Report of a Feasibility Study on Volunteerism in Namibia

FINAL DRAFT

Ingrid Melville, Consultant
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMICAALL</td>
<td>Alliance of Mayors Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAA</td>
<td>Catholic AIDS Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBNRM</td>
<td>Community Based Natural Resources Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Community Based Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCEP</td>
<td>Community Capacity Enhancement Programme</td>
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<td>CHBC</td>
<td>Community Home Based Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>COLS</td>
<td>Change of Lifestyles</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRO</td>
<td>Chief Regional Officer</td>
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<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECNL</td>
<td>European Center for Not-for-Profit Law</td>
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<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
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<td>GEF</td>
<td>Global Environment Facility</td>
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<td>4H</td>
<td>Head, heart, hands and health</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immuno Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICNL</td>
<td>International Center for Not-for-Profit Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>IECCD</td>
<td>Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development</td>
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<td>IVD</td>
<td>International Volunteers Day</td>
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<td>JICA</td>
<td>Japanese International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>KRA</td>
<td>Key Results Area</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MGECW</td>
<td>Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare</td>
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<td>MOHSS</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Social Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
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<td>MRLGHRD</td>
<td>Ministry of Regional and Local Government Housing and Rural Development</td>
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<td>MYNSSC</td>
<td>Ministry of Youth National Service Sports and Culture</td>
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<td>NANASO</td>
<td>Namibian Network of AIDS Service Organisations</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>NANGOF</td>
<td>Namibian Non Governmental Organisations Forum</td>
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<td>NDP3</td>
<td>The Third National Development Plan</td>
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<td>NQA</td>
<td>National Qualifications Authority</td>
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<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organisations</td>
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<td>NPC</td>
<td>National Planning Commission</td>
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<td>NRCS</td>
<td>Namibia Red Cross Society</td>
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<td>NUNV</td>
<td>National United Nations Volunteer</td>
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<td>NYC</td>
<td>National Youth Council</td>
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<td>NYS</td>
<td>National Youth Service</td>
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<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public Private Partnerships</td>
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<td>TCE</td>
<td>Total Control of the Epidemic</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Education Scientific Organisation</td>
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<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<td>UNV</td>
<td>United Nations Volunteer</td>
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<td>VIOs</td>
<td>Volunteer Involving Organisations</td>
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<td>VSO</td>
<td>Volunteer Service Organisations</td>
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<td>VMS</td>
<td>Volunteer Management Systems</td>
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<td>VOSESA</td>
<td>Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa</td>
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<td>V4D-CC</td>
<td>Volunteering for Development Coordinating Committee</td>
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Acknowledgements

This report is the product of the efforts, contributions and support of many individuals and organisations. In particular, this report would not have been possible without the guidance and direction provided by the Office of the President (National Planning Commission Secretariat) which led the research initiative across the seven (7) regions of the country.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), as development partners that supported the research and helped in the identification of best practices across the regions through their expertise in volunteerism and development.

The leadership and immeasurable support provided by the Volunteering for Development Coordinating Committee (V4D-CC) and their partners and volunteers supported the sharing of experiences and networking.
Executive Summary

This Feasibility Study Report explores the efficacy of volunteerism as a strategy for attaining the national developmental goals in Namibia. It lays the basis for drafting a National Policy on Volunteerism which will provide a framework for volunteerism to be recognised and promoted and quantified in terms of its contribution to national initiatives.

The study took into consideration traditional and existing manifestations of volunteering in the country. A common understanding and agreed definition of “volunteer” in Namibia is developed through consultative and participatory methodologies which were employed in this Feasibility Study. National strengths in different sectors and among various stakeholders were reviewed and gaps in volunteer management and engagement were deliberated upon so that the results contained herein informs evidence-based and a responsive Policy to support all volunteering initiatives in Namibia.

The views and data provided by the various stakeholders are the basis of the recommendations which will guide the shape and form of a Policy on volunteerism for Namibia.
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background
As a nation, Namibia has a long term people-centred vision for national development\(^1\). The goal of this Vision is that by 2030 “Namibia has a population of healthy, well educated, skilled, pro-active and financially stable people with a broad range of talents, and displays a positive attitude towards themselves, their fellow citizens, their country and global humanity\(^2\).” The Vision document goes further to outline that “With the emphasis on the development of the people of Namibia, an environment should be nurtured that promotes confidence and the determination to succeed.” It is within the lens of this foresight for the people of Namibia which is at present being operationalised through the Third National Development Plan (NDP3), that this Feasibility Study has been conducted.

Volunteerism as a development issue in Namibia has been under consideration by the Office of the President through the National Planning Commission (NPC) and other Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs). These organisations have organised themselves into the Volunteering for Development Coordinating Committee (V4D-CC) under the Chairpersonship of the National Planning Commission (NPC). They organise the commemoration of International Volunteers Day (IVD) on 5\(^{th}\) December each year. The terms of reference of the V4D-CC has been approved and adopted by the members of the Committee. On 5\(^{th}\) December 2008, and 17\(^{th}\) to 18\(^{th}\) March 2009, respectively, the V4D-CC convened Dialogue meetings to consider the “theory and practice” of volunteerism in Namibia. One of the recommendations of the latter forum is that support should be provided to conduct a Feasibility Study on Volunteerism in Namibia and formulate a National Policy on Volunteerism

1.2 Objectives
The overall aim of this report is to examine, assess and make suggestions for an enabling policy framework to strategically reposition volunteerism as a critical contributor to national development in Namibia. In so doing, the Feasibility Study documents existing volunteering practices, their strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats in order to establish the framework for an evidence-based draft National Volunteering Policy. This report will therefore do the following:

- Explain the meaning of volunteerism and outline the major types of volunteering in Namibia;
- Provide an overview of the nature and extent of existing volunteerism programming in Namibia;
- Identify and elaborate on the implications of existing laws and policies on volunteering;
- Identify volunteering gaps and suggest/recommend ways of bridging the identified gaps;
- Document the experiences of volunteers and VIOs within existing volunteering initiatives;
- Identify and document volunteering opportunities and mechanisms for nurturing and strengthening volunteer action including: policy or law formulation, promotion, facilitation, networking and recognition;
- Make recommendations on how to strengthen volunteerism at all levels in the country;

1.3 Methodology and tools
The Feasibility Study was undertaken through the application of qualitative descriptive research using a purposive sampling methodology. The study population was agreed with the V4D-CC as Windhoek in the Khomas Region, Katima Mulilo in the Caprivi Region, Rundu in the Kavango Region, Eehana in the Ohangwena Region, Oshakati, in the Oshana Region, Uutapi in the Omusati Region and Mariental in the Hardap regions. Key informants for these regions were selected from Government,

\(^{1}\) Namibia Vision 2030 – Policy Framework for Long Term National Development Summary Document

\(^{2}\) Ibid
VIOS, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Traditional Authorities. Focus Group Discussions were also convened involving these stakeholders. A consultative workshop was organised with volunteers in Windhoek and several Focus Group Discussions were organised with volunteers in the various regions.

A literature review of key documents and a review of laws and policies guiding and/or impacting on volunteerism in Namibia were also conducted. A research tool was developed for key informant interviews. Based on these interventions a draft report has been developed for verification by key stakeholders. This draft report was verified at a workshop in Windhoek on 30th April 2010.

1.4 Research area
The research was conducted among stakeholders who engage volunteers, decentralised governance structures and volunteers themselves in the regions outlined above. The research focussed on eliciting information to fulfil the above objectives.

1.5 Sampling strategy
Due to limitations in time and their expert knowledge of the socio-cultural and physical geographical details, the V4D-CC guided the consultant in the selection of the study population which should be reflective of the dynamic cultural perspectives and volunteering initiatives which exist within Namibia.

1.6 Problems and limitations
The research was conducted within time constraints as all components of the research, including field visits, were conducted within a time span of 15 days. While consultative processes including meetings were convened to include as wide a cross sector of stakeholders as possible, attendance at some sites excluded particular interest groups. In particular, there was no direct interaction with representatives from the private sector, academia and representatives from professional organisations such as lawyers, doctors, accountants and engineers. The report is therefore deprived of their contributions of potential strategies to broaden the base and profile of volunteering in Namibia and stimulate their participation.
Chapter 2: Diversity of approaches to mobilising and facilitating volunteerism

2.1 Introduction
Within Namibia, there is no harmonised framework or mechanism for mobilising volunteers or facilitating volunteerism. From a socio-cultural perspective, there is evidence of various volunteering initiatives which are ongoing with varying levels of formalisation in Namibia. Indeed, it is immutable that a rich tradition of volunteering exists within Namibia. In order to determine the future of volunteerism as a sustainable developmental strategy within Namibia, ongoing volunteerism initiatives, the respective roots and synergistic energies are examined.

