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No. 51.00.0000.310.22.002.22-71-Section 13 of the Disaster Management Act, 2012 includes instructions for the formation of National Voluntary Organizations. Bangladesh has a long tradition and socio-culture of voluntary practices. The National Voluntary Policy, 2023 has been formulated to make voluntary activities more streamlined, effective and up-to-date as an integrated strategy to accelerate all positive social changes and development trends in the country. The National Voluntary Policy, 2023 has been approved by the Cabinet.

02| The National Voluntary Policy, 2023 has been issued in the form of a notification to build a public welfare-oriented, responsible and youth community with humane values as well as to play an important role in the welfare of the people during national disasters and crises and it shall come into effect immediately.

By order of the President
Mohammad Harun Ar Rashid
Deputy Secretary.

National Voluntary Policy, 2023

Preamble

Voluntary activities have created opportunities for the people from all walks of life to participate in development activities from the local to the national level. For the sake of the society and the country, volunteers participate in dealing with any disaster as rapid responders. The direct and indirect connections and contributions of voluntary activities to the economic growth of Bangladesh's and sustainable human development are remarkably visible. The role of volunteers is considered to be very helpful in achieving the goals of Field Capacity Building in disaster management, five-year plan, implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, achieving sustainable development objectives, achieving the long-term development goals of the government, Perspective Plan 2021-2041, Vision 2041, Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100. According to articles 15 and 19 (1) of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, there is a need to formulate voluntary policies for the capacity building of all public and private institutions to meet the basic needs of all citizens of the state and to ensure equal opportunities for all. Section 13 of the Disaster Management Act, 2012 provides instructions for the formation of national voluntary organizations. Bangladesh has a long tradition and socio-culture of voluntary practices. The National Voluntary Policy, 2023 has been formulated to make voluntary activities more streamlined, effective and up-to-date as an integrated strategy to accelerate all positive social changes and development trends in the country.

Chapter 1: Background of the Formulation of National Voluntary Policy, 2023

1. Introduction:

Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman felt the need for a voluntary organization. He stopped the election campaign and rushed to the spot due to the catastrophic cyclone in the coastal region in 1970, which resulted the loss of lives about 10 (ten) lakh people. With his timely and far-sighted initiative, the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) was officially initiated in 1973 with the cooperation of volunteers. As a continuation of this unique initiative of Bangabandhu, Bangladesh has been recognized in the outside world as a role model of voluntary service in dealing with disasters. The Election Manifesto 2018 reiterates the government's commitment to ensure development for all through efficient and people-oriented government, security, prevention of corruption, service sector and balanced implementation of the law. The present government under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is implementing various programmes to expand modern urban facilities in every village and transform the youth into skilled human resources and create employment for them. Through the formulation of the National Volunteer Policy, 2023 the implementation of these programmes; the inclusion, coordination and development of voluntary services in the various development activities of the government; and above all, formulate and systematize the voluntary programme for the institutionalization of voluntary activities, will be possible.

2. The context:

Volunteers play an important role in the socio-economic development, service and disaster management of Bangladesh. There is a need for an integrated policy for creating a database on the contribution of volunteers to national development, organizing volunteers, building capacity and maintaining efficiency in conducting activities, protection and recognition. In this context, the draft of the National Voluntary Policy prepared by the Local Government Division with the technical support of the United Nations Volunteers (UN Volunteers) was presented in the cabinet meeting held on 28th April 2022. At the cabinet meeting, it was decided that since the voluntary activities are under the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, it would be appropriate for the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief to be the initiator of the policy. In addition, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief will complete the implementation of the policy through organizing inter-ministerial meetings. In this context, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief has taken the initiative to finalize the National Voluntary Policy, 2023.

3. Development and voluntary services:

A rights-based approach, gender equality, inclusiveness and social and institutional involvement in capacity building are important in voluntary service development. The role of volunteers is considered to be very helpful in achieving the goals of the five-year plan, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the long-term development goals of the government, Perspective Plan 2021-2041, Vision 2041 and Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100.

