

A portrait of a young Black woman with a serene expression, looking slightly to her left. She is wearing a blue and white patterned headwrap and a light blue apron over a black and white plaid tank top. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with green foliage.

# LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

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2017/18

VSO brings people  
together to address  
marginalisation and  
poverty.

Together, we will leave  
no one behind.

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©VSO/Jeff DeKock

VSO's Community Empowerment for Deaf Inclusion (CEDI) project is helping to improve the quality of life of deaf children and their families in Kenya. Here, some of the children celebrate World Teacher's Day.



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# WELCOME FROM OUR CHAIR AND CEO

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**Leave no one behind. This is the ambitious target agreed by all United Nations countries as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). But what do these words mean in practice?**

Since VSO began 60 years ago, huge progress has been made in tackling extreme poverty. But significant pockets of inequality still exist. The challenge of poverty has become even more complex. There are the pressing issues of climate change and globalisation disproportionately hurting the world's poorest.



**Mari Simonen**  
VSO Chair



**Philip Goodwin**  
VSO Chief Executive  
Officer

VSO's volunteering for development model is a way of doing development differently. It offers compelling ways to address and eradicate poverty. In our annual report you'll read about how bringing together people of different backgrounds, expertise and experiences delivers results, ensuring no one is left behind.

Philip was moved and inspired to see this in action when he visited a maximum-security prison in Zimbabwe this year. Here, VSO is working to improve health in prisons where HIV rates are more than twice the national average.

Philip met 46 Peer Educators trained by VSO – all of them long-term prisoners. They are both benefiting from our programmes as well as being VSO community volunteers – helping drive increased demand for HIV testing and adherence to treatment. It is a powerful example



©VSO/Ginny Latul

**In Northern Uganda, only 1 in 10 girls are able to finish their primary education. Through our Inclusive Education programmes, VSO is helping girls to reach their full potential.**



©Syngenta/Abir Abdallah

**Women farmers in Rangpur, Bangladesh have improved their yields and profits thanks to Syngenta corporate volunteers on our Growing Together project.**

of volunteering reaching the most marginalised members of society.

But reaching these 'harder to reach' groups – be they deaf youth who've been excluded from sexual health services in Rwanda, or Dalit children unfairly disadvantaged in classrooms in rural Nepal – isn't easy, or cheap.

We can only do these things if we have the finance to deliver. It's been a challenging yet successful year; however, the external environment continues to get tougher. VSO can't rely on funding from governments with any certainty, and with ever-growing competition, we have to constantly think about how we can unlock the resources to deliver on our mission.

Over the last year, we have further streamlined our administration, organisation and governance. We are committed to providing excellent value for money. We want to show how our interventions reach those people left untouched by 'business as usual' development.

Safeguarding those we work with is the most important part of our work. It's central to us successfully delivering our charitable mission. Due to the vulnerability of those we are working with, international development organisations are rightly held to a higher standard than other institutions.

VSO has an organisation-wide commitment to take seriously and act on all breaches in safeguarding. We take a zero-tolerance view of behaviour that harms, threatens, abuses or exploits the vulnerable. We have a survivor-led approach to dealing with safeguarding. We are confident in VSO's approach, but we can never be complacent. This year we have commissioned an external review of our safeguarding practice to ensure it is as robust as it can be.

Already last year, as part of our ongoing drive for greater transparency, we provided reporting on every medical, safety and safeguarding issue. This year's annual report seeks to be even more transparent.

We're proud of what our volunteers, our staff, and those we serve, have achieved over the last year, and we're incredibly grateful for the financial support we have received. We want to extend a personal thanks to all of you who stand beside us. With enough financial support, together we can build a fairer and more equal world, leaving no one behind.

*Philip*

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# VSO AT A GLANCE

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## VSO works for a world without poverty, where no one is left behind.

For 60 years, we have brought people together through volunteering for development. This is a uniquely effective way of tackling poverty and marginalisation.

Our volunteers live and work in the poorest communities. They:

- Develop **new, creative ideas** for solving poverty from within communities themselves.
- Build the **confidence and ability** of communities to take ownership of change.
- **Reach** out to the most remote and excluded people.

### Who are VSO volunteers?

Our volunteers are national and international. They can also be members of the communities we work with. VSO brings people together from different backgrounds and with different experience and skills. By doing so, VSO helps nurture skills, ideas and the exchange of knowledge. This creates the conditions for transformational change.

Our volunteers may live and work in a community for years. Some may work for a period of shorter, targeted support. Others volunteer in stages, as many of our corporate volunteers, youth volunteers or e-volunteers do. However long they volunteer with us, their focus is on developing the systems and conditions for positive social change.

### What is VSO working on?

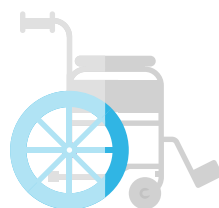
We focus on delivering positive change in three areas: **education, health** and **livelihoods**. Our volunteering model means our development interventions are more likely to be sustainable. The communities we work in grow in terms of resilience, fairness and accountability.

Our programmes focus on five core areas:

- maternal and newborn health
- adolescent and youth sexual health and rights
- inclusive education
- agri-based value chains
- youth employment and enterprise.

Last year VSO worked with thousands of volunteers and partners to support over 1.5 million of the poorest people in 24 countries across Africa and Asia.

