



IYV 2001

***NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON VOLUNTEERISM: Preparation for IYV 2001 and Beyond
4 August 2000;8.00 a.m., Botswana National Productivity Centre, Gaborone, Botswana***

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Facilitator: Mrs. Imelda Molokomme

Coordinating Chairperson: Ms. Dianne D. Arboleda

Coordinating Member Secretary/Rapporteur: Mr. Jack Prasai

8.00-9.00 Registration: Secretariat

The workshop was formally opened by Ms. Molokomme inviting Rev. Simon Magowe to led the morning's invocation. Mrs. Nileema Noble, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP-Botswana gave the welcome address and followed by a Keynote Address on Volunteerism by Mr. B.K. Sebele, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs.

Mr. B.K. Sebele mentioned the need to revive the spirit of volunteerism and seek the improvement of local communities through such traditional concepts as 'melaletsa' (self-help). He noted that in the past, some schools and roads were constructed by national volunteers. He mentioned that the introduction of international volunteers in Botswana's development process had found support and contributed to the country's economic growth as well. He mentioned specifically that international volunteerism as it exist today can contribute as an agent of change: (1) transferring factual information about developing countries, as well as about global, social, economic and political structures and problems; (2) fostering understanding of development as a process that involves all nations; (3) creating a broad global consciousness and an awareness of transnational problems; (4) promoting values and attitudes which encourage a feeling of responsibility to correct injustices; and (5) engaging citizens in various actions and advocacy for activities that promote justice and equity and lead to an improvement in the quality of life for all peoples. He requested all volunteers and volunteer-sending agencies (VSAs) in Botswana to direct their efforts at reaching out to the community and also to learn valuable lessons from each other.

9.30-9.45 Tea break/ Group Photo Session.

9:30-10:00 Introduction of the Participants
Overview of the Workshop by Ms. Imelda Molokomme

Ms. Imelda Molokomme requested the participants to introduce themselves, their respective organisations and where they were stationed. She then provided an overview of the workshop by reviewing its main objective which is to bring together representatives for international volunteer sending agencies, national volunteer sending agencies, UN agencies, educational institutions, NGOs, public and private sectors to review the concepts of volunteerism and establish a national mechanism for promoting volunteerism, and to prepare for the international year of volunteers (IYV 2001) and beyond.

Specifically the workshop aims to:

- Clarify and establish the culture and forms of volunteerism in Botswana;
- to establish a national coordinating body in the country with district representation;
- determine a national agenda and agree on a work plan and determine stakeholders; and
- work towards the promotion of volunteers networking (2001).

10.00-10.15 Brainstorming on Concepts of Volunteerism:

Participants brainstormed various concepts related to volunteerism and identified key emerging issues as follows:

- Decline of volunteerism in Botswana;
- Need to involve the youth to promote and encourage the present efforts of volunteerism;
- Inventorise existing volunteerism issues;
- Lack of strategies in planning to engage volunteers;
- Need to design appropriate programmes for volunteers;
- Need to examine the linkages between the traditional forms and international forms of cooperation in order to sustain the voluntary efforts;
- Consideration of benefits accrued from volunteerism;
- Develop the spirit of social responsibility vs, remuneration;
- Move from words to action;
- Commitment to cut across irrespective of social status;
- Establish a mobilisation strategy to identify a role of people who have the ability to volunteer (availability of time);
- Need to appreciate existing efforts of volunteerism especially those of women and youth;
- Leadership down plays the volunteer efforts in Botswana;
- Mistrust and group dynamics and affiliation to different institutions work against volunteerism;
- Lack of supervisory and guidance role for international volunteers in Botswana;
- Need to incorporate professionalism in volunteerism;
- Create a need for volunteering/ assessment of needs;
- Incentives needed to promote volunteerism;
- Skills development in appropriate fields relevant to volunteerism;
- Resource allocation;
- Need to assess incentives and how the incentives can be managed;
- Government's critical role in the promotion of volunteerism;
- Draw lessons from other countries on incentives on volunteerism; and
- A need for coordinating approaches bearing in mind to make it non-bureaucratic.