4. Disaster Management and Voluntary Services.

One of the goals of all development policies, plans and programmes of Bangladesh is to improve the lives and livelihoods of the people of the country through strengthening disaster management. No development activity can be sustainable without a strong disaster management system. In view of the change in perception in disaster management, priority has been given to increase capacity and tolerance in dealing with disaster risk by moving away from dependency only on relief. The legal and institutional framework for disaster management has been developed and revised. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Emergency Response Management (ERM) activities are being implemented through the best practices of relevant laws, policies, rules and orders. This framework includes:

- (1) Disaster Management Act, 2012;
- (2) National Disaster Management Policy, 2015;
- (3) Standing Orders on Disaster, 2019; and
- (4) National Plan for Disaster Management, 2021-2025.

The importance of formal or informal voluntary activities has been described within the existing framework.

5. The United Nations and Voluntary Services:

The United Nations has provided significant guidance for the promotion of voluntary services through various resolutions (1985 - United Nations General Assembly Resolution 40/212). In addition, the United Nations General Assembly adopted two action plans named ‘Plan of Action, 2015 (A / RES / 70/129)’ and ‘Voluntary Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 (A / RES / 73/140).’ It is noted that Member States have been called upon to give priority and encouragement to voluntary services through the resolutions.

Chapter 2: Details of Bangladesh National Volunteer Policy, 2023

1. Goals and Objectives of National Volunteer Policy

1.1 Goals:

The main goal of the National Volunteer Policy is to integrate voluntary services with the national development process. To play a significant role in socio-economic and overall development through proper utilization of human resources as well as to encourage active participation of informal volunteers and registered voluntary organizations in voluntary activities are also the goals of this Policy.

1.2 Objectives:

1.2.1 Take initiatives to include voluntary services in national and local development planning processes.

1.2.2 Prioritize voluntary services in achieving the goals of the policies, plans and programmes as well as the SDGs that are formulated by the government.

1.2.3 Strengthen voluntary services in the national development process through the development of voluntary activities and raising public awareness.

1.2.4 Practice Decent Work and create a supportive environment for the community.

1.2.5 Formulate an effective volunteer management system by identifying volunteer selection, inclusion, training, capacity building, assignment, supervision, location and departure plan.

1.2.6 Carry out activities for the welfare of the people by making optimum use of the knowledge, skills and capabilities of the volunteers.

1.2.7 Increase the involvement and responsibility of the people through voluntary services.

1.2.8 Keep volunteers always ready and motivated to render service in case of any disaster.

1.2.9 Create an appropriate environment for the safe, dignified and efficient conduct of voluntary activities in an integrated manner.

1.2.10 Establish an effective strategy to measure the contribution of volunteers to socio-economic development.

1.2.11 Promote inclusion, social harmony, gender equality, solidarity and tolerance through voluntary activities.

1.2.12 Recognize the contribution of volunteers at local and national level.

1.2.13 Bring together all voluntary organizations on a single platform.

2. Definition and Types of Voluntary Services:

‘Voluntary Services’ means the act or activity which is voluntarily undertaken for the public welfare without any financial benefit. In addition, the definition and forms of voluntary services shall include the followings:

2.1 Formal Voluntary Services: Structured/institutionalized voluntary services in collaboration with organizations, communities, groups or other organizations which are long-termed and require the commitment and regular presence of volunteers. Such voluntary services involve a variety of policies and procedures.

2.2 Informal Voluntary Services: Informal voluntary services are not structured and one of its aims is to do the public welfare through daily activities. It is informal and has no financial involvement. The concept of informal voluntary services at the local level is considered as the best practice.

2.3 Social Welfare-based Voluntary Services: In this case, the volunteers will get together and take initiative to implement the objectives of the general welfare or advocacy of the society. Such voluntary services can be both institutional and non-institutional and are not time-bound.

2.4 Project-based Voluntary Services: Such voluntary services are time-bound. Volunteers will participate in voluntary activities conducted under the project for a specified period of time. Volunteers need specialized knowledge and skills to achieve the goals set in this type of voluntary activities.

3. The Principles of Voluntary Services

Voluntary activities will be carried out in accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the prevailing laws, keeping in mind the spirit of Independence of the country, human rights and Liberation War. Volunteers selected from all walks of life of Bangladesh will work as a supporting force of the government to deal with any calamity and disaster along with full-time and philanthropic work.

