



UN VOLUNTEER DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT

Preamble:

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development worldwide. Volunteerism can transform the pace and nature of development and it benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for volunteerism globally, encouraging partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing volunteers.

In most cultures volunteerism is deeply embedded in long-established, ancient traditions of sharing and support within the communities. In this context, UN Volunteers take part in various forms of volunteerism and play a role in development and peace together with co-workers, host agencies and local communities.

In all assignments, UN Volunteers promote volunteerism through their action and conduct. Engaging in volunteer activity can effectively and positively enrich their understanding of local and social realities, as well as create a bridge between themselves and the people in their host community. This will make the time they spend as UN Volunteers even more rewarding and productive.

- 1. UNV Assignment Title:** Assistant Programme Officer: Participation and empowerment of marginalized group integrated in UNV initiatives
- 2. Type of Assignment:** International UN Volunteer
- 3. Project Title:** Building up a community development strategy to promote self-reliance and peaceful co-existence among refugees in Tajikistan
- 4. Duration:** 12 months
- 5. Location, Country:** Dushanbe, Tajikistan
- 6. Expected Starting Date:** ASAP
- 7. Brief Project Description:**

The Republic of Tajikistan currently hosts approximately 3,300 refugees and 2,000 asylum seekers. The refugee/asylum seeker population mainly originates from Afghanistan, but also includes smaller numbers of Kyrgyz, Iranians and Iraqis. In recent years, Tajikistan has received in average 15 Afghan families per month and as the situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate, this trend is expected to continue. Most asylum seekers are a mix of complete families, single headed households, and individuals coming from different areas of Afghanistan. Over 90% of all Afghan refugees in Tajikistan are ethnic Tajiks, and the remainder includes Hazara, Pashtun and Turkmen people.

The Republic of Tajikistan ratified the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol in 1994; however, its national asylum system does not fully conform to international standards and in practice authorities systematically give precedence to national provisions over international law. Recognized refugees in Tajikistan are granted work permits and temporary residency permits but are prohibited by law to take up residence in the major urban centers, such as the capital city Dushanbe.

As a post-conflict state, Tajikistan has limited infrastructure, a poorly functioning social welfare system, and reduced institutional and governmental structures. High unemployment rates, widespread poverty and limited livelihood opportunities affect both the refugee and host communities in Tajikistan. Potable water is limited and rent costs are high. Gas and electricity shortages are common. Unofficial extra costs may be levied for access to health care or primary

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education. Many refugee children require special adjustment courses in Cyrillic script and some are unable to complete school due to the imperative of finding employment. The restrictions on settlement in urban centers have important and negative implications for the ability of refugees to access employment, healthcare and other services.

Due to the difficult living conditions, UNHCR is continually called upon to provide material and financial support to refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR and Implementing Partners (IPs) also provide support to refugees in the form of vocational training and access to a recently established micro loan scheme aimed at promoting self employment and small business initiatives. A Social Centre and a Youth Centre were established in 2011 Vahdat. The Social Center was equipped with sewing machines which allow refugee women and local Tajik women to be employed and generate an income. In addition, a series of training courses for women as well as literacy courses are organized as part of the activities of the center. The Youth center is a space for refugee children to learn with computers, have access to a library and perform sport activities. The centers are part of a RCVC project which was financed by the US Embassy in Tajikistan. UNHCR offers counseling and legal consultations twice a week in Dushanbe and Vahdat, where the majority of refugees live, in order to complement the services provided by the IPs.

Within UNHCR's Urban Refugee Policy, whereby Tajikistan is part of the Policy Pilot Project, more community development and outreach activities will be carried out during 2012 and 2013. Through the presence of the UN Volunteer, UNHCR Tajikistan aims to build up on its community development strategy to discourage a dependency of the refugee population in UNHCR and instead promote initiatives for self-reliance, while ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable are met. This should be achieved through consultations with refugees, government, IPs, the Regional Office and Headquarters.

