Global Annual Review 2014/15
Together we can make change happen
Where we work

in Africa

Ethiopia
The Gambia
Ghana
Kenya**
Lesotho***
Malawi
Mozambique
Nigeria
Rwanda
Sierra Leone
South Africa**
Swaziland***
Tanzania
Uganda
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Our teams in the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands support our work in Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Key
* Closed during financial year 2014/15
** Manages applications from volunteers
*** Programmes managed by our office in South Africa

In Sierra Leone, we supported community health mobilisers who shared Ebola prevention practices with 250,000 people.

In Uganda, we helped train more than 4,700 teachers and improve primary education for over 40,000 children.

Kate Green MP, the UK Shadow Spokesperson for Disabled People, volunteered in Rwanda, supporting its government’s plans to address the inequality faced by disabled people there.

On the island of Zanzibar, we have helped train over 2,550 smallholder farmers in good agricultural practices, entrepreneurship and financial management. Farmers working in commercial agriculture increased their profits tenfold.

In Zambia, volunteers worked to improve levels of health service delivery, and to increase women’s demand for HIV and AIDS prevention, care and treatment. Alongside our partners they trained 50 support groups who went on to share their knowledge with over 20,000 people.

Turn to page 15 to see where we work in Asia
Welcome

We are standing at a crossroads. In September 2015, world leaders will decide the post-2015 agenda, and agree on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that will steer international development work over the next 15 years, replacing the existing Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To achieve the goals, we'll need to build the capacity of individuals and unlock the potential of communities: exactly the outcomes that volunteering achieves. There is a global thirst for a change movement that puts people first, and we intend to be at the heart it.

Since joining VSO I have witnessed first-hand the impact of our work in some of the world’s most marginalised communities. Whilst our challenges across Africa, Asia and the Pacific appear huge, we are creating a global network of citizens with the appetite and ability to overcome them - all by engaging national, international, youth, corporate and parliamentary volunteers.

In Malawi, I met villagers working to lessen the impact of climate change on their lives. Our volunteers have supported these communities and local authorities to set up committees to manage land and water better. VSO’s input has empowered these communities to carry the project forward: they have now organised themselves to plant trees, bamboo and grasses to protect their village from flooding and to stop soil erosion. Building a future like this that puts people first is fundamental to achieving fair and long-lasting change.

Our vision is to empower local communities to achieve sustainable change and build resilience against future challenges. We will achieve this through engaging in transformational change, which empowers others and builds capacity. VSO challenges the status quo, empowering individuals and communities to overcome poverty.

Our unique way of working has proved its worth in all manner of challenging situations this year: our work amidst the ongoing Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, and our response to the devastating earthquakes in Nepal. Whilst our focus will always be on long-term development, where we have the capacity to act in an emergency, we have a duty to act. From setting up and staffing Temporary Learning Spaces to providing voluntary physiotherapists, I am proud to see the ways VSO is getting involved in supporting development since the earthquake.

We want to increase our reach and influence. That’s why we will be making some significant changes in the way we organise and structure ourselves in 2015. We’re committed to improving cost effectiveness, and will continue to evolve to ensure we have the greatest impact where it matters most – within the world’s poorest communities.

As you read this review, I hope you will be inspired by the work of our volunteers, supporters and partners. We are immensely grateful to them for helping us achieve the successes of the past year.
VSO at a glance

VSO volunteers change lives every day. We bring inspiration, energy and vital practical skills to help achieve community goals – better healthcare, more valuable education and broader opportunities. Putting people first leads to lasting improvements in people’s lives, bringing us closer to our vision of a world without poverty.

Together we can make change happen

- People have enhanced skills, knowledge and expertise in the last year due to VSO’s training, mentoring and learning opportunities: 136,000
- Lives in which we made a difference last year through our partners and volunteers: 1,950,000

Main areas in which we focused our work: education; health, HIV and AIDS; secure livelihoods; and participation and governance: 4
Valuing Volunteering

We could not change the lives of so many people without our volunteers. But what is it about the way they work that has an impact on poverty?

