNDP</p>	<p>Technical assistance Equipment training</p>
	<p>• Media plan covering information of volunteer activities/ opportunities in newspaper and television. Media plan to be linked with the setting up of the database</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> no structured opportunities for volunteer placements for graduates  <b>Target:</b> structured opportunities established for volunteer placements for graduates</p>	<p>Prepare and support the implementation of information strategy and plan</p>	<p>MGYSR-UNDP</p>	<p>Technical support</p>
<p>C. Complementarity with ongoing efforts by the Government, UNDP and other national institutions that are working towards implementing various development programmes,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host organisations identified and Conditions Of Service (COS) agreed</li> </ul> <p><b>Baseline Host Organisations:</b> 0  <b>Target:</b> 40  <b>Baseline COS:</b> 0  <b>Target:</b> 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify relevant and appropriate host organisations and explore needs and supervision capacity</li> <li>- Agree on procedures and conditions with host organisations</li> </ul>	<p>MGYSR-UNDP</p>	<p>Technical assistance Travel</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host organisations trained on management of volunteers</li> </ul> <p><b>Baseline:</b> no promotion or training available in relation to volunteering  <b>Target:</b> promotion and training made available in relation to volunteering</p>	Train selected volunteer involving organisations on management of volunteers and projects	MGYSR-UNDP	Training travel
<p>D. Improved coordination among Volunteer Involving Organisations in the management of volunteers and their contribution to defined development priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steering Committee for the National Volunteer Corps established with representatives from key Ministries, donors and CSOs</li> </ul>	Establish Steering Committee with representatives of key Ministries and government institutions, and representatives of donor and NGO community	MGYSR-UNDP	Technical support
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination mechanisms established between key ministries, donors and civil society</li> </ul>	Establish fluent coordination and working contact with the different development partners	MGYSR-UNDP	Technical support
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical committee established with participation of experienced volunteer involving organisations</li> </ul> <p><b>Baseline:</b> no coordination mechanisms in place  <b>Target:</b> coordination mechanisms in place</p>	Identify organisations with experience in volunteering and prepare proposal to the Steering Committee	MGYSR-UNDP	Technical support