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POLICY

OTHER FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

Review of the United Nations Volunteers

Report of the Administrator

Addendum

SUMMARY

This present report is submitted in accordance with Governing Council decision 87/36 which requested the Administrator to undertake a review of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme and report to the Council at its thirty-fifth session.

The review was conducted by a team of four consultants using information and data collected by the Central Evaluation Office of UNDP, headquarters staff of UNV and by the team itself through visits to user agencies, donor and recipient Governments, bilateral volunteer organizations and UNDP field staff in seven developing countries. The team also had written responses from UNDP resident representatives to a questionnaire distributed by the Central Evaluation Office.

The review generated 67 recommendations, the majority of which the Administrator has accepted. This report presents the Administrator's views and decisions on these recommendations, as well as his recommendations concerning the future funding of UNV.

INTRODUCTION

1. In its overview the evaluation team reported that:

"The United Nations Volunteers programme has great merit in both concept and implementation. United Nations Volunteers respond to a need for additional operational expertise in developing countries unable to meet these needs with national expertise. The potential for expansion of the programme is considerable, and there appears to be great interest in such an expansion among using agencies, field staff and host country Governments. Volunteers are perceived as being very cost-effective, and as being able to function efficiently and effectively under often difficult circumstances. Their dedication and competence are well recognized and much appreciated by United Nations and host country officials alike."

The Administrator fully associates himself with these conclusions.

2. The recommendations of the review report fall within six broad categories: the UNV concept and mandate, general management and administration issues, programme finance, programming, recruitment and training, which are discussed below.

I. THE CONCEPT AND MANDATE OF THE UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS

3. A number of the recommendations made in the report concern UNV's overall mandate and the concept of volunteerism which it embodies. Whether the UNV programme is in fact a volunteer programme and whether, in any event, it is useful for United Nations Volunteers to be called "volunteers" are two of the basic conceptual issues addressed in the review. The conclusion of the report was that the question is, at best, an open one. Considerable evidence suggests that the term "volunteer" tends to understate the high professional calibre and the undoubted contribution to development made by United Nations volunteers. Thus, it was proposed that the Council explore the possibility of changing the title of "volunteer" to one which more accurately reflects the reality of the UNV programme.

4. The Administrator found that many of the arguments encountered by the review on this issue hinged on views as to whether United Nations volunteers from developing countries, who constitute around 85 per cent of the total number in the field, are serving for the altruistic motivations generally attributed to volunteerism, or for other motives. UNDP considers these generalizations about the presumed motivations of volunteers to be unfair to those originating from the third world. As to the detrimental effects of the term "volunteer", there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the gains from changing the title some 18 years after the programme was founded as is suggested in recommendation 9 would outweigh the loss of an established identity or the inevitable erosion of many of the characteristics of volunteer service which the UNV programme embodies and to which it has, indeed, given fresh meaning. The Administrator, therefore, recommends that the term "volunteer" be retained and subsumed into the designation of the title of each volunteer as in "UNV physiotherapist" or "UNV medical officer."

5. The universality of UNV is an important element of its basic concept and a distinguishing characteristic of the programme. In recent years, there has been considerable criticism of the fact that the number of United Nations volunteers recruited in industrialized countries has remained level, despite the continued growth of UNV. This declining percentage of participation of industrialized countries in UNV (18.7 per cent on 31 December 1982 and 13.1 per cent on 31 January 1988) is largely structural in origin: the differences between UNV's policies and procedures and those of bilateral volunteer-sending programmes in many of the industrialized countries has rendered the task of recruiting more UNV candidates in those countries especially difficult.

6. As a result, a large number of special recruitment efforts have been undertaken by both UNV and some of the co-operating organizations, and efforts in this direction are ongoing. In recommendations 1 and 2, the report proposed that UNV adopt a more "aggressive" posture in achieving "wider geographic representation" and co-ordinate more closely with co-operating organizations to improve the supply of candidates from industrialized countries. Both of these recommendations are well founded and have already been under implementation for some time. In this connection, the report cites experiments in which co-operating organizations have agreed with UNV on the pre-screening of candidates before they are formally rostered. Recommendation 18 proposes that co-operating organizations in industrialized countries which do not now have such an agreement make similar arrangements with UNV, and the Administrator fully endorses this proposal. Also, as part of its special recruitment campaigns, UNV time and again places advertisements in the local newspapers in industrialized countries and has recently taken steps to make contacts with universities and research institutes in those countries. These measures are also aimed at expediting the recruitment process. The Administrator, therefore, suggests that Council members from all industrialized countries urge their volunteer-sending organizations to work together with UNV in these endeavours.

7. It is also proposed (recommendation 12) that the bilateral organizations review the constraints in their selection criteria to providing more UNV candidates. (Some of the constraints mentioned to UNDP include stipulations that volunteers should not serve in urban environments, that they work only in teaching roles and that they should not function in expatriate environments.) The Administrator is pleased to note that the recommended review has been under way for some time. It should nevertheless be recognized that, in some instances, fully satisfactory solutions to the legislative as well as policy and philosophical constraints may prove to be elusive.

