



Working together for change

Annual report and accounts
2019/20 Netherlands



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Welcome



Over the past year, we have seen many challenges for our mission: a fair world for everyone. In many places all over the world, inequality is growing and access to healthcare, education and youth employment is limited for many. Luckily, over the past year, we also saw the difference we were able to make by reaching the most marginalised groups in the world.

As VSO, we are happy to be able to contribute to youth employment through different projects, for example through the new Challenge Fund for Youth Employment. Last year VSO, together with Randstad and Palladium, became fund manager of the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment (CFYE). This fund was set up by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in order to create future prospects for 200,000 young people by investing in decent work and income. The fund pays special attention to equal opportunities for young women in the labour market. The focus regions of the fund are West Africa/Sahel, Horn of Africa, North Africa and the Middle East.

The year 2019 also marked the 15-year anniversary of the partnership between VSO and Randstad. This cooperation is a great example of how we can work with private sector partners to increase the possibilities for young people in developing countries to gain employment. We do so concretely through corporate volunteering. Randstad employees have the opportunity to contribute to VSO's work by sharing their skills and knowledge. They bring something extra to the table: knowledge about career guidance, matching young people with companies and training in soft skills and resume building.

We see that within the Netherlands, more and more people want to contribute to our work. Either by becoming part of our community and sharing their skills as a volunteer or by raising funds, for example by participating in the Kilimanjaro Mount Meru Challenge. Participants climbed mount Meru and raised funds for education projects in Tanzania.

In Ethiopia, the four-year "Sharing skills to give thousands of school children a solid base in Ethiopia" project came to an end. This project has improved the quality of primary education for children, including the most disadvantaged, at 11 schools and the College of Teacher Training in Benishangul Gumuz, Ethiopia. With

the aid of this programme more than 11,000 children now receive better primary education, as a result of training teachers, student teachers and school managers.

In the final months of the year 2019/2020 the world came to a halt and many countries went into lockdown as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. As we work in communities on the ground, many of our regular activities could not continue as a result of this outbreak, and our colleagues, partners and volunteers had to quickly adapt to this new reality. I am proud of the way we have been able to use the flexibility of our organisation to adjust our programmes and were able to contribute by providing information, specifically to secluded communities and vulnerable groups. For example, the farmers in Tanzania that we are training in agricultural techniques, now also receive information about hygiene measures to protect themselves against COVID-19, which markets are still open and how they can safely sell their products.

As we know the response to this virus will greatly affect the lives of people all over the world in the coming years, we are currently exploring how to continue our other programmes, for example through remote volunteering. Under these changed circumstances, the initial focus will be on basic needs, and at the same time, fundamental human rights are more than ever at stake. We see, for example, how Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights might be considered a 'luxury' under these circumstances. But the COVID-19 outbreak will greatly affect the access to SRHR for many vulnerable groups, such as people with a disability, those who are infected with HIV and the LGBTQI community. VSO will focus on this theme in the coming years, to make sure these rights are not being overlooked.

Erik Ackerman
Director VSO Netherlands



Our year in numbers



4,158

people volunteered with VSO
in **20** countries



VSO reached more than
4.5 million
people, including;



over **2.8million**
through our education programmes



nearly **785,000**
through our health programmes



over **120,000**
through our resilient livelihoods
programme



and over **796,000**
through our resilience, inclusion and
social accountability programmes

2030: The road to a fairer world

The year 2020 is a vital landmark on the road towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UN has called for a decade of action to deliver the SDGs before the 2030 deadline. The 17 goals are ambitious – and that's before we take into account the massive additional challenges that have been posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Towards the end of this year, the coronavirus outbreak began to put huge pressure on fragile health, governance and economic systems around the world.

Now the UN is warning that the current level of action is not at sufficient scale to meet the SDGs. It says "ambitious action" is needed if the goals are to be delivered on time.

That means that the next ten years must be a decade of delivery; a period when the world redoubles its efforts. VSO's unique volunteering for development approach can add a great deal of value in this context. Its unique ability to build relationships and inspire action in local communities is essential in strengthening health, education and livelihood systems, while also controlling the impacts of COVID-19.



Going to scale

Over the last 60 years, VSO has worked in over 90 countries with more than 80,000 volunteers and reached over 50 million people.

We couldn't be prouder of these numbers. Behind each statistic is a story of resilience, determination and humanity. But now heading for a new horizon and scaling up VSO's impact like never before.

In 2019, we set ourselves the objective of reaching an additional 5 million people a year by 2021. To do this, we'll draw on the knowledge and experience we've gathered over six decades to develop the quality and scale of our programming. We'll drive the adoption of our volunteering for development approach to deliver systemic change across sectors and societies.

By replicating and growing our best work and focusing on where we can add value through our Volunteering for Development approach, we have exceeded our expectations and are close to meeting that target in the first year of the plan. VSO has been able to reach more people over the past year than ever before and over the next four years we hope to reach another 16 million more.