The facilitator summarized the participants' concepts on volunteerism. The responses were:

Volunteerism is:

- Individual/group responsibility
- Selflessness
- Motivation
- Flexibility
- Patriotism
- Self-help/Self-reliance
- Sensitisation of people's sacrifice
- Individual commitment and group work relationships

As a traditional form of contribution and cooperation, volunteerism evolves around

- Keeping surroundings clean
- Caring for the elderly
- Caring for orphans
- Free labour
- Literacy Classes
- Funerals and weddings
- Collections and distribution of clothes
- Helping others improve their lives
 - “Diphiri” or digging a grave on a bereavement
 - Feeding the poor
 - Borrowing and lending of items
 - Part-time work
 - Utilization of expertise
 - Responding to poor social services

It was highlighted that in the promotion of volunteer service, leaders should lead by example and should be non-judgmental.

In a more modern form, volunteerism is viewed to involve:

- Imparting skills/empowerment
- Child minding
- Community development (for e.g. work camps)
- Donations
- Incentives
- Home-based care
- Crime prevention
- Fire-fighting
- Maphanyane’s fund
- Short-term/part-time project
- Drought relief projects
- Trusts
- Foster care
- Agricultural cooperatives
- Old age homes

- Soup kitchens
- Clean-up campaigns

The facilitator thanked the participants and proceeded in the introduction of the paper presentors.

Paper Presentation: "Volunteerism and Community Building" was presented by Ms. Vivian Mazunga, Coordinator, Women's NGO Coalition. She mentioned in her paper that Botswana had an impeccable record on volunteerism and there was much scope in national society to mobilise communities through voluntary efforts. She felt that the most cherishing gift about volunteerism was the opportunity and environment it gave to citizens to think, act freely and willingly for the improvement and enrichment not only of their own lives but that of others. She stressed that NGOs and CBOs by their nature and mission went hand in hand with the spirit of volunteerism, where the first Non-Governmental Organisations in Botswana such as the Botswana Red Cross Society, Botswana Council for Women, the Young Women Christian Association, the Girl Guides Association and the Boy Scouts Association were all voluntary in true human spirit. She however felt that with the new economic progress and offering by incentives by the Government, volunteering in certain incidents had been adversely affected. She felt that citizens needed to volunteers, and incentives might be placed to initiate appropriate community actions.

A follow-up Paper Presentation: Volunteerism from An International Volunteer-Sending Agency's Experience by Mr. Klaus Theusing, Regional Director for Southern Africa, Gernand Development Service (DED). Mr. Klaus Theusing remarked the notable achievements in voluntary development in Botswana which had not only increased the spirit of volunteerism, but also provided scope for one of the oldest international volunteer-sending agencies in Botswana, the DED had grown in support to the national society. He felt that youth still needed to be targeted, while community sensitization could still assist propel the concept forward. He felt that DED volunteers who had been in Botswana since the early Seventies had contributed in many technical projects throughout Botswana. Mr. Theusing stated that just as much as international volunteers had come to serve in Botswana, he dreamt of a time when Botswana volunteers went and served outside. It would thus be a truly enriching technical exchange with the exchange not only of ideas but cultures as well. He felt that Botswana society had gone through tremendous societal change in the past three decades, where new monetaristic aspirations also stymied the concept of volunteerism. He called on the cooperation of all to keep going. He stated that in his long service as a German volunteer in various African countries, it was necessary to sustain the spirit of volunteerism, not just wholistic development.

A Presentation on IYV 2001 was made by Ms. Dianne Arboleda, UNV Programme Officer. She informed that in November 1997, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers (IYV). To prepare for the year, the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) has been designated as focal point. She stated that the cooperation of all sectors (the government, NGOs, private sector, the volunteer sending agencies, donors etc.) is crucial to its international success. In Botswana, the VSAs had in fact already instituted systematic planning since the beginning of 2000 to prepare for both the International Volunteers Day 2000 (5 December) and the International Year of Volunteers 2001.

