

WHERE WOULD THE WORLD BE WITHOUT VOLUNTEERING?

The impact of volunteering
in international development





PEOPLE AND PARTNERSHIPS:

a recipe for fighting global poverty and disadvantage

*“I need other human beings in order for me to be human.
We are created for complementarity. I have gifts that you don’t have.
And you have gifts I don’t have.”*

Archbishop Desmond Tutu¹

Meaningful and lasting change comes about when people work in partnership, helping each other achieve their goals. The process of developing skills, exchanging knowledge, sharing expertise and giving time is a highly effective way of combating global poverty.

Working in partnership means supporting local communities, organisations, and governments in developing and fragile countries to identify their needs. Working in partnership brings these different levels of society together to find the best way to address those needs. And working with international volunteers as a way to support people in the process of changing and developing their own lives gets results.

The British volunteer agencies and our volunteers deliver quality results across many different sectors. Whether it’s working to meet the challenges of climate change, health or education, we make a tangible impact because we are professionals working with and through other professionals.

Volunteering has an unshakeable place in international development: it is a cost-effective way of fighting global poverty and disadvantage; it is resourceful in meeting some of the 21st Century’s biggest challenges head-on; and its lasting value far exceeds material wealth.

Not only is working with volunteers an effective approach to international development, it’s an ethos too. It’s about the personal, professional and social growth of both the volunteers and those with whom they are working. It’s about growing the global community, growing understanding across cultures, growing skills and experiences, and growing our future.

Volunteers are an important part of the world’s social capital: they are the professionals and the movers and shakers of tomorrow. And many past volunteers are leading the way today. Through their experiences and the things they go on to achieve, international volunteers – crucially – create ongoing support for international development.

¹ Archbishop Desmond Tutu, keynote address at the Advocates for International Development Conference, 13 July 2009
<http://www.a4id.org/events/desmond-tutu-lecture/default.aspx>

TACKLING THE DEVELOPING WORLD'S BIG CHALLENGES

“Looking ahead to 2015 and beyond, there is no question that we can put an end to poverty. We know what to do.

But it requires an unswerving, collective, long-term effort.”

Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary General

The challenges facing the developing world seem enormous – the harmful effects of quickening climate change, the struggle to secure primary education for all children, helping people feed themselves, securing equal rights, keeping people safe, keeping people healthy...

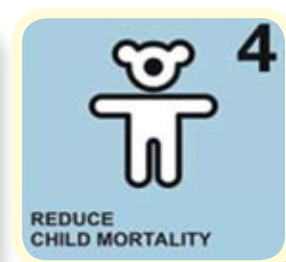
As the British government rightly identifies, these challenges are felt most severely on the ground, in the very heart of vulnerable and impoverished communities. And their health is our health.

It's ten years since the international community embarked on the journey of achieving the Millennium Development Goals; the eight goals that seek to uphold human dignity and free all men, women, and children from the dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty by the year 2015. We still have a long way to go, and

the participation of ordinary people – such as international volunteers – is critical to getting there.

In working with communities who are seeking to transform their lives in order to cope with what's happening now and what lies ahead, and in supporting them in this process of change, they show and share with us many of the solutions. The world has much to learn from them.

Since the British volunteer agencies believe that development is a process of transformation, we're concerned not only with delivering better services and providing for basic needs, but also with meeting the 21st century's major challenges head-on and helping creating the conditions necessary for people to thrive and lead dignified lives.



¹ The Millennium Development Goals are drawn from the Millennium Declaration: <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

“If you are here because you pity us, if you came because you think you have the answers to our problems, if you expect that after two years you can look back on a project which you have established, there is no place for you here.

But if you are here because you have unanswered questions of your own, if you have come to receive as well as to give, if after two years you will be happy to leave behind friends who have become more self-confident and proud as human beings and as farmers because of the friendship you have shared with them, then please stay with us.”

Romy Tiongco, VSO's partner in the Philippines

The British volunteer agencies work in close partnerships with a broad spectrum of people and organisations; from those working at a ministerial level right through to those serving the very grassroots of their communities.

We support them in the process of change to achieve their goals. We work with them to identify the skills, knowledge and people they really need in order to achieve those goals.