2.1.1 Volunteerism as mutual aid or self help
Traditionally, Namibians volunteered through ploughing in the fields of neighbours or assisting a neighbour to build a house. This was how communities sustained themselves and gained socio-economic advancement. At the end of this activity, a token of appreciation would be given to those who participated. This appreciation would be through the sharing of food or home brewed drink. Stakeholders pointed out that these practices were at a time when there was less emphasis on capitalism. Added to this, such volunteerism was in a context where people had something for their own sustenance. In the existing socio-economic context, this practice is less common as a payment will be expected by those who support such initiatives within a community.

2.1.2 Volunteering as service to others
In this scenario, citizens volunteer time to support service delivery. This was observed to be the most common field of endeavour of volunteers in all regions. It was particularly evident in health service delivery through Community Home Based Care (CHBC), support to orphans and vulnerable children and disaster management. The volunteers under the Ministry of Health and Social Services, (MOHSS), Ministry of Gender and Child Welfare (MGCW) and the hundreds of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) which engage volunteers, collectively referred to as VIOs, support the engagement of volunteers for service delivery. The emergence of social or humanitarian crises within Namibia fuels the mobilisation of community based volunteerism to present a coping mechanism. This was witnessed with the ongoing floods in the northern part of the country. Often led by the Namibian Red Cross Society (NRCS), volunteers save lives, provide emergency relief and develop community coping mechanisms.

2.1.3 Volunteering through participating or civic engagement
Volunteering as a good governance strategy for active and meaningful participation of citizens in national development is also visible in Namibia. Community development projects for the formalisation of informal settlements as a prerequisite for infrastructural development in Rundu and Katima Muililo were observed. In these areas, Lux Development, an International NGO mobilises national volunteers to provide information to the communities about project developments, plot surveys and general progress in implementation. The volunteers also engage with and gather concerns from the community which need to be incorporated into the project by the developers and local authorities.

The Government of Namibia has established Volunteer Programmes for youth participation and empowerment.

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ELCIN interview, 16th April 2010
The Ministry of Youth National Service Sports and Culture (MYNSSC) Youth Volunteer Programme was initiated in 2006 to deal with high youth unemployment, poverty, lack of skills and consequent poor employment potential for young people in Namibia. Young people in Namibia are greatly affected by unemployment. 67% of those between the ages 15 and 19, and 59% of those between 20 and 24 years of age were unemployed in 2000. The MYNSSC launched the Regional Computer Literacy Programme and the Regional Tailoring and Dressmaking Programme to capacitate youths. Volunteer trainers were recruited to lead this capacity development initiative. The idea is to promote alternatives for rural youths to deal with unemployment and poverty. Since its inception, the Volunteer Programme has been extended to new sectors. Youth volunteers have been recruited to assist youth officers, and are engaged as cleaners and in gardening programmes through the MYNSSC. The Programme is also collaborating with the Ministry of Health to provide a special training to indigenous youth from the San to enable them to perform as nurses within their own communities. The youth volunteers are now integrated into all Programmes of the MYNSSC.

This Volunteer Programme was motivated by the US Peace Corps, the Japanese (JICA) and Chinese Volunteer Programmes. The Namibian Youth Programme was crafted to expose young people to the working environment and facilitate regional exchanges among the regions in Namibia. There is no database of the skills of youth volunteers but the Volunteer Programme promotes capacity building. This Youth Volunteer Programme is in line with the African Youth Charter. A draft Policy for this Programme is outlined in 5.3 below). The Programme engages more than 102 volunteers countrywide. Thus far, 25 volunteers were integrated and employed in Government. In 2009, 5 volunteers were employed in the Ministry of Youth. There are 35,000 vacant positions in the Civil Service and this programme is working with the Office of the Prime Minister to support these volunteers to be able to fill some of these posts. The Office of the Prime Minister requested for 62 additional vacant posts in the Ministries to be put in place for youth skills promoters. Long serving volunteers will be moved into these posts.

The MYNSSC has infrastructure to support the Youth Volunteer Programme on a national level with 32 Regional Offices in the 13 regions of the country and 107 constituency offices. The Ministry registered 10,000 Namibian youths born in exile and only half of these youths are employed. The registration process for a youth database is underway.

The National Youth Service (NYS) is a public institution for national youth development. It was established by Act Number 6 of 2005. NYS involves and engages young people in national socio-economic development and inculcates and encourages volunteerism in youths and creates opportunities through skills development. NYS has a triple pronged programme involving volunteerism. The first stage is the civic training or distilling discipline in which participants are moulded to be responsible citizens. In the second stage, participants are mandated to serve the community through volunteering and at the third stage, participants undergo skills training in different trades and receive certificates with which they can find jobs or create employment. Within NYS, a volunteer is a trainee who completed civic training and offers his/her services to the community voluntarily in projects which are of national importance. Placements of volunteers are made in partnership with other institutions such as Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and the construction industry.

The National Youth Council (NYC) also has a volunteer Programme. The aim of the volunteer programme is to provide young people with work experience, skills and knowledge. It targets young

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4 Namibia: Labour market and socio-economic indicators, Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI) for the Global Policy Network (GPN), November 2003
5 MYNSSC interview, 14 April 2010
6 NYS interview, 15 April 2010
people between the ages of 16 to 35 years especially out of school youths. The objective is to expose young people to the world of work through 1 year in a volunteer programme. The NYC engages approximately 5 or 6 volunteers each year.

2.1.4 Advocacy or campaigning

Advocacy and campaigning covers diverse actions which can be taken to raise awareness on issues and stimulate social mobilisation. Within his ambit, are the ongoing advocacy and information outreach activities on HIV and AIDS. According to stakeholders, the most profound manifestation of volunteerism in Namibia is the volunteerism which fuelled the liberation struggle which brought the nation to independence from colonial and apartheid rule. Men and women throughout Namibia put their lives on the line to gain the liberation of this country. It was a movement led by volunteers and supported by volunteers, some of whom provided support from the background.

2.2 Diversity of approaches for promoting and facilitating volunteerism

While volunteerism exists in its various manifestations, unharmonised and often informal strategies for promoting volunteerism were observed. There is no central coordinating body for volunteers. Sourcing volunteers for the various types of volunteer engagement is based on the “ad hoc” system identified and applied by a given organisation or sector. There is also no consistency or coherence in the management, definition and conditions of service for volunteers.

2.2.1 Recruitment strategies

For the most part, word of mouth dissemination of vacancies, public advertisements in the media or at public notice boards seem to be the predominant strategy. Some experiences are outlined below:

Community Based Health Care Programmes (CHBC)

An Assessment of Community Volunteers and Community Based Health Care Programmes conducted in 2006 by the MHSSS reveals that the majority of volunteers in this sector are selected through existing community structures. Up to 67% of the 4,728 volunteers who were active in this sector at that time were selected in this manner.

NYC

Volunteer posts are advertised at notice boards, shops and at the National Youth Centres. Interviews are done and participants with a development background, Grade 10 or 12 and computer literate youths are engaged. Those volunteers without these competencies can also be recruited and trained.

NYS

Within NYS, volunteers are recruited from the whole country. They are sent to different regions to learn the culture of the other region. The numbers of youth volunteers fluctuate and at any given point can number up to 500. All volunteers in NYS are recruited through the general youth service programme from across all regions in the country. The participants are then put into formations/teams. Each team has a team leader who reports to the Supervisor and he/she reports to the Senior Manager Volunteer Services. Reports are done on a quarterly basis for a 6 months placement and monthly for a 3 month placement. A report and a survey are also completed at the end of the placement.

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7 Community-Based Health Care, Report of an Assessment of Community Volunteers and Community-Based Health Care Programmes, MHSSS, November, 2006
2.2.2 Incentives and allowances for volunteers

The provision of awards and incentives to volunteers is a major area of discrepancy. At all interview sessions conducted in each region the issue of incentives and allowance was a critical discussion point. The words are used interchangeably. Based on the CHBC assessment, 98% of organisations provided incentives as part of the training. 58% provided in kind incentives and 42% provided monetary incentives. NYS at entry level provides for all costs and gives the participants an allowance of approximately $250 for toiletries. The MYNSSC volunteer trainers receive an allowance of $2,000 and all other volunteers receive an allowance of $1,000. NYC full time volunteers receive a monthly allowance of $500. They are provided with transport.

