



**'Our partnership
provides a sense
of purpose'**

Merijn de Jong, VSO
Marina Illerhues, Randstad

**'Do what no
one else does!'**

Former volunteer Sophie

Celebrating 20 years of partnership and purpose

Discovering Randstad: a leader in equitable talent solutions

Randstad is a global talent leader with the vision to become the world’s most equitable and specialised talent company. As a partner for talent and through its four specialisations - Operational, Professional, Digital and Enterprise - Randstad provides its clients with the high-quality, diverse and agile workforces that they need to succeed in a talent-scarce world. They help people secure meaningful roles, develop relevant skills and find purpose and belonging in their workplace. Headquartered in the Netherlands, Randstad operates in 39 markets and has approximately 40,000 employees. In 2023, it supported 2 million talents to find work. Through a wide variety of local and global initiatives and partnerships, like its VSO partnership, Randstad employees are highly engaged in corporate citizenship activities. These make a difference to the wider community and help people across the world reach their full potential.

Driving change: VSO’s commitment to a fairer world

VSO is a leading international development organisation with a vision of a fair world for all, where all people have equal opportunities. Through volunteering, VSO fights injustice by empowering marginalised communities. Founded in 1958, VSO recruits skilled volunteers in areas such as education, health and livelihoods, with a focus on good governance and partnerships with local organisations in developing countries. VSO creates lasting change by sharing knowledge and experience, empowering marginalised communities to seize opportunities and build sustainable futures. VSO’s mission is to create transformative change through volunteering, recognising that all volunteers and individuals who fight for justice are changemakers. VSO’s goal is to ensure quality education for all, inclusive healthcare and sustainable livelihoods. In these areas, VSO emphasises the most marginalised and ensures that everyone has a voice in shaping a more just and equitable world.

Our shared belief in equity

Randstad and VSO Netherlands share a strong belief in equity: the conviction that everyone deserves equal access to opportunities. Randstad’s vision to become the world’s most equitable and specialised talent company aligns seamlessly with VSO’s mission to create a fair world for everyone and our joint mission to empower marginalised people to attain decent and sustainable work.

As we mark 20 years of partnership between Randstad and VSO, we take pride in all we have accomplished together. This milestone reflects our shared commitment to equality, inclusion and the belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to thrive. Our slogan, “Changemakers for Equitable Communities” sums up the spirit of our collaboration. Each individual involved —whether as a volunteer or mentor— has played an important role in creating a more just and equitable world.

Together, we have empowered people, built livelihoods, and helped marginalised communities gain access to the labour market. In the last four years alone, over 30,000 people have been impacted through our projects. For example, we have trained young women in entrepreneurship and career guidance, helping them acquire vital skills and find secure employment in a traditionally male-dominated sector.



For us at Randstad, this partnership has also had a major impact on our own organisation. It aligns with our vision to become the most equitable and specialised talent company in the world. By combining our expertise with VSO’s mission to foster lasting change through collaboration, we have been able to touch lives, promote decent work and create pathways to growth and opportunity.

It also connects our employees with purposeful engagement by offering them the opportunity to serve as changemakers through the VSO programmes. Through their participation they gain new perspectives, develop professionally, and strengthen their pride in Randstad, in line with our value proposition to our employees: Together we grow. This experience not only advances their careers but also fosters a deeper connection to our mission and social responsibility, helping to create a future where equity and opportunity are attainable for all.

Myriam Beatove Moreale
Chief Human Resources Officer at Randstad



For us at VSO, the value of our partnership with Randstad lies in our combined expertise and our shared commitment to a world in which all people have fair opportunities. For more than 65 years, VSO has been fighting injustice and inequality and working with changemakers to ensure equal opportunities for all. Our “Volunteering for Development” approach puts people on the margins of society at the centre and empowers them to actively participate in building a fairer society. Randstad’s global network and expertise in talent development strengthens our efforts and enables us to develop programmes that equip people with the skills and confidence to overcome obstacles and transform their lives.

Donné Cameron (left) and **Kathryn Gordon** (right)
Co-CEOs for VSO

As we look back on 20 years of collaboration, we also look forward to the future with excitement. This magazine highlights the impact we have had over the past two decades and provides concrete examples of what a successful public-private partnership can achieve. Our partnership serves as a platform for meaningful change, and we look forward to continuing this journey. Thank you to everyone who has contributed—you are all changemakers, and together we will continue to build equitable communities.



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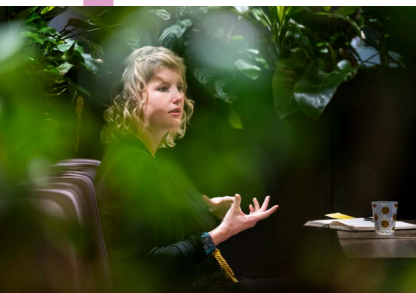


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COLOPHON

This magazine is a joint publication of Randstad and VSO to celebrate 20 years of partnership and purpose.

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Many thanks to all the people who contributed to the creation of this anniversary magazine.

'Our partnership provides a sense of purpose'

Marina Illerhues and Merijn de Jong are both quick to lavish praise on the other's organisation for their contribution to their common goal to foster change. Illerhues is the Global Corporate Citizenship Manager for Randstad, De Jong the co-director of development organisation VSO. They know each other and their respective work very well – not a surprise after two decades of ever closer cooperation.