4. The Principles of Operating Voluntary Services:

4.1 Voluntary services shall be considered as an effective auxiliary factor and a possible means for economic growth and social development;

4.2 Priority shall be given to the willingness of the volunteer's and no one shall be compelled to engage in voluntary work without his/her free will;

4.3 The voluntary services strategy shall be designed in such a way that no individual/group/organization, involved in the voluntary activities, can gain special benefits individually and collectively;

4.4 No financial benefit or profit shall be gained from voluntary services;

4.5 Voluntary services shall not be considered as an alternative employment;

4.6 Equity shall be ensured for all participants in voluntary activities;

4.7 Human values, social equality and co-existence shall be ensured through voluntary services;

4.8 Capacity building of voluntary organizations shall be supported by the government and other stakeholders;

4.9 An environment of social, financial, political and legal support shall be created for volunteers to work with greater efficiency;

4.10 Volunteers shall help the people to acquire new skills for the public welfare;

4.11 Volunteers shall be honest and well-mannered.

4.12 Opportunities for equal participation in voluntary activities shall be created through capacity building of women, disabled persons and marginalized communities; and

4.13 The volunteers shall be encouraged by bringing voluntary services under competition and selecting the best volunteer from the grassroots level to the district level and giving prizes at the national level.

5. The Challenges of Voluntary Services:

5.1 Raising sensitivity and awareness among the people about modernizing and up-to-dating the culture of voluntary services;

5.2. Ensuring voluntary activities in remote areas of the country;

5.3 Providing the necessary allowances for volunteers according to the situation;

5.4 Making the voluntary activities coordinated, goal-based and specific for various public, private and community-based organizations and organizing the volunteers accordingly;

5.5. As there is no proper network for the volunteers, meeting their expectations and ensuring the expected safety and dignity for them by the organizations with which they belong;

5.6 Ensuring the participation of public in voluntary services from the private sector and the community through appropriate coordination;

5.7. Developing specific effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess voluntary activities and their impact;

5.8. Ensuring technical support for the creation of an adequate database of information on the needs, supply, quality improving methods, achievement, monitoring and evaluation of voluntary services;

5.9 Conducting the activities of the recognition of voluntary services, relevant training, safety and capacity building; and

5.10 Creating institutional arrangements and opportunities for rehabilitation to prevent sexual assault, harassment or abuse in voluntary services.

6. Opportunities and Development Strategies of Voluntary Services:

The following measures shall be taken for better management, coordination, recognition and promotion of voluntary services:

6.1 Opportunities shall be created to establish non-discriminatory, tolerant and inclusive development in the society through voluntary services.

6.2 The government shall provide necessary support to conduct organized voluntary activities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

6.3 The contribution of social and voluntary activities shall be considered as noble and decent work in the traditional and cultural standards of the nation. To that end, various governmental and non-governmental departments and organizations shall take up planned advocacy programmes to spread the spirit of voluntary services, solidarity, compassion, tolerance and selflessness in the society.

6.4 In order to effectively organize the volunteers under the institutions, all governmental and non-governmental institutions shall engage resources to provide the necessary infrastructure and other services for the volunteers. This will create an opportunity to spread the new concept of voluntary services in rural and urban areas and all over the country.

6.5 The people of grassroots level shall be made aware of voluntary services. By raising awareness and providing recognition, opportunities shall be created to contribute to the overall

development and expansion of services in urban areas as well as in rural and remote areas along with increasing people's involvement.

6.6 The issue of voluntary services shall be intensely included in the education sector which will contribute to the development of teacher-student relationship and create a scope for inclusion and involvement in voluntary services for the next generation. Apart from this, men and women, boys and girls, small ethnic groups, disabled persons, transgender and other senior citizens, who are currently not involved in this process, shall also be included in this process.

6.7 The concept of voluntary services shall be included in the corporate and private sectors. Under Corporate Social Responsibility, voluntary services shall be made mandatory in the implementation of the programme, which will be helpful for widespread institutionalization.

6.8 Formal proposals shall be made to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas for the inclusion of non-resident Bangladeshis in voluntary activities and the election of representatives in the national taskforce formed for this purpose.

