

## PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES INFORMATION SHEET

### Name of the Partnership/Initiative

# CARING CITIES

## volunteer capital for urban development

**Expected date of initiation: August 2002**

**Expected date of completion: August 2004 (pilot phase)**

### Partners Involved:

**Governments:** Ecuador, Egypt, Jamaica and Yemen. Other countries currently under consideration.

**Intergovernmental organizations:** United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme; UNDP

**Major groups:** NGOs; women; youth; local authorities

**Other:** the municipalities of Esmeraldas (Ecuador); Falmouth (Jamaica) and Amran (Yemen). Other municipalities under consideration.

**Leading Partner:** United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme

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### Main objectives of the Partnership/Initiative

#### Please provide a brief description:

Volunteerism can play an important role in the development of cities and towns. It adds to the overall economic output. It is also closely related to the formation of social cohesion and capital. In addition, volunteering has important contributions in regard to the social aspects of urban development – e.g. as a basis for participatory processes. There is also a relationship between volunteerism and local pride, which, if supported, provides the opportunity for the establishment of a virtuous cycle. I.e. enhancement of the local pride increases people's motivation to invest in their settlement (i.e. increased propensity to do volunteer work). And the additional investment in their settlement will generate further impact in the cultural heritage and local pride, and so on.

However, such volunteer contributions are still largely overlooked and under-utilized. They are seldom fully recognized, promoted and supported by local authorities and by other urban decision-makers. For example, there are only very few cases of local authorities in developing countries that strongly and widely bring volunteerism on board of their policies and that explore

fully its potential. Equally, the local volunteer sector is seldom organized in a fashion that would make the best of itself. The initiative recognizes the aforementioned facts, and aims at helping to expand the contribution of volunteerism to urban development.

Its objectives are the following:

- To raise the awareness of urban policy- and decision-makers and other local stakeholders about the untapped potential of volunteerism in urban development and to motivate them to concretely explore ways to realise such potential.
- To support interested cities to concretely explore ways to increase the contribution of volunteerism to urban development.
- To support the establishment of links between different cities to exchange experiences and mutual support to further explore the contribution of volunteerism to urban development

**Please also provide a brief description of the relationship of the Partnership/Initiative with the objectives of Agenda 21 as well as relevant goals and objectives of the United Nation Millennium Declaration:**

The existing research on and the numerous examples of volunteerism at the local level indicate its importance for the sustainable development process through building social capital, promoting more participation and self-initiatives and thereby establishing or stabilizing democratic processes, as well as contributing to economic growth and protecting environmental assets. Volunteerism, as a cross-cutting social behaviour, takes place in all fields of society. Data on formal volunteerism in several countries suggest that most volunteers are active in more than one of the core fields of sustainable development. These include activities specifically related to Agenda 21 and the Millennium Goals. For example, poverty eradication; sustainable patterns of production and consumption; energy; disaster preparedness; food security; health; transfer of technology; capacity-building. Volunteerism may be interpreted as the everyday implementation of Agenda 21.

By building mutual trust, solidarity and participation as well as enabling the empowerment of poor and marginalized people, volunteer actions may lead to innovative ideas and processes. The volunteer actions, whether in small local self-help groups or in international active campaigning groups, facilitate the process of sustainable development

**Expected results:**

**Please provide a brief description:**

- Producing an inventory of good practices about volunteer contributions in the different aspects of urban development (e.g. sanitation, housing, health, etc.).
- Raising the awareness of urban policy- and decision-makers and other local stakeholders about the still untapped potential of volunteerism to contribute to the development of their city or town.
- Motivating them to concretely explore ways to increase the contribution of volunteerism to the development of their city or town.
- Providing access to the inventory for urban policy- and decision-makers and other local stakeholders (to concretely explore ways to increase the contribution of volunteerism to the development of their city or town).

- Providing technical assistance for urban policy- and decision-makers and other local stakeholders to adapt ideas from the inventory as well as to develop new ideas. This will be carried out via a resource centre.
- Designing and implementing pilot activities, and mobilizing donors to fund further activities.
- Disseminating the information about the partnership as a whole and the pilot activities in particular.
- Encouraging stakeholders of different cities to exchange experiences and mutual support to further explore the contribution of volunteerism to urban development.
- Building networks between cities through exchange of experiences.
- Dissemination of the data on good practices among the cities.
- Facilitation of inter-city co-operation and building capacity of the stakeholders to get benefit from exchange schemes.

**Specific targets of the Partnership/Initiative and timeframe for their achievement:**

The above activities will be accomplished by the interaction of four components: (i) social communication (dissemination, motivation, public relations); (ii) collection, storage, analysis and dissemination of information; (iii) technical assistance, and (iv) resource mobilization and scaling-up.