At first glance, it might seem an unlikely match, this partnership between a commercial firm like Randstad and a not-for-profit organisation like VSO. But in actual fact, it is the perfect combination. Both organisations, each in their own way, are in the business of ensuring that people have the opportunity to secure their own livelihoods, and strive for fair opportunities for all. The difference lies in that one works with volunteers, driven by an idealistic motivation to make the world a fairer place, while the other is a profit-oriented enterprise. At the same time, Randstad also has a strong sense of corporate responsibility, and this is where they clicked with VSO, on their core activity of making a difference with the right people, skills and knowledge in the right place. Their partnership, aimed at turning the world into a more equitable place, kicked off in 2004 and has been going strong ever since. Illerhues and De Jong are proud to be celebrating '20 years of change'.

VSO, founded in 1958, started out by sending volunteers from the global North to help underprivileged people in the global South build better lives for themselves. However, VSO has long since shifted its approach, focusing now on harnessing local expertise. This model emphasises collaboration with local partners who understand the context and challenges first-hand. Over the years, VSO developed wide experience in bringing local actors together, but often struggled to bring in people with the required skills to make the long-lasting change they

were after. VSO found the perfect partner in Randstad, with their extensive expertise in precisely this: bringing in skilled professionals where they are needed.

/// I'm impressed by the deeply intrinsic motivation of VSO.

Marina Illerhues
Corporate Citizenship Manager
Randstad

Both organisations pride themselves in that their approach has always been to put local people in the driving seat. "The aim is always to empower people to take charge of their own development," says De Jong. "We strongly believe in the transfer of skills," adds Illerhues. "Sharing our expertise to amplify VSO's impact is how we continue to add value, in addition to donations to financially support projects."



This does not mean that the VSO-Randstad partnership has not changed over the years. When the Covid pandemic struck the world in 2020, both organisations had to reconsider the way they work. Illerhues: "Placements abroad suddenly stopped. Circumstances forced us to experiment with remote volunteering to be able to continue to have an impact to improve the lives of the most marginalised people on our planet." De Jong: "It is an approach we have continued even after physical placements could resume after the pandemic was over. For example, we launched a mentor-mentee programme that has been very successful. You can read up on the experience of one of our mentors and mentees further on in this magazine." (pp.22/23) The pandemic accelerated a trend that had already been accumulating: moving away from the North-South volunteering that was dominant in the latter half of the 20th century. De Jong: As countries developed, the options to draw on local skills and expertise have increased substantially. Bringing in local volunteers to help the marginalised groups in society also helps with a sense of ownership, which promotes the generation of lasting impacts." De Jong and Illerhues underline how different their collaboration is to the North-South exchange that characterised development cooperation in its early days. De Jong: "We have long moved away from traditional 'third world solidarity'. That way of working has become an essentially outmoded model. With Randstad, we work in a blended volunteer model, where VSO puts together a strong project team, and a pool of local volunteers." Illerhues jumps in: "Which we complement with what is our strong suit: business skills, through our international corporate volunteers." They smile. "That complementarity is what makes our partnership so strong." Both agree that global change towards more equity cannot be enforced by NGOs

alone. De Jong: "We need many stakeholders who work together with shared values and ambitions." Illerhues jumps in: "Exactly. And as a leader in talent and in equity, Randstad is uniquely placed to achieve this. So that's where we meet."

/// The strong reputation of Randstad makes a real difference.

Merijn de Jong
co-director VSO Netherlands

Randstad has always been interested in taking an active stance when it comes to corporate social responsibility. Illerhues: "We have always felt that simply donating to an NGO was a too shallow way to put corporate citizenship into practice. We do finance specific VSO projects, but we prefer to combine this with corporate volunteering, donating expertise and transferring knowledge. It is win-win," she adds. "This way, we can help local people as the primary actors get more grip on their circumstances, and it always also proves to be a life-changing and enriching experience for our volunteers." Illerhues stresses: "We want as many Randstad employees as possible to have an opportunity to contribute. Some of them do a placement abroad for three to six months, but in the new ways we work, they can also invest part of their time in a long-distance mentorship project or give online masterclasses."



“As part of our collaboration, we also work with outside partners,” says De Jong. “Examples are the collaboration with Palladium and the Dutch Foreign Office in the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment and the ConnectionWorks! Conference that we organised together with Edukans, where we put young African people in the lead to brainstorm on how to tackle youth unemployment on their continent.” (p. 13)

Of course, a three- or six-month placement abroad is not for everyone. Luckily, there are other ways to contribute. Illerhues: “We organise an annual Sports Challenge, with the motto ‘Move to Change’. Randstad puts 25 cents into a fundraiser for every minute our employees exercise.” (pp. 24-25) De Jong adds enthusiastically: “Let’s not forget the ‘Kilimanjaro Challenge’! I really admire the Randstad climbers who train to physically conquer Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.” The climbers reach out to their supporters to generously donate towards VSO projects. They fund their trek themselves. (pp.18-21 and p.28)

De Jong: “I always notice how much people love to contribute to VSO.” Illerhues: “Right. When I ask even very busy, high-level managers if they have time to do a mentorship or masterclass as part of our

cooperation with VSO, the answer is ‘Yes, of course! When do we start?’. Being involved in this cooperation adds to employees’ sense of purpose. There is no underestimating how important that is.”

Illerhues: “Can I share a final thought about our partnership? What we really appreciate is how our collaboration with VSO ties in with our value of ‘simultaneous promotion of all interests. The partnership is a perfect example: we get to contribute to the communities that VSO is working to lift out of poverty, while providing our own employees with a unique additional way of developing themselves.” De Jong: “All I can say is that change can only be achieved by working together with different stakeholders, each contributing their own expertise and knowledge. The development of our partnership over the last 20 years really shows the value of such collaboration. I look forward to what we will achieve together over the next 20 years!” ●



VSO/Randstad volunteer services: a truly life-changing experience

Zanzibar, baby!