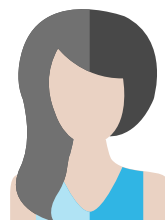
### Last year our programmes supported:



**12,351**  
people with  
a disability



**509,985**  
children and young  
people (under 19)



**915,187**  
women and girls



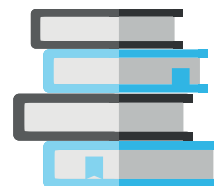


©VSO Nicholas Seun Adatsi

Harvesting cocoa at Nyinahin, Ashanti region, Ghana.

In 2017/18 we supported  
over 1,500,000 people  
including:

over **325,000**  
people through our  
education programmes



over **115,000**  
people through our  
livelihoods programmes



over **900,000**  
people through our  
health programmes



over **185,000**  
people through our core  
approach programmes

# VSO AT A GLANCE

## International volunteers



**98**  
corporate



## National volunteers



**2**  
corporate

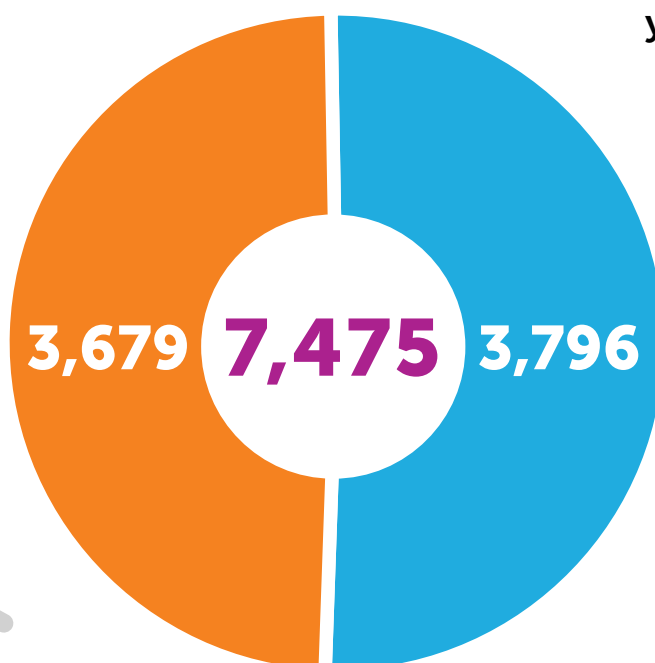
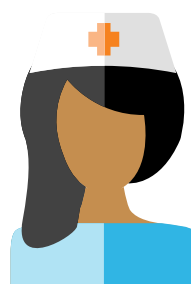


**106** professional volunteers  
from the Global North



**130**  
professional  
volunteers from  
the Global South

**559**  
professional  
volunteers





## International Citizen Service

International Citizen Service (ICS) is a youth volunteering programme that brings together young people from the UK to volunteer side-by-side with young people from developing countries. ICS is funded by the UK government and delivered by eight respected consortium agencies, who are led by VSO.

Last year, ICS enabled 6,580 young volunteers to make a difference in 21 countries around the world. This included:



**28,400**  
hours of peer  
education



**1,870**  
community  
infrastructure  
projects



**17,700**  
hours of  
awareness  
raising  
activities



**3,300** action  
research projects



**7,000**  
new resources  
developed



**33,200**  
hours of  
training



VSO ICS volunteer Julius Ayella takes photos of speeches and musical performances at an ICS community event in Hoima, Uganda.