This year, with the Institute of Development Studies, we launched a ground-breaking body of research that tells us how volunteering reduces poverty.

Conducted in Mozambique, Kenya, Nepal and the Philippines, the research found that volunteering contributes to sustainable development by:

• extending the reach of public services to the poorest and most marginalised
• creating new ways for people to work together
• giving local people more opportunities to create change
• inspiring individuals to become change-makers taking collective responsibility for the future
• providing a model for different ways of doing things

We are indebted to those who came together to transform lives this year:

International volunteers
volunteering outside their home country

National volunteers
volunteering in their home country

Youth volunteers
through our International Citizen Service programme

31 countries in which we worked*  
987 International volunteers  
294 National volunteers  
1,370 Youth volunteers

*See pages 2 and 15 for more information

partners we supported, from every level of society, from government organisations, to teacher training colleges, to village women’s groups

Bishnu Maya Bhandrai (left) a primary teacher in Nepal with education volunteer Gareth George (centre) and their students. Photo by ©VSO/Peter Caton
Education

Every child deserves an education. It is an effective route out of poverty.

But millions are missing out because of a lack of properly trained teachers, or by being excluded from classrooms simply because of who they are.

We’re committed to changing this by focusing on:

**Inclusive education** - aiming for every child, no matter how disadvantaged, to be able to access a quality education that allows them to learn to the best of their ability. Last year, we reached 13,700 children and trained 2,700 education workers in Ghana alone through a single programme: ‘Tackling Education Needs Inclusively’, a programme which focuses on the education and empowerment of girls and children with disabilities.

**Using technology in education** - harnessing its huge potential to increase the scale and effectiveness of our education programmes. Last year in Malawi, primary school children involved in a pilot project using tablets to increase numeracy skills made more progress in eight weeks than in 12-18 months of usual classroom teaching. This project has been scaled up in 100 schools.

**Education management** - supporting school leaders in effective leadership that empowers students, parents and teachers, which enables them to hold schools and governments to account. In Cambodia, 78% of districts in the ten provinces VSO worked in last year now have annual operating plans, compared with 40% nationally.

**Teacher training** - our volunteers aim to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to address individual learning needs. In the past year, VSO has trained 50,800 trainee teachers, 4,300 teacher trainers and worked with 31,200 in-service teachers to enhance their skills and knowledge.

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“Before being trained by Mike, we would normally stay in the classroom and only write notes. Now, when I want to teach the children about plants, I take them outside and show them the real plants... the children are happy and enjoy lessons now.”

Marcel Bakanirora

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At a glance

- 164 education partners we worked with in 16 countries.
- 810,000 adults and children benefited from the quality education services we have supported.
- 98,500 education practitioners have been supported to enhance their knowledge and skills.
Health, HIV and AIDS

Imagine not being able to access adequate basic health care when you need it.

Millions unacceptably face this situation every day. Our programmes work with the most disadvantaged to realise their rights to physical, mental and social health, by focusing on:

Maternal health - supporting women’s health during pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period. As part of a new government programme in Malawi, our volunteers worked with women, chosen by their village chiefs, training them in basic midwifery skills so that they can now support pregnant women in their communities.

Neonatal and child health - our programmes work to ensure front line health workers like nurses and midwives have the knowledge, skills, equipment and capacity to ensure the safe delivery and healthy development of children. In Ethiopia, VSO has supported five hospitals this year to establish neonatal intensive care units with training and on-the-job mentoring. Neonatal death decreased by an average of 40%.

Sexual and reproductive health - we work to increase knowledge of safe sexual practice, provide support for survivors of sexual violence and change community behaviours. At Modilon Hospital in Papua New Guinea, a volunteer psychiatric nurse helped to start a family support centre, where survivors of physical and sexual violence can receive specialist care, as well as emotional and legal support.