When Randstad offered career developer Sophie Oonk the opportunity to use her expertise to support the Vijana na Ajira (VNA) Youth and Employment project in Zanzibar in 2016/17, she was immediately ready to pack her bags.

VNA sparked her enthusiasm because, as Sophie explains, “We didn’t go there specifically to teach students. The project was all about training the trainers and setting something in motion that would bear fruit after we left.”

The focus on developing the skills of pupils and students to equip them for adult life was very much to Sophie’s taste. Sophie: “In the Netherlands, we are used to thinking about talent. Not so in Tanzania. There, children grow up to do what their father or mother did before them. We have trained the teachers to nurture the talents of their pupils. To challenge them to be unique and take the leap to do what no one else is doing.”



One tangible result of the project is a do-book full of playful exercises to promote the development of talent in young adults. The book, which has also been translated into Swahili, has planted the seeds that allowed the project’s unique approach to grow and flourish after the Randstad volunteers returned home. “The method from the book has been used in several other projects in Tanzania”, says Sophie.

The experience in Zanzibar had a lasting impact on Sophie’s life in more ways than one. It was in Zanzibar that Sophie met her boyfriend, Angelo, from a different Randstad team, who was working on a project to help blind farmers cope with their disability. Their daughter Nina, who has just turned four, will be an eternal celebration and reminder of their placement. ●

Blue sauce

Ten years ago, Griet Dufrainmont made the switch to VSO, after two 9-month stints of volunteering for Randstad, where she worked as an in-house consultant.



She has nothing but praise for both organisations. “Randstad keeps an eye on good business results and a decent profit margin, but never loses sight of the human angle”, she says. “I see a similar ethic at VSO with its structural approach to development cooperation, which is about making a lasting impact and not just doing a one-off thing.”

She loves that Randstad has been able to accommodate her passion for social volunteer work and travelling. Her first posting was to the VSO office in Nairobi, where she trained the local HR manager in applicant tracking, onboarding and HR management. Her good work was noticed and she was approached for a second assignment at VSO in Pretoria. Her work training local partners in volunteer recruitment and relationship building was essential in anchoring the newly established VSO offices in Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique into the VSO organisational structure. Griet says: “When I started, Randstad and VSO relied mainly on international volunteers. Now 90% of the volunteers come from the local communities. This is the ultimate proof that our approach works!”

Griet describes her 18 months of volunteering in Africa as the happiest time of her life. No wonder it didn’t take much to convince her when VSO asked her to return to the organisation in a more permanent position in the global workforce planning team. However, she says Randstad will always hold a special place in her heart: “In my nine years at Randstad, I’ve definitely been ‘doused with the blue sauce’. Like VSO, it’s a great company to work for.” ●



Building for the future

In 2015, Maud Schumann, then a sales manager at Randstad's Tempo Team Netherlands, volunteered for an experience that would enrich her life: she was to travel to Africa for six months to support the Swaziland Migrant Mineworkers Association (SWAMMIWA) with her skills and expertise.

Her boss at the time was Vama Jele, who, having experienced the hardships of mining life first-hand, has made it his life's mission to support migrant mine workers who have lost their jobs or even their lives due to work-related illnesses. Migrant miners who contract HIV, tuberculosis or silicosis because of being away from their families and working without adequate safety equipment are sent back to their countries of origin and receive no

support for continued medical care. As a result, many former miners are dying prematurely and their families are reduced to living in poverty when they lose their main breadwinner. Vama's organisation SWAMMIWA fights for better social protection and justice to end the inhumane suffering of migrant workers in the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Her placement in Swaziland – renamed Eswatini in 2018 – was a life-changing experience for Maud and she will always carry this part of Africa in her heart. Now, ten years later, Maud and Vama look back on what was an enriching experience, both on a personal level and in terms of what was achieved at the organisational level.

A priceless gift

It is a reunion between old friends. Since her placement, Maud has revisited Eswatini every year. Vama says he has got to know Maud's mother, and her daughter. They've shared meals together and become like family. Maud speaks fondly about her colleagues at SWAMMIWA and the warm welcome they gave her. She says that as a typical

representative of an overly individualistic European culture, they taught her the value of community and respect for the complementary role of everyone involved in building results together. Creating a supportive environment for every single person involved in a project, recognising that everyone contributes their own unique and fundamental building block towards the whole is something she has brought back from SWAMMIWA and continues to instil into her work environment back in the Netherlands to this day. "Open-minded connection and the feeling of being carried by a community is the priceless gift my African colleagues have given me", she says.

Entrepreneurial spirit

Vama, for his part, is full of praise for Maud. He says she brought an entrepreneurial spirit into the workspace of civil society. He stresses that without her contribution, his organisation would never have got to where it is today: an international NGO with a presence in 11 countries, campaigning for the rights of miners affected by occupational lung diseases and their families' entitlement to unclaimed social benefits, even at the level of the United Nations. "That was my dream," says Vama. "And Maud helped to turn it into a reality." Maud is visibly uncomfortable with all the praise. She is quick to play down her own role. But Vama says: "Maud can never really appreciate the impact she made, because she was not on the receiving side."

