



## Diseño y Verificación de un Marco Metodológico para la Evaluación de Proyectos del Programa de Voluntarios de las Naciones Unidas

- Evaluación del Proyecto Randi-Randi en Ecuador -



HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN

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Berlin, Bonn, Otavalo/ Ecuador, Octubre 2001

**SLE** Centros de Estudios Avanzados para el Desarrollo Rural

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **The Need for this Study**

1. The United Nations Volunteer Programme (UNV) and the Centre for Advanced Training in Agricultural Development (SLE) have signed an agreement to strengthen their future cooperation in the fields of development, training, and promotion of voluntarism. This report presents the results from the first phase of this cooperation.
2. UNV has been supporting, since 1997, the “New Roles for UN Volunteers in the sustainable development of the Lake San Pablo basin/RANDI-RANDI (ECU/97/V01)” project, in Ecuador. The life of the project was of 43 months, ending in October 2001. Due to the project’s termination, UNV decided to conduct an external evaluation in collaboration with SLE.
3. UNV does not have a standard procedure for project evaluation. UNV expressed the need for such a procedure for the following reasons:
  - A standard evaluation procedure allows the design of clearer terms of reference for the evaluators. This benefits the evaluation and regional units responsible for the project under evaluation.
  - Standard evaluations are easier to implement. This benefits the evaluators of UNV projects.
  - Standard evaluations allow comparison among projects.
  - UNV does not always have the opportunity to have a briefing with the evaluators before conducting the evaluation. A standard procedure facilitates and clarifies the evaluator’s tasks from a distance.
  - Standard procedures increase transparency in evaluations.
4. For these reasons, UNV requested from SLE the design of a methodological framework, which should allow not only the evaluation of the project Randi-Randi in Ecuador but could also be used for the evaluation of other UNV projects.

### **The United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV)**

5. UNV was created by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1970 to serve as an operational partner in development cooperation. Since its creation, more than 20 000 UN Volunteers from some 150 developing and industrialized nations have worked all over the world. UNV's main functions are to identify and mobilize volunteers and promote voluntarism. Volunteers work in the areas of technical cooperation providing support to governments; humanitarian relief and rehabilitation; community based initiatives; and support of human rights and peace building processes.

### **The Centre for Advanced Training in Agricultural Development (SLE)**

6. SLE (in German: Seminar für Ländliche Entwicklung) is part of the Faculty of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences of the Humboldt University of Berlin. Each year SLE selects 20 young professionals to take part of a special training in various areas (modules) such as participation, conflict resolution, project management, etc. As an important module during the training, the graduates have to carry out field research projects for a duration of three months aimed at developing and testing solutions to concrete problems of local development projects. These field research projects are conducted jointly with counterpart organizations in the host countries. The findings are then presented in the form of a publication to the parties concerned.

### **The Methodological Framework**

7. SLE designed a methodological framework for the evaluation of UNV projects. This framework was tested during the evaluation of the project Randi-Randi and improved through the experiences gained in the process. It includes three main components: the outline for the evaluation report, which includes a list of questions to obtain relevant information; the methods, which can be used to obtain the information specified in the outline; and the process of the evaluation. The methodological framework is presented in part II of this report.

8. The methodological framework meets the following criteria:

- It evaluates issues related to voluntarism;
- It is on line with the draft “Guidelines on Monitoring and Evaluation” developed by UNV;
- It is easy to implement;
- It is a standard procedure that allows the comparison among UNV projects;
- It is sufficiently flexible to be used for the evaluation of different types of VNU projects;
- It considers the concept of Results Based Management (RBM);
- It takes into account the current discussion on monitoring and evaluation;
- It encourages participative processes;
- It considers gender issues;
- It allows the use of various methods to obtain the necessary information;
- It takes into account that the evaluation budget should not exceed US Dollar 10.000<sup>3</sup>;
- It can be implemented in 3 weeks<sup>4</sup>.

### **The Project Randi-Randi**

9. The project Randi-Randi worked in the San Pablo basin (locally known as Imbakucha) near the town of Otavalo in the Imbabura province. It operated in 21 communities and 2 urban centers.

10. The majority of the population of the San Pablo basin has Kichwa origins (83%) and belongs to two different ethnic groups: Kichwa Otavalo (22 com-

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<sup>3</sup> This criterion can be met in Ecuador if the evaluators are nationals or from neighbouring countries. In Ecuador, the honoraries of evaluators are approximately US Dollars 3.000.

<sup>4</sup> This period does not include the clarification of the TORs, nor the preparation of the final report.

munities) and Kichwa Cayambi (16 communities). The remaining 17% of the population is of mixed origins (Kichwa/Spanish).

11. The main problems encountered in the region of the project are low management capacity of community councils (*cabildos*), environmental degradation, poverty, gender inequality, alcoholism, domestic violence, loss of cultural identity, and deficient access to water.
12. CEPCU (*Centro de Estudios Pluriculturales*) was the implementing agency of the project. CEPCU has Kichwa and non Kichwa staff and is the first non-governmental organization attached to the Kichwa indigenous movement.
13. A team of UN volunteers has been supporting, in the context of the Randi-Randi project, the local population in organization-building, environmental management and micro-credit. Within those components, the project has implemented actions to diminish gender inequalities and to raise awareness about cultural identity of the Kichwa population.

### **The Evaluation of the Project Randi-Randi**

14. The team of evaluators was composed by 5 people (4 participants of 39<sup>th</sup> training year at SLE and one team leader). The evaluation took place in 4 phases, between April and November 2001. The first phase was a two weeks preparation in Ecuador, undertaken by the team leader and the local counterparts in April 2001. The second phase was done in Berlin during a period of 6 weeks. Through this phase the team designed the methodological framework. The Randi-Randi Project Director participated in this phase for two weeks. The country mission constituted the third phase, which lasted 3 months (July 23<sup>rd</sup> to October 22<sup>nd</sup>). During this phase the team obtained the results and elaborated the project's evaluation. Finally, the last phase lasted until November 2001 and consisted of the dissemination of results, including two workshops, one in Berlin and one in Bonn.
15. The methodology used by the team of evaluators was the implementation of the methodological framework previously designed for this purpose. The outline of the evaluation report was applied in order to get the relevant information. Several methods were used to collect the information. For example, the team conducted various workshops with the volunteers, CEPCU personnel, and community leaders. In addition, the team conducted rapid rural evaluations with 7 communities and 1 parish center (*centro parroquial*). Case stud-

ies were conducted with 3 beneficiaries (one Kichwa Otavalo, one Kichwa Cayambi and one of mixture origins). The team also interviewed 24 people (project personnel, personnel from CEPCU, UNV current and former programme officers, and representatives from other organizations working in the region). Finally, a comprehensive questionnaire was distributed to 31 people from the above mentioned institutions in order to collect their opinion of the project. The process of the evaluation was systematic, iterative, transparent and participative. This has allowed the evaluators to obtain good results in a climate of trust and confidence.

16. In summary, the project Randi-Randi has been a good project. Its actions have benefited the communities in various ways, such as in enhancing the management capacities of local governments, implementing measures to diminish environmental degradation, promoting product's diversification in family farms, improving their credit access and increasing awareness on gender and cultural issues. However, the positive impacts of the project seem to have a very limited sustainability for two main reasons. The first is the short life of the project: changes of behavior of the target group cannot be achieved sustainably in a period of 43 months. Secondly, the project has not implemented actions to ensure sustainability after project termination. The complete evaluation of the Randi-Randi project is presented in part III of this report.