Volunteerism in Change of Lifestyle (COLS) – Experiences of a VIO

From volunteerism to formalisation

COLS was started by volunteers. At inception, the entire human resource was volunteers. The organisation is now led by salaried staff. However, while there is no mechanism in the organisation to track the personal and career development of volunteers, COLS has an internal policy to recruit from amongst its volunteers to fill salaried positions.

Different categories of volunteers

COLS has attracted different categories of volunteers including volunteers from tertiary institutions seeking practical work experience, professional volunteers from institutions such as banks, the Post Office and other professional spheres. COLS has a yearly target of 12 active volunteers. From 2009, COLS has had 40 volunteers but only 6 full time. Volunteers are willing to render services for free during their free time only.

Motivation for volunteering

Some people volunteer as they are not doing anything else at the time, not studying or working. They stop when other options became available. Some volunteers are willing to contribute time to an NGO. People reflect before they decide to volunteer. A volunteer knows that he/she has something to offer for the good of a specific cause. Volunteers become involved with a particular organisation because of what the organisation is doing and their background relationship to what the organisation is doing.

Volunteer appreciation

A volunteer in Namibia is reflective of the existing economic and political situation as volunteers have time but not money.

In terms of volunteer appreciation, COLS conducts an Annual Volunteer Award Ceremony at the organisational level. In those awards they indicate to the volunteers how they have contributed to national development. Volunteers have the expectation that there will be something of value added to their lives through volunteerism. This can be training or exposure. These are incentives. Allowances are also given if the project to which the volunteer is attached has funds for volunteers.

8 Ibid
2.3 Categories of volunteers and the nature of volunteering assignments

Due to the varying manifestations of volunteerism in Namibia, stakeholders in Hardap Region and some contributors in Windhoek suggest a classification of different types of volunteerism. This will then motivate a varied and more targeted policy response to promote volunteerism in Namibia. Some people volunteer by sacrificing resources. Others volunteer their time. Even now if a visitor comes to the village and people are aware they will volunteer and mobilise resources to host a visitor. The spirit of volunteerism is still alive.

In the Government offices in all regions visited, students and graduates go in and offer to volunteer. Although one motivating factor for the volunteers seem to be the desire to gain work experience for future jobs or enriching their CVs, if this is propagated, there will be people willing to take up the challenge of volunteering.

These categories of volunteers should include the following:

- International volunteering – UNV, US Peace Corps, VSO, Nigeria Technical Aid. These volunteers have established Conditions of Service and are covered by bilateral or other framework agreements between the organisations and the Government of the Republic of Namibia
- Volunteering within CSOs and NGO such as the NRCS - the latter hosts approximately 4,000 volunteers. Volunteerism provides the social capital for socio-economic development and accelerates the advancement and attainment of goals by registered Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).
- Volunteering to support service delivery within Government Ministries such as the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD), Ministry of Health and Social Services (MHSS).
- Existing independent sector specific schemes which are termed volunteering initiatives to stimulate youth empowerment and participation in national development such as the Youth Volunteering Programmes within the MYNSSC, NYS, NYC
- National community based volunteering developed based on identified needs within the community where volunteers mobilise other community members. This is a purely bottom up initiative often through an informal structure
- Short term social mobilisation volunteerism initiatives to restore nationalism and build national pride such as the construction of road/railway

2.4 Facilitation of volunteers and volunteerism

The facilitation of volunteering is largely sectoral and sporadic in organisations, the latter because, volunteers are engaged when there are funds for a particular initiative. The following frameworks for engaging volunteers were noted:

- The NRCS has a Volunteer Policy and Management Guidelines which facilitates the engagement of volunteers in the organisation
- NANASO provides support in Volunteer Management System (VMS). As an umbrella organisation, NANASO trains its members on VMS. This was supported by a previous VSO Training of Trainers initiative. Following an initial training, the organisations are sent to implement. After 1 month of implementation, NANSO provides additional coaching for the trainees. Feedback is provided by the trainees on how much was implemented, what tools are being used and challenges which they are experiencing. They are also given sample forms to
support volunteer registration and management. Members are provided with templates for a volunteer application form, contract/agreement form, volunteer exit form and a Manual on VMS.

- NANGOF Trust has developed a Code of Ethics for VIOs. Following an assessment among 600 organisations, throughout Namibia, NANGOF Trust observed that volunteers were subject to exploitation due to a lack of standards by VIOs. A Code of Ethics was developed for members which engage volunteers.

- 4H Namibia has application forms for recruitment

- Health Sector – The National Policy on Community Based Health Care provides guidelines for volunteers but organisations generally determine the conditions of service of their volunteers including allowances or incentives.

- The Youth volunteerism initiatives within MYNSSC and NYS also have specific programmatic guidelines.

- International Volunteer Programmes which operate within Namibia are guided by established and agreed frameworks. This is so even in instances when these Programmes have national volunteering component such as UNV and VSO programmes. International volunteers include UNV Volunteers, The US Peace Corps Volunteers, VSO Volunteers, JICA.

2.5 Volunteering obstacles

To be fully understood for the purpose of stimulating an appropriate policy response, the obstacles to volunteerism needs to be broken down and examined with volunteerism being treated as a living organism. Applying a systems approach, the challenges of volunteerism are structural, process related and also caused by people. These challenges within volunteerism are identified as follows:

2.5.1 Structural issues

Volunteering operates within the legal and operational mandates of various role players and there is:

- Lack of coordination
- Absence of standards
- No database
- No framework for advancing volunteerism of linking volunteerism to development

Certain volunteer programmes need to be rationalised. While programmes such as the MYNSSC is beneficial, as volunteerism is empowering, considering the ethical framework for this Programme and the proposed terms of the draft Policy in 5.3 below, further analysis might be necessary to classify this Programme as a Active Labour Market Programme (ALMP) to be implemented in tandem with the Ministry of Labour or a volunteer programme. While volunteerism can promote skills development and employability, the definition of a volunteer and volunteerism should underline a volunteer Programme.

Similarly, within the NYS volunteering is a mandatory component of the NYS programme

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9 Interview with Anna Beukes, Executive Director, NANGOF Trust, 12 April 2010
2.5.2 Process issues
The absence of guidelines or standards for mobilising or managing volunteers results in allegations of nepotism by critics of these practices who were of the view that since volunteerism is unregulated, staff or organisations recruit their relatives for volunteering opportunities as through volunteering there is a hope that the volunteer will be absorbed into a paid position within the organisation. This further confuses the definition of volunteerism and the motivation for volunteering.

2.5.3 Human capital issues
There are no guidelines for volunteers, terms of reference or written contracts. Volunteers are viewed as poor, uneducated and unemployed and they are not treated with respect by staff members in organisations. This low profile makes volunteers the subject of derogatory and demotivating attitudes from relatives and communities.
Chapter 3: People’s perspectives and understanding of volunteering

3.1 Introduction

Within Namibia, the concept of volunteerism evokes varied responses. Many argue that volunteerism is a practice inherent in Namibians and integral to the existence of the nation as the liberation of this country was won through volunteerism in the liberation struggle. On the other hand, there is the sentiment that volunteerism is imported and not well known among Namibians. It is only being observed since independence through the operations of entities such as JICA, UNV and the US Peace Corps. Proponents of the latter view believe that since the concept of volunteerism is not known and is being learnt from outside Namibia it is difficult to inculcate. There was also a concern that people do not understand the concept and idea of volunteerism in Namibia and thus do not appropriately value volunteers.

Despite these widely varying perspectives, there is universal agreement that the essence of volunteering should be characterised by certain noble values and guided by an extraordinary commitment to service. This section summarises the perspectives of various sectors on volunteering. In order to do this, the definition of the term “volunteerism” within the Namibian context is necessary.