Making a difference

Both agree that the year of Maud's placement was a turning point for Vama's migrant workers' union SWAMMIWA and the Southern African Miners Association (SAMA) where Vama is now regional coordinator. Vama says: "We'd been working for years to sensitise the mining communities about their right to compensation when their breadwinners are struck down by HIV, tuberculosis or silicosis. We helped the women to set up community enterprises such as dairy farms and goat rearing so that they have a source of income when their husbands are dead or unable to work." He smiles at Maud.

"Remember when we went on a field visit to the goat farm? You'll be pleased to know that it is still thriving ten years later." Maud is delighted: "That's why I joined the programme, to actually be able to help make a material difference to the lives of vulnerable people."

Long-term contribution

They share a moment to reminisce about that time. Then Vama continues with his story. "Migrant mineworkers in Southern Africa are disproportionately affected by HIV, TB and silicosis. What we really wanted to achieve was to get them recognised as occupational diseases. At the same time, we advocated for the harmonisation of the legal framework for compensation and social security across the Southern African Development Community, so that migrant workers would always be ensured of adequate treatment and support. We had been advocating for the portability of social security benefits and compensations for years, and then suddenly, everything just started to



"I'm glad I was able to use my skills and connections to help SWAMMIWA make strides and set things in motion that have such an amazing impact ten years down the line." **Maud Schumann**

snowball: within six weeks, we managed to bring together all the stakeholders, including parliamentarians, health ministers and relevant high-level government officials and human rights institutions, for a political dialogue to discuss how to solve the problems of migrant mineworkers." He emphasises once more, "Maud, with her more business-like attitude and skills, most definitely added an extra layer to build a very strong advocacy. She showed us new ways of reaching out to people - setting up websites, for example - and helped us establish global relationships with some key players."

/// Maud helped to turn my dream into a reality

Vama Jele

Maud tries to interrupt: "Really, Vama, my role was much more modest than you make it out to be." But Vama begs to differ. "Do you remember, Maud? You were the one who put us in touch with the EU Ambassador to Swaziland, the EU Head of Delegation, Delft Imaging. Together with Delft, we are now in the process of setting up a programme for



"Through Maud, Randstad has helped us to lift ex-mineworkers out of poverty and vulnerability. We thank you so much!" **Vama Jele**

AI-supported screening for early warning signs of silicosis. Can you imagine how valuable such a preventive medicine approach is for the mining community? It's a contribution to the long term, and you made that connection for us. We can safely say, Maud, that when you were with us, you and I, all of us together, were building for the future." •

Expanding Horizons: Partnerships in Action

Young people in the driving seat at ConnectionWorks!

Real change happens through partnership—VSO, Randstad, and Edukans organised the April 2023 ConnectionWorks! conference to unlock Africa's youth potential.

By 2030, there will be a global shortage of 85 million workers, yet 83% of young people entering the labour market in sub-Saharan Africa remain unemployed. Each year, only 3 million out of the 12 million young Africans looking for work secure formal jobs, with many jobs offering poor conditions and lacking inclusivity.



ConnectionWorks! gathered young people, businesses, NGOs, academics, and the Dutch government to tackle youth unemployment in Africa through partnerships. This hybrid event placed youth from Uganda, Nigeria, and Kenya in the lead. Participation experts like Peace Tizaru and Umar Abdullahi from the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment (CFYE) highlighted the mismatch between education, training, and skills as a core cause of persistent youth unemployment. Their key advice: center young people in solutions, as they know the sectors they're drawn to, where innovation is possible, and where they can contribute most.

ConnectionWorks! found strong support in the Netherlands. Jurriaan Middelhoff, the ambassador for Youth, Education and Work of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "Young people can think outside the box. I hope I could inspire more organisations to link up and form new partnerships to put youth at the heart of our work!" •

Share your ideas and best practises to sustainably promote youth employment in the Global South:



SHARE



PODCAST



STORIES



CFYE: Smart Economics for Youth Employment



The Challenge Fund for Youth Employment (CFYE) is a 7-year program, funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and launched in 2019. FYE brings three partners together to tackle youth unemployment in Africa who each bring unique strengths Palladium in fund management, Randstad in recruitment and career management, and VSO in education, employment, inclusion, and gender.

The CFYE aims to provide decent work for 230,000 young unemployed, precariously employed and underemployed people in the Middle East, North Africa, the Sahel/West Africa and the Horn of Africa. However, the CFYE seeks to avoid "business as usual." Challenges such as climate change, urbanisation and digitalisation will radically change the world of work as we know it. The CFYE provides co-investment and technology support to local private sector partners to create future-proof green and digital jobs for the next generation.

The CFYE sees the "green economy" as a solution to challenges like climate change, poverty, and inequality. It uses new technology to create jobs and overcome barriers for young people, especially women, entering the labour market. Young people are matched with jobs and trained in both soft and technical skills, such as agriculture, solar panel installation, cybersecurity, and programming. Randstad and VSO send volunteers to support these projects on-site. •

Learn more about our blended volunteer model on our podcast and see beneficiary stories here:

Our impact

Volunteering with heart



800+ changemakers (remote and overseas) since the beginning of the partnership



Almost 30,000 people were impacted since 2021



Randstad changemakers have contributed 34.700+ days of work

Giving with heart



115,000 € donated by Randstad through the sports challenges in the last years



253,000 € raised by the participants in the two editions of the Kilimanjaro challenge