UNV will field a team of specialists for a period of 2 years, implementing the initiative simultaneously in three pilot cities: Esmeraldas in Ecuador, Falmouth in Jamaica, Amran in Yemen; and establishing a resource centre in Egypt. The UNV team will be divided into four groups. Three identical groups will be based in the three pilot cities. The fourth group will coordinate the initiative and provide on-line support to the other three groups as well as to any stakeholder wishing to replicate the initiative in their cities (beyond the pilot cities). The coordinator will also be responsible for resource mobilization.

The UNV team will be based in offices of the local authorities in the respective towns. The whole team will be connected via e-mail, and will also take part in yearly workshops which would bring all the members of the team together. The initiative will be implemented in accordance to the following chronological steps:

- Planning phase (6 months):

(i) *for the pilot activities*: (a) survey of the existing, planned and untapped volunteer contributions; (b) consultations with all the volunteer groups, in order to discuss ways of exploring synergies and complementarity among their separate actions; (c) assessment of the unattained needs and the priorities in the city, (d) design of a Strategy of Action.

(ii) *support and parallel activities*: (a) design and initial set-up of the database; (b) awareness-raising and information campaign; (c) initial set-up of technical assistance for other municipalities; (d) initiation of contacts with donors to expand the number and/or depth of pilot activities.

- Implementation phase (18 months):

(i) *for the pilot activities*: (a) implementation of the Strategy of Action.

(ii) *support and parallel activities*: (a) database established and available for general consultation; (b) continuation of the awareness-raising and information campaigns – incorporating information about the pilot activities; (c) technical assistance established and available for other municipalities; (d) development of further contacts with donors and preparation/submission of

proposals.

- Expansion phase: will depend on the way the previous phases develop.

### **Coordination and Implementation mechanism**

**Please provide a brief description of expected coordination/implementation mechanism of the Partnership/Initiative.**

The overall co-ordination of the partnership will be carried out by UNV.

The main role of the local authorities is to provide the enabling framework for the partnership at the local level. In each town the partnership team will also identify one umbrella CSO (Civil Society Organization), whose main role is to facilitate the contacts between the partnership team and the local stakeholders. The partnership will build the capacity of local organisations and also co-ordinate their linkages. The participation of such organizations as partners ensures a large scope for the initiative. It can begin with just a small number of local partners, and bring more on board along the way.

UNDP will be involved firstly through the country offices' administrative and supporting roles. Further associations will be explored – e.g. joint initiatives involving volunteer and non-volunteer activities (i.e. the UNV and the UNDP/UN-Habitat projects).

*The initiative also has the potential to incorporate new partners and therefore to broaden its scope. Suggestions and proposals from potential new partners interested in joining the partnership are welcome.*

### **Arrangements for funding**

**Please describe available and/or expected sources of funding for the implementation of the Partnership/Initiative (e.g. donor government(s); international organization(s)/financial institution(s); foundation(s); private sector; other major groups, etc.)**

UNV has already secured funds to implement the resource centre plus activities in three pilot cities over a period of two years (August 2002 – August 2004). The activities of the resource centre also include resource mobilization for extending the initiative beyond the two years or/and beyond the pilot cities.

### **Arrangements for capacity building and technology transfer**

**Please include information if the Partnership/Initiative provides for training, informational support, institutional strengthening and/or other capacity building measures:**

The initiative will build the capacity of local organisations through its specialists working on-site with the local beneficiaries and stakeholders. It will also provide information and transfer-know how via the advisory work of the resource centre. In addition, mutual transfer of know-how is envisaged through the co-operation between cities.

### **Links of Partnership/Initiative with on-going sustainable development activities at the international and/or regional level (if any)**

**Please provide a brief description:**

The partnership has links with a number of on-going UNV and UNDP initiatives.

Regardless of the importance of (urban) volunteerism (explained before), programmes related to sustainable development seldom explore the volunteer potential of cities and towns. Therefore, the present initiative has the potential to link with many such programmes – including many WSSD ‘Type 2’ partnerships.

**Monitoring Arrangements**

**Please describe expected arrangements for monitoring of progress in the implementation of Partnerships/Initiative after it will be launched at the WSSD:**

**(e.g. frequency/modalities of preparation of progress reports; electronic updates, newsletters, etc)**

An internal review will be undertaken with all involved partners. Envisaged after first year of implementation, the exact timing of the review will be defined with the partners. Towards the end of the second year, it is planned to recruit an external consultant to evaluate the overall results of the initiative with a focus on achievements, lessons learnt and replicability.

**Other relevant information:**

Web-site (if available):

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