We updated our values to help focus our mindset internally, as well as to articulate VSO's modern-day identity, attracting partnerships with like-minded people and organisations that share these values. We invested in our practice areas of health, education and livelihoods, allowing for better strategic oversight and accelerated growth in our global portfolio. Innovation at VSO is now about scaling our work – doing what we know works well, in many more places.

To support this move to scale, we are organising ourselves around a global programme implementation team to ensure quality and consistency. Focusing our technical, programme and business support teams on implementation enables clear prioritisation of work and demonstrates value for money to our donors.

We're in a stronger position than ever to create a fair world for everyone.

Building Learning Foundations: Delivering at scale

There's already compelling evidence of the power of volunteering for development when taken to scale. Our Building Learning Foundations (BLF) programme is currently operating in every government-funded primary school in all 30 districts of Rwanda. The project has improved teaching for 1.8 million children, including those with disabilities and learning difficulties.

"Before, I wasn't interested in using teaching aids as I thought that children were able to easily understand my lessons," says maths teacher Seraphin. "However, after joining the Building Learning Foundations project, I realised I was wrong".

Now Seraphin uses teaching materials that help to make lessons clearer. An education volunteer visits him once a month to accompany and mentor him as he develops his teaching practise. Seraphin cites these one-to-one meetings and the constructive feedback following lesson observation as the two things that have helped him improve most.

"I have opened my mind and I am more reflective in my lesson delivery. This has allowed me to change the way I teach. I am also making my own essential classroom materials. Now, my pupils always seem interested in my lessons."

Since the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, Rwanda has been through a period of growth and rapid transformation. This led to a sharp decline in poverty. However, 39% of Rwandans are still living in poverty, and education is a powerful tool for people to improve their own lives.

The Building Learning Foundations programme helps strengthen teacher development, school leadership and governance. It builds inclusive and impactful education for Rwandan children, no matter who they are, where they come from or what support they need.



Many teachers in Rwanda lack adequate training. National volunteers, mentored by international volunteer teaching advisers, are improving the skills of local teachers.

About 5% of Rwandan people are living with disabilities and are often highly stigmatised and marginalised as a result. The Building Learning Foundations programme has a strong focus on reaching children with disabilities as well as those with learning difficulties and other factors that act as a barrier to thriving in school. Expert VSO volunteers have developed an inclusive education guide for teachers, equipping them with the tools and understanding they need to identify and meet the needs of children with disabilities or special educational needs. English and maths toolkits also help promote inclusive thinking and action as part of teachers' daily practice.

It's working. English proficiency levels have almost doubled among third grade students - up from 16% to 28% so far. Teachers are now much more likely to praise and encourage learners.

All this requires coordination on an enormous scale. Every school has a structured support visit from an expert volunteer each month. Each district has a team of volunteers who meet weekly to plan, review, reflect and adapt their approaches. Then, districts meet in groups of three to further scale-up good practice and share learning throughout the country. The project is designed so that lessons learned on the ground are passed on proactively, allowing best practice to be replicated and scaled quickly. Importantly, the Volunteering for Development methodology ensures that teachers and head teachers are supported in their place of work. This means our support is based on a firm understanding of the local context, on the daily challenges that teachers face, day in, day out and those teachers can immediately apply their learning with their pupils. Teachers and head teachers are encouraged to support each other through learning networks that build local capacity and sustainability.

The goal of the Building Learning Foundations programme in Rwanda is to reach 4.2 million children and 42,000 teachers in 2,600 schools by March 2023. We are well on the way. Beyond that, we are building on this experience to deliver inclusive education for children all over the world – developing low-cost, accessible resources; investing in teachers and making sure that no child is left behind.

30,000
teachers have received
mentoring from 200
Rwandan volunteers





Unlocking Talent in Malawi

Chisomo, pictured left, is a student in rural Lilongwe, Malawi. With huge classroom sizes of up to 140 students, he was falling behind at school.

"Chisomo struggled to follow lessons. Because of his struggles with learning, he repeated the same grade twice," says his mother, Shackra.

With the introduction of the Unlocking Talent project in Malawi, Chisomo started to use a tablet computer loaded with child-focused learning software. He is now learning essential literacy and numeracy skills, in his own local dialect.

The software, developed by VSO's partner onebillion, gives children instant feedback, which helps slower learners catch up with their peers. Teachers can instantly see which students need extra support. The tablets are solar-powered, and VSO volunteers are training teachers to guide and monitor pupil progress using the technology.

"Ever since I started to learn using tablets, I have learned to write, read and draw," says Chisomo. His mother has seen a marked difference in her son, too. "I have noticed that Chisomo now really loves going to school. He is no longer missing days and is full of joy when he comes home from school."

More than 150,000 children have already used the tablets to work through a structured course made up of thousands of engaging activities, games, and stories. But that's barely the beginning for this ambitious programme. VSO and its partners are aiming to roll it out across all of Malawi's 5,300 primary schools'.