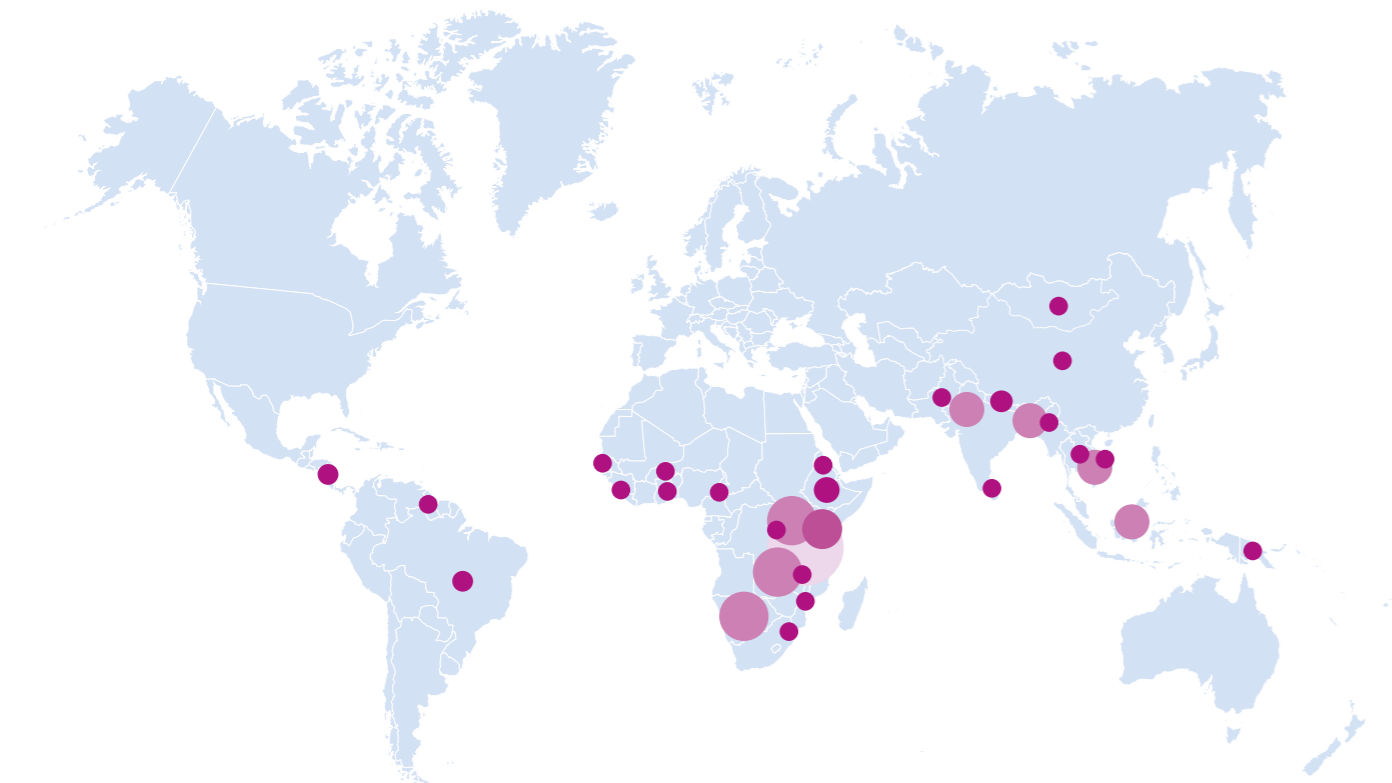


More than 9,000 colleagues participated in the fundraising activities in the last five years



Almost € 1.9 m direct payments in five years

Country of placement



Because of the things I learned through participating in the From Waste to Work project, and the network I am now part of, I have managed to put some money aside so I can send my child to school.

Doreen

Spotlight on the Sahyog project

‘Sahyog’ is an excellent example of how different forms of support can come together: it combines direct funding by Randstad, additional fundraising efforts through a charity challenge and volunteer support.

In 2018/19, twelve international and national Randstad volunteers contributed their expertise to support young people with disabilities in the district of Ranchi (India) to develop their work skills and find jobs. They joined forces with local VSO and local Randstad volunteers to find training and skilling centres willing to take on people with disabilities and sensitising potential employers in the Ranchi district to hire people with physical impairments. Capacity building for Ranchi’s community facilitators took centre stage. They played a crucial role in ensuring that 2625 people received a disability card and were able to claim the state benefits to which they were entitled.

242 young people with disabilities took part in training in areas such as retail management, food processing, mechanics, mobile phone repair and computer operation. Volunteer job coaches helped them with their job applications and boosted their self-confidence by helping them write good CVs and practise for job interviews. They helped 39 men and 28 women find jobs in local markets and small businesses, and 100 people, including 24 women, were supported to start their own businesses. In a wonderful show of solidarity, the money for the grants they received to start their businesses was raised by Randstad employees during the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.

“The Sahyog project has played a crucial role in empowering people with disabilities in Jharkhand to realise their rights to livelihood and social participation and lead a life of dignity. Randstad’s support has been instrumental in overcoming stereotypes and negative attitudes towards people with disabilities and promoting greater inclusion in society.”

Praveen Kumar Gurunath, VSO Global Lead Advisor for Social Inclusion



“The Sahyog Project showed me that you can really make a difference if you join forces. I hope I brought both joy and business insights to the people of the Sahyog Project.

Jozien Schaake
Employment & Enterprise Advisor at VSO, from Randstad, the Netherlands



“I was impressed by the openness of people with disabilities and their families and how they are motivated to develop themselves and help others to do the same

Anneke Verbocht
Employment & Enterprise Advisor at VSO, from Randstad, the Netherlands

Let’s find out how some of the primary actors are doing now!



Pukali Kumari, a 34-year-old woman with paraplegia, had to rely on other people to carry her around. With the help of the Sahyog team, she successfully applied for a wheelchair. Now she is much more active and helps others to get their disability cards and apply for disability aids.