Definition

Based on the consultations and observations of volunteerism within Namibia, including consideration of the definition suggested in the Dialogue Report, a “volunteer” within the Namibian context is “A person who provides services, skills or knowledge based on his/her own free will, for the benefit of the community without expecting to be paid”

Characteristics of a volunteer

Generally volunteers were described in a positive light as resilient, ethical, role models providing service for the benefit of others and the love of community, solving the problems in a community. Volunteers are sharing, visionary individuals with time, energy, a positive mindset, willing spirit, open minded, and caring people who are leaders, not motivated by finances. They are punctual, committed and hard working.

Namibian peculiarity – volunteerism and socio-economic rights

There is widespread concern that despite the definition of volunteering, the Namibian context needs to be noted as there are high rates of unemployment and poverty. Volunteers are often from within this category. Volunteers need to appear presentable (clothing), they need a meal, transport allowances – therefore volunteers need allowances to enable them to meet their basic needs.

3.2 The government

All Government entities consulted noted the value of volunteerism to motivate service delivery, stimulate capacity utilisation and community participation. The value of volunteers in providing information to the community was highlighted.

3.3 The parliament and parliamentarians

As Parliamentarians are lawmakers and legislation is often crafted to regulate certain social practices, initiatives to regulate volunteers through laws and regulations were considered. No holistic laws or regulations on volunteerism were noted.

11 Report on
3.4 **Civil Society (NANGOF Trust, NANASO)**
Volunteers provide a sustainable human resource strategy which enables most CSOs to be able to function. Volunteers are thus greatly valued by CSOs which comprise the bulk of VIOs. The umbrella organisations are concerned about the need for regulation of volunteerism. NANASO supports its members with management strategies and NANGOF Trust has drafted a Code to which organisations can sign up to be regulated.

3.5 **The traditional authorities**
Traditional leaders execute their service to communities through volunteerism. As they are unpaid, they regard themselves as volunteers with often dangerous and time consuming tasks. The Mafwe Traditional Authority is one of those that mediate situations of violent conflict in their courts (khutas) and adjudicate and deal with culturally harmful items.

3.6 **International VIOs**
International volunteers provide skills and experience. The recruitment of international volunteers should be short term for skills transfer to the nationals within a sustainable organisational structure and not for filling up a skills gap, which may culminate into a need to recruit new volunteer at the end of each assignment. Placement of international volunteers then becomes a rotating, cyclical challenge. Organisations should not be dependent on international volunteers. Volunteers should provide mentoring.

Sometimes the motivation of international volunteers can also be personal as “Some think they can change the world, it can be a career progression move or an opportunity to live in another country and experience different culture. Nevertheless, skills transfer should be at the forefront.

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme defines volunteerism as “an expression of people’s willingness and capacity to freely help others and improve their society”[12].

Within the United Nations System, the use of volunteerism is being encouraged. UNDP engages international and national UNVs to support various development projects. At community level, projects supported by GEF are being run by volunteers. UNESCO has been involved in discussions with UNDP and UNV for the use of volunteers globally. There is a Memorandum from the Director General in UNESCO which outlines a breakdown for the use of volunteers in UNESCO. UNESCO also works with volunteers outside the UN System. In Namibia, UNESCO works with volunteers in Communication and Information – Programme involving Community media. UNESCO facilitates the training of volunteers to run the community radio stations. Grant to Councils. IECCD - Grants are made to partner NGOs and the NGOs recruit, train and pay allowances to the volunteers.

VSO believes that a critical area within volunteerism is choice. Volunteerism is something that a person chooses to do which provides benefits beyond the individual and his/her immediate family. The issue of choice within a resource constrained setting raises concerns that volunteers are pressured into volunteering based on the moral principles they believe in and the extent of suffering in the society.

VSO International volunteers experience challenges. As the organisation has no framework agreement with the Government, international volunteers fall under the same banner as expatriate staff and they need to be granted work and residence permits to facilitate their volunteerism in Namibia. This poses to be a major challenge.

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[12] UNV Website
The Nigerian Technical Aid Programme, instituted by the Nigerian Government affords Nigerian professionals the opportunity to volunteer and transfer skills to Namibians in the same professional sphere.

**Challenges of international volunteers**

At times, international volunteers, particularly from the North, grapple with understanding the different pace of getting things done. There is need for adequate orientation. To a large extent, international volunteers command more respect than national volunteers as the volunteer placement programmes in which they participate such as VSO and UNV recruit and place senior professionals. However, some international organisations utilise international volunteers in their human resources cadre since the associated costs are cheaper than on the international professional scale. As sometimes an international volunteer is placed as part of a wider development initiative, and the organisation in which they are placed does not bear the costs of the placement, the international volunteer is improperly placed solely to fill a skills gap. At the end of the tenure of the international volunteer, he/she leaves a vacuum in the organisation.

3.7 **National VIOs**

NANGOF Trust as a database of approximately 600 CSOs. This was updated in 2008 and it is estimated that there are approximately 80,000 volunteers in CSOs. This sector has a critical role to play in regulating volunteerism as there is a need for regulation. There is a need to impress sustainable level of civil society organisations and a need to take a volunteer policy to a level where Government contributes to the sustainability of the sector. There is a conducive environment for Civil Society to be supported – sustainability through funding for volunteers. The policy should establish a conducive environment which gives a minimum standard.

3.8 **Volunteers**

Interactions were held with various cadres of volunteers in all regions surveyed. Volunteers agreed with the broad principles which characterise the essence of the spirit of volunteerism. However, their socio-economic needs were always at the forefront and there was great debate about the need for incentives and allowances, progression and skills development.

3.9 **The private sector**

Within present day Namibia, there is a perception that volunteers are poor, unemployed and lack formal qualifications. This relegates only those members of society to be volunteers with the result that there is almost a stigma attached to volunteers as being from the lowest level of the social strata.

This excludes highly qualified persons, professional retirees and the private sector from volunteering.

Officials from the MYNSSC, at national level, as well as MRLGHRD at regional level expressed concerns about the difficulty in integrating volunteerism into the private sector. The private sector is not receptive of youth volunteers. The private sector has the view that there is a mismatch between the skills of graduates and the needs of the private sector.

There are indications that the private sector indicates that they have no time to train volunteers as they will reduce profits. This is at odds with the issue of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) which places a duty on the private sector beyond the bottom line figure on the balance sheets. Programmes of Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) have been tried to interact and bring in the private sector.

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13 Interviews with UNFPA, UNESCO on 15 April 2010
There is a need for stakeholders from the private sector to be brought on board to secure their “buy-in” into volunteerism. This includes engagement with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Namibian Employers Federation.

The Government might need to provide funds to the private sector. There is also the need to share lessons learnt from other countries. Within the Government tendering system, there is provision for tenders to add youths as implementers.
Chapter 4: Link between volunteering and development

4.1  Introduction

As volunteering builds the capacity of volunteers in service delivery and the establishment of sustainable communities, the link between volunteerism and Namibia’s progress towards the MDGs is considered.

4.2  Contributions of Volunteers to Namibia’s development and MDGs

A qualitative analysis would best map out the input of volunteerism. However, this study was not able to do so. 4H Namibia conducts a shadow wage analysis which highlights that the replacement of volunteers with salaried staff in 2009 would have increased the operational cost of the organisation by over $980,000.

There are a number of community volunteers in the GEF projects throughout Namibia. These involve indigenous people and reflect capacity building. These projects stem urban migration. They are sustainable initiatives. There is a need to link these volunteers in ongoing projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDGs</th>
<th>Volunteerism for the MDGs in Namibia</th>
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| Poverty and extreme hunger    | NGOs for food distribution and disaster relief  
                                 | Income generating activities – ELCIN trained 2 community groups in bread making                      |
| Universal Primary Education   | Professional volunteering especially through international volunteering                            |
|                               | School Boards and members of community even non parents volunteering in school activities such as sports |
|                               | Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development (IECCD). Volunteer teachers are trained and deployed. About 6 are in place to facilitate preparedness of children for formal primary school education - UNESCO |
|                               | Community life skills training, sports activities and mentoring                                      |
| Gender equality               | Paralegal work – LAC and Namibian Paralegal Association trained community volunteers as paralegals particularly on land and inheritance issues |
| Maternal mortality            | Traditional birth attendants / midwives                                                              |
| Child mortality               | Community health workers  
                                 | Registration of OVCs  
                                 | PMTCT                                                                                               |
| HIV and AIDS, Malaria and     | Health service delivery – HIV, HBC, peer and lay counselling, distribution of ARVs especially in remote areas |
| Tuberculosis                  | Counselling and caring for Orphans and Vulnerable Children, psycho social support - ELCIN           |
|                               | Namibian Red Cross has groups of volunteers - TB treatment support groups                            |
|                               | Volunteers provide information to facilitate treatment literacy                                       |
|                               | TCE volunteers in the villages provide information on HIV and AIDS                                    |
|                               | Sanitation – teach communities how to build proper toilets                                           |
|                               | Malaria prevention – using nets and insecticides                                                     |
| Environment                   | Conservancies – CBNRM: In the rural areas rural people set up conservancies. Sometimes these are income generating initiatives but the income is very small so that finance is not the main motivating factor |
|                               | GEF projects                                                                                         |
4.3 Nature and extent of the integration of volunteerism in development programming

While the NDP3 notes the need for human capacity enhancement, linkages between volunteerism and development have not been explored. The establishment of a Volunteer Policy provides the opportunity to establish linkages particularly in coordinating for the attainment of Key Result Area 8 in the NDP.