Unlocking Talent is already changing the lives of children in Malawi. Research shows that reading scores in schools using the tablets are twice as high as those in other schools. It's also won international recognition. In May 2019, the technology behind the project was recognised by the \$10 million Global Learning XPRIZE, a competition to solve humanity's greatest challenges. In further evidence of our ambition for the programme, pilots were also undertaken during the year to evidence the potential of Unlocking Talent in other settings, including with Dzaleka refugee camp near Lilongwe, and in Ethiopia's remote Afar region.



As part of the Unlocking Talent project, UT Learning Centre Coordinator and VSO E-learning volunteers give trainings to adults within the household to ensure that the onetab is shared among all children in the household, and that it is properly cared for.

Our vision

A fair world for everyone

Our purpose

Creating lasting change through volunteering

Collaboration

- Empower poor and marginalised people to take charge of their own development
- Share skills and knowledge to create long lasting, sustainable change
- Build collaborative partnerships that promote innovation, growth and impact

Knowledge

- Lead volunteering for development, setting the standard for ourselves and others
- Use evidence and insight to guide our actions
- Recruit the right people and work where we have the greatest impact

Inclusion

- Stand beside and advocate for those who have been denied choice and opportunity
- Promote diversity and equality throughout our work
- Encourage different, inquisitive perspectives

Integrity

- Commit to safeguarding and take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and harm
- Treat others with respect, as equals
- Be open, transparent and accountable in everything we do

Doing development differently



VSO's volunteering model of development puts the most marginalised people first. It's an approach that helps every person involved drive the change they want to see, whether it be better education, improved healthcare, or sustainable jobs. It changes policy and practice at local, national and global levels. And in doing so, it creates the systemic shifts needed to build a fair world for everyone.



Putting people at the heart of development

We know that people in developing countries have the power, courage and desire to help themselves. That's why the volunteering for development approach puts the most marginalised people first.

We focus on those who are traditionally left out in society – for example, people who are poor, living with disabilities, ill, female, young, living with HIV, or incarcerated.

These people are not passive recipients of aid, so we don't call them "beneficiaries". They are the primary actors at the heart of our development approach. They are closely involved in every aspect of our programme design and delivery, leading the change, guaranteeing the results benefit the people who need it most.

What do we mean by primary actors?

Primary actors are the people and communities that we work with. They are the ones engaging in projects, helping us understand the community's needs, and working with volunteers to build a fairer world. Our responses are driven by demand from the poorest and most marginalised. We always work with local partners who can guide the most effective support.

Why do we use that term?

'Primary', because they are principal contributors to VSO's work and they lead the design and delivery of programmes. 'Actors', because they are active agents. VSO doesn't do development to communities, it works with them.



©VSO/Maheder Halleselassie

Abrehet Assefa, second from right, lost her first baby to a difficult labour. In Ethiopia, VSO is helping women like Abrehet access the healthcare they deserve.



Encouraging enterprise in Tanzania

"When I started, people had doubts if I had the skills to make wine. Some people in my culture think women should just stay at home and cook so it can be harder for women starting out in business."

Chany Henry, pictured above is a 27-year-old winemaker from Tanzania. Chany got business support through VSO's Tanzania Local Enterprise Development (T-LED) project when she set up her own wine shop. VSO volunteers supported Chany to achieve her business goals, training her in record-keeping and encouraging her to improve her packaging, in order to attract more customers to her hibiscus wine.

"The training with VSO gave me the confidence to try new things and expand my business."

Results shows 76% of the female entrepreneurs who've taken part in the T-LED programme say it has improved their negotiation and networking skills. Over 93% say they now feel more assertive about taking on leadership roles and making business decisions.

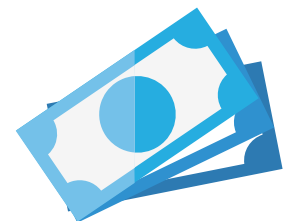
Since the training, Chany has seen her customer base grow and an increase in income. Chany now mentors another winemaker in her area, sharing what she learnt from VSO training. Eventually she wants to

put a portion of her profits towards improving her local school with new buildings and teaching materials.

Tanzania has one of the largest youth populations in the world, with almost half of Tanzanians aged under 25. VSO volunteers are working with these young people to navigate a challenging environment by building their own businesses and creating jobs.

Difficulty accessing capital, business networks and professional advice are some of the issues that hold back young entrepreneurs, especially women. The T-LED project has established three centres across Tanzania which provide market-driven and gender-responsive business development and financial services. This advice comes from a network of national and international volunteers, able to share a wide range of business and technical skills.

Participants'
incomes have risen
by an average of
65%



By the end of the five-year programme, the project will have created an estimated 2,500 jobs, with support given to at least 1,300 businesses.

Peer education in prisons across Southern Africa

Arthur is a 39-year-old father of three and lives in Harare, Zimbabwe. Having been in and out of prison three times, Arthur was losing direction and struggled to cope after learning he was HIV positive.

Arthur committed to volunteering and trained as a VSO peer educator whilst in prison, where he quickly learnt what it really meant to be HIV positive, and how he could educate others around him. He attended VSO trainings around HIV and sexual health, as well as psychosocial support to cope with the double stigma of being both an inmate and living with HIV. This, coupled with skills to improve communication and decision-making, helped him adjust to life outside prison.