# VSO AT A GLANCE



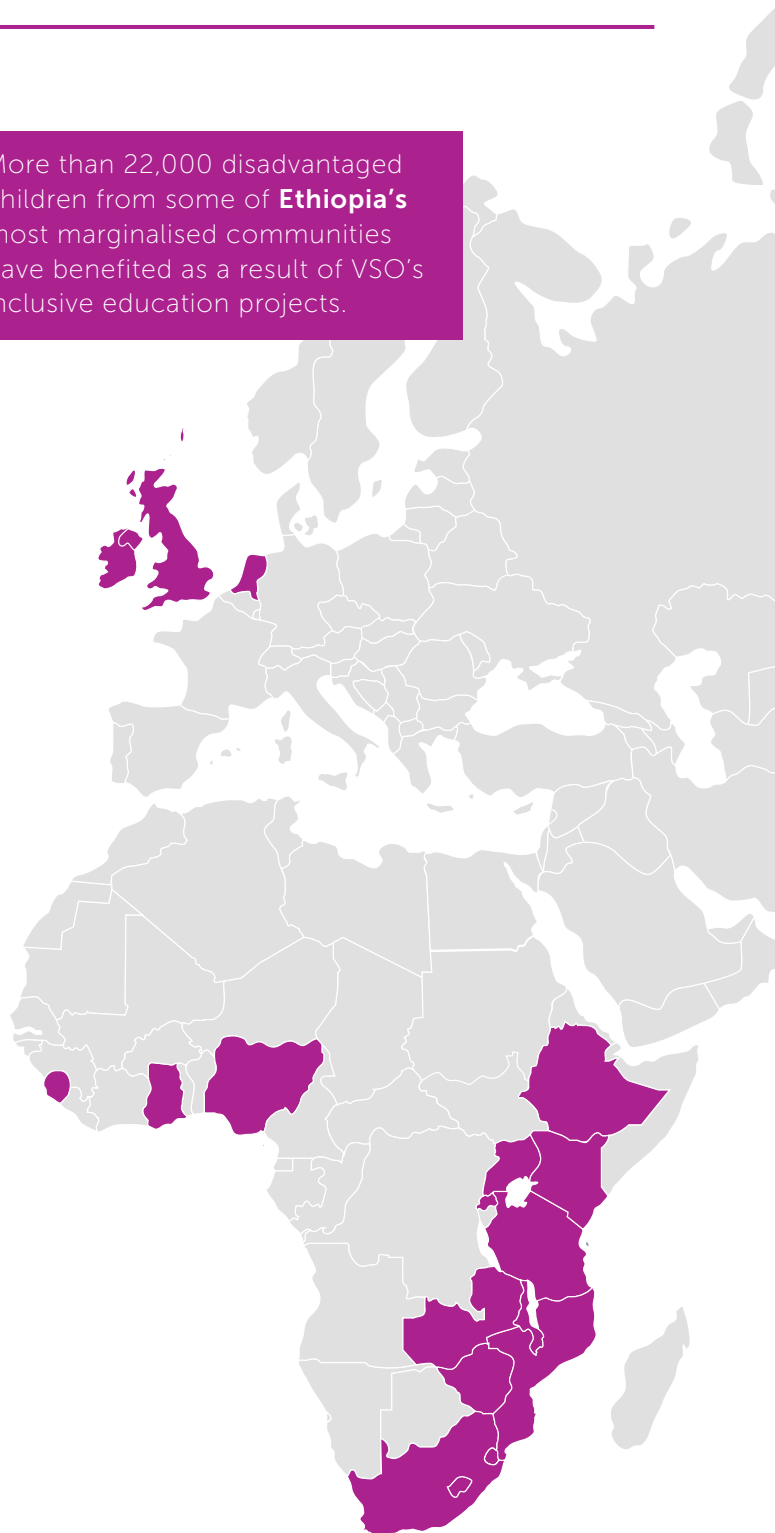
©VSO

More than 22,000 disadvantaged children from some of **Ethiopia's** most marginalised communities have benefited as a result of VSO's inclusive education projects.



©ICS/Jeffrey DeKock

VSO launched the first of ICS's Disability Projects. ICS volunteers in **Kenya** are advocating for the rights of disabled people. They are promoting inclusive neighbourhood spaces, and delivering Kenyan sign language to community members.





In **Sierra Leone**, VSO volunteers piloted the use of portable battery-powered ultrasound-scan machine technology. These 'V-scanners' strengthen early detection of pregnancy complications in women and have been rolled out at five basic emergency obstetric newborn care centres.



A VSO-led campaign to raise awareness of gender-based violence in **Pakistan** reached 472,000 people. As a result, the Inspector General of Police made a commitment to establish an anti-violence against women and children centre in Islamabad. This will provide legal and medical facilities to survivors of violence.

In **India**, VSO has helped 5,000 farmers improve their knowledge on good agricultural practices, enabling them to reduce production costs and increase yields.

### In 2017/18 VSO worked in 24 countries:

Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe



Thanks to the development of a VSO-supported Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), the infant-mortality rate at Moroto hospital, **Uganda**, has reduced from 50% to 10%.



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# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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**Education should be a right of all children, no matter who they are or where they are from. That is why our projects focus on inclusion and why our volunteers live and work in the communities they support.**

We make sure that children of all genders, abilities and backgrounds have an equal chance to learn and thrive.

## **No child left behind**

Teenage pregnancy, menstrual taboos and prejudice are keeping girls out of school in Nepal.

The Sisters for Sisters' Education project is helping girls get back into education by giving girls a 'Big Sister'. These 'Big Sisters' are community volunteers who support girls through their adolescent years. The volunteers offer encouragement, accountability and taboo-busting information on sexual and reproductive health. As the 'Little Sisters' get older, VSO is supporting them to transition to higher levels of education and develop the life skills to navigate the next phase of life.

This year, VSO also began its biggest education project to date.

In Rwanda, the Building Learning Foundations project is working in every primary school in the country. The aim is to improve children's maths and literacy skills, and to make classrooms more inclusive for children with disabilities. Another project based in Rwanda, Strengthening School Readiness, is making sure children age 3-5yrs are ready for school. Volunteers work with parents, teachers and local leaders in one of the country's poorest areas. They help identify children with disabilities and ensure they have everything they need to learn with their peers.

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## 93.8%

**of the 'Little Sisters' believe the project will help them stay in school**

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“From when I first joined this project, I got training in life skills. From that point onwards, I really felt the importance of education: that every girl needs to be in school.”

Durga Dahal, 37, a community volunteer 'Big Sister' in Surkhet, Nepal



**Children at schools in Katsina state now have access to quality facilities for science education – conveniently delivered by a 'laboratory on wheels'.**

## Technology transforming teaching

In one of Nigeria's most remote regions, young people are falling behind in their science education. Less than a quarter of schools have science labs. So, VSO decided to bring the Mobile Science Lab to them.

The Mobile Science Lab travels around schools in Katsina, one of Nigeria's poorest states. It provides a unique opportunity for young people here to get stuck into science, maths and technology.

VSO worked with the Ministry of Education and Nigeria's National Youth Service Corps to recruit young Nigerian graduates to volunteer in schools. These young volunteers now deliver the mobile science lessons. They are the future science teachers of Nigeria.

Meanwhile in Malawi, we are bringing technology into the classroom.

With an average class size of up to 90 pupils, our Unlocking Talent project makes teaching manageable using tablet technology. By March 2018, 90,000 children from 110 primary schools

saw massive improvements in their learning. Reading scores doubled and girls are no longer falling behind boys. Over the last year, volunteers have brought new ideas to reach out to school drop-outs, applying the technology as an outreach tool to help them catch up to a level where they can re-enrol.