8. One of the most important recommendations made in the report (recommendation 13) was that the Governing Council reassess its rules on the use of the UNV Special Voluntary Fund (SVF) to permit payment of the external costs of UNVs from industrialized countries, which would give UNV much greater flexibility in recruitment. It is suggested that the Council review this issue together with recommendation 50 that the external costs of UNVs, currently calculated at \$US 2,500 per volunteer/year, be added to the pro forma costs charged to project budgets. The Administrator welcomes these recommendations and, accordingly, proposes to the Governing Council that the amount of \$2,500 per volunteer/year be

added to the pro forma cost of UNVs to cover the external costs of all UNVs, recruited in either developing or industrialized countries to be paid into SVF for this purpose.

9. In this context, the Administrator further suggests that Council members from industrialized countries should request the co-operating organizations from their respective countries to assist UNV in the recruitment process by providing such services as the verification of the credentials of candidates, completion of medical clearance formalities and travel arrangements. The Administrator believes that the implementation of these recommendations will facilitate the selection of candidates from industrialized countries and an increased participation of nationals of those countries in UNV's field operations (see paras. 14, 39, 40 and 41 which relate to the subject of volunteers from industrialized countries).

10. Although the number and proportion of volunteers from the developing countries in general has been increasing, at present almost 56 per cent of them come from seven countries. The Administrator, therefore, intends to make stronger efforts to recruit more volunteers from other countries.

11. In addition to financing the external costs of volunteers from developing countries, SVF has also been used to finance UNV's programme development and promotional activities, the internal costs of UNV programme assistants assigned to UNDP field offices in the least developed countries and activities in follow-up to UNV's mandate in the field of youth. The Administrator considers that the promotional and programme development activities are a normal part of UNV's programme and should be provided for under the administrative budget of UNV. Apart from relieving SVF from this expenditure, and adding the external costs also for volunteers from industrialized countries (see para. 8 above), the Administrator is not at this time proposing any further changes in the rules for the use of the Fund.

12. The report recommended (recommendation 14) that UNV develop outreach activities targeted on increasing the number of women in the programme to include the development of strategies for reaching out to women's organizations in developing and industrialized countries. The Administrator fully endorses this recommendation and is pleased to note that action already is under way in this direction.

13. The report also recommended development of special strategies to increase the number of older volunteers (recommendation 15). The Administrator fully endorses this recommendation also. The Council may wish to note that in this regard contacts have already been made at various times with a number of organizations including the Japan Silver Volunteers; the International Federation of Associations of the Elderly (FIAPA); the Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO) and the Senior Experts Service based at Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany. The recruitment of older candidates for volunteer service abroad is, however, limited by certain factors such as strict United Nations medical clearance procedures and working conditions in hardship duty stations. Notwithstanding these constraints, at present over 5 per cent of serving volunteers are over 55 years of age.

14. One of the proposals concerning the basic UNV mandate and concept (recommendation 10) suggests that the Governing Council take steps to eliminate the "monopoly of the UNV programme on volunteers for use in United Nations agency projects", while maintaining UNV's co-ordinating role. The Administrator recognizes that the intent of the proposal is to ensure more involvement of volunteers from industrialized countries; however, he considers the use of the word "monopoly" in this context misleading. Bilateral volunteers can serve in United Nations system-financed projects provided that they do so in compliance with several General Assembly resolutions (2810 (XXVI) of 14 December 1971, 2970 (XXVII) of 14 December 1972, and 33/84 of 15 December 1978) aimed at ensuring the quality of personnel recruited and fielded by the United Nations system in developing countries, and that they are given comparable emoluments, duties and privileges. The Administrator does not feel that he can relinquish his responsibilities in this respect and considers, therefore, the existing practices satisfactory, allowing for the desired participation of candidates of all nationalities. It should also be mentioned that, as pointed out in the review report, bilateral volunteers can serve on United Nations system-financed projects on the conditions of their own sending organization if they are fielded in agreement with the host government as a Government counterpart contribution.

15. The proposals to explain the basic objectives of UNV to its partners (recommendation 4) and to brief project managers and host government officials about the role of the supervisor of volunteers (recommendation 37) underline the efforts that UNV has long been making in this regard. In terms of the former, UNV has utilized for this purpose such meetings as the two High-level Intergovernmental Meetings on International Volunteerism and Development, attended by senior representatives of recipient countries, United Nations agencies, co-operating organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the annual Consultative Meetings with bilateral volunteer-sending organizations and Governments. The UNV programme also holds consultations periodically with United Nations specialized and executing agencies, in addition to entering into bilateral co-operation arrangements with a number of them including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Bank. As for briefing project managers and government officials, the objectives, role, work methods and procedures of the UNV programme are always discussed with government officials, UNDP field office staff, United Nations agency representatives and project managers whenever UNV headquarters officials undertake visits to recipient countries for the purpose of programming, monitoring or promoting UNV's activities. Other promotional and information activities have included the distribution of a series of publications on the UNV programme such as "United Nations Volunteers: History and Concept"; "The Role and Potential of United Nations Volunteers in International Development Co-operation"; and "United Nations Volunteers: 'The Alternative Way'". The Administrator intends to sustain and strengthen this area of activity to the extent possible subject to the availability of funds and staff resources.

II. GENERAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES

16. A large number of general management issues is addressed in the report. The majority of these have to do with proposals designed to increase the effectiveness and improve the management and administration of the programme. Of the remaining recommendations, most may be grouped under the heading of measures to increase "volunteer satisfaction".

17. Effectiveness. Several of the recommendations concern the increased effectiveness of UNV's capability to support field operations, primarily through modification and strengthening of the existing system of attaching UNV programme assistants to the offices of UNDP resident representatives in countries where there are more than 20 UNVs.