"I learnt about the importance of adherence to medication and the importance of acceptance and disclosure."

Arthur now speaks out in his local community to end myths surrounding HIV. It's the sustained effort from committed individuals like Arthur that creates strong, resilient communities, long into the future.

"As a peer educator, I've encouraged others to accept and disclose their status so they can live a happy and healthy life"



Community volunteers like Arthur are at the heart of our development model.

"Being HIV positive does not mean the end of life. It's a condition that is manageable. I have left the life of crime and I can now take care of my family and buy medication for myself."

"I've learnt that I can still earn a living just like anyone who is not HIV positive. There's no stigma against myself or anyone who is HIV positive. This is because I disclosed my status and I'm able to talk freely about my status with anyone and I'm helping others to do the same."

1782

**volunteers trained
as peer educators
across 35 prisons**



The impact of volunteering

Volunteers build strong relationships and trust because they work with and alongside the communities they serve. They're there to engage with communities. They don't do hand-outs. Instead, they support people to better understand their challenges and opportunities.

Action research (Valuing Volunteering, 2015) into VSO's work in Africa and Asia has demonstrated that volunteers help communities become more inclusive, create more innovation, and generate more social action, all through the strength of the relationships that volunteers build.

VSO's volunteering for development approach brings together volunteers with local partners and communities. At its best, volunteering is about connection, and a network of connected volunteers is a powerful thing.

Most VSO volunteers work in their country of birth. Speaking local languages, understanding the economic, environmental, societal, and cultural issues, local volunteers have an intimate knowledge of what works in their own communities – and what does not. Their commitment to their communities and on-the-ground working locations allow them to continue working even when travel restrictions limit the ability of traditional aid programmes to reach the most isolated and marginalised.

Other VSO volunteers bring a mix of perspectives, expertise and ideas from a wealth of different countries, backgrounds and experiences. Each has its own advantages, and each contributes to addressing the unique needs of each community, project or individual.



An all-Deaf team of UK and Kenyan volunteers have been working to tackle disability stigma around deafness in Nandi county, Kenya. They've been supporting parents to learn Kenyan sign language so they can communicate with their Deaf children.

Inclusion, resilience and social accountability

All our programmes address the root causes of poverty by focusing on three areas that reliably tackle the structures, systems and conditions that keep people in poverty.

Social inclusion and gender

Around the world, millions of people are discriminated against because of who they are. This may be based on their gender, age, disability, cultural background, sexual orientation, and many other factors. We aim to understand and address the systemic causes of this discrimination.

Resilience

Disasters, disease outbreaks and other shocks and stresses can have a devastating effect on communities. This can be especially damaging on those communities that are already marginalised. Our goal is to help communities prepare and adapt to disasters, as well as reducing their vulnerability to shocks and stresses.

Social accountability

Millions of the poorest people around the world are denied basic rights and entitlements that are guaranteed in law. Yet corruption, fear and power dynamics can stop people from speaking up and demanding what they deserve. VSO is committed to giving people a voice, no matter who they are or where they are from, as well as helping authorities better respond to that voice.



Susan Sesay, 36, with her four-month-old son Joseph. Susan lost three of her four older children to disease. When she became pregnant with Joseph, Susan was able to receive an ultrasound by a VSO-trained midwife, Elizabeth Davies.



Sustainability and resilience in a changing world

The world faces shocks and stresses of increasing frequency and magnitude, due to global pressures such as climate change, economic crises and political instability. These challenges are multifaceted and intertwined – continued climate change, for example, is likely to cause major economic disruption. This means that the needs of the most vulnerable communities are complex and diverse, calling for an equally multidimensional response.

Poor and marginalised people are often hit the hardest in a crisis. They lack the resources to cushion themselves against shocks and may already face exclusion due to their gender, disability or social status.

At time of writing, every country VSO works in has been significantly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. Just as we would expect with any other shock, we are seeing that each person's ability to protect themselves from the impacts of the virus greatly depends on the resources available to them. Poor and marginalised people are less likely to have savings to fall back on in an economic downturn, to have secure

housing in which their family can safely quarantine or provide out-of-school education, or to be able to access medical help when they need it. What's more, existing exclusion and stigma can be exacerbated and reinforced during a crisis. VSO rapid assessments in some countries suggest increases in gender-based violence during quarantine, and an uptick in child marriages taking place while schools are closed.

Building resilient communities isn't just about responding to crises as they happen, but building the local ability to pre-empt, prepare for and mitigate potential risks, as well as creating social, practical and financial safety nets to help cushion the impact and speed recovery when disaster does strike.

True resilience does not arise from providing a specific solution to an individual threat. Instead, real resilience lies in building a community's flexibility to identify, prepare for and respond to a range of scenarios. We do this by building the skills and knowledge in recognising both the risk and the action required to mitigate it.

Surviving Idai: Community volunteering in a crisis

When Cyclone Idai hit Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi in 2019, followed by Cyclone Kenneth just a month later, it had a terrible impact on hundreds of thousands of people, leaving families without food, water or shelter and creating deadly natural hazards during the ensuing flooding.