**7,500** students  
learning with our lab  
on wheels in Nigeria



**By 2019, Unlocking  
Talent will reach up to  
300,000**  
students

“These young Rohingya children are at such a delicate stage in their lives. The Early Years Guide brings together expert knowledge from around the world to give Rohingya volunteers the tools they need to support them.”

Professor Marilyn Leask co-chair of MESH – the Mapping Educational Specialist Knowledge Initiative

There are hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugee children living in camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. They have experienced violence and ongoing trauma in some of the most crucial years of their lives. Yet most still lack safe spaces to learn and play.

We are rolling out a home-based early childhood care and education (ECCE) in emergencies programme. This works with children aged 3-5yrs. VSO has brought together leading education specialists to create an open-source guide for people working in young children's education in extremely challenging contexts.

This guide is open to everyone, worldwide, to download and use wherever needed. We have lined up expert international and national volunteers to help deliver it on the ground in the camps where needed, alongside Rohingya community volunteers.

Translated into the local language, the guide teaches through songs and stories. We have designed it to help young children in crisis understand the world around them. It will support their emotional development and will help them grasp early literacy and numeracy. This is so important if a whole generation is not to lose access to education.

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**Cox's Bazar is now home to almost**  
**700,000**  
**Rohingya refugees**

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**Educating children  
in crisis in Bangladesh**

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# HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

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**Poor health is both a cause and a consequence of poverty. It creates a vicious cycle. Those in poverty become too ill to work, and money spent on accessing healthcare pushes people further into poverty.**

VSO volunteers work with health workers, communities and governments to improve health services and break the cycle of poverty.

## Health in the first month of motherhood

Each year, over 2.6 million babies die within the first 28 days of life. Nearly 300,000 women still die from complications related to childbirth. Most of these deaths take place in developing countries, from preventable causes. We support healthcare workers to provide better quality services and support communities to demand better access to maternal and newborn healthcare.

VSO has worked in Myanmar, Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia to ensure that more women give birth safely, attended by a qualified midwife. In Myanmar, VSO volunteers have contributed towards reducing maternal deaths by mentoring 50 midwife tutors who have cascaded what they have learnt to 672 trainee midwives.

In Tanzania, the VSO Accelerated Care and Treatment project has increased access to maternal and newborn health services in eight district hospitals in Lindi and Mtwara provinces. It's also improved the quality of services. VSO volunteers have trained healthcare workers in the use of portable ultrasound devices. They have also helped develop specialist newborn intensive care units and rolled out colour-coded checklists to help healthcare workers monitor babies in their first crucial hours.



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**Over 600**  
midwives trained  
in Myanmar

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**Amina Nakukonde, 30, experienced complications when she gave birth at Gulu hospital, Uganda. Fortunately, VSO volunteer midwife Marianne Bontenbal was close at hand to make sure she received the vital treatment she needed.**



## Young people taking control of their sexual health

Teaching young people about sexual and reproductive health helps them to make healthy decisions about their bodies. But they are often left out of the conversation about sexual health. This is especially true for those identifying as HIV positive, disabled or LGBTQ. Stigma prevents them from speaking out in public.

Through the Gender Empowerment and Development to Enhance Rights (GENDER) project,

VSO has trained 1,069 young people as community volunteers in six countries across Southern Africa. These volunteers are providing sexual and reproductive health information and promoting behaviour change amongst their peers.

As a result, 35,990 young people across Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe have gained knowledge of – and greater access to – sexual and reproductive health services.



Niyonsaba Brown, pictured above, is training 140 community health workers and nurses in sign language in Nyagatare, Rwanda, so they can communicate with their deaf patients.

“The deaf community are most affected by sexual and reproductive health issues – particularly with regards to early pregnancies among young girls. It’s great to be able to support them with information and services they need.”

Mukeshimana Marie-Claire, 38, one of the nurses to receive this training.



“Before the programme, some of us were moving skeletons. As you can see, even those of us that are HIV positive look healthy now.”

Comment from one Zimbabwean inmate

In Zimbabwe, the rate of HIV infection is twice as high in prisons as in the general population. VSO is working to help prison communities improve the health outcomes of HIV positive inmates.

Prisoners are being trained to provide peer support, HIV, sexual and reproductive health education, and cell-based care to other inmates. They act as volunteer advocates and role models, gaining the confidence to affect change for the most marginalised in their communities.

Tracey Ben is one advocate, and has seen the devastating effects of life in an under-resourced prison:

“We all come from different backgrounds and have committed different crimes, so it is difficult to get along. Peer education is critical in building bridges.”

Creating an environment where inmates feel comfortable disclosing their status has led to a 100% increase in adherence to HIV medication. Upon release, the peer educators use the skills they have learnt to support their own communities, contributing to society and reducing the stigma attached to ex-offenders.

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**514**

**inmates trained in  
supporting other  
prisoners with HIV**

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**100%**

**increase in  
adherence to  
HIV medication**

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# Transforming the lives of prison inmates in Zimbabwe





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# SECURE LIVELIHOODS

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**Millions of people are struggling without a reliable source of food and income to support themselves and their families. VSO works to address the barriers to financial independence. Our skilled volunteers work in communities to ensure people have the skills and opportunities needed to live secure and dignified lives.**



**Cocoa-farming communities in Ghana are benefiting from increased yields and bigger profits thanks to our 'Cocoa Life' partnership with Mondelēz International.**

## **Sustainability at the heart of development**

By sharing their skills and experience, VSO volunteers help generate long-lasting change in the communities they work.

