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Abbreviations

BMICH – Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ILO – International Labour Organization
IOM – International Organization for Migration
RCO – Resident Coordinators’ Office
UN – United Nations
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS – United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund
UNIC – United Nations Information Centres
UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOPS – United Nations Office for Project Services
UNV – United Nations Volunteers
WCY – World Conference on Youth
WFP – World Food Programme
WHO – World Health Organization
Introduction

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. We work with partners to integrate qualified, highly motivated and well supported UN Volunteers into development programming and promote the value and global recognition of volunteerism. UNV is active in around 130 countries every year. With Field Presences in over 80 countries, UNV is represented worldwide. UNV is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and reports to the UNDP Executive Board.

UNV embraces volunteerism as universal and inclusive; and recognizes volunteerism in its diversity as well as the values that sustain it: free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity.

UNV Sri Lanka

Active in Sri Lanka since 1974, UNV works to enable stakeholders to be agents of change in their communities through volunteerism. After the 2004 tsunami, UNV supported the Government of Sri Lanka by mobilizing 104 UN Volunteers who played a crucial role in coordinating emergency relief and reconstruction initiatives. Recently, UNV, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Services, established the first National Volunteering Secretariat and, together with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skills Development, produced a research report to document the contribution of youth volunteers in the country.

UNV advocates for volunteerism and supports policy development and legislation recognizing volunteer work in Sri Lanka. Working in close cooperation with state institutions and national development fora, it aims at developing nationally-owned and sustainable volunteer structures, as well as supporting the documentation of volunteer contributions to peace and development.

UNV will continue its efforts towards social inclusion through networks and programs responding to specific needs, with focus on marginalized groups like women and youth, while partnering with governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as academic and private institutions through volunteerism.

V-Force

V-Force, an initiative of UNV Sri Lanka, was established in August 2011 to mark the 10th anniversary of the International Year of Volunteerism. The overall goal of V-Force is to leverage on the country's rich volunteerism culture (40% of the population engages in volunteerism activities) and to provide opportunities for young people to strengthen skills. V-Force provides a nationwide platform for volunteers to network, collaborate and promote volunteerism.
V-Force brings together people with a passion for volunteerism and a willingness to give back to society. V-Force makes way especially for the youth in Sri Lanka to initiate change and express their ideals while also ensuring youth participation in the development of the country.

Since its inception, V-Force has been involved in projects with different UN agencies such as UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, among others in the fields of sustainable development, peace and reconciliation, environmental sustainability and more.
Background

Volunteerism in Sri Lanka

Volunteerism is not a new concept in Sri Lanka. It is a trait that is deeply ingrained in the religious and social cultures of the country with children being taught from an early age to look out for those around them and provide a helping hand to those in need.

The rich volunteer culture in Sri Lanka is showcased by the country's ranking in the World Giving Index in 2013 (second position\(^1\)) and in 2016 (fifth position\(^2\)) which looks at time spent for volunteer activities. The report ‘Sri Lankan Youth: Volunteering to Make a Difference’\(^3\) states that the initial forms of volunteerism in Sri Lanka were in the forms of collectives of individuals involved in activities of the local temples (Dayaka Sabha) and village dwellers engaged in agricultural activities (Wewa Sabha). The Asian Development Report (Asian Development Bank; 1999) stated, “The Wewa Sabha are the historical roots of collective action, participatory decision-making, and sustainable development in Sri Lanka”. The Institute for Participatory Interaction in Development (IPID, 2001: 8) mentions that volunteering in Sri Lanka is, to a great extent, based on religious beliefs. The establishment of organizations such as the Youth Men’s Christian Association, Young Men’s Buddhist Association, and the Ceylon Young Men’s Muslim Association facilitated the engagement of young people in faith-based community initiatives.

While many of these traditional volunteer opportunities are still available in Sri Lankan society, there has been a shift in the approach and pattern of engaging in volunteer activities. Volunteer initiatives are more formalized with a clear demarcation of activities undertaken, and with members being better informed on project management that lead volunteers to design interventions focused on solving problems. Many of these volunteer organizations have now been set up as charities, associations and corporate structures that focus on achieving development in a sustainable fashion as opposed to solely engaging in charity work.