We don't embark on projects because we think they're a great idea - we work closely with our partners to develop the programmes, projects and services that will help them achieve lasting change.

Our volunteers (our people) are a key way in which we work with our partners and their

people. They do and support essential work that money and food packages can't. It takes people working with other people to develop the process of change, put it into action, and get results.

Our partners want to work with professional people who bring commitment, respect, and a willingness to learn and share. Our volunteers are just that. And because they often live and work with communities over extended periods of time, they build strong relationships, can be flexible, and respond to situations in a way that is appropriate to each context.

The stories of transformation over the next few pages show that strong partnerships - combined with volunteers - make for powerful achievements.



ECONOMIC STABILITY

Stable and prosperous livelihoods are the foundation for growing populations, healthy individuals, and the well-being of families...

Despite economic growth across the globe, inequality remains pernicious and persistent.

Breaking the cycle of poverty involves creating local wealth and new opportunities through decent and productive employment for men and, especially, women.

Economic stability leads to social capital: healthy people with access to services and opportunities who are the basis from which to sustainably grow skills, knowledge, and economies.

To enable excluded individuals and communities to grow, we know that helping people to gain access to skills training, business training, and finance (such as banking, saving, credit and insurance) is crucial. It's vital that we support people to develop the skills they need in order locate, access and nurture the local, national and

international markets so essential for trade, stability and growth.

Urban environments are areas of significant population growth. 60% of the world's population is expected to live in cities by 2030.¹

Not only does this mean increasing challenges for employment and prosperity within these expanding urban environments, but the challenges facing rural areas are severe and twofold:

- labour forces in rural areas are diminishing rapidly as people flock to towns and cities, driven by the hope or conviction they will find better opportunities
- the demands placed on rural produce by increasing urban populations means agricultural innovation is essential for food production and food security

¹ United Nations Population Division, World Urbanization Prospects: the 2005 Revision. 4.9bn people are expected to be urban dwellers by 2030 - an increase of over 50% compared with the number of urban dwellers in 2005 (3.2bn).

In Mozambique, over 80% of the labour force is employed in agriculture and rural development. At least one million Mozambicans depend upon fishing activities. Rural employment like this makes a crucial contribution to food security for disadvantaged communities who are particularly vulnerable to drought and hunger.

Skillshare International has been working in partnership with the Institute for the Development of Small-scale Fisheries developing and enhancing their capacity to reach artisanal fishing communities, including supporting them to establish micro-finance associations and community management committees.

In one part of this initiative, Skillshare International placed volunteer Sarojakshan as a Technical Adviser with the Institute in order to help them work with local fishermen to improve their fishing techniques and long-term prospects.

During his placement, Sarojakshan trained fishermen in good fishing practices, and how to use nets to maximise catches. This has benefitted tens of thousands of families across the provinces of Inhambane, Gaza and Maputo.

Manuel Gulamo, 50, is a fisherman who lives near Angoche with his wife and 12 children. He participated in Sarojakshan's training sessions, learning how to improve his techniques and fish responsibly. He says: "The Institute gives us nets and teaches us how to construct good gill nets and how to hang them. Now we use scientific methods... We catch more fish and they're bigger. The more fish I catch, the more I have to sell, and this means I can buy uniforms for the children so they can go to school and I can buy better food. We're also taught not to use mosquito nets because fishermen who use these catch eggs and

small fish which is very bad, and if they keep using them there'll be no fish left in the sea."

Nihumame Essiaca, is a fisherman in the same region. He started working with the Institute for the Development of Small-scale Fisheries and Sarojakshan in 2007.

He says: "Working with the Institute is good. Since I joined we have set up an association with some of the other fishermen. We've learnt how to use savings and are opening up a bank account.

I now catch more fish, and I can negotiate a better price when selling the fish. This is very important as I can provide more for the family and now we have more food."



EDUCATION

*Education is perhaps the bedrock of enabling lives to function.
Without education, meaningful change cannot happen...*

Education builds skills, abilities and knowledge - all the things essential for personal worth, future growth, economic prosperity, and social capital.

A lack of education often leads to life-long inequality and social exclusion.

Achieving primary education for all boys and girls by 2015 remains a challenge.