HIV and AIDS - championing the rights and treatment of people living with HIV and AIDS. In Mozambique, our ‘Phoning Out Poverty and HIV and AIDS’ programme worked with women in mining communities who are infected or affected by HIV, ensuring they understand their health issues and rights to care. It reached 1,796 people in Mozambique this year, with plans in place to expand.

At a glance

- 141 health partners we worked with in 18 countries
- 867,000 adults and children have benefited from the quality health services we supported.
- 23,500 health practitioners have been supported to enhance their knowledge and skills.

“They observed me helping to deliver a baby safely, with no resources, and saw for themselves that it is not just about money and resources, rather it is our skills and knowledge that can save a life.”

Beth Connelly

Beth Connelly (second from left), volunteer midwife trainer in Malawi, overseeing students doing a postnatal health check with Kafereni (left) and her seventeen hour old baby.
Secure livelihoods

Our world is rich enough for everyone to live free from poverty, yet hundreds of millions of people are struggling to support themselves and their families.

We are determined to support disadvantaged people’s right to make a living and tear down the fences that trap them in poverty.

Supporting agricultural value chains - working to make sure smallholder farmers have fair and equal access to markets. Last year, through our ‘Making Markets Work for the Poor’ programme in Nigeria, we helped train over 380 community volunteers who will go on to share their knowledge of good agricultural practices to help others grow the diversity, yield and profitability of their crops.

Market-led youth employment - strengthening training institutes to prepare students with the skills they need to get a job, and supporting young people to identify ways of making a living in their communities. In Tanzania this year, in partnership with LNG Tanzania, we built employment advice into the college curriculum, enabling more women to gain the right qualifications to pursue careers in male-dominated vocations, such as electronics.

Rural enterprise development - supporting small and medium enterprises to build their capacity and increase their profits. Our volunteers in Cambodia, for example, helped establish a micro finance scheme which set up 200 ‘self-help groups’ to enable local people to access the financial investment they need for their businesses to grow.

At a glance

184 secure livelihoods partners we worked with in 23 countries

273,000 marginalised men and women have benefitted from quality secure livelihoods services.

14,000 practitioners have been supported to enhance their knowledge and skills.

“Now I’m thinking ahead for my children. I’m keeping money aside for their future, so they can be educated properly and we don’t need to borrow money from others.”

Philomena Aind

Philomena Aind (left) and Sujina Begum (right) at a VSO supported rug factory in Bangladesh. This project targets poor and marginalised women who would otherwise struggle to find work.
Participation and governance

It’s hard to make people hear your voice and take notice if you’re living in poverty.

We think everyone deserves a say in the decisions that affect their lives, and that people in power should listen to those they serve, treating them in a fair and transparent way. That’s why we’ve been working on:

**Democracy building** - supporting the decentralisation and devolution of power in countries, helping governments become fairer and more answerable to communities. In Zambia our inclusive governance programme has seen volunteers work at the national, provincial and district levels. VSO last year worked with five out of ten district councils in the northern province to build their capacity, which led to improved budgeting, financial reporting and transparency.

**Social accountability** - working with community members to get them in a position from which they can fully participate in decision-making that affects their lives. In the Kalahandi district in India, VSO community volunteers spread awareness of Samadhan, an online platform allowing rural people to file grievances relating to delivery of government services by sending a text message.

“At a glance

| 53 | We worked with 53 participation and governance partners in 12 countries |

“...In Papua New Guinea I live in a different world, far away from high-level global discussions, where I am trying to understand and support the challenges that women face [...]. Experts from civil society, including volunteers such as myself, know local situations so well and can bridge that gap [from the grassroots to the global level].”

Elles Blanken

Elles Blanken, women’s political empowerment volunteer, delivering a gender workshop in Papua New Guinea. Elles represented VSO at UN intergovernmental negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals.

*Unlike other areas of our work, our progress in this area is not measured by the number of practitioners supported or adults and children reached through services. In 2015/16 we will develop a new framework to measure progress in this vital area of our work.*
Youth

Young people don’t just want our world to be fairer, they want to play their part in making it a reality. This year, we worked with more of them than ever before.