18. The Administrator supports the recommendation that the title of UNV programme assistant be changed to UNV programme officer (recommendation 30) which more accurately reflects the importance of the post and the nature of the responsibilities attached to it. UNDP is not in accord, however, with recommendation 31 that the posts be converted from volunteer positions into regular staff posts in view of the financial implications of this proposal, which are considerable. Moreover, such a change would detract from the effectiveness of the UNV programme officer as the person on the resident representative's staff who fully understands the practical reality and exigencies of UNV service and can serve as a credible interlocutor for UNVs in the field. The Administrator will examine the duties assigned to such officers to ensure that they are compatible with the status and qualifications of the UNV programme officers. The Administrator also intends to consider the use of national officers for these functions.

19. The Administrator fully endorses those recommendations concerning increased logistical support on the part of field offices for UNV programme assistants/programme officers as well as the desirability of increasing their number, extending them also to countries which are neither least developed countries nor have contingents of more than 20 UNVs (recommendations 32 and 33). In practice, there have always been some countries with fewer than 20 UNVs which have had a UNV programme assistant who was financed under an indicative planning figure (IPF)-supported project. In line with the recommendations made in the review report, renewed efforts will be made to assign programme officers to countries with a minimum of 10 serving volunteers as well as to others with potential for substantial growth in the size of the programme.

20. Quite a few recommendations concern the resident representative's role vis-à-vis UNVs, and the UNV programme itself, including improved briefing of resident representatives, specific mention of their responsibilities towards UNV in their job descriptions, etc. (recommendations 34, 35, 38 and 59). In practice, resident representatives are given such briefings at UNV headquarters on periodic visits to Geneva and when UNV staff undertake field missions. Such briefings also cover the lines of responsibility and authority between UNV headquarters and resident representatives in regard to programme development, recruitment of volunteers, programme implementation in the field, monitoring and the promulgation of regulations and policy framework (recommendation 59). There is evidence that

the resident representative's responsibility towards UNV is accepted as a matter of course, as it is for other programmes and funds under the Administrator's delegated authority, and on behalf of all United Nations agencies not directly represented in the country of assignment. Similarly in response to recommendation 8 that guidance be provided to resident representatives concerning the potential diversion of UNVs from assigned duties in times of emergencies, the Administrator confirms that this has been a standing procedure for some time. The expanding UNV programme and the need to monitor and back-stop it adequately increases field office work-loads. The Administrator plans to keep the work-load situation under review and, on a case-by-case basis, as appropriate, will make recommendations to strengthen the field staff.

21. In recommendation 61 the review report recommends that UNV have its recruitment and placement staff operate on a sectoral rather than a geographical basis. This is not considered to be a practical proposal. The nature of the work of the UNV secretariat does not particularly require technical specialists in the fields where UNVs are assigned, nor is it realistic to consider that more than a handful of fields could be covered even if such specialists were necessary and available. The present geographic arrangement ensures continuity of operations, the development of staff who understand field working conditions and are committed to programme activities in specific countries and creates clear lines of responsibility. The Administrator does not propose, therefore, that UNV alter this structure.

22. After having examined recommendation 19, the Administrator suggests that the present interview system which involves UNDP field staff and, as necessary, agency technical personnel (for candidates from developing countries) should be maintained, but agrees that the interview report will be revised to lay additional emphasis on technical qualifications, language ability and suitability, which includes, of course, volunteer motivation. Interview reports will in the future be made available to selection officials on request (recommendation 20). Additionally, as part of the interview process, UNV will send to the field office a list of United Nations volunteers who have returned from assignments abroad and who are recommended by UNV headquarters as sources to be consulted by the potential candidates.

23. Management. Several recommendations were made the intent of which was to increase the authority of the resident representative with respect to the qualification standards for the selection of UNV candidates (recommendation 23) and to the setting of the length of tours (recommendations 24 and 25) and the allowances and other entitlements of serving volunteers (recommendation 53). Although the Administrator realizes the general desirability of flexibility in the administration of all programmes, he feels that the problems of such ad hoc approaches to programme management in this case have been insufficiently taken into account. It should also be noted that when UNV headquarters in specific cases feels unable to grant a request from a field office, recourse can be had to the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Special Activities, who supervises UNV.

24. In relation to recommendation 36, the Administrator proposes to request resident representatives to report periodically to the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Special Activities, on UNV activities in their countries of assignment.

25. In respect of recommendations 41, 42 and 46 relating to reports prepared by UNVs, the Administrator will revise the reporting format for the volunteer's final report to focus on the impact of the volunteer's activities during the entire duration of the assignment. This will give an opportunity for the volunteer to conduct an assessment of both the programme and the project within which the incumbent had served.

26. Recommendations proposing more active involvement of the resident representative and his staff in the ongoing programme of UNV activities in the field are endorsed, including a proposal (recommendation 40) to convene in-country "conferences" of UNVs as appropriate and subject to the availability of the modest funds needed for such meetings.

27. The review report's recommendations concerning evaluation of UNV activities, including the proposal that UNV develop an in-house evaluation manual and that the Central Evaluation Office develop a system ensuring the review of UNV activities at least every three - five years (recommendations 43 and 44), are most welcome and will be acted upon. The Administrator is separately proposing the strengthening of the Central Evaluation Office to assist in these efforts.