6.9 Based on the interest of educated unemployed skillful youth, retired employees, teachers and other senior citizens they shall be organized to apply their knowledge, skills and experience for national welfare.

6.10 Advanced techniques and technologies shall be used in institutionalization of voluntary services.

6.11 Flexible techniques and technology shall be used to ensure the services of experienced volunteers.

6.12 A self-contained database and standard information centre on voluntary services shall be set up. The demand and supply-based information of volunteers, evaluation and volunteer award-related information shall be stored in the information centre effectively through awareness-raising, information exchanging and conducting research.

7. The Span and Field of Voluntary Services:

7.1 The span of voluntary services shall extend to all the objectives of SDG and the mandatory functions of the related institutions.

7.2 In addition, people shall have the freedom to participate in voluntary activities in their locality in the following areas:

- Community education and learning activities;
- Educational institutions and student groups;
- Vulnerable, disadvantaged, discriminated and deprived groups;

- Environmental groups;
- Community support groups.
- Community and political groups;
- Organized social groups;
- Integrated community activities;
- Various events and festivals of the community.
- Sports, recreation and leisure activities;
- Corporate voluntary services;
- Providing services (e.g., to help someone);
- Taking decisions (e.g., advisory committees)
- Online voluntary services; and
- Relevant and free-willed voluntary services.

7.3 The following areas, although cover the core of voluntary services, shall not be considered as voluntary services in this Policy:

- Compulsory learning services.
- Service provided by the order of the court;
- Internships, formal work-experience and technical activities;
- Mandatory governmental programmes; and
- Any financial donation or service and blood donation for individual or family needs.

8. The Types of Volunteers:

The following volunteer groups shall be considered under this policy:

8.1 General volunteers: Individuals between the age group of 18-50 who provide voluntary services or would like to do so;

8.2 Senior volunteers: Persons between the age group of 51-65 years who provide voluntary services or would like to do so;

8.3 Online volunteers: Individuals or groups who provide virtual voluntary services or would like to do so;

8.4 Institution based volunteers: Individuals or groups who organize or would like to organize voluntary services through an institution or organization;

8.5 International volunteers: Foreign nationals or organizations/institutions who participate in voluntary services in Bangladesh or would like to do so;

8.6 Non-resident volunteers: Non-Resident Bangladeshis who participate in voluntary services or would like to do so;

8.7 Community volunteers: When an individual or a group informally participates in the voluntary services to the development of his/her community or would like to do so;

8.8 Professional volunteers: Professionals (such as doctors, engineers and others) who are locally employed in various fields and provide part-time voluntary services or would like to do so;

9. Implementation of the Policy:

Some specific policy initiatives shall be taken on an emergency basis to implement the National Voluntary Policy. These initiatives include the formation of institutional structures/institutes/authorities, planning of advocacy for inclusion of voluntary activities, promoting the positive role of voluntary services in the overall development and allocating necessary budget for the implementation of the policy. In addition, appropriate steps shall be taken to provide dignity and recognition to the volunteers.

10. Raising awareness about voluntary services:

10.1 Necessary support shall be provided to various departments/institutions/organizations for the development of voluntary services and raising awareness through the adoption of advocacy programmes designed to achieve the objectives of the Voluntary Policy. In this regard, the importance and tradition of voluntary services as well as the good practices of it in public welfare shall be widely promoted through the celebration of various national days and international programmes at the local and central levels.

10.2 Special initiatives shall be taken to develop the spirit of voluntary services by taking and implementing integrated programmes in coordination with different institutions and organizations. In addition, governmental/autonomous/non-governmental organizations shall work in close coordination and cooperation with the government and the development partners to raise awareness about voluntary services from the grassroots level to the national level.

11. The management of volunteers:

11.1 Professional Health and Safety:

11.1.1 In the case of any health risk to the volunteers while performing professional duties, the concerned departments/institutes/local governmental organizations shall take necessary measures to ensure their health and safety.

11.1.2 Under the existing laws/rules/regulations, the concerned Ministries i.e. Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Local Government Division, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and other concerned departments/institutes shall take necessary initiatives to formulate the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) unanimously to ensure the health and safety of volunteers.

