

Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency

NEDA Complex, EDSA Diliman, Quezon, City

OFFICE CIRCULAR NO. IV

Series of 2003

GUIDELINES IN THE DEPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN VOLUNTEERS TO DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

WHEREAS, the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) is mandated to coordinate with foreign volunteer organizations the deployment and utilization of volunteer service workers for development projects;

WHEREAS, it is necessary for PNVSCA and the various foreign volunteer organizations to adopt common policies and guidelines for the effective and efficient implementation of the foreign volunteer service program;

WHEREAS, Section 15 of Executive Order No. 635, Series of 1980, provides that the Director of PNVSCA shall promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Order;

NOW THEREFORE, to attain the above objectives, this set of guidelines is hereby adopted.

TITLE I

REQUESTS FOR VOLUNTEERS

SECTION 1. Request forms shall be submitted to PNVSCA and shall be numbered upon receipt.

SEC. 2. The request shall include the volunteer/s' proposed Work and Financial Plan as laid out by the requesting organization and which may be adopted or modified later after consultation between the volunteer and the host organization.

SEC. 3. The request shall clearly provide information on the duration of volunteer assistance to the project.

SEC. 4. Requests from national government agencies (NGAs) shall be signed by heads or their authorized representatives, provided that the signatories do not hold ranks lower than those of a Bureau/Project Director.

SEC. 5. Requests from local government units (LGUs) shall be signed by the Provincial Governor, Municipal/City Mayor or the Barangay Chairman as the case may be.

SEC. 6. Requests from academic institutions shall be signed by the President or the equivalent highest official as the case may be.

SEC. 7. Requests from non-government organizations shall be signed by the highest executive officer (e.g. CEO, Executive Director, President).

TITLE II

ASSESSMENT OF REQUESTS

SEC. 8. Assessment of requests for volunteer assistance shall focus, among others, on the (a) value added of the volunteer assistance to the project, consistent with government priorities and the thrust of the partner foreign volunteer organization and (b) the readiness of the requesting organization and communities to utilize volunteer assistance.

SEC. 9. Based on the result of the initial review of the request by PNVSCA, any requesting organization may be required to make a project presentation either at PNVSCA or the NEDA Regional Office to determine their eligibility for volunteer assistance.

SEC. 10. A joint assessment through field visit or consultation may also be undertaken by the requesting organization, the foreign volunteer organization, NEDA Regional Office and PNVSCA.

SEC. 11. PNVSCA shall act on the request for volunteer assistance based on the result of the assessment.

SEC. 12. Foreign volunteer organizations shall inform PNVSCA within twelve months their ability to recruit volunteers for requests endorsed to them.

TITLE III

RECRUITMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

SEC. 13. Foreign volunteer organizations shall recruit volunteer candidates based on the terms of reference indicated in the Request for Volunteer Form endorsed by PNVSCA.

SEC. 14. Volunteers shall be officially nominated to and accepted by prospective host organizations through PNVSCA prior to their deployment in the Philippines.

SEC. 15. Volunteers are entitled to 47(a)(2) visa during the tenure of their assignment. PNVSCA shall request the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to issue the visa to the volunteers upon completion of the necessary requirements for their assignment. The foreign volunteer organizations shall ensure that volunteers hold 47(a)(2) visa before they enter the Philippines and shall coordinate with PNVSCA in the extension of their visas as may be necessary.

SEC. 16. Volunteers shall register with PNVSCA prior to deployment to their respective host organizations. Foreign volunteer organizations shall coordinate with PNVSCA to register the volunteers with the Bureau of Immigration (BI) and in obtaining for them their Alien Certificates of Registration (ACR).

TITLE IV

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

SEC. 17. Volunteers shall attend the institutional orientation to be conducted by

PNVSCA and the host organizations, aside from those conducted by their respective foreign volunteer organizations.

SEC. 18. Host organizations shall attend and participate in co-management meetings to be chaired by PNVSCA in collaboration with the foreign volunteer organizations.