101 million children of primary school age are not in school.¹

Working in partnership through volunteers has an undeniable impact in helping change the status quo in places where there aren't enough teachers, where teachers need professional support and training, where poverty makes school fees unaffordable, or where the education of girls is valued less than that of boys.

We know from experience that helping people know and understand their rights

means they are better placed to make decisions that will guide and change their lives for the better. Supporting people to find their voice and make it heard puts them in a better position to actively demand their rights.

Education also keeps people safe and healthy. It helps transform attitudes - for example, tackling domestic violence where it may be considered the norm. And it leads to positive changes in behaviours and habits - for example, educating people about sexual health is an effective weapon in reducing rates of HIV, AIDS and sexually-transmitted infections.

Because we work to support people, organisations and institutions in developing the skills, approaches and confidence they need in order to deliver education, all of this is possible.

¹ UNICEF, statistics by area, education <http://www.childinfo.org/education.html>

Non-formal education: helping children back into school



Each year, an estimated 1.5 million children between the ages of 9 and 15 drop out of formal education in Tamil Nadu, India. People who continue their education beyond primary school typically enjoy improved health and long-term prospects. Instead, a high drop-out rate such as this one in Tamil Nadu represents a significant loss of technical and social skills, and perpetuates the poverty gap between generations.

In order to tackle this large-scale problem, the State Government asked **Students Partnership Worldwide (SPW)** to support its *Education for All* initiative by drawing on their expertise in using volunteers to deliver non-formal learning methods and training in educational environment planning. What started as a local, nine month project now reaches 30,000 children each year.

Education for All aimed to increase the number of 10th Grade pupils achieving the minimum standard for government exams. The initiative sought to increase access to effective education in rural areas, and increase school enrolment rates among children not currently attending school.

Therefore, as part of an initial nine month project, SPW recruited and trained young volunteers aged 20-25 in the role of Peer Educator. Supported by professional staff, the volunteers delivered lessons in health and life-skills every week as part of the school curriculum. They used non-formal education methods such as drama, debate, art and group work to make information relevant to young people, and build life-skills such as critical thinking, decision-making and self-confidence.

In addition, the volunteers trained Head Teachers in how to use non-formal education methods, and helped set up 15 Youth Resource Centres - places for young people to access information, seek confidential advice, and be encouraged back to school.

The Head Master of a Government Panchayat Village School in the Vellore District said: "Our school has a number of children who work as bonded labourers rolling Beedis [local cigarettes]. It has been a difficult task to get the children to school on a regular basis. Ever since the SPW volunteers started to work in our school there has been a significant increase in the number of children attending school."

The project helped over 260 young people return to school, and saw a double-digit improvement in exam pass rates. As a result of the volunteers' successful work on this project, SPW was invited to sit on the Vellore District Board of Education and is now working to expand the initiative across Vellore and its neighbouring Districts, reaching approximately 30,000 young people each year.



HEALTH

*It's often said that if you haven't got your health,
you haven't got anything...*

In developing countries:

- malnutrition is responsible for half of all child deaths, and 1/5 of maternal deaths¹
- 900m people do not have access to safe drinking water²
- 2.5bn people lack adequate sanitation³
- 2m people die from HIV and AIDS every year⁴
- many diseases which kill, such as TB and malaria, are easily preventable

The impact of poor health on developing countries is massive. This is why we help more people to access essential services, and support healthcare providers to reach more people with better quality services.

Ill health and malnutrition in a child's early life increase cognitive and physical problems, affecting the child's ability to learn. This increases the likelihood of lifelong inequality and discrimination, as children with disabilities and special

learning needs are routinely denied access to education.

Millions of parents around the world are dying from AIDS and AIDS-related illnesses, meaning families often lose their main wage earners. This orphans countless children and puts them under pressure (along with their siblings and elderly relatives) to provide for the rest of the family. It can become almost impossible to access healthcare and education, and many children end up on the streets.

Poverty denies people access to healthcare services. Many cannot afford the birth certificates and official documents necessary to access these services. People living in rural locations are often denied healthcare services due to poor transport links, rough terrain, and a lack of infrastructure. Many women face additional discrimination as their ability to access healthcare is restricted by cultural practices or religious laws.