Suzana Capitao, pictured right, was at home with her five children, the night that Cyclone Idai struck:

“The storm was so heavy it frightened me. I was crying for my children, as they were not safe. That night we moved out of the house to a nearby school. The roof of my house had blown away and some of the walls were taken down by the storm.”

“We had nothing to eat, but VSO came at the right moment. We were given maize meal, rice, cooking oil, and some relish. All these things came in handy and it helped us to move on with our life. Since the cyclone, volunteers helped in educating us on what we must do in the event of these emergencies. Volunteers are always there, and they help us in every situation. Unlike people who are paid, volunteers belong to our communities.”



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©VSO/Bless Ngonhama

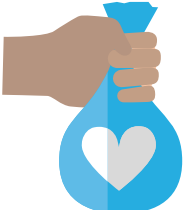
Food trucks arriving into some of the worst affected areas after Cyclone Idai.



Marta Memba, 67, was one of 13,000 people to receive food aid from VSO after Cyclone Idai.

Following the disaster, VSO was able to move faster than many other organisations because it already had hundreds of volunteers on the ground, trained and ready to respond to just such an event. VSO-trained volunteer Carolina Banda, 33, remembers the moment she was called to put her training into practice:

“When I looked outside and saw the strong winds, I was filled with fear. But then I thought of the people without the shelter I had, and this gave me the courage to move outside and rescue others.” VSO’s community volunteers mobilised quickly and distributed a month’s worth of food and essential items.



180
tonnes of food
was donated

They reached areas considered unreachable by many other agencies.

Community volunteers ran sessions to help vulnerable communities understand the risks they are facing, including examining which areas are most in danger, such as low-lying areas prone to flooding.

Volunteers shared their knowledge around disaster preparedness with the wider community, enabling the identification of people most at risk, such as pregnant women, those who are less mobile and people with disabilities. This makes sure no one gets left behind or forgotten and helps mitigate some of the deadliest effects of such disasters.

A year before Cyclone Idai hit, VSO had begun training this network of community volunteers in resilience and disaster response, shoring up communities to better deal with disasters. By the time it made landfall, 750 volunteers were trained and ready to respond to disaster.

After the initial response, those same volunteers were able to remain in the communities as they began the difficult recovery process – monitoring and reporting on the impact and ongoing needs as people began to rebuild their lives.

Preparing for disaster in Nepal

"The village was underwater. Most people could save themselves by receiving early warnings of the flood, but others couldn't save themselves. The resources supported by VSO has helped us save more than 50 lives," says Arun Kumar Shah, mayor of Durga Bhagwati-5, Rautahat.

Right now, more than 80% of Nepal's population is at risk of natural hazards like floods, landslides, fires and earthquakes. This is one of top 20 most disaster-prone countries in the world. With extreme weather events predicted to become more frequent due to climate change, it's vital that vulnerable communities are ready and able to withstand such events.

In 2015, a devastating earthquake impacted more than a quarter of Nepal's population. Since the earthquake response, VSO has been strengthening Nepal's ability to respond to disaster, working within communities at a local level, all the way through to supporting governance in planning and preparing for disasters. The Nepali government has now adopted some of this work as policy.

In Terai, a low-lying region in southern Nepal, 400,000 homes were lost to flash floods in 2017. VSO embarked on a two-year project to reduce the

risk and impact of future disasters in the region, including working with schools to introduce disaster management as a compulsory component of the education system.

In Rautahat, south-eastern Nepal, volunteers have been creating preparedness plans in communities most exposed to annual flash floods during monsoon season, as well as leveraging local agricultural expertise and knowledge around water management, to lessen the impact of disasters. This preparation meant that when flash floods hit Rautahat again this year, communities felt better able to manage the crisis.

"In this flood we felt more safe and confident to overcome it compared to the 2017 flood, because we have taken different types of disaster risk reduction training and lifesaving skills, with the support of VSO," said Lahan Mishra, the volunteer leader of the community search and rescue taskforce in Rautahat.

"Just three weeks ago we practised a flood simulation, which was very effective – in this recent flood we were able to rescue more than 60 people."



Assessing the damage following the 2015 Nepal earthquake.

Achieving policy change

The voices of the poorest and most marginalised often go unheard, leaving people trapped living in poverty, in systems and societies that have not been built for them. Giving these people a voice to influence decision making and policy is crucial.

This is because while substantial change can happen through local programme activities, at other times entire systems need overhauling, or entire policies need rewriting, to make change possible.

Volunteers help to promote the voice of primary actors, bridging the gap between government or service providers and marginalised groups, and bring their own expertise and understanding of how to make changes to policies and systems.

Policy change is a complex process, which needs consultation with a range of groups including stakeholders, civil society, experts, government and primary actors.

VSO volunteers are helping to facilitate this process and help governments and service providers to truly understand the deep-rooted causes of an issue.

Alongside this, volunteers and primary actors work together to make sure all policy changes are in line with the SDG principle of leave no one behind, and that governments are fulfilling their commitment to the SDGs.