SEC. 19. Foreign volunteer organizations shall ensure the attendance of volunteers to briefings/orientations to be provided by PNVSCA. In consultation with PNVSCA, they may provide cultural management trainings to host organizations as may be deemed appropriate.

TITLE V

MONITORING

SEC. 20. Monitoring the volunteer/s' progress and accomplishments vis-a-vis the objectives of their placement shall be a shared responsibility among the foreign volunteer organizations, the host organizations and PNVSCA.

SEC. 21. The principal basis for monitoring volunteer/s' accomplishment shall be the Work and Financial Plan.

SEC. 22. Monitoring shall be done through consultations, site visits and sharing of information among the volunteers, PNVSCA, foreign volunteer organizations, host organizations and other stakeholders. It shall address issues related to volunteer placement and volunteer management and coordination. It may also be used as a means in project documentation and input to evaluation.

SEC. 23. Foreign volunteer organizations may furnish PNVSCA copies of the reports submitted by their volunteers. In the absence of such, the prescribed PNVSCA report forms shall be used and submitted by the volunteer/s.

SEC. 24. Host organizations shall submit reports to PNVSCA in relation to their availment of volunteers.

SEC. 25. PNVSCA shall sponsor conventions and conferences such as Volunteer Sharing Sessions and Host Organizations' Meetings as venues for monitoring, among other intents and purposes.

TITLE VI

VOLUNTEERS COMPLETION OF SERVICE

SEC. 26. Volunteers who completed their assignments shall submit an End-of-Assignment Report and visit PNVSCA for exit interview.

TITLE VII

TRANSFER/PRE-TERMINATION/PULL-OUT OF VOLUNTEERS

SEC. 27. Decisions concerning volunteer transfer, pre-termination and pull-out shall be determined based on consultations among the volunteer, host organization, the foreign volunteer organization and PNVSCA.

TITLE VIII

REPLACEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

SEC. 28. Request for replacement of volunteer may be applied for in cases where (a) the in-service volunteer signified intention to withdraw from his/her assignment due to urgent personal reason or unforeseen circumstances and (b) completion of the volunteer service contract but approved period for volunteer assistance has not yet been satisfied.

SEC. 29. Volunteer replacement should be fielded within the next twelve (12) months following the departure of the previous volunteer. If replacement cannot be fielded within the twelve-month period, the need for volunteer placement shall be reviewed.

TITLE IX

Extension of VOLUNTEERS Assistance to a Program/Project

SEC. 30. Host organizations may request for extension of volunteer assistance to the project provided that such is made on the basis of certain changes in components or timetable which have not been previously determined during the assessment period.

TITLE X

Duration of VOLUNTEERS ASSIGNMENT

SEC. 31. Volunteer assignment shall start from the date of volunteer arrival, or from the date after the volunteers' in-country training.

SEC. 32. The maximum period for volunteer assignment in a program or project is three (3) years while the maximum period for volunteer assignment in the country shall be six (6) cumulative years, unless there is a strong justification to grant additional years which shall be the subject of discussion among the host organization, the foreign volunteer organization and PNVSCA.

SEC. 33. Extension of volunteer assignment within the same program or project shall be based on an agreement among PNVSCA, the volunteer, the host organization and the foreign volunteer organization. The request for extension shall be submitted to PNVSCA for approval at least two (2) months before the end of the volunteer's present assignment.

SEC. 34. Volunteers who completed assignment in a program or project may be given another assignment within the same host organization or another organization provided that they meet the program/project requirements and that the total duration of their placement falls within the six-year limit.

TITLE XI

Effectivity

This set of guidelines shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the *Official Gazette*. All office orders and circulars

inconsistent herewith are hereby modified or amended accordingly. Signed in Quezon City, this 6th day of March, in the year of our Lord, Two thousand and three.

(Sgd.) JOSELITO C. DE VERA
Executive Director