During the consultations led by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) on the post-2015 development agenda, vibrant and inspiring conversations took place with volunteers through the “MY World” Survey. Out of the total number of voters, over 660,000 were from Sri Lanka. As stated by the Secretary-General in the Report “Integrating volunteering in the next decade”, the extent of participation in the MY World global survey was an unexpectedly powerful demonstration of people's readiness to engage when avenues are available and accessible.

The wide volunteer participation in the MY World Survey does not come as a surprise in Sri Lanka, as the country has a long history and rich culture of volunteerism. The National

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Survey on Volunteerism, conducted in 2014 with the support of 1250 volunteer enumerators, also gives us a good understanding of the scope and inclusiveness of volunteerism in Sri Lanka. Given the total population of 15.1 million individuals aged 15 years or above, the survey estimated that approximately 8.6 million people volunteer in Sri Lanka at least once a year (with youth accounting for 40%). Furthermore, only 16.9% of volunteers belonged to the urban sector, whereas 81.2% belonged to the rural sector and 1.9% to the estate sector. Moreover, 8.2% of all volunteers are found to be suffering from a disability or a chronic illness, emphasizing that a challenging health condition is not a barrier to volunteering.

Role of V-Force

Given the dynamic context in Sri Lanka and worldwide, V-Force provides UNV with an unprecedented opportunity to play a critical role in the achievement of the SDGs in Sri Lanka by widening dialogue spaces and designing innovative models for stakeholder engagement and monitoring.

Building on the comparative advantage of volunteerism to convene people from many different social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds to work towards a common goal this project has the potential to take a concrete step towards the future of volunteerism: fostering collective intelligence, providing opportunities for increasing youth volunteerism, linking volunteers to the needs expressed by partners, ensure inclusion and promote gender equality, and work in collaborative and innovative partnerships.

Furthermore, on a global scale this project could be considered a pilot that could potentially be replicated in other countries, hence multiplying the positive effect of this investment.

V-Force was initiated in 2011 with a small group of 10 individuals. The group continued to grow through words of mouth and public outreach initiatives organized by UNV. As memberships grew, there was a need to formalize the V-Force recruitment process. This resulted in the creation of an online document that was shared amongst volunteers and facilitated the collection of volunteers’ data. This also ensured that all information was available on an easy-to-access document. Subsequently, a repository sheet was introduced in 2013, to streamline the process of requesting volunteers and enabled the maintenance of data such as the record of events, the total count of volunteers and their skill set. This database has since grown to include over 8000 motivated volunteers, and thus needs to be evaluated taking into consideration the change in environment and volunteer commitment.
About This Study

What do we want to know?

The V-Force system comprises multiple levels of stakeholders and for the purpose of this study key stakeholder groups were consulted. These includes founding members of V-Force, former volunteers, current members and UN staff members who have previously engaged V-Force in activities hosted by their respective agencies. Engagement with this cross section of individuals provides perspectives on past and current trends as well as points of view from different levels of the management structure of V-Force. It is vital to gain an accurate understanding of the existing levels of engagement of V-Force within the UN system.

Methodology

This has been achieved by analyzing V-Force repository sheets. Although the repository sheets were introduced only in 2013, two years after the formation of V-Force, they are the most accurate and current records available to indicate V-Force engagement. Founding members of the V-Force, past volunteers and UN staff members were consulted through one-on-one interviews.

Objectives

This feasibility study has been conducted to ensure a better understanding of the V-Force and the dynamic changes it has gone through over the years. The study aims to enable the identification of the most efficient management structure for V-Force, potential for scale up and explore potential financial models to ensure its sustainability.
Situation Analysis
Where do we stand now?

Prior to proposing any new changes, it is important to understand and analyze the current situation with respect to V-Force. This situation analysis will look at current membership, number of volunteers engaged and key areas of V-Force contribution towards UN agencies. This analysis will also look at the current management system being used to mobilize V-Force. In addition, taking into consideration the objective of increasing volunteer opportunities, this section will also evaluate the overall presence of the UN system in Sri Lanka, as this will facilitate the evaluation of volunteer opportunities beyond Colombo.

Demographic Characteristics

The V-Force online registration form consists of questions that gather information on such variables as age, education level, and geographical region of the volunteers, which allow us to analyze the demographic characteristics of V-Force members/volunteers. Registration data have been collected since 2011, and, as of June 2017, there are approximately 8000 registered volunteers. In this research, a sample comprising 2039 responses from 2016 is used for analysis.