Stronger efforts should be made to identify and monitor the situation of refugees and asylum seekers who have specific needs and vulnerabilities. This objective could be supported by establishing a network of refugee outreach volunteers and by undertaking regular participatory assessments and field visits. UNHCR's implementing partners should be fully engaged in these efforts and should receive the support that they need to ensure that people with specific needs are properly protected.

Refugees in Tajikistan currently have very limited livelihoods and durable solutions options, and renewed efforts are needed to address this situation. Particular attention should be given to the provision of better educational and employment opportunities for refugee youth and to gain a better understanding of their aspirations and expectations. At the same time, UNHCR should continue to explore the potential for the local integration of refugees, many of whom have close affinities to the Tajik population. All of these endeavors should be coordinated with other members of the UN Country Team, steps being taken to ensure that refugees are included in broader poverty reduction and development initiatives.

8. Host Agency/Host Institute:

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Tajikistan.

9. Organizational Context:

UNHCR has one single country office in Tajikistan which is located in the main of the two common houses that the UN system has in downtown Dushanbe. A UNHCR regional Office in Almaty, Kazakhstan supports the operation in Tajikistan. The country office has 11 staff members of which two are international and nine are national posts. Due to the size of the office, it has been not been subdivided in units, but rather in areas of work coordinated by the staff members in the



corresponding positions. The office holds weekly staff meetings and regular day-to-day coordination between staff members is encouraged.

The UN Volunteer will receive direct supervision from the Protection Officer. The incumbent will also refer to relevant chapters in UNHCR Manual and various policy papers. The supervisor defines the objectives and assignments to be performed, provides regular guidance and assists the incumbent in solving more difficult problems. In certain situations, the incumbent may be required to supervise some support staff.

The Government of Tajikistan remains UNHCR's main partner and several ministries and government institutions maintain a positive coordination with UNHCR. However, given the social and economic situation in the country, the government is unable to allocate funds for projects that benefit refugees and help address their urgent needs.

UNHCR implements its activities mainly through 3 partners which are local NGOs, namely Rights & Prosperity (R&P), Refugee Children and Vulnerable Citizens (RCVC), and Consortium Initiative (CI). R&P and RCVC are based in Dushanbe, while CI operates from Khujand. R&P provides mostly legal assistance to the refugees and asylum seekers; RCVC is in charge of conducting social assistance programs; and CI provides a combination of both types of support. All of them receive small funding from external donors for other projects and some of these resources are equally used for the benefit of refugees and the local population.

UNHCR and its Implementing Partners (IPs) also cooperate with the Afghan Refugee Association ("Ariana"), whose aim is to assist refugees in finding accommodation, obtaining emergency medical assistance, receiving in-kind/food assistance and being informed of relevant refugee issues in Tajikistan in coordination with UNHCR and its IPs.

UNHCR also coordinates with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), which manages several projects through funding from the EU which benefit refugees and asylum seekers in Tajikistan.

UNHCR also works in close proximity with other UN agencies, other international organizations and key embassies to ensure that asylum and refugee issues received coordinated international attention.

10. Type of Assignment Place: assignment with family

11. Description of tasks:

Under the direct supervision of the Protection Officer the UN Volunteer will undertake the following tasks:

- Identify social capitals of the communities of the persons of concern (PoCs) to UNHCR (refugees, asylum-seekers and others) and assess capacities and resources of them of managing their own communities;
- Analyze factors for successful / unsuccessful community formation and management among PoCs;
- In collaboration with PoCs, partner organizations and other stakeholders, formulate strategic plans for community development of PoCs in a beneficiary-oriented manner, in view of the Office's efforts to promote durable solutions for PoCs;
- Provide innovative inputs to formulating project proposals and monitoring the implementation;
- Provide technical advice to other staff and counterpart organizations;
- Liaise with the implementing partners (national NGOs) of the UNHCR to ensure that projects are implemented with the maximum capacity and potential of the NGOs, and that UNHCR resources are spent efficiently and according to the set regulations;
- Maintain regular contact and dialogue with representatives of PoCs' communities;
- Compile lessons learnt from activities and projects as inputs for the next project cycle;

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- Develop and maintain communication with potential new donors and counterparts;
- Undertake other duties as required.