⁸ Prof Robert E Black MD, Prof Lindsay H Allen PhD, Prof Zulfiqar A Bhutta MD, Prof Laura E Caulfield PhD, Mercedes de Onis MD, Majid Ezzati PhD, Colin Mathers PhD, Prof Juan Rivera PhD, Maternal and child undernutrition: global and regional exposures and health consequences The Lancet, Volume 371, Issue 9608, pp 243 - 260, 19 January 2008

⁹ WHO/UNICEF, Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation – Special Focus on Sanitation, 2008, pg 2

¹⁰ ibid

¹¹ UNAIDS, 2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic, p215



Improving sexual health in North East Brazil

International Service has 5 volunteers and a project manager working with the Amazonas State STI HIV & AIDS Programme. Since 2007 they have been strengthening the Amazonas State's mission to control the AIDS epidemic through preventative healthcare – a relatively new idea amongst Brazilian healthcare professionals.

The World Health Organization estimate that 10 million cases of sexually-transmitted infections occur in Brazil every year. Infections like HIV and syphilis can be deadly if untreated, and are easily transmitted from mother to baby during pregnancy or childbirth.

The volunteers support the State Programme's core work across 62 municipalities, and they also provide specific support to 4 health teams in the municipalities of Lábrea, Itacoatiara, Eirunepé, and Benjamin Constant.

By delivering training sessions, the volunteers enable health professionals and health workers to improve their knowledge about sexual health, learn how to prevent the transmission of infections, and learn how to carry out essential research into sexual behaviours and sexual health awareness. So far, over 70 training sessions have been held with 525 health professionals. 49 health professionals have been specifically trained to work with pregnant women.

March 2009 was a major milestone for the programme: across the 4 municipalities there was a 20% reduction in the incidence of sexually-transmitted infections amongst a sexually-active population of 270,000 people.

The volunteers also help health teams become more effective in reaching vulnerable people - such as young people and riverboat crews - with advice and information about sexual health and how to prevent STIs. Two volunteers are working with the *Projeto Saúde e Alegria* (Health and Happiness Project) which provides health services by boat to 143 riverside communities who are difficult to reach due to the immense rainforests.

One volunteer uses circus techniques and visual materials to help children learn about health and human rights, whilst another volunteer supports the project's strategic communications.

So far, this programme has...

- distributed 51,400 condoms at carnivals and major cultural events between September 2008 and March 2009
- extended counselling and testing services to rural areas for the first time ever
- reached over 5000 young people
- carried out over 3900 HIV and syphilis tests on pregnant women
- enabled 14,500 adults to actively participate in prevention projects
- supported 11 times more young people to actively seek sexual health information and use condoms.



CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is happening now.

And it's happening to all of us...

The world is already beginning to experience the effects of climate change.

In the future we are most likely to see: land lost to flooding, melting ice, and rising sea levels; increasing temperatures matched by an increase in disease; heightened competition for resources; food production affected by drought; death and displacement of people as a result of natural disasters.

Climate change will hit developing countries first and it will hit them hardest.¹

It threatens to undo the progress that our work in international development has been making, and the possibility of countries having to cope with thousands upon thousands of environmental refugees is real.

Many poor and vulnerable communities can already show the developed world a thing or two about using available resources wisely, creatively, and effectively. With additional technical support or training from our volunteers, vulnerable communities can become better able to cope with what's happening now, as well as acquiring the skills to adapt to what the future brings.

The significant majority of the world's poor depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. The developed world is dependent upon poor and indigenous communities because they perform the crucial role of maintaining and conserving countless resources and natural habitats – like rainforests.

At the same time as the developed world must find ways to cut its own carbon emissions and manage resources more responsibly, we are working to support developing and fragile countries (who are themselves entitled to grow) to manage their growth in a low-energy, low-carbon, and environmentally sustainable 'green' ways.

Returned volunteers are extremely well-placed to share their experience and knowledge about climate change and its effects, helping increase understanding about what is happening around the world and sharing approaches to responsible use of resources.

¹ See the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change (2006) for details on how the developing world will be impacted environmentally and economically.

“Look at this land,” says Hector, a farmer in western Honduras. He points to a hillside that was once covered with trees, but now stands bare.