For example, in Zimbabwe, volunteers are tackling SDG 3 – ensure healthy lives and wellbeing for all – to assess the prison healthcare system. Inmates are using community scorecards and mystery visitors to call attention to the need for better healthcare and sexual and reproductive health provision.

Following this, female inmates now have access to cervical cancer screenings in one facility. At another facility, after raising the issue of poor nutrition and lack of protein in inmate diets, prison management are now providing a more balanced diet.

In the last year, we have helped achieve eight policy changes – including a national action plan for

Disaster Risk Management in Nepal and finalising the National Volunteering Bill in Kenya.

As we prepare to scale up our programmes in the coming years, influencing policy will become increasingly important. Working on a larger scale, policy change will make our work possible in guaranteeing that projects will have a long-lasting and wide-reaching impact.

Nepal is one example of policy change strengthening the impact we are able to make. Here we are coupling bridging classes, to help children with disabilities back into formal schooling, with changes to inclusive education guidelines.



ICS volunteers support a rally for International Women's Day 2020 in Lamjung, Nepal.

Putting policy into practice in Nepal

Fifteen-year-old Kabita, who is living with an intellectual disability, has faced stigma and discrimination all her life. In rural Dhaubini, southern Nepal, many people believe that disability is a result of sin from a previous life.

Her mother has seen a big shift in Kabita since joining VSO-supported bridge classes, giving her the education needed to return to school.

"I used to spend a lot of time taking care of Kabita, and never thought my daughter would be able to read Nepali letters and count numbers one to fifteen. She started going to bridge class regularly, carrying bags and books herself, and talking to friends in the class. I'm so happy Kabita is now going to bridge class regularly, and can spend four hours there without my support," said Kabita's mother.

Many children like Kabita, who have disabilities or additional needs, are left out of traditional schooling. These children should have the opportunity to learn.

VSO has supported the government to create an Equity Strategy Implementation Plan (ESIP), outlining ways to ensure all have access to education, alongside nationwide inclusive education guidelines. Despite the Ministry of Education's endorsement of the inclusive education guidelines and ESIP to support children across Nepal, these weren't being implemented at a provincial and local level. VSO, working with 40 local governments, aimed to find practical ways to implement the guidelines, and plan to make sure they were used at all levels of decision-making.





©VSO/Omar Havana

Seven-year-old Puspa Umari is attending bridge classes to rejoin mainstream schooling. Here, she listens to advice from her teacher before reading a book to her grade 5 class in Bhediari, Nepal.

VSO has international and national volunteers to provide support at a local level to implement this plan. Volunteers have been in contact with primary actors to help contextualise this work and develop the plan.

Volunteers collected data to create a database held by local government, with a focus on vulnerable children, such as those who are out of school or children with disabilities. The local level government

has since adopted the database, and is using it to plan inclusive education interventions, based on need.

In addition, 2,525 children received learning materials translated into braille, including those attending the bridge classes. These children were being left behind, and now they have a route into education, where they can learn and grow with their peers.

Modelling best practice in volunteering

VSO volunteers are held to rigorous standards to ensure their interventions are impactful, beneficial and sustainable.

However, without proper oversight and systems in place, it's possible for both formal and informal volunteering to have a detrimental impact.



Setting the standard:

The Global Standard for Volunteering for Development

Volunteering organisations like VSO can be at the forefront of changing the lives of the most poor and marginalised. However, to be impactful, our activities must be responsible, well-planned, transparent and respectful — and based on genuine partnerships and measurable outcomes.

In 2019, VSO led a consultation that heard from hundreds of voices, from 80 different countries. Feedback was gathered from volunteer hosting and sending organisations, volunteers, community voices and government officials. Using this information, the forum launched the Global Standard for Volunteering for Development: a standard of good practice for volunteer organisations.

The Standard was launched at the International Volunteer Cooperation Organisation (IVCO) conference hosted by VSO in Kigali last October, to over 200 delegates from a diverse mix of organisations, and with 57% of attendees from the Global South.

With the global standard in place, volunteers will consistently and safely be able to create measurable impact that truly addresses the needs of primary actors around the world.

It draws on the unique ability of volunteers to work

alongside communities, responding to the needs of communities, as defined by those communities.

The Standard covers four areas: designing and delivering projects, duty of care, managing volunteers and measuring impact.

“An important consideration in constructing the standards has been that they encourage uptake, that they are relevant to all volunteering-involving organisations whatever their size and wherever they are located in the world, and that, most importantly, they clearly help organisations contribute towards the delivery of the sustainable development goals.”

Philip Goodwin, Chief Executive

The Standard is currently being tested and validated by 28 organisations from around the world, whose experience and feedback will be incorporated into the final stage of development before being made available to the wider sector. VSO will encourage and support other organisations to adopt the Standard and set the benchmark for impactful and responsible volunteering for development.



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Last year, the VSO London Action Group held a panel discussion on 'Resilience, Conflict and Natural Disaster: Can Volunteers Have an Impact?', held at London South Bank University.