Membership

The V-Force registration started from 2011 and its membership is growing fast. The current membership, as of June 2017 is 7824 and it is estimated to be more than 10000 in 2018.
Generation

More than 70% the V-Force volunteers are in the 17-28 age range. The millennial generation has had a direct impact in showing great enthusiasm and inspiration in volunteerism. These volunteers are mostly fresh graduates who are aiming to acquire new skills and experience through volunteering.

Education

In Sri Lanka, schooling is compulsory for children of ages 5 to 18. The Department of Examinations in Sri Lanka’s Ministry of Education conducts examination for qualification—namely, the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level (O-Level) and Advanced Level (A-Level) Examinations. The O-Level examinations are usually taken by students during grades 10-11 of senior secondary schools, at around the ages of 15-16. The A-Level examinations are usually taken by students during grades 12-13, at around the ages of 17-18, after the completion of the O-Levels. Diplomas and Degrees are given to those who complete courses at a Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

The pie chart below shows the latest degree obtained by the volunteers. The gap between all four educational levels are minimal since most of the volunteers are in the 17-28 age group.
Geographical Region

The graph below summarizes the geographic region of the volunteers registered in 2016. Most of the registered V-Force volunteers are from the Western province where the capital of Sri Lanka, Colombo is located. The Central and the Southern provinces are the second and third most populated provinces in Sri Lanka; however, the volunteer membership has not been common in these areas.

Since many of the volunteering opportunities are based in Colombo, the volunteers from the Western province have a greater chance of getting opportunities at a short notice with less transportation cost. That may account for the relatively increased participation from volunteers residing in the Western province.

Inequality in availability of volunteer opportunities in Sri Lanka is one of the challenges for V-Force to overcome. The V-Force secretariat will conduct volunteer consultations and build partnerships with regional universities to inspire and involve more volunteers in the other—Southern and Central—provinces.
Engagements

V-Force members have played a pivotal role in the planning, preparation and execution of key projects within the UN system. Here are the milestone projects of V-Force from 2013 to 2016.

2013

Twinning Schools Programme – UNDP, UNV
35 V-Force
The Twinning Schools Programme (TSP), a main component of Communities for Progress II (C4PII), implemented under the Transition Recovery Programme (TRP) of UNDP, began in June 2011. It aimed to strengthen social reconciliation and socio-economic recovery in conflict-affected communities.

The Twinning Schools Programme was held at the Uva Wellassa University, Badulla from 17 to 21 April 2013 bringing together more than 200 school children from 21 conflict-affected communities for a unique experience of learning and sharing. The participants were gathered amidst the professional guidance of top national athletes, artists and media personnel for an invaluable exposure to talent and professional experience.

UNV worked with UNDP to enhance volunteer mobilization, donor coordination and partnerships with civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders. Over 70 professionals in the field of sports, media, and performing arts volunteered their time towards the Finale. Also 35 V-Force promoted inclusive volunteerism through preparation and execution of the programme at all levels.

2014

National Unity Convention - Ministry of National Languages and Social Integration, UNV
70 V-Force
An Island Art and Essay competition was organized by UNV with the Social Integration Unit of the Ministry of National Languages and Social Integration under the theme of ‘National Unity in Diversity’. A total of 2000 people joined activities.

World Conference on Youth (WCY) - UN Sri Lanka, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skills Development, National Youth Services Council, National Youth Corps
162 V-Force
The World Conference on Youth brought together over 2000 volunteers who were crucial in ensuring the smooth running of the conference. The conference itself brought together youth leaders from across the world. The Government of Sri Lanka was the main host for the event along with the support of the UN Sri Lanka

National Kite Festival - Ministry of National Languages and Social Integration, UNV, UNDP, Kite Sri Lanka, News 1st
160 V-Force
A Kite Festival was held on the 19th of July 2014 at 7 selected locations across the costal belt of Sri Lanka. Volunteer working groups were set-up in the selected seven locations and empowered to organize the festival in their respective location under the guidance and expertise of the Ministry and UNV. Furthermore workshops were also organized in another seven selected in-land locations across the Island to promote and educate about the social integration week and the kite festival. The Kite Festival also featured side events such as, cultural shows, potluck food stalls and language stalls. The event reached out to around 25,000 people.