For example, through the Cocoa Lives programme in Ghana, 905 marginalised women and men have been trained in skills such as commercial agriculture, soap-making and textiles. Thirty percent of those trained are now applying these skills to support their incomes.

In Tanzania, smallholders in Zanzibar increased their yields by as much as 66% through VSO's Commercial Agriculture for Smallholder Farmers in Horticulture (CASH) project. This project focuses

on women and people with disabilities and has helped farmers improve their access to resources, technology and links to the markets. This means that they have more control over when, where and to whom they sell their produce. It means greater control and growing incomes, ensuring their hard work pays off.

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**Smallholders in Zanzibar have increased their yields by up to**

**66%** through VSO's CASH project.

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©VSO/Sophal Neak

**Mao Pek, 56, (left) demonstrating how to apply fertilizer pellets at his rice field during a community demonstration facilitated by VSO as part of the IMA4P project.**

### Future-proofing farming

Climate change. Market demands. Natural disasters. There are so many shocks that can devastate the livelihoods of the world's poorest.

In Cambodia, rice farmers were struggling due to unpredictable rains and lack of access to markets. This was making farming more and more unprofitable. Our Improving Market Access for the Poor (IMA4P) project is addressing this. Volunteers have introduced a sowing innovation called the Eli-seeder. This seeder means farmers no longer have to plant seeds by hand, cutting labour costs

by 30%. For many farmers, this has made farming financially viable.

These rice farmers now also have membership to the Sustainable Rice Platform. This platform is bringing people together to tackle some of the biggest issues in rice farming – like climate change, sustainability and meeting the global demand for rice – while making sure farmers get a fair price. Membership of the platform has cut costs for farmers, boosted yields and opened access to the EU market.



©VSO/Sophal Neak

**“We’ve really started to minimise the impacts on the farmers that we’re working with. We’ve managed to make their crops adaptable to climate change.”**

**Albert Mutasa, VSO project manager in Cambodia**

“I like JOIKKO because it’s a social enterprise – it’s doing a social service for people. I want to make this Farmer Centre a model for others. For me, it’s made a huge difference.”

Mohammed Azadul Islam, 33, Farmer Centre Entrepreneur (FCE) in Bhangni, Bangladesh

For farmers in Bangladesh, high market prices, high-interest borrowing and poor yields drive cycles of debt and poverty.

As part of the Growing Together project, VSO works with the global agribusiness company, Syngenta. Corporate volunteers from Syngenta, work with skilled national and international volunteers with a background in agriculture, business development and social inclusion. Together, we have developed a network of community-led, for-profit ‘Farmer Centres’. These provide agronomic training and improve market access, as well as selling quality essentials like fertilisers and seeds.

Control of the centres is being handed over to farmer entrepreneurs, trained in business skills and agricultural best practice. This is a transition from an externally-funded project to what it is today: JOIKKO, a self-financing, sustainable social business that gives power back to smallholders.

There are currently six initial Farmer Centres in northern Bangladesh and a customer base of 7,000 farmers. By 2020, with financial investment from the UK’s Department for International Development, the project will expand to 20 centres supporting 100,000 farmers.

In the project’s second year, farmers reported an increase in net income of 300%. Chemical fertiliser and pesticide usage has reduced by 60-70% and 10-50% respectively.

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Through VSO’s Growing Together project, farmers in Bangladesh have seen an increase in net income of **300%**

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# Empowering farmers in Bangladesh





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# CORE APPROACHES

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**Across all our work, we look at how we can build stronger communities where no one is overlooked or left behind. To do this, we focus on three areas: social accountability, resilience, and social inclusion and gender.**

## **Everyone deserves to be heard**

Whether you're a school teacher in Nepal, a crab farmer in Bangladesh, or a midwife in Uganda, you deserve to be listened to. But power dynamics stop people speaking up. This is where VSO can help.

VSO volunteers can bridge the gap between decision-makers and communities. We empower communities to hold decision-makers to account, and support those who are responsible for providing services to respond to community concerns. This is social accountability.

Social accountability gives people a voice. We support people to influence and engage with governments and other service providers.

## **Youth as a force for change**

In Lesotho, young people are holding government to account over the sexual health services on offer to them. Using scorecards, youths and adolescents have rated two health services in the Mafeteng district.

This project shows young people they have a right to assess health services, and call the government out when they aren't up to standard.

In the coming year, we're expanding our social accountability toolkit, introducing new methods, like interactive theatre, to build the confidence of communities and to help bring their voices to the attention of decision-makers.

**Sathi Das, 27, used to struggle on the uncertain income from her husband's crab-catching in Narketola, Bangladesh. But following training from VSO, she was able to set up her own profitable crab farming business.**



©VSO/Abir Abdullah



©VSO/Evelyn Fey

**Zimbabwean international volunteer Jonah Tendere, 43, (left) works alongside community volunteer Saidu Turay, 50, (right) to help mudslide-affected communities in Sierra Leone become more resilient to future disasters.**

## Community resilience

Shocks and stresses, such as climate change, natural disaster or political instability, can have a devastating effect on communities. When crisis hits, a community is only as resilient as its most vulnerable. For example, people with disabilities, or poorer people living in a precarious area. We build our disaster plans with these people in mind.

First, we analyse how a community currently protects itself from risks, and identify where we can best assist. We then mobilise governments and individuals, seeing how they can act when disaster strikes. VSO is then able to make best use of resources, working where there is the greatest need.