Responsible volunteering

Keen to have a unique experience while “giving back”, many well-meaning backpackers are attracted to volunteering opportunities in orphanages while travelling in developing countries. Some pay thousands to do so.

Over the past year, VSO has contributed to a campaign raising awareness of the damaging practices that can arise through unregulated and irresponsible volunteering schemes.

These schemes prioritise the experience of the volunteer and the revenue they generate, rather than the wellbeing of primary actors – such as in the case of so-called ‘voluntourism’ in orphanages.

This is at odds with what responsible and impactful volunteering should look like: opportunities should be ethical, sustainable and always in the best interest of the community.

Research shows that orphanages can be harmful when used as a long-term solution. Yet, the industry of voluntourism creates an economic incentive to keep orphanages open. Vulnerable families are

encouraged to place children in care, exposing them to serious harm. Children within institutions lack stability and are often cared for by volunteers who lack the proper skills, experience and background checks to work with young children.

VSO’s vocal network of 40,000 young people who have volunteered on the International Citizen Service (ICS) programme have spoken out against orphanage voluntourism, sharing resources on how to volunteer responsibly.

"There have been decades of research showing that children are better cared for in family setting and growing up in institutions has all types of long-term detriments. Almost 80% of children in these long-term residential institutions aren't orphans at all but have at least one living parent, who are often encouraged to put children into institutional care due to factors including extreme poverty"

Clare Hawkes, VSO Responsible Volunteering Specialist



Our voluntary workforce at VSO

Many of the active citizens we work with continue engaging with VSO over a lifetime. Each year, hundreds of people give up their time to help VSO in the mission to create a fair world for everyone, as part of VSO's voluntary workforce. This year over 350 highly motivated individuals, passionate about making a difference, donated 13,840 hours working alongside employees in teams around the world.

Thomas Meredith, an ICS volunteer, is part of the VSO voluntary workforce in the UK:

"Coming back from my ICS placement in 2017, I was saddened by the thought of saying goodbye to the programme for good. Being able to encourage and guide new rounds of volunteers has been an invaluable opportunity to further my own leadership and speaking skills. It has shown me that my true passion lies within the development sector.

"The most rewarding part of being a trainer comes at the end of each training weekend, when I watch the new volunteers file out the door, because I then begin to imagine the amazing experience that they are about to embark on, and I know that I played a small part in it."

VSO voluntary workforce volunteers take on a variety of roles:

Facilitators share their knowledge and experiences, helping volunteers gain a better understanding of VSO's work as they prepare to embark on their VSO placement,

Researchers and **community workers** feed into programme design through workshops with partners and other stakeholders.

Enumerators interview and collect data from primary actors for evidence-based impact assessment of VSO's interventions.

Auditors complete internal audits across our practice.

Our **International Board of Trustees** provide guidance and support to the executive board in their leadership and stewardship of VSO.

Sharing best practice

This year VSO added a new dimension to its voluntary workforce. Fifteen highly respected education professionals joined VSO to provide technical expertise across four areas:

- Education in Emergencies
- Early Childhood Care and Education
- Inclusive Education
- Numeracy Teaching Material Development

These volunteers support the professional development of teachers in many different classroom-based and non-classroom contexts.

These experts review programme proposals, give input into programme design and develop research tools, educational resources and guides. For example, VSO education specialists created an open-source guide for people working in young children's education in extremely challenging contexts, which volunteers adapted for use in Rohingya refugee camps.

Resources like this are used widely by our programme partners to support teachers' personal development and raise teaching standards.

The input of these education experts means that VSO interventions are led by best practice.

For example, as coronavirus developed into a pandemic and traditional schooling was disrupted, VSO education specialists adapted learning materials to support children in continuing to access education.

We've since continued to recruit and train volunteers to support VSO worldwide, as we prepare to scale up our work. Our volunteer selectors provide us with insights that ensure our recruitment methodology and practice stays relevant as we respond to changes and deliver on our operational plan.

We are grateful to these selectors, who continue to play a huge part in assessing applicants and identifying the people with the right skills, knowledge, values and attitude.



What we do

VSO Netherlands

VSO aims to improve access to healthcare, education and livelihoods for the most vulnerable and secluded communities. We do so by working together with these communities, sharing knowledge, expertise and experience. By doing so we aim to work together with the most vulnerable groups to claim and fulfil their rights. That is what we do as a global organisation, and what VSO Netherlands contributes to with our potential: as a European centre for the recruitment of international volunteers, as a broker of transformative partnerships for knowledge sharing and capacity building and as a developer and fundraiser for impactful programmes.

COVID-19

Although the risk of contracting COVID-19 was minimal for our volunteers in Asia and Africa, the cancellation of international flights in March 2020 meant that we were not able to guarantee the duty of care to our volunteers in case of an emergency (either related to COVID-19 or otherwise). Most were therefore repatriated to their country of origin, among them 24 volunteers recruited by VSO Netherlands. The repatriation went very quickly, often making use of the last available flights. Although disappointed that they had to leave their counterparts, volunteers were generally happy about VSO's response and the decision to suspend international volunteer placements proved to be the correct one.