Developmental initiatives such as the Community Capacity Enhancement Programme (CCEP) under the MRLGHRD are implemented through volunteerism. This Programme engages community facilitators who are from the communities which they serve. They are provided with extensive training to be able to motivate communities to talk through difficult issues on HIV and AIDS and determine solutions. This initiative is supported by UNDP and Alliance of Mayors Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL). The community volunteers are supervised by National UNV Volunteers. While challenges exist in logistical and operational issues, this engagement of volunteerism for community capacity building is an important developmental best practice in Namibia.

The CBHC volunteers are critical to public health service delivery. They receive training which enables them to support the MHSS in coping with the terminally ill and also passing public health information to communities. They play a critical role for the health sector.

Environmental sustainability is a critical issue for Namibia. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects are bottom up community initiatives which are fuelled by volunteers. Supporting capacity enhancement for the extension of best practices through replication is a critical aspect of promoting volunteerism in Namibia.

4.4 Funding for volunteering interventions and activities

At present, no sustainable or comprehensive funding exists for volunteer interventions and activities. Volunteering initiatives are designed and supported on a sectoral an organisational level. This promotes discrepancies and inconsistencies as volunteers in a given volunteering scheme can receive an allowance of $500 for 6 months while there are funds available from a given donor. If these funds are fully utilised, the same volunteers, continuing in the same activities receive nothing for another 6 months. This creates unmet expectations and disillusionment and further demotivates volunteers particularly if another group of volunteers within the same organisation continue to receive allowances throughout this period.

Within the MYNSSC, volunteers receive an allowance based on resources which the Ministry is able to mobilise. Cabinet approves these allowances. The Computer Literacy and Tailoring volunteers receive an allowance of $2,000 per month and other volunteers receive $1,000 per month. The Ministry is of the view that a living wage is a least $3,000 plus benefits. The Programme would like to provide bus tickets and enrolment of the volunteers in medical schemes and the pension fund. Their entry point will be as Clerical Assistants, labourers, cleaners. The Ministry has been allocated 10 million for youth projects. This includes 2 or 3 million will be for the Youth Volunteer Programme to increase allowances in the next financial year.
4.5 Recommendations

As the linkage between volunteerism and national development is being established under the direction of the NPC which has the responsibility for directing and coordinating developmental initiatives, there is the need for the establishment of a basket fund. This can be done through centralised budgeting through the NPC. As the NPC also provides guidance on aid effectiveness and supports donor coordination, factoring volunteerism as a component of all development initiatives will be able to provide for this budget. Generally though there is a need for mechanisms for strengthening the impact of projects involving volunteers and quantifying the economic value of volunteerism.

There is a need to proactively consider gaps in volunteerism and human capacity constraints in development initiatives which can be filled by volunteers through short term training in previously unexplored areas. For instance, over the last few years, Namibia has been experiencing flooding within its Northern regions. The team had the opportunity to observe the impact of these floods in communities in Omusati, Oshana, Ohangwena, Kavango and Caprivi regions. Hundreds of volunteers are mobilised for disaster management within these areas. There is an absence of proactive developmental projects which can prevent such flooding or take preparatory action for the affected communities such as cleaning up of the river, building of dams. This can be supported by volunteers.
Chapter 5: The Law and volunteering in Namibia

5.1 Introduction

There is no comprehensive legal framework on volunteerism in Namibia. Regulation of volunteerism is largely sector specific as outlined above largely based on thematic area of intervention of the volunteering initiative. As is the case in most countries where there is no law of regulating volunteerism, Labour Laws are looked at for guidance. This is the case in Namibia.

5.2 Laws, draft laws and regulations affecting volunteers and volunteering

The Labour Relations Act of 2007

The Labour Relations Act was made law in 2007. This new Act has a wide definition of an employee which can prove a challenge for volunteerism. Volunteers can use the Labour Act to ask for minimum remuneration. Based on this legal challenge, bigger organisations like CAA and NRCS expressed concern that if volunteers should approach the Labour Court, the court might find organisations liable to pay a minimum wage to volunteers. NANGOF Trust and VSO set up a task force to address the issue. The Labour Act was reviewed and a legal opinion was obtained. The group held meetings with the Ministry of Labour, including the Legal Advisor. The MoL indicated that the design of the Act was not to include volunteers and the Government had no intention of running after Civil Society. Despite this, if a case is taken to court, CS will have a problem. The CS have made a legal submission to MOL late in 2009 for the definition of employee to be changed to exclude volunteers and NGOs will develop a Code of Conduct to deal with volunteers.

Individual organisations need to apply for exemption from the application of the definition of employee under the Act. The Labour Act might be detrimental for volunteerism as organisations might not be able to provide the conditions of the Act for volunteers and thus will refrain from using volunteers.

National Youth Policy

The National Youth Policy of Namibia defines a youth a person between the ages of 16 and 30 years. The Policy provides an obligation on young people to promote youth volunteerism in Clause 7.2.20. Further to this, Clause 7.3 provides for the obligation of the state which includes the obligation “to provide the necessary resources and framework for young people to fulfil their obligations”\(^\text{14}\)

Under its Strategic Objectives, in Chapter 8 of the National Youth Policy, there is further express provision for volunteerism under Clause 8.6 which focuses on Employment Creation. Clause 8.6.2 provides that in view of the increase in population, more young people are experiencing difficulties in finding employment. This clause therefore provides in 8.6.2 that the following objective will be pursued “To inculcate and promote the spirit of volunteerism and internship in the Namibian Youth so as to provide exposure and experience to young people”.

The implementation, monitoring evaluation and review of the National Youth Policy lies with the Ministry of Youth National Service, Sport and Culture. This is done in collaboration with other Ministries, NGOs and other stakeholders. The Government through the Ministry will provide sufficient resources for the proper functioning of the National Youth Council.

\(^{14}\)Republic of Namibia, Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sports and Culture, Clause 7.3.2
National Development Plan 3

The overall theme of The Third National Development Plan (NDP3) is “Accelerated Economic Growth and Deepening Rural Development.” Key Result Area (KRA) 6 of NDP3 is “Productive and Competitive Human Resources and Institutions” encapsulates the critical role of human resources in realising the Vision through a skilled and competitive workforce. One initiative under this area is human resources capacity utilisation which includes the matching of human resources supply and demand.

KRA 8 deals with The Quality of Life: KRA is derived from the Vision 2030 Objective that targets a healthy and food-secure nation in which all preventable, infectious and parasitic diseases are under secure control; and in which people enjoy a high standard of living with access to quality education, health and other vital services, in an atmosphere of sustainable population growth and development. Through KRA 8 = The Government is committed to ensuring sustainable human development and will implement programmes on:

(i) health system planning and management;
(ii) disability prevention and rehabilitation; (iii) public and environmental health;
(iii) the control of communicable and non-communicable diseases;
(iv) family health services;
(v) tertiary and clinical health care services;
(vi) monitoring water quality;
(vii) sanitation in rural, urban, peri-urban areas, integration of population in development, and management and coordination of the National HIV/AIDS Response; and
(viii) poverty reduction.

Civic Organisations Partnership Policy

This regulatory framework provides for Government coordination of NGOs, CBOs, FBOs and COs in Namibia and is a starting point for the coordination of volunteerism within VIOs.

The National Youth Council Act

The NYC was established by Cabinet Resolution. In June 2009, the Act No. 3 of 2009 was passed. It provides for volunteer Regional Coordinators who will be placed in all 13 regions. The NYC is establishing a decentralised structure.