Before, farmers enjoyed secure livelihoods, growing their crops in the rich soil. “Now”, says another farmer, Romelio, “the soil is dry and tired. We’re struggling to grow enough food to survive.”

It’s a common story. Illegal loggers move in, cut the trees down, and move on – stripping the land, damaging the environment, and leaving local people with nothing.

Up until now, no-one could stop them. For years, the Environmental Movement of Campamento (CAM) had campaigned against illegal logging, and the corruption that let it continue. They wanted to bring in a new law so that local people had the power to protect their natural resources – but were finding it hard to make it happen.

Their campaign stepped up a gear when Francisco Hernandez – a volunteer with **Progressio** – arrived. An expert in natural resource management, he helped CAM to develop draft legislation. He supported them in lobbying government departments, and building support for their proposals. And his input – his skills and expertise – made the difference. In 2007, the new Forestry, Protected Areas and Wildlife Law was passed.

But the story doesn’t end there.

“The law by itself will not resolve everything,” says Hector. “But it gives us the tool to fight corruption in this country.”

Progressio is all about passing on the skills that people need so that they can bring about long-term change. So Progressio volunteers are continuing to work with CAM, helping them make sure the new law is implemented, the environment is protected, and the people who depend on it for their livelihoods face a more secure future.

“We have learned a lot from Progressio,” says Hector. “We know that they are our allies and this encourages us to continue with our fight.

“We will not let those people steal our resources again.”



CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE BUILDING

Promoting justice and systematic change is essential in countries that are deeply affected by conflict...

Incredibly, countries which are in the midst of conflict, or coping with the aftermath of conflict, are home to:

- 1/3 of all people living below the poverty line¹
- 1/2 of all children who die before the age of 5²
- 1/2 of all children who are not in primary school³

In fragile countries, we are helping our partners meet the challenge of maintaining the provision of the essential and basic services that are so often denied or destroyed as a result of conflict.

Not only are many basic services, entitlements and freedoms enshrined in human rights, but they are also linked to the economic development and social health of fragile nations. Supporting the reform of legal systems is often necessary so that the poor - and women, especially - do not live in fear of persecution.

The link between politics, security and development is irrefutable.

In many nations, conflict and fragility are rooted in the politics of sharing power and of sharing resources between classes, genders and ethnicities. It is therefore essential that our volunteers work with our partners to promote justice and facilitate change that seeks to end inequality and discrimination.

¹ DfID, *Eliminating World Poverty: Building our Common Future*, 2008, pp15 & 69. Statistics calculated using World Bank Development Indicators 2009 and UNICEF *States of the World's Children* 2009.

² *ibid*

³ *ibid*

Uganda continues to suffer the effects of more than 20 years of armed conflict. Human rights groups estimate that nearly 2 million people have been uprooted and displaced, forced to flee the fighting.

In Western Uganda - especially in the area bordering the Democratic People's Republic of Congo - there has been conflict between displaced people and local people over land use, land ownership, cultural differences, and power in local politics.

As part of their Participation & Governance programme in Uganda, VSO have been working on shared objectives with partner organisations - including the Rwenzori Forum for Peace & Justice where two volunteers supported a participatory needs assessment.

The Rwenzori Forum for Peace and Justice comprises 10 community peace groups with representatives from every district in the region. It works to promote conflict resolution between all communities. In particular, it supports women to act as neutral mediators in disputes, and to act as Human Rights Ambassadors to prevent future conflicts by building social cohesion.

But the Forum has faced challenges in its work such as a lack of funding, a lack of capacity, and governance issues. So they worked with VSO to determine how they might benefit from working with a volunteer.

As a result, VSO recruited Darlene Gage - a Canadian volunteer with 20 years' experience in conflict resolution and restorative justice with indigenous peoples. Darlene's background meant she had developed the openness and flexibility needed in working with different sets of traditions.

The remit of the volunteer placement was to support the Rwenzori Forum to increase its ability to function more effectively as an organisation, and to help build a strong network enabling the community peace groups to operate more effectively throughout their own districts. Darlene also coached Forum staff in how to develop a new strategy, improve communications

activities, and secure longer-term funding.