11.1.3 Organizations involved in voluntary services shall take special precautions to ensure the safety of volunteers and to prevent any harm to any member of the local community by any of their activities.

11.2 Liabilities of Non-profit, Corporate and Governmental Organizations:

11.2.1 A volunteer engaged in voluntary activities in governmental institutions, departments/non-profit corporate bodies and local governmental organizations shall not be held personally liable for the negative impact of any activities undertaken on behalf of such organizations; if –

- (1) the volunteer carries out the duties assigned to him from within the scope of voluntary activities;
- (2) the volunteer is licensed, certified or authorized by the competent authority to carry out specified voluntary activities;
- (3) the rights and safety of others are not harmed by the volunteer's criminal attitude or willful misconduct, gross negligence of duty, recklessness, and indifference; and
- (4) the voluntary activities are not undertaken without the consent of the community for which those activities are to be undertaken.

11.2.2 The employing agency / corporate body shall ensure proper safety of the volunteers; in the case of failure, the affected volunteers/families shall be provided with suitable compensation.

11.2.3 The institution / agency shall not be forced to bear any kind of liability for negligence in the duty of the volunteer.

11.3 Dissatisfaction and Complaints:

The appointing authority shall always endeavour to resolve the grievances of the volunteers.

11.4 Confidentiality of information:

The person engaged as a volunteer shall have to keep the information of the overall activities of the concerned organization confidential. Similarly, the personal information of the volunteer shall also be kept confidential by the recruiting agency.

11.5 Interrelated issues:

11.5.1 The volunteer shall always be ready to take on a variety of assigned duties. If the recruitment of new volunteers and the selection of permanent volunteers is considered difficult and time-consuming, the problem shall be resolved by recruiting volunteers from the relevant agencies/ organizations; and

11.5.2 If the local authority faces challenges in providing emergency services to the local people due to natural disasters or any other unforeseen problems, volunteers shall work there. Issues relating to voluntary management shall be resolved through discussions and agreements at inter-ministerial or inter-departmental meetings.

11.6 Recognition of volunteers:

11.6.1 All governmental, semi-governmental, autonomous, non-governmental organizations (domestic and international), development partners, corporate sector and voluntary organizations shall ensure recognition of multidimensional contributions / workflows of volunteers irrespective of religion, race, ethnicity, gender.

11.6.2 Special priority shall be given to the possibility of recruiting volunteers by resolving physical, financial, social and cultural barriers to participate in development activities. Non-governmental organizations shall work with government institutions to create a positive environment to the promotion of voluntary services in national life. Therefore, the Government shall provide the following supports:

- (1) Initiatives shall be taken to reflect the measurement and recognition of the contribution of voluntary services to the GDP of the national service sector.
- (2) Volunteers shall be recognized from the local to the national level.
- (3) The Voluntary Development and Coordination Committees of the divisions, districts, city corporations, upazilas, municipalities, unions and wards shall prepare and recommend the list of the selected volunteers for the purpose of recognizing the decent voluntary services for public welfare from the local level to the national level.
- (4) The National Voluntary Development Council shall approve the list of volunteers for recognition at the national level after reviewing the recommendations at the field level.

- (5) Initiatives shall be taken to observe the International Volunteer Day on 5 December every year with a view to promoting voluntary services throughout the country and formally recognizing the volunteers. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief shall formulate and coordinate various programmes from the local level to the national level for this purpose.

11.7 Administrative Activities:

Voluntary Service Development Councils shall be formed at the national level for the purpose of voluntary development and coordination. Under this, a management and organizational structure shall be established in accordance with Appendix A.

11.8 National Voluntary Service Data Management:

11.8.1 An effective data management system shall be established under the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief for the purpose of preserving information and data of government and non-government organizations and voluntary organizations associated with voluntary services.

11.8.2 The Voluntary Data Management System shall be accessible to all organizations as well as stakeholders related to voluntary services. Voluntary Data Management System shall be integrated with other government data management system initiatives such as e-Governance, A2i, Pauro Digital Centres (PDCs), Union Digital Centres (UDCs), etc.