The Sahyog project - a partnership between VSO India, Randstad, the Jharkhand State Disability Commissioner and the local non-governmental organisation Nav Bharat Jagriti Kendra (NBJK) successfully convinced employers to hire disabled people through local job fairs. When the project ended, it was clear that further efforts were needed to sensitise employers and adapt workplaces for people with disabilities. To maintain Sahyog’s successful approach, potential donors were approached for new funding, and a field team of people with disabilities was formed to ensure ongoing support and information dissemination.



Her disability confined Chand Mani Kumari (30) from Ormanjhi to her house with very little to do. The Sahyog project gave her the opportunity to learn how to sew. The villagers started coming to her to stitch their petticoats, blouses and other clothes. Together with her community facilitator, she wrote a business plan and received a grant to buy a sewing machine and start a business from home.

“Before the Sahyog project, I only lived at home, now I have a purpose in life and even earn a little money to support myself. My dream of opening a small shop in my house where I could sell my handmade work has come true

Chand Mani Kumari

Having successfully established herself as a seamstress in her neighbourhood, she has trained 10 girls and housewives over the past five years and is in the process of getting a new loan to open a roadside sewing shop.

Check out the Sahyog experience of Corporate Volunteers Fé Wielemaker and Jozien Schaake:



The Kilimanjaro Challenge!



€ 103,321
raised by participants

“ What I found most heartwarming was how quickly this group found each other. By listening, laughing, sharing knowledge and giving support, we all managed to tap into our 'best self' ”

Tine Tytgat, HR Director Randstad Group Belgium



The Kilimanjaro Challenge is a once-in-a-lifetime experience! Between 1 and 12 October 2023, 19 Randstad employees from eight different countries began the trek to the beautiful 5,895 m high peak in Tanzania. Each employee had the task of raising at least €5,000 for the "Access to Decent Green Jobs for Youth" project in Kenya. In total, the participants raised over €100,000. The journey took six days and all participants managed to reach the summit. Following this achievement, they visited the Waste to Work project, which forms the basis for the Access to Decent Green Jobs for Youth project. The project targets 3,900 young people in the waste sector in the slums of Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa. Its main objective is to improve the capacities (knowledge, skills and agency) of young people in the waste sector and enable them to create quality jobs through recycling, recovery and value addition.

200
young women waste workers
are provided enhanced water
and sanitation facilities



2
Women led community
buy back centers (CBBC)
are established

50
young women waste workers
equipped with additional
value addition skills



50
young women waste workers
equipped with functional
literacy and numeracy

200
waste pickers receive
improved health
care access



100
young women waste workers
are provided
childcare services



“ The Kili Challenge has supported us in many ways, from providing valuable training and new skills in upcycling glass to helping us earn our own income. The Daycare support made a big difference, giving our children a dedicated space to play.

Jennifer, Team Lead for The Ahadi Queens



“ This mentorship experience was truly valuable, and I’m grateful to Adam and the VSO/Randstad team for making it possible!

Natasha Edward Mwaipungu



“ Mentorship is not about the mentor teaching the mentee, but about guiding them on their journey to find out the answers for themselves – and learning things about yourself in the process.

Adam McNally

Remote mentoring

A Covid-19 innovation

Colleagues from around the world act as career mentors for young people in East Africa as part of Randstad and VSO’s remote mentoring programme. The programme was launched during COVID-19 and has so far matched 423 mentors from 17 Randstad countries with Tanzanian or Kenyan youth.

Adam McNally, who works for Monster, joined the Randstad/VSO mentoring programme after listening to a podcast about the need to ask ourselves every now and then why we do what we do in our lives. He realised that he needed a sense of purpose and that helping people motivated him. So he decided to search the intranet that Monster shares with Randstad to find a project where he could bring these realisations to life. He is now a 3-time mentor.

Adam says: “When they hear about the mentoring programme, most people tend to think of the mentor as a teacher who passes on practical skills and knowledge to the mentee. That was my initial thought too.” But the actual experience couldn’t have been more different than such a one-way teacher-pupil relationship. Adam explains: “I found that the roles of mentor and mentee often get blurred. You learn from each other. It’s very much a two-way street.”

Adam’s mentee Natasha Edward Mwaipungu, a social media manager and content creator based in Zanzibar, Tanzania also had to readjust her ideas. She came to the programme expecting to find a teacher who could help her deepen her social media management knowledge. Instead, she realised that the mentor-mentee relationship is much more about reflecting on how you want to shape your life, who you want to be and how you can achieve that.

Natasha illustrates this with an example: “On my first session with Adam, we talked at length about being consistent,” she says. “I was struggling with that. Adam pointed out to me that I was clearly very consistent with my religion. That gave me pause, because it made me realise that the underlying problem was that I did not believe in myself.”

“The programme is not primarily intended as skills training to help you write a better CV or anything as practical as that,” says Adam. “In my experience, it’s more about developing a self-awareness that allows you to ask yourself the difficult questions you have about the direction of your life and confidently creating a path for growth, based on the answers this reflective process throws back at you, both on a personal and professional level.”

Things do become practical, but more on the level of conveying new perspectives. Adam gives an example: “I told Natasha: When I’m looking to change roles or progress in my career, I like to find people who have already made that move and ask them for five minutes of their time to talk to me about what their job entails and how they got there.”

