

**UNV UN Volunteer Performance Assessment (VPA) Guidelines**

# Introduction and Purpose:

The UNV **UN Volunteer Performance Assessment** (VPA) Report is a systematic and periodic process that assesses a UN Volunteer’s contributions and achievements in relation to pre-established and defined criteria.

It is mandatory for every UN Volunteer, (national, international, youth), to have a performance assessment, whether host agencies use UNV’s VPA or their own assessment system.1 A UN Volunteer is required to complete a performance assessment together with his/her supervisor.

The purpose of this guideline is to provide an instructional overview of the assessment steps for the UNV VPA. This note should be read in conjunction with UNV’s ‘UN Volunteer Performance Assessment Report‘.

# Background:

The VPA assesses a UN Volunteer’s performance against the Description of Assignment (DoA) and the work plan and outputs that are discussed and agreed at the beginning of each new assignment. It evaluates the effectiveness of the UN Volunteer and provides him/her with valuable information and feedback for their current assignment and future career opportunities. Performance assessment should be used in a constructive way to recognize and reward a UN Volunteer’s actions and inputs, and to identify where any improvements in the UN Volunteer’s performance can be made. The UN Volunteer and their immediate supervisor should be involved in regular dialogue and discuss any performance issues as they arise throughout the contract period. Any comments or ratings in the VPA form should therefore not be unexpected.

Individual performance is influenced by personal (i.e. competencies, motivation) and organizational factors (i.e. training, work conditions, management practices) which in turn impact on the achievement of a Host Agency‘s goals. Performance assessment should not be subject to bias and inaccuracies, or be overlooked and/or poorly managed.

# The VPA is designed to:

* Link the UN Volunteer’s main responsibilities/duties as listed in their DoA with the agreed work plan and major output/achievements during the reporting period;

1 The only exception is for UNV Programme Officers. They are required to follow the UNDP Performance Management and Development (PMD) process in consultation with their substantive and technical supervisor at the field level and their administrative and operational supervisor (generally UNV Portfolio Manager) at UNV HQ.

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* Acknowledge the UN Volunteer’s performance and bring to their attention any spe- cific areas that may require strengthening, or additional training and/or support re- quired from the supervisor;
* Ensure that a transparent process takes place where the UN Volunteer and the Supervisor discuss all sections/criteria with the aim of reaching agreement on the comments and ratings prior to signing the VPA;
* Provide accurate information to UN Volunteer of their suitability, (or otherwise), for a contract extension or a new UN Volunteer assignment;
* Give the UN Volunteer a useful document that can be shared with future employers which has insights into the responsibilities undertaken by the volunteer together with their achievements and capacity.

The VPA will also assist UNV to verify the accuracy of its identification and selection processes to find the right candidates with not only the right technical capacity but the soft skills and motivation to volunteer.

# Period of completion and timing:

A performance assessment is typically conducted for all assignments of six months or more. For assignments of one year or more, generally the assessment will be conducted annually. An assessment is to be completed each time a contract extension of 6 months or more is requested and at the end of each UN Volunteer’s assignment.

One month prior to the end of the contract or the UN Volunteer assignment, the assessment needs to be completed. The information provided in an assessment report form is the **official summary** of the UN Volunteer’s performance during their assignment. No supplementary information, which has not been discussed with the UN Volunteer, or included in an assessment report, will be accepted as an official record of performance.

UNV’s UN Volunteer Performance Assessment **does not replace** the Volunteer Reporting System (VRS). VRS is not a performance assessment tool but a reporting tool which captures UN Volunteers’ reflections about their assignment and promotion of the value of volunteering therein.

If a UN Volunteer does not complete a performance assessment as part of the check-out process at the end of the assignment, the resettlement allowance will be withheld.

#  Specific instructions for UNV’s VPA:

**Part 1 – UN Volunteer self-assessment (to be completed by the UN Volunteer)**

Using the agreed work plan and outputs, and considering major achievement/s, the UN Volunteer is required to complete section 1. This section can also be used to make note of

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how the UN Volunteer promoted and represented the spirit of volunteerism and if he/she participated in any additional voluntary activities during their assignment. The comment sections are restricted by characters, (*as a guide - 500 characters is around 75 - 100 words including spaces).*

# Part 2 – Section A. Supervisor’s assessment: (to be completed by the Supervisor)

Sections A, C and D are to be completed for **all** UN Volunteers. The supervisor is required to rate the professional/technical knowledge and skills of the UN Volunteer choosing from the following 5 ratings:

1. ***Excellent*** : Agreed outputs and expectations accomplished above expected levels. Performance that is consistently above the work standard for the task. Sustains uniformly high performance.
2. ***Very Good****:* Consistently completes agreed outputs as expected in terms of quality and schedule. Performance is fully competent in all aspect of assignment content and expectations.
3. ***Satisfactory:*** Sufficient to achive the agreed outputs, performance acceptable.
4. ***Requires Improvement:*** Sometimes fails to meet agreed outputs and expecta- tions and has some difficulty following through with tasks. Requires regular follow- up and direction. Improvement in highlighted category/ies is required.
5. ***Unsatisfactory****:* Agreed outputs and expectations were not met. Consistently fails to meet assignment requirements. Performance significantly below minimum re- quirements.

# Part 2 – Section B. Supervisory competency assessment: (to be completed by the Supervisor)

Section B only applies to UN Volunteers whose assignment included supervisory responsibilities.

# Part 2 – Section C. Supervisor’s overall assessment: (to be completed by the Supervisor)

In this section, brief comments for each of the given ratings are required. Additional comments will help the UN Volunteer to understand how the supervisor arrived at his/her conclusions. It is important that the supervisor provides constructive and honest comments.

# Part 2 - Section D. Contract extension and/or recommendation for future UNV assign- ments: (to be completed by the Supervisor)

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This part allows the Supervisor to provide a final recommendation on a possible extension, or another UN Volunteer placement in the future. If the recommendation is to **not recommend**, the reasons must be clearly explained and stated. Similarly, clear reasons must be given for recommendations with reservations, i.e. ‘recommended but not for hardship duty station’; ‘rec- ommended, but not for assignments requiring supervisory responsibility’. Former UN Volun- teers can re-activate their profiles at any time in the future; therefore it is important to ensure that a final recommendation is made for **every** UN Volunteer, whether they are considering another assignment at this time or not.

All contract extensions and future UN Volunteer assignments are subject to completion of a performance assessment and satisfactory performance.

# Part 3 – Final comments: (to be completed by the UN Volunteer)

This section allows the UN Volunteer to comment on the overall assessment and ratings, supervision, received training and/or development and any additional information or comments on their assignment.

If the UN Volunteer assignment is ending, please state clearly the reasons for not extending the UN Volunteer assignment. To assist UNV to continue improving its programmes and UN Volunteer management, additional information and comments are encouraged.

# Section E: Signatures: (to be completed by the UN Volunteer and the Supervisor)

A performance assessment discussion should take place between the UN Volunteer and their supervisor before the form is signed off by both parties. It is important that the UN Volunteer is given feedback and has the opportunity to respond to the feedback.

Following the finalization of parts 1 to 3 and the discussion between the UN Volunteer and the supervisor has taken place; the VPA should be completed and signed by both parties.

Any disagreement by the UN Volunteer of the VPA contents should be raised by the UN Volunteer directly with the supervisor, so as to enable the supervisor to explain fully. If however, the disagreement cannot be resolved, the UN Volunteer, and the supervisor, both have an opportunity to record that they are not in agreement with the assessment report at the time of signing. No formal rebuttal is available.