11.8.3 Innovations and new technologies shall be applied in data management to conduct the data management system. This system shall be strengthened gradually so that all the stakeholders can incorporate appropriate information into the National Data Management System timely. Under this system, the following initiatives shall be taken and services shall be provided:

- (1) Identify the involvement, needs and joining of volunteers in all sectors;
- (2) Identify the requirement of information for international volunteer exchange programmes and improving the skills of volunteers;
- (3) Provide information on the future demand and supply of human resources for voluntary services at the national, regional and international levels;
- (4) Increase the use of Tracer Studies for the purpose of improving and integrating voluntary services;
- (5) Identify and assign responsibilities to various institutions and organizations for the collection, management and reporting of volunteers;
- (6) Provide information on ongoing programmes and projects of various organizations; and

(7) Create awareness about all the rights and obligations related to voluntary services under the relevant rules and other regulations.

11.9 The Missions of Bangladesh situated in abroad shall be responsible for co-ordinating international demand-based information on foreign involvement in voluntary services.

11.10 The datacell of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) shall work together with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief on the involvement opportunities and exchange programme management of migrant volunteers.

11.11 The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief shall decide on the proper use of the necessary plans and resources after analyzing the information on the demand and supply of voluntary services.

11.12 Recruitment of Volunteers:

11.12.1 A volunteer registered by the competent authority can work as a volunteer after the completion of necessary verification and formalities;

11.12.2 Since voluntary employment is not considered to be paid or profitable, a simplified procedure shall be followed for the recruitment of volunteers in line with the voluntary activities of the institution.

11.12.3 Equality, fairness, balance and inclusiveness shall be adopted in the process of recruiting volunteers;

11.12.4 The duration of volunteers' appointment shall be determined on the basis of the policies, human resource management, type of works or responsibilities of the concerned organization;

11.12.5 Volunteers shall be recruited on the basis of interest in a particular work or general interest in voluntary services. In this regard, the volunteers' skills, knowledge, training, commitment and prior experience in creative work shall be taken into account;

11.12.6 In order to provide guidance to the volunteers, the concerned institutions shall take the initiative to formulate the necessary amendments and Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) of the existing laws, rules, policies, where applicable;

11.12.7 Information on the criteria and procedures for sorting, selecting, and appointing volunteers shall be informed to volunteers at the time of application;

11.12.8 Applications of volunteers shall be selected in accordance with the organization's policies. Volunteers shall be given guidance on an acceptable general code of conduct before joining the work;

11.12.9 In special cases, while recruiting, the past offenses and the habitual nature of crimes of volunteers shall be verified if necessary;

11.12.10 Measures shall be taken for necessary training and providing information to the volunteers in case of attachment or appointment to a new responsibility;

11.12.11 Special programmes shall be taken to encourage students to take part in voluntary services during the holiday or at the end of final examination;

11.12.12 The appointed volunteer may take leave during the period of duty by informing the appropriate authority, which shall not alter or extend the period of duty of the volunteer; and

11.12.13 All registered volunteers are required to wear identity cards with photo or badges while doing their duties.

11.13 Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers: Registered volunteers shall enjoy the following rights and shall be responsible for these duties:

11.13.1 Rights

- (1) The right to have voluntary service related information and benefits;
- (2) The right to lodge a complaint and seek redress;
- (3) The right to be informed and to have the opportunity of consultancy on matters affecting, directly and indirectly, the work of volunteers;
- (4) The right to take advantage of getting allowance and adjustment of expenses associated with voluntary works for a certain period;
- (5) The right to have a safe working environment;
- (6) The right to develop capacity through refresher training in accordance with the requirements of entering voluntary services and the work period;
- (7) The right to personal information and privacy;
- (8) The right to work in a gender-equitable and gender-sensitive environment;
- (9) The right to safety and security; and
- (10) The right to insurance in case of risk of death and disability in a particularly hazardous work.

11.13.2 Responsibilities:

- (1) All volunteers shall be respectful of the laws, rules, values, customs and traditions prevailing in the country;
- (2) Performing the assigned duties with dedication;
- (3) Participating in training programmes;
- (4) Maintaining a good relationship with the community;
- (5) Respecting all persons irrespective of religion, race, caste, gender and age; and
- (6) Ensuring the security for the information of the concerned institutions/ community organizations/ voluntary organizations.