28. The proposal (recommendation 7) that the Governing Council take action "to merge the domestic development services (DDS) and youth programmes into the overall volunteer programme" is not realistic. Several specific resolutions of the General Assembly underlie UNV's activities in these fields. Moreover, the idea of such a merger ignores the fact that UNV DDS personnel are not akin to the regular UNV specialists, but are in reality participatory development field workers whose conditions of service are designed to harmonize with those of co-workers in the rural settings where they are assigned. Nevertheless, their remuneration will be looked into in the light of the recommendation. At the same time, it must be conceded that a problem of perception exists which has not been adequately tackled thus far. The Administrator will make new efforts to address the perceptual difficulty, including the proposal to adopt a new name for the DDS activities, such as "UNV participatory development programme", which will communicate more precisely the nature of this element of UNV's activities. The Administrator is re-examining UNV's role in the field of youth.

29. The Administrator has taken note of recommendation 27 and would like to inform the Council that, in keeping with a long established practice, a WHO standard medical kit should be provided to each and every volunteer together with a brochure in English and French containing detailed information on general hygiene in tropical areas at the time of the assignment. The Administrator will take steps to ensure that these instructions are carried out consistently.

30. Administration. A number of recommendations concern the administration of UN volunteers (recommendations 56, 57, 60, 62, 63, 64 and 65). The issues addressed by the review merit close attention, but the Administrator feels that these recommendations should be looked at in the light of the existing rules and regulations of UNV as spelled out in the "Instructions for the administration of United Nations volunteers" (UNDP/UNV/Field/15 and Rev. 1), which cover the rights and the obligations of serving volunteers. The instructions are revised

periodically to take into consideration, among other things, changes in the living and working conditions of serving volunteers. Since UNV became operational in 1971, the instructions have been reviewed four times and a major revision is currently being done. The procedures for each review and revision call for comments and views by UNDP field offices and the UNDP Division of Personnel.

31. The Administrator accepts recommendation 56 that the resettlement grant should be paid immediately upon the volunteer's return to the home country and he will study further the practicality of paying a part of the resettlement grant already on the departure from the country of service (recommendation 57). It will not always be possible to follow recommendation 63, that housing should be available prior to the volunteer's arrival in the country of service, but every effort will be made to ensure housing availability whenever possible. The regulations and rules mentioned in recommendation 64 should as always remain under continuous review. With regard to recommendation 65, the Council may wish to note that the "Instructions for the administration of United Nations volunteers" contain detailed procedures for appeal of administrative decisions taken by UNV headquarters. The recourse procedures provide for a review of such decisions by (a) UNV Executive Co-ordinator, (b) UNDP Administrator and (c) arbitration. Volunteers also have access to procedures which coincide with those available to UNDP staff members.

32. The review report recommends (recommendation 62) that UNV remove the limit on number of dependants and use instead a limit on dependant allowances, with all additional costs of more than three dependants borne by the volunteers. The Administrator accepts this recommendation.

33. Volunteer satisfaction. Finally, a number of proposals are made which may be grouped under the heading of recommendations intending to increase the level of volunteer satisfaction with UNV service, including a range of career counselling and other services which would be provided by UNDP field offices to returned UNVs in developing countries (recommendations 45, 48 and 49). The Administrator must point out that these proposals have work-load and cost implications which go well beyond what can be entertained. This world-wide recruitment base of UNV and the limited size of the UNDP field offices make it impossible to extend such services to returning volunteers. It should also be noted that the majority of UNVs have long work experience in their home country and have generally substantial familiarity with the job market.

III. PROGRAMME FINANCE

34. The report makes a number of significant proposals concerning programme finance. One of the most important, recommendation 50, which suggests an increase in the UNV pro forma to cover the external costs of all UNVs, has been noted and endorsed above. With regard to recommendation 52, the Administrator proposed to insert in future an additional note to the financial statement of SVF. The note would disclose the unspent balance of the reserve of the Fund at year end, the amount of commitment in respect of repatriation travel and resettlement allowance and the resulting unencumbered balance or deficit of the Fund. The Administrator considers that this additional information on the encumbrance against the Fund's

unspent resources would meet the recommendation of the 'accrual accounting concept' and further clarify the status of the Fund.

35. The Administrator is not able to recommend adoption of recommendation 51 that UNV use SVF for the full or partial funding of UNV posts in "high-priority" countries. This proposal ignores existing Governing Council decisions that already provide special weighting to countries classified as least developed in determining IPFs and access to special facilities. It also goes against the sense of numerous Governing Council decisions that the funding of UNV inputs be assimilated as nearly as possible to that of other project inputs.

36. Recommendation 58 advocates the encouragement of private sector contributions to SVF as provided for in UNV's founding General Assembly resolution. The largest contribution by an individual to date has been \$US 500,000 which the programme received in 1982 from Mr. Akram Ojjeh, Founder and President of the Tag Group S.A., a holding company for a wide-ranging group of commercial enterprises in Europe and the Middle East. This information was reported to the Council at its twenty-ninth session. UNV has been active in seeking such contributions and will continue to do so.

37. The report makes the recommendations that UNV monthly living allowances be decoupled from the United States dollar and from United Nations common system procedures for determining post adjustment allowances and be linked, instead, to local staff salary scales (recommendations 54 and 55). Linkage to local staff salary scales conflicts with the notion that volunteer living allowances are not intended to be salaries. These scales are also the result of a combination of factors unrelated to the situation of expatriate volunteers, and would be an unreliable guide for setting the UNV living allowances. On the other hand, the shift to a system in which UNV monthly living allowances are calculated in national currencies rather than United States dollars is one which merits close investigation and this idea will be examined to see whether it may be adopted.