Ms. Arboleda shared that the 2001 celebration aims for an enhanced recognition, facilitation, networking and promotion of volunteer service. She informed that to help prepare and get involve in IYV 2001, various promotional tools are available such as the IYV kit which is complete with

guidance notes, a poster with the IYV logo. An IYV CD rom that contains information on IYV, the official logo in various digital formats and a slide presentation is likewise available. Concerning the IYV logo, she mentioned that Botswana could design its own IYV logo. This matter could be discussed further by the National IYV Committee.

She mentioned several possible constituents for the celebration of the International Year of Volunteers 2001 National Committee (IYV 2001) which would include: **Government, Private Sector, NGOs, CSOs, Volunteer-Sending Agencies, Religious Organisations, Civic Organisations, Donors, Regional Cooperation Bodies (such as SADC, OAU, etc.), UN system, Media, Communities, and Education Institutions.** To carry on with the country's preparations for IYV 2001, a National Committee would be necessary with the following roles to play:

- Assist in the process of consultations;
- prepare and facilitate the Workplan for 2001; and
- make recommendations to government to realise aims of IYV 2001.

After a brief synthesis of all the presentations given, Ms. Molokomme proceeded by thanking the presentors and facilitated the breaking up of the participants into four groups. She explained the questions that need to be discussed as follows:

- **What do you understand by volunteerism?**
- **What forms and cultures of volunteerism do you know of?**
- Are these cultures and forms of volunteerism in Botswana still working?
- If not, what are the problems and what can be done to revive them and who can do it ? (e.g. stakeholders's enrollment and involvement)
- Where should the National Committee be housed? And who should provide funding?

Having clarified with the groups the tasks to be done, they proceeded with the discussion and presented as follows:

Group 1's Presentation

Volunteerism is a desire to contribute to the community/providing service without expecting money, but expecting some support.

The forms and culture of volunteerism includes: A: Traditional: (1) "Mephato" (2) "Letsema" (3) "Dikgafela" (4) "Diphiri" (still working somewhat). Modern forms include Foster homes/orphanages.

If the culture and forms of volunteerism in Botswana are still working, the group answered yes and no. This is due to the existence of individualism, materialism, democratization, deteriorating morals, cash economy, weak extended family ties, those asking for volunteers are employed, decline in traditional power, people living outside home community, benefits reaped by non-participation.

To revive the spirit of volunteerism, there is a need to campaign to redefine volunteerism, equal incentives to all, encourage people to participate in activities they enjoy, structure for linking volunteers to opportunities, strong leadership, increased productivity, form, national volunteer association, new alternative programmes to replace TSP.

The National IYV Committee should be housed at the United Nations Development Programme with MLHA and other ministries funds should be allocated as they are currently benefiting from volunteerism.

Group 2's Presentation

Volunteerism is availing one's time, energy and ability and willingness to provide free service with commitment and professionalism to those who need.

The forms and culture of volunteerism are: (1) Person-to-person such as neighbourhood watch/child care/"Mafisa"; (2) Community services as Funerals/ Weddings/"Melalatsa"/ Regiments/ Cleaning-up; (3) National Services such as "Motho le motho Kgomo"/disaster relief/fire fighting / Workcamps/"Tirelo Sechaba"; (4) International Service such as peace-keeping missions/ economic relief/ technical assistance.

The culture and forms of volunteerism in Botswana are still working but are being eroded gradually by practices such as monetary expectation, insecurity and lack of truth, lack of time etc. What can be done is to implement relevant aspects of Vision 2016, create a forum for sensitization on volunteerism.

The IYV stakeholders should be voluntary organisations, volunteer- sending and receiving agencies, traditional leaders, politicians, religious organisations, and government. Contributions by way of increasing volunteerism would be working on societal sensitization, mobilization of the community, identification of appropriate projects and programmes for volunteers, etc.