She was asked to work closely with one of the members of the Forum, the *Integrated Women's Development Programme*, who had secured funding from the EC. She trained respected elders in conflict resolution, mediation, and paralegal skills. The elders were soon dealing with local people who arrived each Saturday to seek advice and intervention with their land conflicts, domestic conflicts, tribal conflicts, disputes between neighbours, and even political conflicts.

Darlene says: "The process of consulting village elders and clan leaders for advice and intervention in disputes is an ancient and long-respected tradition in Uganda. This example of a home-grown solution to local problems is a model for the world. It deals with issues at their source, and uses traditional methods of conflict resolution to intervene before conflicts escalate out of control."

The impact of setting up training activities and introducing modern methods such as mediation, has meant elders are now able to use their role as wise counsellors to bring long-lasting solutions agreed upon by the communities in conflict. And there has been a wider impact in supporting the Rwenzori Forum for Peace and Justice to develop itself as an organisation; it can now serve its members more effectively, helping them in-turn increase their own effectiveness within their own communities.



THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING IN DEVELOPMENT

We know that volunteers in the UK make an invaluable contribution by providing services and activities within society, supporting individuals, and helping communities to function.

We also know that volunteering makes a profound contribution to the UK's economy. In 2005, the work, input and dedication of volunteers equated to £48.1 billion - the equivalent of around 2.1 million full-time workers.¹

But what about volunteering in international development?

The impact

Working in partnership through volunteers has an impact on a significant scale:

- it enables people to take an active role in improving life in their own countries

- it promotes social inclusion and deepens participation
- it fosters personal transformation and enables people to empower each other
- it grows knowledge and experience that can shape development programmes effectively
- it advocates, campaigns and raises awareness at local, regional, national and international levels
- it connects governments, regions and local people

And because we work by supporting service providers, trainers, organisations, institutions and governments to function more effectively, the impact of our development work is long-lasting. It doesn't stop when the funding does.

These two examples demonstrate how, in working with our partners on many different levels, our volunteers' input is effective in reaching many, many vulnerable and poor people.

'The gap between the rich and the poor is not just money, it's know-how,' says Ethiopia's Education Minister, Gennet Zewide. Education at all levels is clearly key to Ethiopia's development and is a Government priority. School enrolment rates here are amongst the lowest in Africa.

In 2003, at the request of the Ethiopian Government, two volunteers devised and implemented the 'Higher National Diploma', a scheme to improve the professional skills of teacher-trainers. They visited every college and university in the country. In just two years, 1,363 Ethiopian teacher trainers completed the diploma. They in turn trained a further 11,000 local teachers who returned to their classrooms with new approaches. In this way, 800,000 children have benefited from the work started by just two volunteers and the Ethiopian Government.

¹ Report of the Commission on the Future of Volunteering and Manifesto for Change, January 2008. The full report is available here: <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/WhatWeDo/Policy/Commission+on+the+Future+of+Volunteering/ourfindings.htm>

THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING IN DEVELOPMENT

Cost-effectiveness

Working through international volunteers is a cost-effective way of meeting development objectives and improving aid effectiveness.

Between April 2008 and March 2009, the British volunteer agencies had a total of **2960** volunteers working with **1570** partners in **62** different countries.

The impact of our work quickly permeates community, family and workplace networks. Between April 2008 and March 2009, we supported over **8.1 million** people to share and develop skills, build their capacities, and take control of their own continuing development.

It costs £61.1 million per year to run our five development agencies. 63% of those costs

are met by the British Government through strategic funding from the Department for International Development.

When you consider the wider ripple-effect of our work, it becomes even more cost-effective than you might have first imagined.

We reach millions more people by supporting national and regional programmes that are designed to benefit populations on a larger scale, such as advocacy and lobbying work, awareness-raising programmes, or campaigns and communications initiatives.

It is never truly possible to account for how many people are reached by work like this, but it engages, involves and affects significant portions of the populations in the countries and regions where we work.

“The way we will get a new school is the same way we got the water supply,” says Milagros, a resident of Villa Gonzalez in the Dominican Republic: “by getting involved in the participatory budgeting process.”