IV. PROGRAMMING

38. Several recommendations were made relating specifically to the programming of UNV inputs (recommendations 3, 5, 6 and 22). The Administrator commends the proposal that the role of the resident representative in programming UNV inputs be strengthened and welcomes the suggestion that resident representatives particularly in Latin America make special efforts to promote the use of UNVs in their countries, so that this region may benefit in the same manner as others from the special capabilities of the UNV programme. As for the Arab States, the Council may wish to note that 13 countries in the region accounted for 126 or about 10 per cent of the 1,269 volunteers in post as of 31 December 1987. Moreover, a number of country programmes of Arab countries specifically call for the utilization of UNV services, a priority in the programming exercise. Yemen (host of the first UNV High-Level Symposium on Volunteer Service and Development) and the Sudan are only two examples. Additionally, two Arab States, namely Yemen and Somalia, have always been and still are among the 10 largest recipient countries of UNV assistance. An intercountry project has been approved recently to provide UNVs to the least developed countries in the Arab region.

39. The report also urges that UNV improve placement capabilities through better job descriptions and candidate files (recommendation 3) and matching of job descriptions incorporating qualification requirements with the real needs of the project (recommendation 22). Some of the issues raised by the review in these respects, such as the fairly common divergence of assignments from the initial job description, are in no way unique to UNV, but also affect many expert and consultant assignments, pointing to some of the difficulties inherent to development co-operation work. These are, indeed, two continuing concerns of UNV and a variety of methods are employed with field offices and co-operating organizations, as far as recruitment activities are concerned, and with field offices and United Nations specialized agencies as far as the preparation of accurate, detailed job descriptions and projects summaries ("blue sheets") are concerned. Efforts will be made to ensure that the field offices receive assistance from agencies' or other technical personnel in the field for this purpose.

V. RECRUITMENT

40. Quite a few recommendations (recommendations 11, 16, 17 and 47) centre around the critical issue of recruitment of UNVs in general, in addition to others referred to in section II which specifically address the problem of increased recruitment of volunteers originating from industrialized countries.

41. An additional significant issue addressed by the report, but without an agreed recommendation being made, is UNV's practice of multiple submissions of UNV candidates for posts, which may have a negative impact on the number of industrialized country volunteers recruited. The Administrator does not consider it to be either practical or wise for UNV to abandon a recruitment-placement system which it has carefully crafted over a number of years by reverting to a "one candidate-one post approach". The element of free choice inherent in the present system, which parallels the practice followed in nominating experts and consultants within the United Nations system, is too fundamental to the central concept of both UNDP and UNV to be compromised. This being said, there is certainly room in special circumstances to permit special placement efforts for selected candidates for certain posts, which Governments would still be free to reject without prejudice to their interests. UNV is already experimenting with this approach with candidates selected and nominated by a number of bilateral sending organizations in industrialized countries and, depending on the success of these initial efforts, may be able to broaden the scope of this activity.

42. The proposal that UNV reduce the size of the roster to meet "expected needs" (recommendation 17) is intimately related to the proposal that its overall policies and procedures for nominating and recruiting candidates be altered in favour of single submissions. Moreover, despite the much tighter integration of UNV programming into overall country programming and agency project formulation today, as compared to UNV's early years, there still is neither sufficiently reliable nor adequately long-range information on future requirements available to UNV to enable it arbitrarily to limit the size of the roster to correspond more closely with anticipated requirements for volunteers. Neither does the Administrator find

evidence that the present size of UNV's roster is a hindrance. Accordingly, he agrees with UNV's preference for maintaining the widest possible pool from which to select candidates for nominations.

43. The suggestion that UNV work with UNDP resident representatives to utilize returned volunteers to assist with recruitment efforts in developing countries undoubtedly has merit (recommendation 16). It should be noted, however, that it is the close contacts between UNV and developing country volunteer organizations and/or government departments that have made it possible over the years to increase both the number and the qualification level of UNV candidates coming from developing countries. The present need of UNV is to increase recruitment efforts in industrialized countries and here more attention will be given to the utilization of former volunteers, including their possible use as a source of orientation on UNV to prospective candidates.

44. The report calls upon UNV to adopt a more vigorous approach in helping successful UNVs find subsequent employment in the United Nations system and proposes that such career possibilities be mentioned in the recruitment literature (recommendation 11). UNV has, in practice, discussed employment of former UNVs with specialized agencies and, when justified and requested, routinely provides strong recommendations for the employment of former UNVs. It is not considered advisable, however, to utilize the prospects of United Nations employment after service as a recruitment inducement. That might distort the purpose of UNV service and lead in many cases to frustration in view of the severely limited prospects of such employment for the great majority of UNVs.

45. Finally, regarding the requirement for candidates chosen by host Governments to report to the duty station within six weeks (recommendation 66), the Administrator considers that this should be maintained as a target. This is in direct response to host Governments' urge to recruit volunteers with minimum delay. The Administrator will instruct resident representatives in the volunteer's home country to assist in solving problems of formalities preventing the volunteer from leaving for the assignment and will, if difficulties persist, show flexibility in practising this requirement.