First National Conference on Volunteerism – National Volunteering Secretariat, Ministry of Social Empowerment and Welfare, UNV

25 V-Force
Under the 2nd Phase of Voice Project, the NVS was established by the Ministry of Social Services and UNV/UNDP and successfully launched on 14th October 2014. The launch was followed by the first National Conference on Volunteerism (14-15 Oct 2014). 400 people attended the event and 170 participants from 35 countries followed the conference through live streaming (first time in Sri Lanka). The conference was also streamed to three other locations in Sri Lanka to allow an additional 100 people to participate.

2015

160 V-Force
V-Awards is a project initiated in 2011 marking the 10th anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers. This project recognizes individuals who make extraordinary and selfless contributions to society at large and reward the most outstanding volunteers at national level. The event is a tri-party partnership between the UN, the Government of Sri Lanka and the private sector under the guidance of the National Steering Committee on Volunteering (NSC-V). The most recent edition of V-Awards took place on 13th February 2015 at the Nelum Pokuna Theatre in Colombo. This was the largest edition so far and received over 600 nominations from all districts. The Grand Finale of V-Awards 2015, a two-hour, trilingual live television event reached over 5 million viewers, while 1200 guests were present at the event. Three awards have been given for “Volunteer of the Year”, “Youth Volunteer of the Year” and a thematic Award on “Volunteering for Disaster Risk Reduction”. An extensive media campaign was conducted prior the Finale which reached over 7million people. 160 V-Force volunteers were mobilized for the overall coordination of the project in the lead up and during the finale.

World AIDS Day – UNAIDS
80 V-Force
The World AIDS Day celebrations focused on awareness-building. The event was held at the Independence Square in Colombo with volunteers carrying out a survey with visitors to gauge their knowledge and informing them of the myths and facts on HIV. The event mobilized approximately 80 V-Force members who worked closely with the staff of UNAIDS to ensure that the programme was a success.
National Foresight and Innovation Summit for Sustainable Human Development - UNDP

50 V-Force
The national foresight and innovation summit for sustainable human development was a two-day conference that consisted of participants mainly from all sectors of the government planning divisions, foreign missions, development practitioners, etc. The event hosted over 200 people. The objective of the event was to introduce the skills of foresight and innovation for planning officials; this was done through plenary presentations followed by thematic working groups. Approximately 50 members of the V-Force were involved in this project; a large part of the group of volunteers worked with the core UNDP team months ahead of the event and was involved in the formulation of the final event. Volunteers carried out tasks of, event managers, rapporteurs, researchers, bloggers, photographers, writers, etc.

Public Representations Committee (PRC) – UNDP, UNV
60 V-Force
In 2016 one of the main achievements of V-Force was the involvement in the Public Representation Committee (PRC). The PRC was appointed by the Prime Minister to gather and compile the proposals of the public for reforming the constitution. UNV contributed to the process through a combination of UN Volunteers and a team of 60 V-Force volunteers and two NUN Volunteers. The volunteers operated as the first line of filtering and reviewing submissions. The V-Force volunteers had the opportunity to utilize their academic knowledge to identify and classify submissions under predetermined categories. Their work assisted the PRC in compiling the report of recommendations to the Parliament of Sri Lanka.

Other Recurring Projects
- United Nations Day - (RCO) – V-Force supports the annual UN Day in the areas of research, event coordination, pre-planning, and preparation.
- World Food Day - (FAO and WFP) – V-Force members volunteer during World Food Day by explaining the theme of the event and the work of the WFP to participants.
- World Refugee Day - (UNHCR) – V-Force serve in the capacity of communicators and organizers at this event. Specialized V-Force members are recruited since knowledge of Urdu and Hindi is required to communicate with the refugees.
- International Volunteer Day - (UNV)
- Assignment Preparation Training (APT) - (UNV)
- Capacity Development and Learning Facility (CDLF) – (UNV)
Service Lines

The participation of V-Force in UN projects has brought in community perspectives while also helping the volunteers to understand the role of UN agencies in Sri Lanka, thus opening the UN and its work to the greater communities and beneficiaries.

Based on the analysis of a sample of 100 Repository Sheets it emerges that **Event Coordination** is one of the skills most in demand. This is also confirmed if we look at the Milestones activities where V-Force has been involved in. Moving forward, it is likely that Event Coordination will continue to be a key service lines for V-Force and this should guide our engagement with UN Agencies in terms of anticipating their needs for V-Force mobilization (e.g. identify regular UN observances that require regular V-Force support).