Furthermore, UN Volunteers are encouraged to:

- Strengthen their knowledge and understanding of the concept of volunteerism by reading relevant UNV and external publications and take active part in UNV activities (for instance in events that mark IVD);
- Be acquainted with and build on traditional and/or local forms of volunteerism in the host country;
- Reflect on the type and quality of voluntary action that they are undertaking, including participation in ongoing reflection activities;
- Contribute articles/write-ups on field experiences and submit them for UNV publications/websites, newsletters, press releases, etc.;
- Assist with the UNV Buddy Programme for newly-arrived UN Volunteers;
- Work with UNV FU for contributing to the UNV Country Team's knowledge management through organising workshops on successful articles writing;
- Collaborate with UNV FU to organize events and formulate small projects for promoting volunteerism and youth participation into projects and/or activities;
- Promote or advise local groups in the use of online volunteering, or encourage relevant local individuals and organizations to use the UNV Online Volunteering service whenever technically possible.

12. Results/Expected Output:

- Identified and analyzed social capitals and factors for successful / unsuccessful PoCs communities (as ongoing process);
- Project plans for empowering communities of PoCs, leading to capacity development in community management;
- Compiled knowledge as monitoring reports, inputs and technical advice;
- Expanded and deepened key informants and partners in PoCs communities
- Proposed model or case studies for future project planning and implementation for beneficiary-oriented community development, aiming at building resilience in communities built by CoPs;
- A final statement of achievements towards volunteerism for development during the assignment, such as reporting on the number of volunteers mobilized, activities participated in and capacities developed.

13. Qualifications/Requirements:

- University or higher degree in Social Sciences, Sociology, Public Administration, Business, preferably related to community / rural development and/or community governance at grass-roots level;
- Knowledge or experiences on project formulation and management would be an asset;
- Excellent analytical and strong communication / negotiation skills, as well as the ability to work with a variety of partners in diplomatic manner;
- Experience in resource mobilization, including partnerships with donor organizations;
- Minimum 2 years of previous job experience relevant to the function;
- Fluency in English is essential and in Russian or Farsi desirable;
- Excellent computer skills, including command of MS Word and Excel.

14. Living Conditions:

The UN Volunteer will be based in Dushanbe the capital city, with travel to project sites upon a need. The UN Volunteer will be expected to pay for accommodation in the Dushanbe area through his/her



own means. Rental of apartments and houses in Dushanbe is relatively easy for foreigners and the Office can provide support in establishing contacts with realtors and landlords that can facilitate the house search process. Transportation in Dushanbe is also facilitated by the availability of a local bus system, public taxis and in general safe areas to walk from different points of the city. The Office can facilitate the airport pick up upon arrival as well as provide the transportation to a hotel during the initial days of stay while an accommodation alternative is found.

Dushanbe has many economic and social facilities at a reasonable price but occasionally influenced by commodity prices in Moscow. Security is recently relatively calm. There is no immediate threat of violence but security environment could be volatile, depending on security situation in northern Afghanistan due to influx of militant groups to the eastern border. As a mountainous area, occasional slight earthquakes can be felt. Summers, between May and September, are very hot ranging from 30 to 40C, while winters, from November to March, are relatively cold and dry with little snow; spring time (March, April) is usually rainy.

15. Conditions of Service

A 12-month contract with monthly volunteer living allowance (VLA) intended to cover housing, basic needs and utilities, equivalent to US\$ 1,777.00; US\$ 2,027,00 for person with one recognized dependent, and US\$ 2,227 for person with two or more recognized dependent; settling-in-grant (if applicable); life, health, and permanent disability insurance; return airfares (if applicable); resettlement allowance for satisfactory service.

Description of Assignment prepared by the UN Agency:

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Date: 22.01.2013

Description of Assignment approved by UNDP/RR/CD or UNV Field Unit:

Keiichi Sato, UNV Programme Officer)

Date: 22.01.2013