46. On the question of advance information to candidates prior to their assignments (recommendation 64 (b)), the Council may wish to note that information is communicated in various forms such as (a) the Request Form for Technical Assistance commonly referred to as the "blue sheet" (VR 7-8) which requires a summary description of the project covering its objectives, justification, activities, institutional framework, working conditions, the job description of the post requested, as well as the professional and technical requirements; (b) UNV country orientation booklets; (c) relevant parts of the UNDP living condition booklet series, where a UNV country orientation booklet is not available; and (d) extracts from the instructions for the administration of United Nations volunteers which cover the basic and key elements of the conditions of service. In the future, a copy of the standard contract will also be included in the information provided before the volunteer leaves for his/her assignment.

47. The Administrator agrees with recommendation 21 to revise the procedures for clearance and selection of candidates with the goal of accelerating the decision-making process and considers that technical clearances by United Nations executing agencies should not take more than two weeks. As for the host Governments, since clearance procedures entail approval firstly by technical ministries or other recipient institutions followed by final approval by the official government co-ordinating agency, the period of one month should suffice for such formalities and procedures. In order to streamline the recruitment procedures further, the Administrator is arranging that a volunteer's nomination will be made to only one country at a time and the Government will be informed that, if a response is not received within four weeks, the candidate would be offered to another country.

VI. TRAINING

48. Several of the recommendations made by the review concern training and orientation for UNVs (recommendations 26, 28, 29, 39). This is a topic which has arisen in nearly every major meeting in which UNV has been engaged, including its annual consultative meetings with volunteer co-operating organizations. As the report points out, significant progress has already been made. A number of orientation booklets have been produced with major inputs by UNVs themselves. In an increasing number of countries, orientation programmes of various lengths, levels of sophistication and degrees of support by the host Government are being conducted. Yet, what is accomplished undoubtedly lags behind what many of the bilateral volunteer organizations do themselves and what they would like to see UNV do.

49. The Administrator agrees that, at least in countries using larger numbers of volunteers, greater efforts should be made to arrange volunteer arrivals in such a manner as would permit their early participation in the periodic orientation programmes arranged by the field offices with support from the host Governments (recommendation 28). Additionally, the resident representative or the UNV programme officer in the sending country will be asked to give appropriate orientation (recommendation 26 (c)) on UNV to the selected volunteer. A suggestion is also made that agencies conduct skills-enhancement training for UNVs (recommendation 39). Some agencies do make arrangements for some special briefing for UNVs assigned to their projects when this is required, but it must be pointed out that UNV's policy is not to field volunteers who do not already possess the relevant skills at the appropriate level of expertise required by the particular assignment.

50. There is, nevertheless, much scope to enhance what is currently being done, and the recommendation that UNV develop standard training modules (recommendation 26) perhaps suitable for self-instruction is a laudable one. It is also fair to say that it is not sufficient simply for UNV to budget funds for language training (recommendation 29). The Administrator will ensure that volunteers whose effectiveness requires language training receive it. Provision for such training will be included in project budgets, as appropriate. Finally, the Administrator will, to the extent possible, endeavour to use former volunteers to assist new volunteers also in pre-assignment orientations.

VII. STAFFING OF UNV HEADQUARTERS AND FINANCING MODALITIES

51. The question of staffing of UNV headquarters has been raised with the Council on several occasions as the programme has grown. In 1985, the work-load put on the staff had increased to a point where the Council was alerted to the fact that a 30 per cent increase in the programme had been accompanied only by minimal increase in staff and that the situation had become exceedingly difficult to handle.

52. Feeling the need for an in-depth analysis of the work-load situation at UNV headquarters before approaching the Council with a comprehensive request for relief, the Administrator commissioned a thorough review by an outside consultant. The study was completed in early 1986, and the report was made available to the Council. At that time, the UNV headquarters employed 19 Professional officers and 32 General Service staff. The report, pointing out clearly the seriousness of the situation and the negative consequences on the morale and physical well-being of the existing staff members, confirmed an immediate need for 10 additional Professional posts and 5 General Service posts in order to carry the programme at its level at that time (1,145 serving volunteers) and with further expansion foreseen.

53. Based on the consultant's report, the Administrator concluded in document DP/1986/49/Add.1 that immediate strengthening of UNV headquarters was essential and that the consultant's recommendations should be seen as targets to be realized as soon as possible and in a certain order of priority.

54. To begin to provide for new staff, the Administrator proposed that he be authorized to pay 8 per cent support cost to UNV for UNV-executed projects, which would make it possible to give considerable immediate relief to the administration of UNV. In addition, the Administrator informed the Council that he intended to confer with agencies about an arrangement whereby UNV would share with the agencies the support cost charge levied on the volunteer component of agency-executed projects.

55. In its decision 86/43 of 27 June 1986, (paras. 4 and 5), the Council chose instead to make an exceptional charge of \$791,630 to UNDP support-cost resources to be treated as extrabudgetary income to UNV up to December 1987 and used to strengthen its administrative capacity with five Professional and four General Service posts. The Administrator was further requested to report to the Council at its thirty-fourth session on alternative financing modalities to meet the need for staffing UNV headquarters in relation to its work-load and also on the proposed consultations with the agencies on compensation to UNV for services provided in identifying and fielding volunteers to work in agency-executed projects.

56. In compliance with this request, the Administrator in document DP/1987/46 proposed a comprehensive system for a long-term solution whereby the administrative cost of UNV would be divided into two parts, one covering certain basic managerial functions with little direct relationship to the actual provision of volunteers as project inputs and another covering the major part of the total cost, which would be a project-support function. This part would in his opinion be a proper charge to the support-cost budget, while the first mentioned, smaller part should continue as part of the normal administrative budget of UNDP.