In Malawi, for example, volunteers are using drones to analyse the risks a community may face. Drone photography reveals any threats a community may be exposed to, prompting community members to take action and to work with volunteers to find solutions.

## The tools to prevent and manage disasters

Building resilience isn't just about helping communities respond in the wake of a crisis. It's also about preventing disasters happening in the first place.

In Malawi, communities engaged in our More Action for Just Initiatives (MAJI) project are less likely to be destabilised by climate change and natural disaster, thanks to an emphasis on resource management and reforestation.

VSO volunteers work with communities on resilience all over the world. From mudslides in Sierra Leone to flooding in Nepal – building in processes that help identify and mitigate against risks, is saving lives and livelihoods in some of the world's most vulnerable communities.

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**28,000** people have benefited from the MAJI project in Malawi so far

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# CORE APPROACHES

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## Finding the root cause of gender inequality

To end gender discrimination, we have to address the structural and systemic causes of poverty and inequality.

As part of the One Community One Family (OCOF) project in Nepal, local community volunteers helped provide training for husbands, brothers and other male community members. The aim is to change gender attitudes and practices, and to improve family relationships.

Covering everything from domestic violence to the distribution of household chores, the project has seen significant changes in attitudes to gender and has created greater harmony amongst family

members. The women involved have also become more empowered to take an active role in financial decision-making in their households.

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**800** community members have watched interactive theatre performances on gender-based violence, designed to help challenge damaging attitudes.

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Mina (above left) felt isolated and suicidal after her husband started drinking and became violent towards her. Thanks to the OCOF project in Nepal, and the training provided, Mina's husband is no longer drinking to excess and the violence has stopped.



Four ICS youth volunteers after delivering an employment skills session at a high school in Kratie, Cambodia. The team comprises both Khmer and British young people.



### A focus on disability

Disability inclusion is central to our work. VSO has committed to undertaking social exclusion (including disability) and gender analysis in each VSO country to develop a greater understanding of the causes and consequences of exclusion where we work. We are introducing minimum requirements regarding disability across all our global programmes.

In Kenya, VSO is undertaking research into how training in Kenyan Sign Language affects the quality of education. This research will help us design new and improved interventions to benefit teachers, deaf students and their communities.

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**356** married men and women, and their family members, have completed gender training in Baglung, Nepal.

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# GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

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**We can meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). But only if citizens across the world support, demand, oversee and deliver them. This needs the support of organisations to engage and mobilise active citizens. This is why the UN has formally recognised the power of volunteering in delivering the SDGs.**

VSO is building global engagement by:

- Encouraging our volunteer network to become global citizens, and advocates of the SDGs.
- Creating opportunities for those most affected by poverty and exclusion to create change in their own communities.
- Developing partnerships with funders, private sectors, civil society, and other International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs).

## Promoting global citizenship

For 60 years, VSO has worked with more than 76,000 volunteers in over 40 countries.

Our volunteers live and work in local communities. They see, first hand, the roots of poverty and exclusion. They have the unique skills and

commitment to continue taking positive action beyond their placement. With the right support, they become lifelong agents of change.

Our citizen-led monitoring work, which helps people to hold authorities to account, demonstrates just how powerful this is. Last year, over 120 volunteers supported over 10,000 people in raising awareness of the SDGs.

One awareness campaign in India's Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh states underlined the importance of access to social protection services for people with disabilities. This campaign reached nearly 1,500 people with disabilities. Three quarters of these people accessed at least one service or entitlement as a result.



©VSO/Priyanka Budhathoki

**Through the partnership between VSO and Theatre for a Change, young women in Nepal were trained to use interactive theatre in their child marriage prevention campaigns.**



©VSO/Peter Caton

**Dr Kiran Cheedella (centre) is a GP from the UK, volunteering on VSO's Doctors for Development programme in partnership with the Royal College of General Practitioners.**

## Youth engagement

Of the 1.8 billion young people around the world, 90% live in developing countries. VSO works with young people in all our programmes. Through the International Citizen Service (ICS) programme, VSO has helped to create a powerful network of young people. They are passionate advocates for creating change in their own communities and committed active global citizens.

Over the past year, we brought young people together in seven countries to raise awareness, engage local decision-makers, and campaign for issues that they care about. Some of the issues covered include youth unemployment in Tanzania, religious tolerance in Pakistan, and child marriage in Bangladesh.

Child marriage has been the focus of a national awareness-raising campaign in Bangladesh. The campaign was led by returned national youth volunteers who appeared on four leading radio stations, attached campaign stickers to over 560 vehicles in Dhaka, and featured in a national newspaper.

## Building global partnerships

We believe that progress is only possible by working together. Partnerships are a way for us to build on others' expertise. They are a way for us to innovate. They are a way for us to extend the reach of our work and to amplify our voice.

**Others' expertise:** Through our Doctors for Development project we have facilitated a partnership between The Royal College of General Practice (RCGP) and Makeni hospital in Sierra Leone. Qualified practitioners from the RCGP volunteer to provide training and assessment of local doctors. To date this partnership has benefited more than 90 health professionals.

**Innovation:** Last year we launched a new partnership with Theatre for a Change, piloting five new projects in Bangladesh, Nepal, Swaziland, Rwanda and Tanzania. This innovative project uses interactive theatre to help young people understand their rights to quality health services.

**Extending our reach:** Our partnership with MESH Guide is working to develop a teaching guide for Early Childhood Development (ECD) in emergencies, specifically for our Bangladesh Education in Emergencies programme. We're now working with Ustad Mobile, to expand our reach and deliver this resource using accessible technology.

