Summary of Security Policy Applicable to UN Volunteers

UN Security is underpinned by five main legal documents, outlining the responsibilities of all stakeholders:

1. United Nations Charter – articles 104 and 105
2. Conventions on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (1946 and 1947)
4. Annual Resolutions of the General Assembly on Safety and Security of UN personnel and associated personnel

The Security Policy Manual (https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/undss-unsms_policy_ebook.pdf) (SPM) constitutes a solid policy framework for enabling the conduct of UN operations while ensuring the safety and security of UN personnel, including UN Volunteers. It contains a series of security policies that guide all actors within the UNSMS, including UNV. There are four essential policies for any security decision maker in the United Nations system:

1. The Applicability Policy
2. The Policy on Security Risk Management (SRM)
4. Programme Criticality (PC) Framework

Chapter III of the UNSMS SPM Applicable Policy makes clear that UN Volunteers serving with UN Entities and their eligible dependents must be fully incorporated into UN Entities’ security planning, management and implementation arrangements for the area of the relevant UN Entity office and under the overall authority of the Designated Official.

UN Volunteers shall abide by the requirements of such security plans and adhere to all security instructions given by their UN Entity supervisor and/or UN Entity Field Security Adviser, as applicable.

The Programme Criticality methodology assigns one of the four Programme Criticality levels:

- PC1 activities only in very high present risk environments;
- PC1 - PC2 in high present risk environments;
- PC1 - PC2 - PC3 in medium present risk environments;
- PC1 - PC2 - PC3 - PC4 in low present risk environments.

UNV reserves the right to restrict placement of UN Volunteers, with particular attention to UN Youth Volunteers, from serving in environments with unacceptable risk levels in line with the UNV guiding principle that UNV does not compromise on duty of care health, safety, well-being, and sanity of UN Volunteers.
Annex

Risk determination and Programme Criticality

Determining Acceptable Risk: Comparing Security Risk and Programme Criticality levels

Security Risk Management (SRM) process → Present Risk → Programme Criticality Level

The levels of present security risk in a certain location are determined through the SRM process. PC levels (PC1-PC4) are determined through a PC assessment.

Risk Levels:
- Negligible
- Minor
- Moderate
- Severe
- Critical

Impact Levels:
- Very High
- Likely
- Moderately Likely
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

Programme Criticality Levels:
- PC1
- PC2
- PC3
- PC4

- Life-saving activities (all scale) - or -
- Any activity endorsed by the SG (Principal’s approval to implement in very high risk)

Two rating criteria:
- Contribution to each in-country UN strategic result
- Likelihood of implementation

Accountability Matrix

1. Regularly conducting Programme Criticality assessments
2. Using the results of a PC assessment in UN Security Risk Management
3. Decisions on PC1 activities carried out in very high risk

Responsibilities:
- Overall responsibility:
  - RC (in non-integrated settings)
  - SRSG (in integrated settings)
- Managerial responsibility:
  - Heads of Country Offices (Agencies / Programmes / Funds, UN mission)
  - Heads of Country Offices (Agencies / Programmes / Funds, UN mission)
  - Heads of Country Offices (Agencies / Programmes / Funds, UN mission)
- Oversight and support at HQ:
  - Advises where/when PC assessments are required, and reviews PC results

Programme Criticality Steering Group
- Advisory level at HQ
- Supported by
  - Programme Criticality Coordination Team (senior technical level)

Executive Head (SSG):
- To sign off on PC1 activities. USG ESS must give final approval.

To ensure PC assessments take place in accordance with PC Framework.
To ensure full participation in PC assessments.
To ensure PC assessments are required, and reviews PC results.
To endorse country-level decisions based on SRM and Programme Criticality levels PC2 - PC4.
To review and adjust delivery and risk management strategies based on acceptable risk, and sign off on implementation of activities in accordance with their PC rating.
To provide justification for PC1 activity (PCDERS)