VSO Legal Framework

The Ministry of Health has challenges in recruiting VSO volunteers who are greatly needed for the Health Sector. There is a need for clear policies – volunteers are seen as cheap labour in HBC.

5.3 Ministerial Policy on Volunteerism

In March 2010, the MYNSSC developed a draft Ministerial Policy on Volunteerism. This Policy specifically defines a “youth volunteer” “as any Namibian young men and women as defined in the National Youth Policy of Namibia15. Within the National Youth Policy, “The definition of youth in Namibia therefore is defined as those young men and women between the ages ranging from 16 – 30 years.”16 The Ministerial Policy further describes the purpose of youth volunteering as an important strategic approach towards personal development and growth of a person towards adulthood. This Policy proposes the establishment of a Youth Volunteer Project Fund and establishes allowances for

15 Chapter 1A, Ministerial Policy on Youth Volunteerism
16 Ministry of National Service Spot and Culture, National Youth Policy, Section 2
the participants in the amount of $50 per day. The Policy also establishes mechanisms for recruitment and stipulates conditions of service and circumstances for the termination of series.

5.4 Proposed amendments
Based on the above, the following legal amendments are proposed.

- Labour Act – the definition of “employee” should exclude legitimate volunteers
- A comprehensive Policy on volunteerism needs to be passed by Cabinet

5.5 Recommendations
There should be a comprehensive law on volunteerism. Initially a policy is proposed so that through its operationalisation, the efficacy of this policy will test the principles which will inform the legislative review.
Chapter 6: Gender and volunteering

6.1 Introduction
From the study conducted it appears that the majority of national volunteering is being done by women.

6.2 Gender roles in volunteering
There are many ideas as to why this is so, these are:

- That care giving is the major area of involvement of volunteers and this is the traditional domain of women
- Men as bread winners are too busy to be involved in non income generating activities. They focus on providing income and homes for their families
- A macho culture exists due to the emasculation of men under the repressive colonial regime. This is reflected issues such as GBV, child sexual assault and other forms of sexual abuse. This feeds into societal inequality in an extreme form beyond mere patriarchy.
- Volunteers are perceived as very poor as it is constituted by over 80% disadvantaged women.
- Men were raised during the apartheid era not to be too aggressive. This was for their own protection by mothers who did not want them to be rebellious and become victims of brutality and political elimination
- Men are more of income driven to sustain their households and hardly persevere on non-income generating activities. Women have greater determination. They are self motivated.
- Men engage in more in extramural activities and entertainments
- Female volunteers are better advocates on issues than males and they motivate their peers to become involved.
- More females volunteer with NGOs but more men volunteer in activities such as building the railway.
- There is a perception among men that volunteering is wasting time. There is a need among young men to make money. They are interested in quick gratification and instant success. This is the new culture among blacks. There is a culture of materialism which is challenging for men.
- Proportionally, women are more than men in Namibia.
- Also women do not like to see people suffering.
- Men only come in when there are some incentives

The Aids Care Trust, Cheshire Foundation, Outapi has 12 groups of volunteers with a total of 230 volunteers in this group, only 8 are males. Of the 102 volunteers in the Ministry of Youth volunteer Programme, about 70% are females. This is because female rural youths are more affected by societal challenges such as teenage pregnancies. Their only option is domestic work. Female domestic workers experience a great deal of abuse17. There is high urban migration by male youths. Male youths have more options as farm workers, in the game reserves, construction industry. There is a general need to address the needs of female youths in Namibia. The population is also skewed with 51% being female and 49% males.

In the NGOs, it is felt females are more involved in social development issues, for example issues involving children

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17 Newspaper report
6.3 Promoting gender and equality in volunteering
Women have been deliberately targeted with CHBC. Organisations are slow in taking up men and urging them to volunteer. There is no effective strategy for male involvement. HBC is split with the power dynamics so that if there is one man in a group he assumes leadership and is afforded priority in terms of resource allocation.

Volunteerism in conservancies is dominated by men. They engage in hunting and environmental protection and these activities are seen more as the domain of men.

6.4 Important good practices
Change is possible. Changing age old practices of female volunteering will not happen overnight. FAO – Junior Farmers training – gardening tools are given and caretakers appointed. Initially women but men are coming forward since tools were given. Men are therefore participating in this volunteering initiative. Similarly with the water and sanitation volunteers in communities, there seems to be almost 50/50 meal and female participation.

6.5 Recommendations
Volunteerism needs to be more structured for targeted strategies for male involvement.
Chapter 7: Some insights into volunteering strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

7.1 Introduction
As the manifestations of volunteerism were observed through the eyes and perspectives of various stakeholders, issues can be emotional and reactionary. To be able to formulate evidence-based policy from the interactions, there is a need to apply objective criteria which can be used to assess volunteerism to be able to suggest a responsive policy design. A SWOT/SCOT analysis is done.

7.2 Common strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and causal factors

7.2.1 Strengths

- Namibia has a structure for decentralisation of governance which reaches from central government to regional and community levels and includes existing volunteer networks
- The NPC has a coordinating role in national development initiatives and is involved in policy formulation
- The engagement of volunteers even within Government ministries reflects Government buy-in into volunteerism
- Namibia has high unemployment and a young population with a large pool of current and potential volunteers
- CSOs are skilled in mobilising resources and can include component for volunteers (NANASO, NANGOF Trust)
- Organisations provide training and accreditation for developing career paths of volunteers. NANGOF Trust has a Unit Standard on managing staff and volunteers which they are seeking to accredit with the National Training Authority (NQA) and NANASO trains member organisations on Volunteer Management Systems
- Organisations provide a coordinating function e.g., NANGOF Trust has a database of over 600 organisations, but uncertainty over numbers of volunteers members exists. It is strategically placed to coordinate civil society, information dissemination and standardisation of volunteerism. NANGOF Trust members have data on the numbers of volunteers they engage. NANGOF Trust has developed a Code of Ethics for volunteers in Namibia
- Existence of V4D-CC shows commitment by all sectors. This momentum needs to be strengthened and sustained
- Existing reservoir of people who are willing to volunteer

7.2.2 Challenges / Weaknesses

- Economic context – There is unemployment and poverty and volunteers who are willing to devote their time volunteering are unable to meet their basic needs
- Lack of understanding of volunteerism detracts from the spirit of volunteerism as some engage in volunteering to gain an entry point into the organisation and thus first preference for employment
- Lack of coordination and regulation of volunteerism - No guidelines/policy on volunteerism – no protection/parameters
- No provision to cover the health and safety of volunteers
- Lack of quantitative data on active volunteers
- Absence of common understanding of volunteerism with the effect that programmes which do not essentially embody principles of volunteerism are classified as volunteer programmes but they seem to be hybrid Active Labour Market Programmes (ALMP)
• No mechanism for university graduates, professionals and/or the private sector to volunteer
• Volunteer experience is not classified as professional experience analogous to work experience
• Private sector is not involved in volunteering
• A large number of volunteers are elderly women who cannot manage the physically challenging nature of the work. Their families also have needs
• Broad definition of employee in the revised Labour Act – can include volunteers
• Local volunteers feel they are being exploited. In some organisations they work 40 hours per week
• International volunteers have basic minimum standards and this creates tension with local volunteers
• Expectation among volunteers that they will get employment – not just altruism
• Volunteer needs to be defined and awareness raised
• Gaps in volunteer management
• The challenge is how to manage to value the contribution of volunteers equally. The management system for both categories of volunteers is different and the expectations of the volunteers also vary.
• Absence of incentives and confusion of incentives and allowances. Volunteers need incentives but these do not necessarily have to be monetary. It depends on the circumstances

7.2.3 Opportunities
• High unemployment, poverty and absence of skills creates a large reservoir of volunteers and a short term opportunity to promote volunteerism in the country
• Various organisations from Government and CSOs are interested in volunteerism and benefitting from volunteerism and are part of the V4 D-CC
• Development partners such as WHO are willing to support volunteers
• International organisations such as VSO and UNV have knowledge of international best practices on volunteer management which can be adapted

7.2.4 Threats
• Namibia is just emerging from colonisation (1990)
• Adverse weather conditions – drought relief, flooding
• Absence of national laws and policies which support volunteerism in the country
• Volunteers are not oriented to understand the broader development context to which they are contributing
• Perception that volunteers are of low social standing threatens appreciation of their contribution to volunteerism
• There is no standardised training of volunteers
• No system for the progression of volunteers through progression in organisations, learnerships or accreditation of skills

7.3 Way forward
Identified strengths and opportunities need to be seized to develop a national framework for volunteerism and development in Namibia.
Chapter 8: Institutional Framework

8.1 Introduction

As the practice of volunteerism has been observed within the context in which it has thrived and adapted into its existing form, strategies for reforming and enhancing volunteerism should also be context based and as far as possible be as broad based as the phenomenon of volunteerism itself.