VSO is at the heart of these cross-sector collaborations – brokering and convening relationships, and ensuring all parties have the well-being of the communities we support front and centre at all times.



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# GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

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**VSO is the world's leading volunteering for development organisation. We have a responsibility to share our experience and to work with others in promoting high-impact and responsible volunteering practice. It requires us to lead by example.**

To get there, VSO is leading on the development of a set of global volunteering for development standards. In 2017, we formally established a group with other international organisations to drive this work forward. Today, the group has 22 members, and we plan to launch these standards in 2019.

## Sharing knowledge

As well as setting new standards, we're committed to building our knowledge and insight. We formed a partnership with the Institute for Development Studies to aid our understanding of how our volunteering model of development helps people to hold governments to account.

We also share our experience and best practice with the wider sector. Last year we developed a position paper for the annual International Volunteer Cooperation Organisations (IVCO) conference on The Role of Volunteers in Promoting Women's and Youth Empowerment. We were also invited to take part in the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Volunteering Alliance to contribute to discussions on volunteerism.

We are now preparing for a Global Technical Meeting on Volunteering at the UN in 2020, which will provide an opportunity to promote the new volunteering standards to a global audience.



Shehla Qureshi (second left), Karachi's first female superintendent, attends a UN Women event with Baroness Lorely Burt (third left) on ending violence against women and girls.



**Irene Ratamwa is a community health worker in Zimbabwe. She works with ex-inmate and VSO volunteer peer educator Tafadzwa Jokochoko to try and improve health in the community.**

## Influencing policy

We know that policies and laws set by governments and international institutions can make a huge difference to the lives of people VSO is working with and for.

Throughout all our policy and advocacy work, we take a bottom-up approach. This enables people in the communities we support to identify the drivers of poverty in their own contexts. It helps them to decide where policies need to be changed, and to plan for change in their own lives.

Over the past year, we have advocated for the inclusion of the right to health for prisoners

in Zimbabwe. We have also worked with the Government of Nepal to influence their national disaster risk reduction strategy.

We draw upon our wide range of volunteers to deliver this work, including our parliamentary volunteers who use their skills as influencers to support VSO's advocacy work.

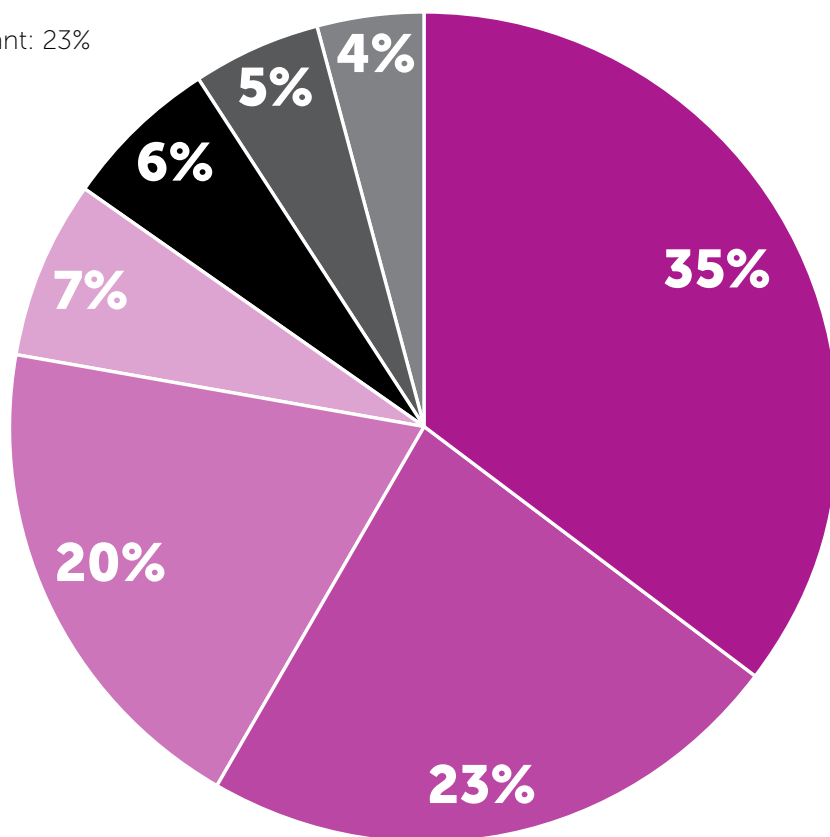
Baroness Lorely Burt worked with local police forces in Pakistan to encourage them to be more sensitive in their response to gender-based violence. And in Bangladesh, UK MP Dr Rosena Allin-Khan supported our advocacy work on child marriage.





## Where our income came from 2017/18

- ICS 2 Contract: 35%
- DFID Volunteering for Development Grant: 23%
- Institutional Grants: 20%
- Individual giving: 7%
- Companies: 6%
- Events and community: 5%
- Other donations: 4%