He explains that this was an approach Natasha had never thought of before. “It may be a cultural thing,” says Adam. “In Africa, apparently you only get a job if you have the exact qualifications, diplomas and certificates for it. In Europe, lots of people don’t work in the industry they were trained for. People are hired on the assumption that many of the skills they have acquired can be used in any professional setting. That seems to be a much more foreign concept in Africa.”

Natasha says that the programme was one of the most impactful exchanges that she’s experienced in her life: “The program gave me insights about who I really am, what I’m capable of, and how to respond to negative feedback. Adam was incredibly supportive, caring and not only helpful but also very encouraging, which really boosted my confidence in handling life in general.” ●

Sweating for success:
creating job opportunities in Tanzania and Zambia

VSO Sports Challenge

The VSO Sport Challenge was launched in 2018 in honour of the International Day of Sport for Peace and Development. Every year since then, the event has connected Randstad colleagues from around the world who donate their time and efforts to raise money in support of VSO development projects.



2018 #sportschallenge

1280 Randstad employees engaged in sports activities and raised close to € 6,000 in support of 87 people with disabilities in VSO's Sahyog project (see p.16-17).

It's fun, good for health and makes sense.

Roman Hoffman, 2024 participant and legal counsel for Randstad Austria

2020

No activities due to Covid



2019 #15,000k challenge

By walking, running, cycling and swimming, Randstad employees achieved a whopping 31,471k!



2021 #100,000k challenge

In the week that coincided with World Youth Skills Day (15 July 2021), Randstad organised its third sports challenge to support VSO projects. The sporty participants raised € 15,897, which Randstad generously topped up to € 30,000. The money raised was donated to the Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship (YEE) project in Tanzania.

Randstad colleagues came together from across the globe to take part in the **#100k challenge**: 100,000 sit-ups, 100,000 push-ups and 100,000 seconds of planking. For each repetition/second Randstad donated 10 eurocents.



2022 #movetotalk

995 Randstad colleagues from 26 countries took part in the #movetotalk VSO fundraiser. They reached a total of 96,200 active minutes, resulting in a donation of € 24,050. The proceeds were used for education, training and community development in the Mwanza and Geita region of Tanzania.

Not so sporty? Bring out your dancing shoes!



2024 #movetochange

1990 Randstad colleagues once again raised € 30,000 for a VSO project to give young people in Dar es Salaam an economic perspective. This time not only by running or cycling, but also by...dancing!

Fun fact: To raise awareness of the inclusion of people with disabilities, Randstad volunteers helped organise the first ever local commemoration of the International Day for Persons with Disabilities in Zambia's Samfya District.



2023 #movetotalk

1,437 Randstad employees worldwide took up the challenge of the #MoveToTalk event. They spent more than 241,085 active minutes doing sports activities, from push-ups to yoga, bouldering and jogging. Randstad rewarded their efforts with a € 30,000 donation for a VSO programme in Zambia that aims to improve the prospects of young people with disabilities.

To all athletic participants: thank you for your commitment to helping improve the lives of young people!

Transforming lives

Impact stories of the VSO/Randstad partnership

Meet 21-year-old Mercy Lanyero from Uganda and Mrs Sat Sokea from Cambodia, whose lives have been transformed thanks to their participation in VSO projects supported by Randstad.

Mercy Lanyero was sad when she had to quit school early due to the financial difficulties her family faced. To support her parents and siblings, she worked at a grocery shop, helping with orders and financial tasks. “Unfortunately,” Mercy says, “the shop owner only needed me on busy days, so I didn’t earn much money.”

A new opportunity

When VSO’s Youth Employment Enhancement Project (YEEP) offered training in catering and hotel management at Binen Restaurant, Mercy eagerly accepted. At Binen, she stood out for her passion for customer service and food preparation. The restaurant manager quickly offered her a job as a waitress.



Dreams of becoming a chef

“I was over the moon when I was offered the job. My parents were also very proud,” says Mercy. The job not only improved her income but also opened doors for her future. She plans to use the skills gained from YEEP and the CV built with volunteer support to gain experience in other restaurants. While she loves working as a waitress, Mercy aspires to become a restaurant chef one day. Thanks to YEEPS, she has not only gained the skills, but also the confidence to pursue and realise her dream. ●

For over 30 years, **Sat Sokea** (53) relied on traditional farming skills. She had limited knowledge of fertilisers and her crops were often infested by insects. Selling to customers was never even a consideration.