11.14 Ensuring Gender Equality through Voluntary Services:

Through close involvement in the management system, all institutions shall take priority initiatives to ensure gender equality as follows:

11.14.1 Women's voluntary participation in national and local institutions shall be upheld;

11.14.2 Ensure women's participation in voluntary activities under the Sustainable Development Goals;

11.14.3 Voluntary services and gender equality issues shall be included in various policies and strategies; and

11.14.4 Initiatives shall be taken to involve more women volunteers in the planning and implementation of various programmes.

11.15 Training and Orientation:

11.15.1 In order to achieve the objectives and goals of the voluntary activities and to facilitate the proper performance of the duties assigned to the volunteers, informing training courses shall be organized for them;

11.15.2. On-the-job training shall be provided for volunteers;

11.15.3 Capacity building shall be encouraged through continuous education and training during the period of engagement in volunteer activities; and

11.15.4 Specialized training shall be provided for volunteers to perform rescue operations and use rescue equipment during disasters.

11.16 Supervision and Evaluation of Volunteers:

The respective organizations shall take measures to manage and evaluate the daily activities of the volunteers and provide necessary advice and supervision.

11.17 Voluntary Service Management and Coordination:

11.17.1 A registered volunteer shall be assigned the duties of a Voluntary Service Manager and Coordinator for each voluntary activity. The Voluntary Service Manager shall perform the following duties:

- (1) The overall management of voluntary activities in accordance with the rules of the organization / institution; and
- (2) Identify the various needs of voluntary activities, determine how the desired results shall be achieved and take steps to meet them, and ensure their adequate documentation;
- (3) Distributing responsibilities among officers for coordinating the volunteers;
- (4) Ensuring appropriate training of officials for coordinating voluntary activities;
- (5) Ensuring safe working environment, health protection, safety and insurance opportunities for volunteers; and
- (6) Redistributing the responsibilities of volunteers and changing the volunteer, if necessary, to ensure quality service.

11.17.2 The Voluntary Service Coordinator shall perform the following duties:

- (1) Coordination and supervision of the work of volunteers;
- (2) Providing adequate health materials and equipments for the health and safety of volunteers in the workplace;
- (3) Registration of volunteers' information; and
- (4) Undertaking initiatives to evaluate and improve the performance of volunteers.

11.18 Organizations of Volunteers shall Perform the Following Duties:

11.18.1 Formulate and implement strategies to improve the skills of officials engaged in voluntary service management;

11.18.2 Ensure that voluntary programmes are implemented maintaining appropriate procedures;

11.18.3 Take the necessary measures to ensure the work environment, health protection and insurance of volunteers in the relevant institutions in order to implement the objectives of the Policy;

11.18.4 Identify, review and resolve the problems of organization; and

11.18.5 Review and evaluate the respective rules and regulations as required and take necessary steps to ensure the effectiveness of the strategy.

11.19 Discharging of volunteers:

A volunteer shall be disqualified, banned and discharged from service for the following reasons:

11.19.1 If convicted by a court of law;

11.19.2 If any allegation of sexual harassment is proved.

11.19.3 If addicted to any kind of drugs;

11.19.4. If found guilty of activities contrary to these Rules and Regulations; and

11.19.5 If allegations of involvement in seditious activities are raised.

11.20 Financial Management: Government financial rules and procedures shall be followed in the management of government fund received for voluntary purposes.

12. Financing and Budgetary Support: The following activities and strategies shall be adopted as financing and budgetary support for the promotion and development of voluntary services:

12.1 Allocating funds in the budget of the concerned Ministry / Department / Organization for the promotion and development of voluntary service;

12.2. Encouraging the raising of funds from local, national and international sources to support voluntary service;

12.3 Providing funding support to the proposed Voluntary Development and Coordination Committees for carrying out voluntary activities;

12.4 Allocating the necessary funds in favor of the relevant ministries and administrative units at the field level to provide services in the innovation process through voluntary services;

12.5 Allocating funds in favour of such Ministries / Departments / Organizations shall be gradually increased by conducting voluntary activities at the national level. Allocating funds for the implementation of voluntary activities based on the needs of recognized organizations for voluntary services;

12.6 The management of funding and assistance by non-governmental organizations shall be as follows:

12.6.1 The Economic Relations division shall seek financial support from international sources for the promotion of voluntary services and shall work closely with development partners to develop voluntary services.