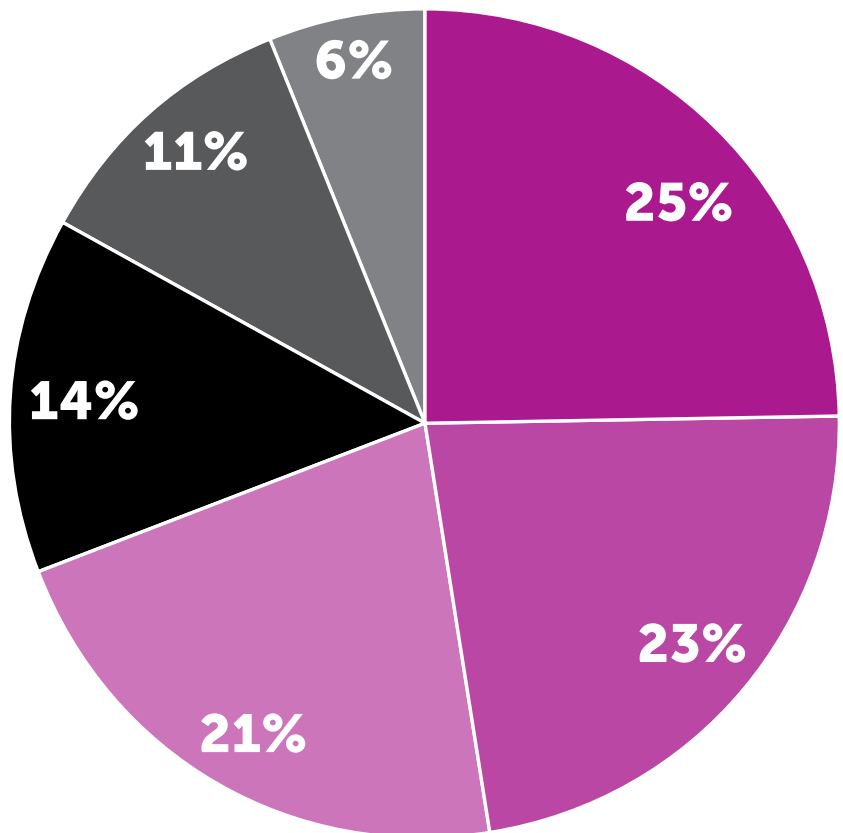


**TOTAL  
INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR  
£74  
MILLION**



## How the money was spent 2017/18

- ICS consortium partners (contract): 25%
- Livelihoods: 23%
- Education: 21%
- Health: 14%
- Core approaches: 11%
- Raising funds: 6%



**SPEND ON  
CHARITABLE  
ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEAR  
£68.4  
MILLION**



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# HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US

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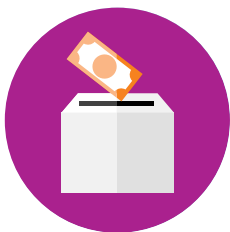
At VSO, we believe that progress is only possible by working together. Thousands of people who want to see an end to global poverty and injustice are taking actions to support us. Could you join them and help us leave no one behind?



## Volunteer in developing countries

Last year over 7,400 people volunteered to work in our programmes to tackle poverty and marginalisation. We have opportunities for professionals, young people and corporate employees to volunteer around the world on a wide range of placements.

Find out more at [\*\*vsointernational.org/volunteering\*\*](https://vsointernational.org/volunteering)



## Support us with a regular donation

We depend more than ever on public support to be able to transform lives in the world's poorest and most marginalised communities. Please consider supporting us – just £5 a month could make a huge difference.

Donate today at [\*\*vsointernational.org/donate\*\*](https://vsointernational.org/donate)



## Partner with us

Partnerships lie at the root of all the positive change that we create. Together, we work on programme development and delivery, research, advocacy and fundraising. We partner with institutions, private philanthropists, trusts and foundations, private sector businesses and community groups who share our vision of a world without poverty.

To find out more contact [\*\*partnerships@vsoint.org\*\*](mailto:partnerships@vsoint.org)



## Remember us in your will

One day, a gift in your Will could help make the world a fairer place. Leave a lasting legacy to the people who need it most of all.

To find out more contact [\*\*legacies@vsoint.org\*\*](mailto:legacies@vsoint.org)

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# THANK YOU

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**Our work wouldn't be possible without the dedication and support of thousands of people, partners and organisations.**

From the volunteers who share their time and skills in our programmes around the world, to the partners who work with us on programme development, delivery, research and fundraising. From the staff and supporters who work tirelessly on our behalf, to the people and organisations who donate the vital funds needed to support our work – and all those who generously choose to leave a gift in their Will.

Together, we're working towards a world without poverty. Together, we will leave no one behind.

Thank you.

Here are just some of the individuals and organisations who made a vital contribution to our work in 2017/18.

Accenture  
AmplifyChange  
Big Lottery Fund  
British Gas Tanzania  
Citi Foundation  
Citibank  
Comic Relief  
Department for Foreign Affairs  
Trade and Development  
Department for International  
Development  
Dr and Mrs Alan Hearne  
Dubai Cares  
ElectricAid  
European Commission  
GIZ

Global Affairs Canada  
Greg Dyke and Sue Howes  
IBM International Foundation  
Irish Aid  
Jersey Overseas Aid  
Kahane Foundation  
Mars  
MasterCard Foundation  
Medicor Foundation  
Mondelez  
Norwegian Agency for  
Development Cooperation  
Oil Search Foundation  
Randstad Global Partnership  
Royal Norwegian Embassy  
SAP

Scottish Government  
Stichting Weeshuis der  
Doopsgezinden  
Swedish International  
Development Agency  
Swiss Development Cooperation  
Syngenta  
The Foreign Service of the Faroes  
Islands  
The Grocers' Foundation  
The Pestalozzi Children's Fund  
The Schroder Foundation  
UNICEF  
USAID



Global Affairs  
Canada

COMIC  
RELIEF





**If you would like to know more about VSO's work worldwide, visit [www.vsointernational.org](http://www.vsointernational.org)**

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