57. As for determining the size of these two budget components, the Administrator pointed out that this would necessarily be somewhat arbitrary. An estimate indicated that the functions that were not directly related to providing volunteer inputs to projects would correspond to a net administrative budget of approximately \$2 million annually at 1987 prices, which would leave the rest to be covered by extrabudgetary resources based on the work-load measured by the number of volunteers in service. It would be necessary to devise a mechanism which would generate additional resources for UNV as its programme increases.

58. In examining the structure of such a mechanism, the Administrator considered first an adaptation of the normal support cost, whereby a charge of 13 per cent would be made on UNV-executed projects and of 11 per cent on UNV-Government-executed projects. However, because of the relative inexpensiveness of volunteers, the yield would not increase sufficiently with the increasing number of volunteers.

59. The Administrator, therefore, examined another possibility, namely that of using a standardized per capita charge. If a simple charge were made of \$3,000 per volunteer per annum, extrabudgetary resources of \$3,798,000 would be provided, giving UNV a total of \$5,798,000 which would be very close to an estimate of requirement based on the then level of operations. When the number of serving volunteers reaches 2,500, the support-cost income would produce \$7.5 million which should give UNV \$9.5 million and enable it to hire the additional staff needed to back-stop these volunteers. It was estimated that, as the number of volunteers increases and there is a concomitant increase in the staff, the work-load of each Professional would also increase but to a degree which should be manageable.

60. As the Council was informed at its thirty-fourth session, the agencies have agreed that the administrative functions performed by UNV in respect of volunteers serving in agency-executed projects should entitle it to one half the support-cost rate charged by the executing agency, i.e., UNV should be compensated at the rate of 6.5 per cent, which then should be credited to the support-cost line of UNDP general resources.

61. In developing proposals for consideration by the Council at its thirty-fifth session, the Administrator has determined that the managerial functions of UNV to be covered by the administrative budget comprise (a) the Office of the Executive Co-ordinator; (b) the Programme Policy Development and Evaluation Division, including its two sections, Programme Policy and Evaluation, and Information and External Relations; (c) part of the DDS and Youth Division, namely the whole of the Youth Section and part of the DDS Section; and (d) parts of the Administration and Finance Sections and the Registry Unit. Of the posts approved in 1986-1987 biennium budget 9 Professional and 11 General Service posts had been assigned for these functions. The consultant who reviewed UNV's work-load and staffing in 1986 (see para. 52) had recommended, *inter alia*, strengthening of the above-mentioned areas by the addition of three Professional and two General Service posts. The review which has now been conducted has also recommended, *inter alia*, strengthening the functions of UNV, some of which would fall in the areas mentioned above - promotion of UNV activities; outreach activities for women volunteers; training and orientation, briefing of project managers and host government officials and

evaluation (recommendations 4, 14, 26, 28, 37 and 43). Given this convergence of recommendations, the Administrator has decided that the "management" of UNV be strengthened and brought at least to the level recommended by the consultant, i.e., to around 12 staff units (each unit including one Professional and one secretary). In view of the general cost increases since the Administrator's proposals in document DP/1987/46 and to cover this level of staffing, the Administrator proposes that, at 1988 costs, UNV's administrative budget, to be charged to UNDP's administrative budget, be set at a level of \$3 million a year.

62. The remainder of the UNV will then be covered by the per capita charge. This part consists of (a) the whole of the Programme Operations Division, including the Section for Arab States, Asia and Pacific and the Section for Africa and Latin America; (b) the Recruitment Division, including the Rostering and Planning Sections; (c) the Programme Support Division, including the whole of the Placement Unit and parts of the Administration and Finance Sections and the Registry Unit; and (d) part of the DDS and Youth Division, including part of the DDS Section. At 1988 costs, the Administrator estimates that a rate of \$3,500 per serving volunteer would have to be levied annually to cover these costs. At varying levels of UNV operations, the charges and the resulting staff strength would be as follows:

No. of volunteers	Yield per volunteer (dollars)	Yield \$US (thousands)	Resulting staffing units	Volunteers per staffing unit
1 269	3 500	4 442	18	70
1 500	3 500	5 250	21	71
2 000	3 500	7 000	28	71
2 500	3 500	8 750	35	71

63. The merits of this proposal are that the central parts of the management of UNV which is covered by the administrative budget of UNDP would be strengthened in line with the recommendations of the review team and would remain more or less stable, while the programme support staff would correspond to the level of the actual operations, with the work-load per staff unit remaining more or less the same. The cost of the operations staff would be covered from the support-cost line of the UNDP resources.