In 2014/15 we continued our work to support young people to become active citizens within their communities. In Pakistan for example, local youth volunteers organised eight peace forums in the Multan District, strengthening youth-led advocacy on human rights and peace building.

The International Citizen Service (ICS) programme

Through the ICS programme, UK volunteers work alongside national counterparts and support the work of local partner organisations: 97% of our partners said that ICS volunteers were supporting them to bring about positive change in their communities. Young volunteers also develop valuable skills as a result, with 96% having found ICS useful for professional development.

ICS is funded by the UK Department for International Development. It is led by VSO and works through partnership with 10 respected development organisations. In September 2014, the ICS consortium celebrated having worked with 10,000 volunteers since the programme started in 2012.

“As well as contributing to international development volunteers have brought home vital skills and a new perspective that will help them succeed in the global businesses of tomorrow.”

Justine Greening, Secretary of State for International Development, UK

1,370 VSO ICS volunteers achieved the following over the past year:

- 1,923 peer education activities
- 1,338 awareness raising events
- 587 community infrastructure projects
- 273 resource development projects

ICS volunteer Alexandra Mountain (centre) and Filipino (right) counterpart Glenn Oliva, conducting an environmental awareness raising workshop in the Philippines.
Influence and advocacy

Post 2015
2015 is a big year for the future of our work. World leaders will finally agree on global development priorities for the next 15 years - the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The world is deciding what it should look and feel like by 2030.

In these crucial years, people must be recognised as having an active role in their futures, rather than as passive recipients of aid. We know that the most effective and sustainable change takes place when people work together and create solutions from the bottom up, as epitomised in the responsible volunteering that we have been championing for 57 years.

VSO has worked hard to make sure that volunteering is recognised as a vital way of carrying out these SDGs, and monitoring their progress. Volunteers can help to make sure that their aims – such as extending education to all, offering universal access to health care and ensuring gender equality – become a reality for the poorest and most marginalised: the very people government action can fail to reach. We were delighted that our work in this area, including VSO Ireland chairing the post-2015 volunteer working group, contributed to volunteers being directly recognised by the UN Secretary General.

Our Women in Power campaign called for the SDGs to include a target to increase women’s participation and influence in all levels of decision-making. A milestone came in March 2015, when Binti Alii Goga, the Chair of Kenyan grassroots women’s movement Sauti Ya Wanawake–Pwani (a VSO partner), spoke at a Women in Power event run by VSO Ireland, VSO Jitolee and VSO International at the Irish Embassy in London. Another highlight came when we were able to support our partners from Nepal to voice the experience of grassroots women’s organisations at the UN.

Campaigning for change
We’re thrilled to have helped convince the UK government to enshrine in law its promise to invest 0.7% of Gross National Income in overseas development. We’re also deeply proud of our achievements securing reforms of teachers’ salaries in Cambodia, the adoption of care-givers policies in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and commitments to inclusive education within Kenya’s revised education.

“Volunteerism can help to expand and mobilise constituencies, and to engage people in national planning and implementation for sustainable development goals... volunteer groups can help to localise the new agenda by providing new spaces of interaction between government and people for concrete and scalable actions.”

UN Secretary General Synthesis Report on Post-2015, December 2014

Kenyan MP and former minister Hon. Esther Murugi Mathenge (left) who is supported by VSO’s Women in Power campaign. Here she is meeting with elderly people who are part of her national initiative to support those most vulnerable to poverty with food, medicine and free hospital treatments.
## Income 2014/15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Description</th>
<th>£’000</th>
<th>% of total income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Grant from DFID</td>
<td>£22,000</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other governmental income</td>
<td>£38,198</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other charitable income</td>
<td>£2,269</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>£6,142</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companies</td>
<td>£2,298</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other grants and donations</td>
<td>£2,035</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events and community</td>
<td>£3,847</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>£224</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total income, an increase of 12% year-on-year