**ICT** is another service lines where V-Force can carve out a niche. 10% of the requests from the analyzed sample relates to website management, database development and other ICT-related tasks. Building on the global partnership between UNV and CISCO, we have strengthened our engagement with CISCO by mobilizing their students as V-Force volunteers. The volunteer assignments last for a period of six months with clear deliverables as the assignments will be part of the students’ curricula. Through their engagement, V-Force Cisco volunteers receive guidance and mentoring from both V-Force and CISCO. Currently 9 V-Force Cisco volunteers have been mobilized to develop the new V-Force online portal.

**Data Gathering and Analysis** are increasingly receiving attention from UN Agencies. The UNSDF 2018-2022 responds to the need for a strategic focus on data, knowledge management and evidence based policy and planning. The focus on data seeks to increase opportunities to develop evidence based policies, help expand partnerships with government and help strengthen relationships with international partners. In the UNSDF cycle, the UN family will support the Government to produce, analyze and use the data for decision-making and SDG monitoring. In addition, the joint efforts of the UN will look
at innovative approaches to engaging with all stakeholders including citizens to create easily accessible information. In this scenario, the mobilization of V-Force can be a useful asset to support gathering of new sets of qualitative and quantitative data.

Management System

The current mobilization and management system of V-Force is a linear process that mainly consists of the following stages:

- **Request by UN agency representative**
  The respective UN agency sends in a formal request to the V-Force team. The request is sent via a signed repository sheet. The repository sheet gathers information on the project details, the duration of engagement, number of volunteers required, the skills needed, contact details and names of the responsible officer. In 2016 UNV Sri Lanka has automatized the repository sheet; now the volunteer request form is also a Google Form. This will facilitate recording keeping and data collection in the long-run, not to mention the environment friendly and easy administration factors.

- **Notice sent to the V-Force**
  The V-Force team shares the request among V-Force members via a group email. The email requests members who are interested and available to participate to express their interest and register their response through an online form prior to a specified deadline.

- **View and select interested applicants**
  Once the deadline for expressions of interest has lapsed, the V-Force team will go through the list of members who have signed up and ensure that they have the skills and meet the requirements requested by the UN agency. Prior experiences are also taken into account. The shortlisted applicants are then sent to the requesting UN personnel. The UN personnel makes the final decision for the required number of volunteers and notifies the V-Force team, who then contacts and invites the selected members for a briefing.

- **Briefing**
  Volunteers will receive a briefing and be asked to sign a Code of Conduct. The requesting UN agency representative will brief members on the project, preparations required and future meeting dates.

- **Engagement in the project**
  The volunteers will now engage directly with the UN agency representative and work on the project for the allocated time.

- **Reference letter**
Upon conclusion of the project, volunteers may receive reference letters from the relevant UN agency (this practice varies with the agency). If requested, volunteers may also be issued a letter by UNV Sri Lanka.

- **Evaluation**
  At the end of the volunteer assignment, the volunteers and the focal point from the Host Agency will fill in a feedback form.

**Key partners**

The V-Force has built partnerships with many organizations from private and public sectors and the United Nations agencies based in Sri Lanka.

**UN Agencies**

V-Force volunteers are mobilized always with a UN agency or in the framework of a UN supported project or initiative. Therefore, partnerships have been established with all agencies for the mobilization of V-Force. Through the years, thanks to the excellent support provided by the volunteers, and the client-oriented service provided by the UNV team, UN agencies have gained more trust in V-Force which has resulted in increasing requests for volunteers.

Given that many agencies are putting considerable effort in engaging more young people in their programmes, several UN agencies have also shown interest in a more systematic mobilization of V-Force during the year. Discussions have been on-going with WFP and WHO at this regard. WFP has expressed interest to mobilize V-Force CISCO volunteers.

Other agencies, like RCO or UNHCR also have regular mobilization of V-Force especially for the World Refugee Day and UN Day celebrations.

**CISCO**

As previously mentioned, CISCO has recently strengthened a key partnership with UNV Sri Lanka to mobilize their students as V-Force volunteers. This initiative started from the feedback received by the CISCO Asia Director on the need to create more opportunities to engage CISCO students as volunteers (going beyond the limited number of CISCO Fully Funded UN Volunteers currently mobilized). From that a discussion with the CISCO Focal Point in Sri Lanka led to this V-Force partnership.