8.2 Coordinating Institution/s at the National, Regional and Local levels

8.2.1 Scenario 1

The NPC has the responsibility of planning national priorities and directing the course of national development. It is proposed that the NPC takes a more proactive role in the coordination of volunteerism in Namibia. The strategic advantage of the NPC lies with the fact that the NPC is already the custodian of Government of the Republic of Namibia Civic Organisations Partnership Policy. In this capacity, the NPC is tasked with providing “support to the International Volunteers Day”\(^\text{18}\). In this capacity, the NPC acts as the convener and Chairperson for the V4D-CC.

Given the role played by the NPC thus far in its work with VIOs, such as organising the National Dialogues on volunteerism, the organisation has a comparative advantage in formally taking on the role of coordinating and regulating volunteerism. NPC has already established legitimacy and respect in this area.

Given its coordinating role nationally and holistic outlook on policy review, the NPC will be able to mobilise budgetary support and policy and legislative coherence for effective implementation.

It is proposed that while the NPC takes the lead, it can work through the established enabling framework for decentralisation. A structural framework for the effective coordination and management of volunteerism exists in Namibia through decentralised governance structures under the MRLGHRD. The synergies between NPC and regional and local governance structures were observed during this consultancy as these structures were able to mobilise and convene stakeholder fora at the various regions. Further to this, in Kavango region, the MRLGHRD is already compiling a database of VIOs for effective partner coordination and implementation. Although capacity enhancement will be necessary, the foundation is already in existence.

Scenario 2

While the National Dialogue Report makes provision for the establishment of a structure to lead the direction of volunteerism nationally, such a structure will be superimposed on existing Government and VIOs. This new structure will take time to find its feet and niche. It will need a budget to begin to work. This raises sustainability issues

8.3 Duties and responsibilities of different stakeholders

NPC- coordination and capital budgeting

V4D-CC – VMS should play a monitoring

\(^{18}\) Government of the Republic of Namibia Civic Organisations Partnership Policy, December 2005, Office of the President National Planning Commission
MRLGHRD – implementation at regional and local level in partnership with VIOs. The promotion and management of the policy should be with the MRLGHRD but all Ministries should play their role. All ministries should play a role in promoting skills development of volunteers. Volunteer coordination should be with an officer reporting to the RDCC who reports to the CRO. MRLGHRD should host the Secretariat

However these institutions should be advised by a multi sectoral council comprising different stakeholders (Government institutions, private sector, volunteers)

8.4 Volunteerism funding

See 4.4 above
Chapter 9: Synthesis

9.1 Summary of the main findings

9.1.1 Volunteers are making significant contributions towards the attainment of Vision 2030 and the MDGs in Namibia as they are involved in HIV and AIDS, energy and environment, agriculture, poverty reduction, maternal mortality and universal primary education

9.1.2 Volunteerism is not playing the significant role that it should due to the absence of coordination

9.1.3 The will to volunteer exists but it is hampered by socio-economic factors

9.1.4 Volunteering can be beneficial as volunteers gain work experience, training and opportunities for and priority for employment but there is no framework to support this consistently and no opportunities for international volunteering/exposure

9.1.5 There is need for a harmonised definition of volunteer and volunteerism which suits the context in Namibia

9.1.6 There is a lack of understanding and misconceptions of volunteerism. Some regard volunteering as work and volunteers develop entitlements. They see an allowance as a salary. Some discourage volunteering as unprofitable

9.1.7 There is evidence of exploitation of volunteers as they fill posts which should be filled by staff members in some organisations and they do so for 40 hours per week with no leave days or benefits of staff members

9.1.8 Volunteers are sometimes discriminated against at workplaces. Staff members do not regard them as part of the organisation. Staff do not see them as adding value. They de-personify volunteers by referring to them as “this volunteer...”. Sometimes volunteers are a threat to staff if the volunteers are very competent and staff then try to demoralise them. There is no sponsorship to volunteers or possibilities to attend youth meetings or other beneficial activities

9.1.9 Some organisations do not value the intellectual property rights of volunteers. Volunteers collect the data for reports and policies and are not acknowledged.

9.1.10 There are challenges with facilitating the work of volunteers as some organisations do not make financial provision for costs incurred by time volunteers. The issue of allowances for volunteers need to be considered to support the socio-economic needs of volunteers without diluting the spirit of volunteerism. The needs of volunteers are not looked after by host organisation in terms of communication, tools, transport equipment such as shoes and identification including t-shirts, identification cards

9.1.11 Lack of incentives or motivation of volunteers and misunderstanding of incentives. Lack of recognition, including recognition of efforts by MPs, lack of affirmation and recognition by host organisations and government except for IVD

9.1.12 Lack of insurance or provision for health and safety of volunteers and death benefits

9.1.13 Lack of integrity – both volunteers and host organisations characterised by poor performance and lack of respect
9.1.14 Misconception that volunteers are poor and unprofessional
9.1.15 No certificates for volunteering/volunteers
9.1.16 No contracts to bind volunteers with host agencies
9.1.17 No coordination, database or information management system with information on where to go if people want to volunteer, especially professionals
9.1.18 Poor marketing of volunteerism, absence of broad based public information dissemination on the importance of volunteerism and its definition
9.1.19 Unwillingness of men to volunteer
9.1.20 Volunteers are not listened to or included in decision-making channels
9.1.21 There are gaps in volunteer management. The management system for different categories of volunteers is different and the expectations of the volunteers also vary without considering the cultural context

9.2 Some recommendations for the way forward
A draft policy to promote and regulate volunteerism among individuals, communities, civic and community based organisations as well as the private sector should be developed

9.2.1 Objectives
The objectives of this policy should be to:

a) Highlight the fundamental principles necessary to stimulate and harmonise volunteerism in Namibia
b) Provide an enabling environment for volunteers and VIOs by establishing mechanisms to promote and protect the rights of volunteers and highlight the role and contribution of volunteerism to national development
c) Promote the participation of the various sectors in volunteerism including the young, professionals and hitherto uninvolved sectors and to facilitate the integration of volunteerism into CSR policies of the corporate sector
d) Provide a framework for the coordination of volunteers, volunteerism and volunteering interventions and activities
e) the comprehensive integration of volunteerism into development programming and planning

9.2.2 Title
The title of the Policy should be “National Policy on Volunteerism and Development in Namibia”

9.2.3 Definitions

a) Definition of “volunteer” and “volunteerism”
b) Categories of volunteers and volunteering interventions and activities
c) Differences among volunteers – sharing resources
d) Clear distinction between volunteerism and employment. Volunteer schemes should not be a parallel employment programme. Amendment of the Labour Relations Act so that the definition of an employee excludes volunteers

9.2.4 Coordination
There is need for the development of a national coordination mechanism for volunteerism in Namibia. In establishing this mechanism, a database should be developed which will facilitate the matching of supply and demand for volunteers in that all persons interested in volunteering will be able to register their names, interests and profiles. This database should be accessible nationally through decentralisation to regional and local level networks. The database should specifically include information relevant to graduates from university and other professional training institutions who seek to volunteer.

National level coordination will also enable volunteerism to benefit from sustainable funding. Such a national mechanism should spearhead the adoption of a diversity of approaches to mobilising and facilitating volunteerism; establish a nurturing or enabling volunteering environment and spearheading a common understanding of volunteerism and a shared appreciation of its values. In the long term, this coordination system can be expanded to support sub-regional volunteering within SADC.