Net assets £18.4 million

Income 71% unrestricted, 29% restricted

Figures shown come from VSO’s Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2014/15, which can be found on our website: www.vsointernational.org
Expenditure 2014/15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of total expenditure</th>
<th>£’000</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24%</td>
<td>£17,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>£12,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health, HIV and AIDS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>£4,059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and governance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>£13,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure livelihoods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24%</td>
<td>£17,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments to ICS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consortium partners*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>£8,061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs of generating funds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>£973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance costs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\*ICS is a contract based on payments by outputs, which means that VSO receives money from DFID for each volunteer who participates in a programme overseas. Due to the size of the contract, VSO has chosen to sub-contract approximately 75% of the delivery to 10 respected development partner organisations, who are also paid on the basis of the number of volunteers who participate in their programmes.
VSO would like to take this opportunity to recognise the significant contribution of our volunteers. They very generously give up their time and salaries in order to share their expertise in our programmes around the world. Without them, our work would not be possible. Many volunteers help VSO both before and after their placement, by raising funds and promoting our work.

We would like to recognise and thank a very important but often unheralded group of supporters whose gifts in their wills in 2014/15 and have made a huge contribution to VSO’s work. VSO couldn’t function without these supporters’ generosity as well as thousands of others who give regularly to VSO.

We have received a huge amount of pro bono support and gifts in kind during the year from companies and our corporate partners including Accenture Development Partnerships, Clifford Chance, Google, Microsoft and many others. This type of support is invaluable to enable us to achieve our goals.

We would also like to thank our other large funding partners, including those not individually listed below, for their continued vital support of our work. In addition, we thank the group of individual donors who have given their generous personal support through VSO’s innovative Million Hours Fund.

A.S. Hornby Educational Trust
Accenture
ASN Foundation
Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Bentley Systems
BG Group
Big Lottery Fund
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Charities Aid Foundation
Clifford Chance
Comic Relief
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Elsevier Foundation
European Union
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Greg Dyke and Sue Howes
Guernsey Overseas Aid Commission
IBM
IOM
Irish Aid
Mastercard Foundation
Medicor Foundation
Mondelēz International
New Britain Palm Oil
Pestalozzi Children’s Foundation
Pharo Foundation
Randstad
Royal Norwegian Embassy
Schroder Foundation
Scottish Government
Shell
Stanley Thomas Johnson Foundation
Sweden
Swire Group
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
Syngenta
Tropical Health and Education Institute
Turing Foundation
UK Government (Department for International Development)
UNDP
UNICEF
USAID
Zochonis Charitable Trust

Thank you
98 youth volunteers supported VSO’s sexual and reproductive health work in Nepal. Volunteers established peer education networks to share vital knowledge around issues such as HIV and AIDS and hygienic menstruation practices - enabling individuals to make informed decisions about their health.

In Papua New Guinea, volunteers worked in every teacher training college in the country to improve primary English teaching. They designed, tested and produced new teaching materials which are expected to benefit 6,500 trainee teachers every year.

In Myanmar, VSO has partnered with the Eden Centre to research inclusive education for children with disabilities. The findings have influenced policy discussions at a national level, as well as VSO’s wider education programmes.

Seven volunteers worked with the government in the Philippines to help improve flood modelling of the country’s major river basins. The flood models will help to warn communities in advance of potentially deadly floods.

Where we work
in Asia and the Pacific

Bangladesh  Pakistan
Cambodia  Papua New Guinea
China  Tajikistan*
India  The Philippines**
Myanmar  Thailand**
Nepal  Vanuatu*

Key
* Closed during 2014/15
** Manages applications from volunteers
Join us and make change happen

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www.vsointernational.org
+44 (0)20 8780 7500
enquiry@vsoint.org

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Cover image: Members of a women’s farmer group tend to their communal crop as part of VSO’s ‘Growing Together’ programme in Bangladesh. Picture by ©VSO/Allison Joyce