12.6.2 The expansion of voluntary activities in Bangladesh shall be financed by corporate bodies, financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and others who have social commitments under social responsibility;

12.6.3 The financial institutions and individuals mentioned above shall provide assistance in the field of technical knowledge and technology; and

12.6.4 Voluntary affiliated organizations such as Scouts, BNCC, Girl Guides, Red Crescent Society, Self Help Groups, various voluntary organizations, INGOs and NGOs shall be recognized as important supporting organizations in carrying out voluntary activities in Bangladesh. The division in charge of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief shall provide support to review, strengthen and further coordinate the activities of these institutions.

13. Review and Evaluation:

13.1. A national level framework shall be developed to monitor and evaluate the progress of implementation of objectives and strategies of the National Voluntary Policy.

13.2 Service-based specific strategies, programmes and projects of voluntary organizations in the relevant Ministries shall be monitored and evaluated under this Policy;

13.3 The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief shall prepare a monitoring and evaluation guideline in consultation with other ministries/divisions for the implementation of the guidelines of the policy and the programmes taken under it. In addition, other voluntary organizations involved in the implementation of the Policy shall be encouraged to increase their internal monitoring and evaluation capacity;

13.4 Whether the objectives of the policy are being implemented in the measurable index within the specified time shall be evaluated by the concerned division/department. Voluntary organizations shall carry out impact assessment survey in coordination with concerned bodies/agencies. To enrich volunteers' contribution further to GDP and national development shall be considered as one of the objectives of this assessment survey.

14. The international cooperation:

14.1 International voluntary services are now globally accepted and recognized as the strategy for fostering international cooperation. International volunteers shall contribute to the

development of their own community in addition to cooperation in the development work of international level;

14.2 Initiatives shall be taken to engage domestic volunteers as well as international volunteers on the basis of formal demand in the development/specialized activities of various departments/organizations, institutions;

14.3 The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief shall take initiatives to sign MoUs to expand effective cooperation with international organizations, such as United Nations Volunteer Organization (UNV), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) and VSO (Volunteer Service Overseas). Moreover, necessary steps shall be taken to enable Bangladeshi volunteers to acquire technical skills to carry out voluntary work outside the country;

14.4 The relevant ministries/divisions, the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall make arrangements to send designated volunteers through a coordinated institutional mechanism to perform volunteer duties abroad in emergency situations. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief shall take initiatives to provide training on the best practices of voluntary services and the necessary preparations for working abroad;

14.5 The United Nations, United Nations Volunteer Organizations and its member states shall be assisted in dealing with any emergency situation, including national development. Bangladesh, as a member state of the United Nations, shall receive further support from these organizations in the form of technical assistance and voluntary activities; and

14.6 If necessary, various organizations shall take the initiative to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the United National Volunteers Bangladesh to ensure effective engagement, service, coordination and participation of volunteers.

15. Research and Promotion:

Under the overall supervision of the National Volunteer Development Council (NVDC), various departments/agencies shall conduct necessary research and documentation activities to collect and preserve data related to voluntary activities in the country. In assessing the contribution of voluntary activities to national development and in documenting good voluntary practices in various fields, the advice of different universities and other experienced experts shall be taken. Simultaneously, the involvement of development partners shall also be increased in this effort.

16. Amendment:

The National Voluntary Policy can be revised, modified and moderated according to the necessity and reality. The concerned department/agency shall review the policy and send its opinion to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief for amendment if necessary.

17. Removal of Ambiguity: In case of any ambiguity in any paragraph of this Policy, the opinion of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief shall be considered final.

18. Translated English Text: This policy shall have a translated English text. In case of any kind of conflict between Bangla and English text, Bangla text shall prevail.

11.7 Management and Organizational Structure in Voluntary Service Development and Coordination