The National IYV Committee should have an independent secretariat and funding should come from donor organisations and government.

Group 3's Presentation

Volunteerism is a non-wage activity. It is a process of serving others or serving the community, reaching out to one another. It is a sacrifice characterised by willingness, commitment and generosity. Volunteerism is intended to improve the life of individual family, community and citizens as a whole.

The forms and culture of volunteerism are: (1) Social - such as child mining, home-based care, Maphanye' fund, trusts, soup kitchens, foster care, old age care, imparting skills; (2) Community services as community development, crime prevention, fire fighting, cleaning campaigns, drought relief, etc.; (3) Economic e.g. agricultural cooperatives (4) Motivational such as incentives (5) Socio-economic such as Short term/part time work, giving donations.

The culture and forms of volunteerism in Botswana are still working through, Community Home-based Care, Community schooling, priests praying for non-Church goers. However, there is a need to strengthen the services. The only problem that a lot of services were provided free in Botswana before like one expects "letsema", "matimela" etc.

While the government is a stakeholder for the celebration of IYV 2001, communities should also be included. Contributions by the stakeholders should include ideas, money, materials to use and technical advice for training.

The National IYV Committee should temporarily be housed at UNDP and later be self-housed.

Group 4's Presentation

Volunteerism is the willingness to assist each other/self-gratification.

The forms and culture of volunteerism include A: Traditional: (1) Letsema/Molawetsa (2) Mephato (3) Metshelo
Modern: (1) Foster homes/orphanages.

If the culture and forms of volunteerism in Botswana are still working, the group answered yes and no. The government has contributed towards the decline of volunteerism. The type of life we are leading today/climate change/weather conditions in Botswana/insecurity because of risks involved. Abundance of our culture/Sensitization of our government, e.g. politicians, community leaders.

As stakeholders, the role of Government and NGOs are important. There is a need to conduct training through provision of resources e.g. financial, food transport; mobilization of people to participate in volunteerism; assist volunteers to come up with income generating projects for sustainability's sake.

The National IYV Committee should be housed at UNDP and funding should come from the private sector, UN agencies, and Botswana government.

Workshop Conclusions/Recommendations and Synthesis

Following the group work and presentations made by representatives of each groups, the facilitator synthesized the concepts of volunteerism, and the traditional and modern culture and forms of volunteerism in Botswana such as "mephato", "letsema or molaletse", "mafisa", "diphiri", "matimela", "gooka", "mo dintshong", "metshelo", "boipelego", "dikapolole", "twantsho borukuthli", etc. While these forms continue to exist in the country, Other modern forms were likewise found suitable and identified as supportive to the concept of establishing foster homes, agricultural cooperatives, development trusts, caring for patients, etc. On the basis of the issues that were earlier drawn up and the additional inputs that were provided by the 4 working groups, Ms. Molokomme reviewed the objectives set for the workshop. Together with the participants, it was confirmed that all the items included in the workshop objectives were all covered.

On the National IYV Committee however, the participants decided to identify the composition as follows: the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Local Government to be represented by the District Officer of Molepolole (representing the districts), Botswana Press Agency (BOPA), University of Botswana (UB), Botswana National Youth Council (BNYC), Women's NGO Coalition, another NGO, German Development Agency (DED), the church groups (at the same time representing the International Association for Volunteer Efforts or IAVE). The National Committee will meet at a later date to firm up its TOR, review the above-mentioned conclusions/issues and suggested activities for the formulation of IYV 2001 Workplan and agree on Botswana's IYV logo.

The workshop was formally closed by Mr. N. Kejelepula, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, who stated that the participants and organisers had contributed impartially by way of ideas and resources to regenerating the dying concept of volunteerism in Botswana. A closing prayer was led by Pastor Oupa Rampa of Adopt-A-Person Foundation, Inc. after reading Proverbs 14:31 with emphasis on volunteerism.

Attached are photos taken during the workshop and copies of the speeches and papers presented by resource persons.