**British Council in Sri Lanka**

V-Force and the British Council are joining forces to strengthen the learning experience of V-Force volunteers. British Council provides a social leadership training programme (Active Citizens) that promotes intercultural dialogue and community-led social development. Through the programme, British Council brings together people with different beliefs and perspectives to learn from and share with each other.
Feedback

How did we perform?

Feedback form V-Force Volunteers

After the completion of the volunteer assignments, volunteers are asked to complete a feedback form for V-Force evaluation. For the year 2017, the feedback was collected from 34 volunteers.

The form consists of the following questions:

- Did you enjoy your volunteer experience? (5:highest satisfaction, 1:lowest satisfaction)
- Your skills were valued and put to good use throughout the assignment (Strongly Agree/ Agree/ Uncertain/ Disagree/ Strongly Disagree)
- You were provided guidance and support as needed from the supervisor in charge throughout the assignment (Strongly Agree/ Agree/ Uncertain/ Disagree/ Strongly Disagree)
- Would you recommend volunteering with V-Force to your network? (Strongly Agree/ Agree/ Uncertain/ Disagree/ Strongly Disagree)
- Would you like to volunteer with V-Force in the future? (Yes/ No)

Observing the feedback data, it is evident that all volunteers have enjoyed their volunteer experience. More than 90% of V-Force agreed that their skills were valued and put to good use throughout the assignments. Also more than 60% of volunteers strongly agreed that they were provided guidance and support as needed from the supervisor in charge throughout the assignment.
Your skills were valued and put to good use throughout the assignment:
34 responses

You were provided guidance and support as needed from the supervisor in charge throughout the assignment:
34 responses

Would you recommend volunteering with V-Force to your network:
34 responses
Among All 34 volunteers who agreed, 76.5% strongly agreed that they would recommend volunteering with V-Force to their network. Moreover, all agreed that they would like to volunteer again with V-Force in the future. The possible reason for the rapid growth of V-Force could be because of the recommendations provided by the V-Force volunteers to his/her network.

Feedback from Host UN Agencies

After the completion of the volunteer tasks, host agency focal points are asked to complete a feedback form for V-Force evaluation. For the year 2017, the feedback was collected from 9 focal points.

The form consists of the following questions:

- Attitude of the volunteers (Excellent/ Very Good/ Good/ Poor/ Very Poor)
- Ethical conduct of the volunteer (Excellent/ Very Good/ Good/ Poor/ Very Poor)
- Communication skills of the volunteer (Excellent/ Very Good/ Good/ Poor/ Very Poor)
- Team work capacity of the volunteer (Excellent/ Very Good/ Good/ Poor/ Very Poor)
- Reliability of the volunteer (Excellent/ Very Good/ Good/ Poor/ Very Poor)
- The volunteer had the capacity to successfully support the agency’s project and completed the assignment reaching expectations. (Strongly Agree/ Agree/ Uncertain/ Disagree/ Strongly Disagree)

Overall, the feedback provided in regards to the V-Force volunteers has been positive and constructive. All 9 focal points were satisfied (marked higher than ‘Good’) with the
attitude, ethical conduct, communication skills, team work capacity and the reliability of the volunteers. However, regarding the capacity of the volunteers in supporting the agency’s project, 11.1% answered ‘uncertain’ while the rest were agreed that the volunteers had the capacity.

![Attitude of the volunteers:](chart1)

![Ethical conduct of the volunteer:](chart2)
Communication skills of the volunteer:
9 responses

Team work capacity of the volunteer:
9 responses
The volunteer had the capacity to successfully support the agency's project and completed the assignment reaching expectations:

9 responses

- Strongly Agree: 22.2%
- Agree: 11.1%
- Uncertain: 66.7%
- Disagree: 11.1%
- Strongly Disagree: 11.1%

Reliability of the volunteer:

9 responses

- Excellent: 44.4%
- Very good: 11.1%
- Good: 11.1%
- Poor: 44.4%
- Very Poor: 22.2%
Volunteer Code of Conduct

While efforts are made in-house, it is equally important that standards are maintained by the volunteers. Currently, all V-Force members, in a new assignment, are briefed and requested to sign a Code of Conduct indicating that they are aware of their responsibilities as a member.