A new beginning

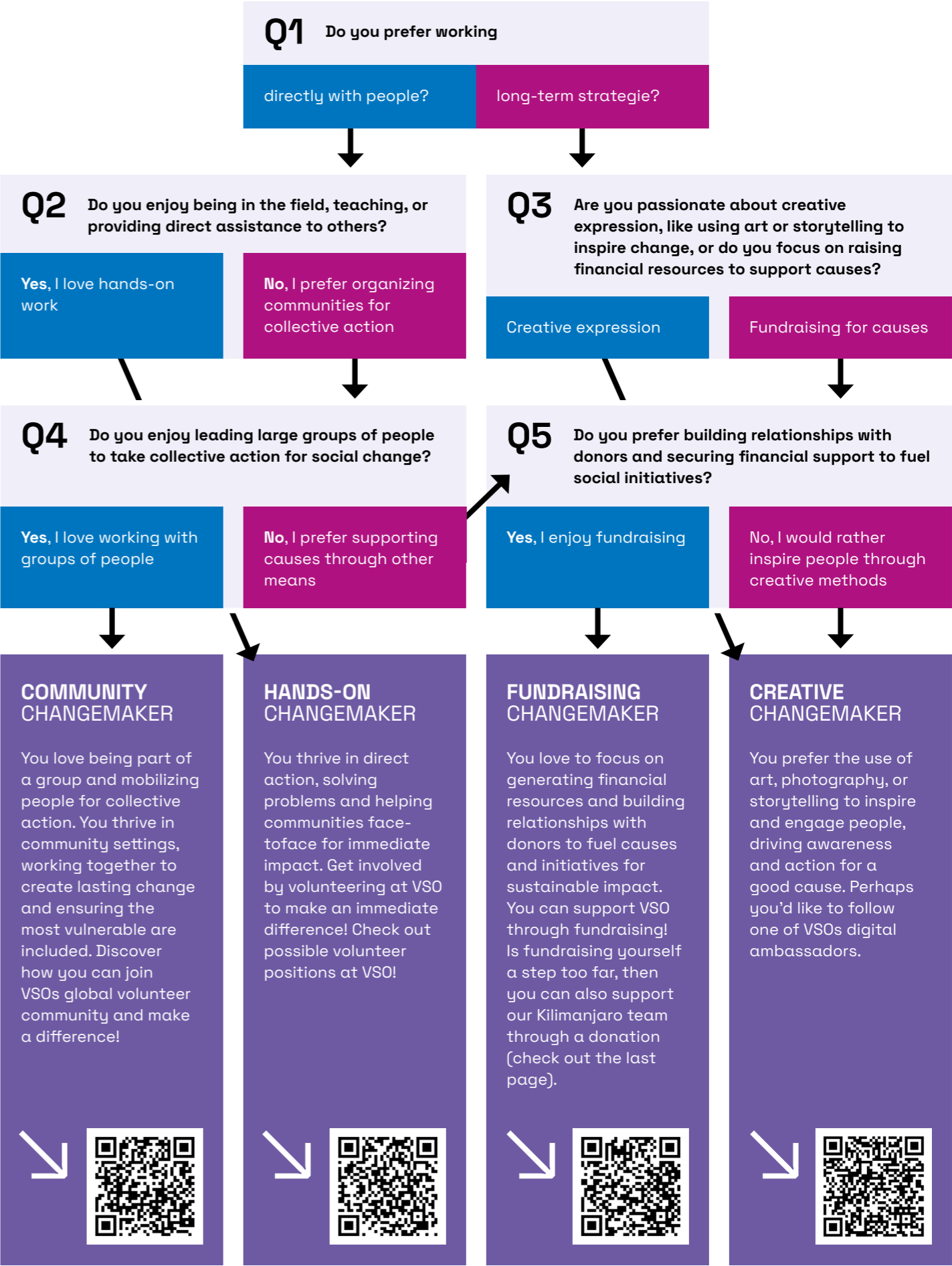
In 2023, VSO Cambodia recruited farmers in the Tonle Sap region to improve socio-economic development and climate resilience in vulnerable fishing communities. Mrs. Sokea joined VSO’s Green Economy project and learned many technical skills. Sat: “Through my participation in the project I have learned many technical skills such as seed selection, soil preparation, technical use of chemical fertilisers, compost fertiliser production, pest control, price analysis, marketing and production plans.”

Learning new skills for sustainable farming

With VSO’s support and training, Sat improved her farming practices and now grows a variety of vegetables such as morning glory, aubergines, and cucumbers, selling them to local markets, restaurants, and community members. She was also asked to become a trainer to teach her skills to others. In 2024, Sat participated in VSO’s business start-up programme, using a \$1,500 grant to install solar and irrigation systems that reduced operating costs and enabled year-round production. “The grant has helped me so much. I can now grow my vegetables in all seasons and have a more stable income,” says Sat.

Her vegetable sales now provide enough income to support her children’s education, cover daily household costs, and fund future investments. By hiring two workers, Mrs. Sokea also creates jobs for others in her community. ●

What Kind of Changemaker Are You?



Climbing for a Cause

In February 2025, an international team of Randstad colleagues will lace up their hiking boots to climb to the snow-covered summit of Africa's highest mountain again: Mount Kilimanjaro (5895 metres) in Tanzania.

THEIR MISSION: to raise € 100,000 to help 100 women (18-35) from Tanzania's marginalised fishing communities to improve their livelihoods and well-being.

The funds raised will help women increase their job prospects, empower them to stand up for their rights, and improve their working conditions. Responsible use and conservation of the world's oceans and coastal areas is a key part of the VSO project: the fisherwomen will be trained to manage marine resources on which their communities depend sustainably. Your contribution will help establish

partnerships with private sector companies for skills training. We also seek to improve and support childcare services that will free young women to work in the blue economy and generate an increased income, certification by local institutions, and cooperatives where women can unite, exchange ideas, and market their products. ●

“2025年2月，我将与任仕达全球12个国家20名同事一起花7天时间徒步挑战非洲之巅-乞力马扎罗(5895 米)。这将是一次公益挑战，我会与英国海外志愿服务组织(VSO) 还有任仕达(Randstad)一起筹集资金，支持坦桑尼亚女性，并在坦桑尼亚建立可持续的海洋经济。我的目标是筹集5000欧元，希望大家多多支持，谢谢大家”

"In February 2025, me and 20 Randstad colleagues from 12 countries will climb Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania to support the 'Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in the Blue Economy Sector' project, funded by VSO and Randstad. Part of my work is raising an amount of 5.000 Euro in order to support it. Each little contribution means a lot to me and is highly appreciated!"

Raven Han, 2025 Kili Climber from Randstad China

€ 44.695 collected, and counting!

Join the Randstad Kilimanjaro Challenge for VSO!

DONATE NOW!