Under this process, people in poor neighbourhoods have a real, decisive say in what local government spends its money on. Volunteers working with local NGO Fundacion Solidaridad have played a key role in introducing the process: training the staff in Fundacion Solidaridad; training community leaders and community groups; training the local government staff; and building up a collection of practical manuals.

At first only the 42,000 people who live in Villa Gonzalez benefited. But it's been so successful that other municipalities have asked for help to introduce it. Now, more than 120 municipalities (out of a total of 151 across the country) have set up participatory budgeting. This means that in a country of 8.5 million people, the majority now benefit from more accessible, transparent and accountable local government.

As Milagros says: “Now we know how to improve our own lives.”



Progressio volunteer, Innocent Ogaba, talks to rural Malawian farmer, Angelina Ngoza, who, along with 40 other families in her village, has escaped the cycle of debt caused by buying high priced chemical fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides each year.

International Service, volunteer Ginny Allonby, helps campesino families in Bolivia to grow salads as part of a project training women, young people, and partner organisation staff in the production of fruits and vegetables.



Progressio volunteer, Musa Chibwana, tells a story to orphaned children at Mbuya Nehanda children's home outside Harare, Zimbabwe,

OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY:

impact beyond economic value

What better way is there for global citizens to work, than with one other? Our lives can't get any more inter-connected than at a personal, one-to-one level.

We have seen that working with volunteers in development is cost-effective. But it's also more than that.

It adds value to what we do. It's about growing the global community, growing understanding across cultures, growing skills and experiences, and growing our future.

Our returned volunteers are passionate advocates for development. They use their personal experiences to make a positive contribution to their own community, and they continue to raise understanding and support for development.

"My time with SPW has been a life-changing experience. To discover my own capabilities and to realize we can work together in making a difference to my community. My experience has widened my horizons and I look forward to pursuing a career in nursing and specialising in adolescent health care."

Sharmila: former SPW volunteer, India

"I left Uganda in 2006 and have kept in touch with occupational therapy colleagues there. Since returning, I have studied and gained relevant work experience in order to be a useful resource to colleagues in developing countries where the impact of disability, poverty and discrimination has an immediate impact on a person's health and quality of life. I helped form OTFrontiers with the aim of supporting occupational therapy colleagues in developing countries; and supporting occupational therapists in the UK who wish to practice in, or contribute towards, the development of the profession in developing countries."

Claire Brundle: former Skillshare International volunteer

And volunteers are an important part of our social capital. Their transformative experiences often lead them to make significant achievements in their professional lives. Many remain committed to international development, continuing to grow international efforts to combat poverty and oppression.

"I now run an international charity which supports over eight and a half thousand vulnerable children in Zambia. I would not have even been considered for this position without the experience of being a volunteer and of working directly with a local NGO."

Caroline Horne: Manager of Cecily's Fund and former International Service volunteer

"I suppose my interest in human right stems from having being sent at the age of 18 to Uganda on VSO. I'd never been out of Britain, I'd never been on an aeroplane before, and of course I had never worked amongst a majority of black people. But I very quickly understood that despite the very conservative, sheltered upbringing I'd had, we had an enormous amount in common. What separated us was poverty."

Jon Snow: Channel 4 broadcaster, International Service patron, and former VSO volunteer

WHO ARE THE BRITISH VOLUNTEER-SENDING AGENCIES?

The British international development agencies working through volunteers are:

International Service

Progressio

Skillshare International

Students Partnership Worldwide

VSO

With the right support, people can find and develop their own lasting solutions to poverty, inequality and injustice.

We believe that powerful and lasting development comes about when people work with people. This is why we work in partnerships, through volunteers.

Between us, we have a diverse range of approaches, including:

- placing highly skilled volunteers on a variety of short-term, long-term, consultancy, and online placements

- recruiting volunteers for placements in a part of the world different from their own
- recruiting people to work as volunteers in the development of their own communities and countries
- providing full-time in-country field teams to support, develop and nurture partnerships and programmes of work
- facilitating networks, partnerships and exchanges
- supporting work that lobbies for change at regional, national and international levels

But decades of experience have taught us that when motivated and skilled volunteers work in the heart of communities and organisations, powerful and lasting transformation happens on both sides.



www.international-service.org.uk

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www.skillshare.org



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