Next steps – The Code of Conduct and volunteer guidelines will provide a framework that will guide volunteer conduct during assignments. The Code of Conduct should be expanded to highlight important factors such as an understanding that V-Force members are not UN staff and that they would not be paid for their services. These factors should correlate with the general V-Force guidelines and thus ensure that internal guidelines match the Code of Conduct provided to V-Force members.

Volunteer Recognition

Recognizing volunteer engagement
The current UNV database has over 8000 registered members. It is understood that not everyone will excel in all types of tasks. Each volunteer will have his or her area of expertise. Some situations may arise where the Code of Conduct and guidelines are trespassed. This is an aspect that needs to be planned for, facilitating better handling of the situation at the ground level.

Next steps – The proposed V-Force database system that is being developed will enable the V-Force Coordinator (the administrative staff) to receive feedback on volunteers. This will better prepare the coordinator when mobilizing a V-Force member for subsequent assignments. For example, if person A did not do a good job with assigned research but performed well in event planning, then the V-Force Coordinator will ensure person A is assigned to event organization related activities in the future. If person B has been given a volunteer opportunity but is non-responsive or absent with no prior notice, then person B may not be considered for future engagements.

Engaging United Nations Staff Members

Raising Awareness on V-Force UN staff members play an important role in of the V-Force ecosystem – as they provide the volunteer opportunities.

The V-Force team requires the support of all UN staff members at all times. During interviews conducted with UN staff members, it was apparent that many staff members are not aware of the structures and formats through which V-Force can be engaged. There is a belief that the engagement of V-Force volunteers is restricted to large events. However, many were not aware that V-Force engagement is also carried out for activities such as research, design, content writing and more. It is important to create awareness about, in which capacity UN staff members can engage V-force members. The awareness should be made at all levels of management, which would also facilitate approval in V-Force engagement.
Next steps
– It is proposed that an awareness programme be carried out in the following way–
(a) Initially directed at senior management of UN agencies, this could be carried out via a clearly designed session to be delivered during a UN Country Team meetings. The objective of this session would be to introduce V-Force, the benefits of using V-Force volunteers for UN activities as well as to the larger community. This is an excellent way to share the important work done in agencies with the greater youth population.

(b) Face-to-face sessions with UN agencies to introduce and build a relationship between the V-Force Coordinator and UN staff members, share the benefits of engaging volunteers, provide examples and formats of the different ways in which volunteers are engaged, and guidelines for volunteer engagement. It is proposed that the V-Force team should visit the individual UN agencies, and preferably field offices where V-Force is to be engaged, in order to build a positive relationship and association with the V-Force.

Appointment of a V-Force focal point

The appointment of a V-Force focal point in each agency will facilitate better communication, while also ensuring a strong advocacy for volunteerism. The focal point could be a key avenue to identify volunteer opportunities.

Staff volunteer guidelines

At present all volunteers are briefed and provided with a Code of Conduct and guidelines to be adhered to. However, to ensure the consistency of the quality of the V-Force programme, UN staff, designated to act as the focal points for volunteers, must be briefed. This ensures that the same values of UNV transcend through all agencies and staff.

Next steps: sharing guidelines, via email, as a reminder of the role of V-Force and the UN agency in engaging the volunteers. Ensure these guidelines are formulated and customized according to the event for example, the availability of DSA for field work and the provision of transport for events that end late at night (after 6.00 p.m.). Sample guidelines are attached in the annex of this document.
**Sustainability**

Over time, after a period of three to four years, a plan can be put in place where UN agencies contribute towards this youth development and empowerment initiative.

**Step 1 - Me - Identity and Culture**

Participants get a better understanding of the concepts of identity and culture and apply their learning to understand the beliefs, behavior and attitudes of themselves and other people.

**Step 2 - Me and You - Intercultural Dialogue**

Participants learn methods of dialogue as a tool for building empathy, trust and understanding within and across cultures.

**Step 3 - Local and Global Community - We Together**

Participants develop an understanding of ‘community’ and its relationship with identity and culture. The group applies this knowledge to their own community in order to identify the problem they would like to address and the people they need to engage with to achieve their objectives.

**Step 4 - Social Action Planning**

Participants focus on planning a social action initiative in their community, considering the process in different levels of detail and complexity. This involves identifying and clarifying their agenda, a specific intervention and how they will deliver it.