64. An organigramme of UNV appears in the annex to the present document.

VIII. CONCLUSION

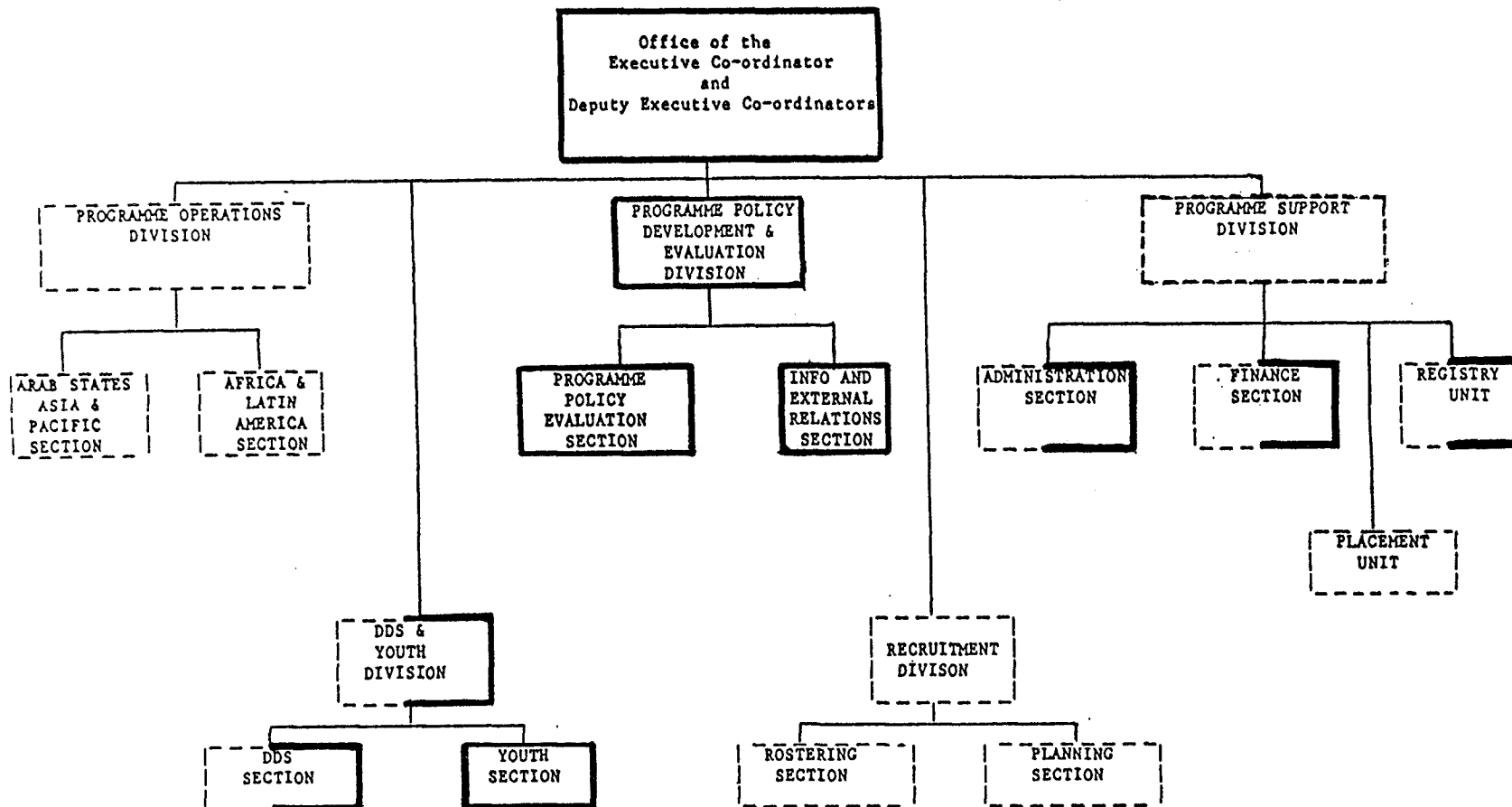
65. In conclusion, the Administrator expresses his appreciation to the members of the review team for the successful conduct of a very difficult task and thanks all those both outside and within the United Nations system who gave generously of their time to assist the team in gathering the necessary information.

66. Many useful recommendations made in the report have been accepted by the Administrator and many of them are already being implemented. Others are being studied for possible implementation. Some recommendations have serious implications on work-loads and budgets and these cannot be implemented at this time still other recommendations touch fundamental issues not only of volunteerism, but also of the nature of multilateral co-operation programmes as contrasted with bilateral programme. The Administrator's views on them are reflected in this report.

67. It emerges from the review that UNDP and UNV still have some work ahead to make better known and more comprehensible some of the special characteristics of UNV, its particular limitations and its peculiar strengths, which reflect its character as an international volunteer programme. The external review has been useful in many ways and especially in bringing many of these issues into focus. The Administrator assures the Council that future review exercises will be conducted, which will assist UNDP and the UNV programme to continue its progress in serving the developing countries.

68. The Administrator has also finalized his recommendations on the staffing and financing of the UNV operations. The Administrator has concluded that the "management" of UNV should be financed through a core budget which would be part of UNDP's administrative budget and that the volunteer recruitment and back-stopping be financed through a per capita charge. The Administrator believes that his proposals would provide strengthening and stability of the UNV management and flexibility in staffing its operations side in line with the changing level of volunteers.

Annex
UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS



Explanation

1. To be financed by administrative budget To be covered by the administrative budget: (a) the Office of the Executive Co-ordinator; (b) the Programme Policy Development and Evaluation Division, including its two sections -- Programme Policy and Evaluation, and Information and External Relations; (c) part of the DDS and Youth Division, namely the whole of the Youth Section and part of the DDS section, and (d) parts of the Administration and Finance Sections and the Registry Unit.

2. To be financed by per capita fee To be covered by the per capita fee (a) the Programme Operations Division, including the Section for Arab States, Asia and Planning Sections; (c) the Programme Support Division, including the whole of the Placement Unit and parts of the Administration and Finance Sections and the Registry Unit; and (d) part of the DDS and Youth Division, including part of the DDS Section.