9.2.5 Recognition and promotion of volunteerism for development

The Policy should provide for the quantification and analysis of the contribution of volunteerism to national development in terms of attaining MDG goals and Vision 2030 benchmarks and support the motivation of volunteers through the following:

a) Recognition of volunteers in organisations’ recruitment policies for instance through a system which states that after a given period a volunteer becomes employed with the organisation they volunteer with

b) Recognition of volunteers as positive community members and they should receive awards for their hard work such as certificates, further studies, remuneration etc. Recognition that volunteers are the cornerstone of the community projects at grassroots level and are doing community work without demanding a wage. This should be recognised by the Government /lawmakers at all times and should be broadcasted through the media including National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) radio, television and or local newspapers.

c) Campaigns can be launched to rebuild learning on volunteerism from other countries. Volunteerism can provide a bridge or gap year programme. This can be developed and launched. The programme should have a specific focus on volunteers as individuals.

d) The Policy should glorify volunteerism as a noble cause. It should highlight that volunteers carry out a difficult mission where others do not go. Volunteers are not ordinary and it should be written in history that volunteers contributed to national development

e) Valuing volunteers - Incentives can be in the form of medals or awards, learning incentives, certificates

f) Sensitisation on volunteerism in school as part of life skills and community awareness

g) Volunteer discussion fora should be convened for cross fertilisation of experiences and ideas. This should specifically include strategies for Namibians with international volunteering service to share experiences and motivate other national volunteers
h) Marketing and profiling volunteers through publishing testimonies of volunteers, profiling volunteer champions among prominent national leadership. Organise volunteer festivals to promote volunteerism the spirit of volunteerism in people

i) Categorising and recognising volunteers and offer recognition of the initiatives of volunteer

j) The policy can support a new understanding that volunteerism does not mean services for free but provision of services and cultivate the spirit of volunteerism

k) Identification of volunteers to prevent confusion with the community; e.g., stickers, paper, caps, t-shirts (at least 2), identity card for their organisations or other identification materials. ID cards promote confidence and legitimacy of volunteers in the community

9.2.6 Diversity of approaches

a) The Policy should encouraging and not prevent community volunteering initiatives

b) It should motivate the gaining of value from international volunteering through teaming strategies such as pairing international volunteers with national graduates in the relevant sphere

c) The corporate sector should offer internships to volunteers for possible employment

d) The Policy should put in place strategies to assist the participation of young graduates as part of volunteering

e) There should be further training of volunteers including the international exposure maybe through a regional programme as a long term strategy and international volunteer exchange programmes – opportunities for Namibians to volunteer overseas

f) Partnerships with other volunteer organisations in other countries

g) Support organisations to foster skills development in volunteers through income generating projects for volunteers

h) Promote capacity enhancement of volunteers through the identification of career path progression for competent volunteers e.g. training and development into employment in line of expertise such as health sector.

9.2.7 Effective facilitation of volunteerism including sustainable funding

a) The institutional framework for the management of this Policy should be delegated to NPC and MRLGHRD. However these institutions should be advised by a multi sectoral council comprising different stakeholders (Government institutions, private sector, volunteers). VIOs should be registered with the Regional Council for coordination.

b) There should be provision that volunteerism will be facilitated through:
c) A Volunteer Fund /budget for volunteers and volunteering organisations which is government led/controlled so that organisations do not depend solely on donor funds to support volunteers and volunteerism

d) Guidelines for donors to pool resources to support volunteers. This should allow for parallel financing and pooling funds

e) The climate in the country and the continent can be beneficial to volunteerism if volunteerism is marketed from a developmental approach and a training standpoint. Within Namibia there is a frantic drive to learn and grow academically. Volunteerism can be popularised with this motive and experiential learning assessed in partnership with the National Qualifications Authority (NQA)

f) The Policy should promote the involvement of all sectors in volunteerism such as churches and all Ministries, The Policy should have separate conditions for civil society, government and private sector. Incentives for professionals such as lawyers, doctors to volunteer including tax holidays

g) The Policy should provide for the identification and nomination of volunteering champions (focal persons) in relevant institutions

h) Management of volunteers including an agreed value system/ethical standard for recruiting and/or managing volunteers to prevent nepotism

i) Guidelines or principles for volunteers – straightforward and honest volunteers

j) Developing regulations and registration of volunteers

k) Clear delineation of the obligations of hosting institutions towards volunteers including provision for the identification and recognition of their volunteers

l) Host institutions security checks should be done to ensure that volunteers are placed within stable and self sustaining organisations

m) Orientation of staff of host agencies on volunteerism and volunteers including accountability issues

n) Deterrents to stop or reduce abuse of volunteers

9.2.8 Volunteer effectiveness

a) The policy should not stipulate a standard minimum allowance for volunteers. It should allow for in-kind/non monetary support to volunteers. The policy should only support that volunteers should be given support

b) There should be VMS to acknowledge the value of the volunteer. There should be a descriptive title for the volunteer so that he/she is a part of the organisation in which he/she serves
c) The policy should provide for the economic measurement of the economic value of volunteering as a critical aspect of GDP. This could be incorporated into the existing national household surveys.
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Annex 2 – Interview Guide

Key Informant Interview Guide for a Feasibility Study on the Development of a Volunteer Policy in Namibia

Name of respondent  

Position of respondent  

Name of organisation  

Date of interview  

The role and contribution of volunteers to national development needs

- Volunteerism has long history in Namibia, what is your understanding of volunteering in the country?
- What are the forms of volunteerism found in Namibia? (probe on different levels of volunteerism - formal and informal/economic or social)
- How is each of these forms of volunteering operationalised?
- Who is a volunteer in Namibia?
- What are the rights of a volunteer in Namibia?
- What is the average age of volunteers in Namibia?
- In which sectors of the economy do you find volunteerism?
- In your view, has volunteerism contributed to the development of Namibia?
- If yes, how and in which areas?
- If no, why do you think volunteerism has not contributed to development in Namibia and what can be done to improve the contribution of volunteerism to development?
- In view of the challenges in Namibia, in which areas do you think volunteers can make a positive contribution? How?
- Are there benefits of volunteering? Give reasons for your answer

Legislative and policy framework on volunteering

- Are there national policies or legislation that regulate volunteerism in the country (probe on adequacy)
- How enabling are the existing policies and legislation on volunteer initiatives in the country by Namibians and non citizens?
- Are there laws or policies which inhibit volunteer initiatives in Namibia?
- What do you think volunteers should be entitled to? Why?
- In your view what are the rights and obligations of volunteers?
- Have you observed volunteers in Namibia experiencing any human rights violations?
- Is there anything which volunteers in Namibia can do if their rights are violated?

Gender dimension of volunteerism

- Do you think that more men or women are volunteering in Namibia at present? Give reasons for your answer
- What do you think motivates men to volunteer?
- In your view, what factors motivate Namibian women to volunteer?
- From your observations, are there different challenges for male as opposed to female volunteers?
- Do you think that there are different expectations from male and female volunteers?
• What is the gender breakdown of volunteers in your organisation?
• Why do you think there are more males/females?
• Do males and females volunteer in different areas or perform different tasks in your organisation? Give examples

Organisational perspectives on volunteerism

• Who is a volunteer?
• Does your organisation engage volunteers? If yes, in which areas. If no, why not?
• How are volunteers recruited into various portfolios? Give experiences from your organisation and elsewhere (Facilitate for the respondents to generate a simple mental process map)
• How many volunteers are there in your organisation?
• How effective is the use of volunteers in your organisation?
• How can the engagement and effectiveness of volunteers be enhanced in your organisation?
• Do you have a policy on volunteerism in your organisation?

Volunteer management systems

• How do you recruit volunteers/mobilize people to volunteer?
• Is your recruitment mechanism adequate?
• What are some of the main challenges you deal with in obtaining competent and committed volunteers for your organisation?
• What do you think will be a better way of sourcing volunteers for you organisation?
• How do you manage the volunteers in your organisation?
• What are 3 differences between volunteers and staff members in your organisation?
• Do you think the volunteers in your organisation are satisfied? Give reasons for your answer
• What will make the volunteers in your organisation lead a better life and contribute more effectively?
• If you had to replace these volunteers with staff members how much per month do you think that it would add to your present salary bill?
• Which geographic region do the volunteers you work with come from?
• If the government had a national coordination mechanism for volunteers do you think that more Namibians will be motivated to volunteer? Why?
• What are 4 differences between volunteers and other persons working in your organisation?

Promotion of volunteerism

• Do you think that people should volunteer?
• How can government support people to volunteer?
• What can private sector organisations do to promote volunteerism?
• What can civil society do to support volunteerism?
• How can youths be mobilised to volunteer?