However, our programmes have not been suspended. Wherever local COVID-19 restrictions allow, VSO staff and national volunteers have continued to engage with partners and primary actors. Often via phone, radio or social media, in some cases adding health education messaging and providing protective equipment to those less likely to be reached by formal media. Many international volunteers found ways to keep supporting their project and local colleagues remotely through e-coaching and advising, with some hope of returning once travel restrictions are lifted. More formal remote volunteering models are being developed by VSO to support and strengthen ongoing on-the-ground engagement. Not only as a temporary COVID-19 response, but also as a new and permanent means of delivering our mission alongside in-country partners and national and international volunteers.

Programmes and Partners

Challenge Fund for Youth Employment

Together with Palladium and Randstad, VSO became the fund manager for the newly established Challenge Fund for Youth Employment. This Fund aims to create a prosperous future for 200,000 young women and men in the Middle East, North Africa, Sahel & West Africa, and the Horn of Africa. This will be achieved by supporting youth employment initiatives in these regions. The Fund has a total size of 114 million euros. Part of this is allocated to VSO to provide technical support to these initiatives through volunteering.

As a Fund, we create new opportunities for youth by boosting impactful solutions. We focus on supporting businesses that create, match, improve, or sustain inclusive and decent jobs for youth. With technical assistance and funding, we enable private sector players to invest in the labour force of the future. Solutions will be built around integrated approaches designed to bridge the mismatch between the demand for high-quality jobs and the supply of skilled labour. They will be aligned with the aspirations of young women and men in the regions.

Our intervention starts with a scoping study to define 'the Challenge'. We conducted the scoping study for Uganda in November 2019 and for Egypt and Nigeria in March 2020.

Based on our scoping report, over 300 consortia indicated that they were ready to pick up the Challenge and applied for co-funding in Uganda for their project. Out of these 300 applicants, 25 were selected for the second round. We expect that the



Georgina Mbithe bakes cakes and sells them in Mwala, Kenya. VSO has supported her with production materials, information and skills on how to be resilient in business and where and how to get loans.

final projects for Uganda will be selected by the end of July 2020.

Once projects are selected for implementation, tailored technical support through Palladium consultants and VSO volunteers will also be made available to maximise the delivery of results.

Sharing skills to give thousands of school children a solid base in Ethiopia

Between 2016 and 2020, the "Sharing skills to give thousands of school children a solid base in Ethiopia" programme has improved the quality of primary education for children, including children with disabilities and children from minorities, at 11 schools and the College of Teacher Training in Benishangul Gumuz, Ethiopia. With this programme, which was conducted with the support of Dutch foundations, DFID and Book Aid, we were able to give more than 11,000 children better primary education. We managed to do so by improving the skills of 250 teacher, 200 students and teachers of the Teacher Training College (TTC) and 20 school managers.

The evaluation of this project showed an impressive increase in children passing the Grade 8 exams, although the percentage of children passing this final exam is still below the national average. During early reading tests at over 40 primary schools, VSO volunteers noticed results that were sometimes shocking; more than one school had a 100% score of "zero" readers in Grade 2, meaning that no student

could read a single word in Amharic. Many children are from minority backgrounds and do not speak Amharic at home. On top of this, however, some of the teachers were not able to score on simple reading tests.

The contribution of volunteers in this project was noted as vital and key. They were engaged in the follow-up and coaching of teachers, College instructors and education officials. Training courses and workshops organised by VSO were indicated as events of high quality.

Youth employment Bangladesh

In the Northwest of Bangladesh, VSO is implementing a programme to support vulnerable youth with vocational skills building and employment opportunities. The programme is funded by a variety of donors including GSRD Foundation and Weeshuis der Doopsgezinden. Up to the end of 2019, the programme supported over 2,100 young people by organising 61 youth clubs and provided vocational training for 207 young people. These training courses include mobile phone repair, driving and chicken rearing. This year, we added a trade ICT & Technology specifically targeting young women. It had a promising start and we hope to increase the number of girls and young women in the remaining programme period. However, due to COVID-19, we had to stop all activities. With support from the donors, we are now setting up cash/food assistance to support the families in this programme during the crisis.

Raising Income for School Education (RISE II)

Raise Income for School Education (RISE) II project's overall goal is to improve learning outcomes for marginalised children, especially girls in the Kamachumu area of Muleba district in Tanzania. Specifically, the project aims to improve the quality of education by supporting 250 teachers and reaching 10,000 school children from 20 primary and 4 secondary schools. It also aims to ensure food security and increased income at household level for 2,880 marginalised households through improved environmentally-friendly farming activities. The rationale behind this is that when households have an income, they can send their children to school, and that when children have better nutrition they can learn better. By the end of year two (31 January 2019), the project has reached 15,520 children, 165 teachers from 24 schools, 2,070 farming households and 80 lead farmers. After a difficult first year, the project staff and volunteers picked up activities very well and for most KPIs, the project is on track or exceeding targets. Extremely sad news was the tragic and sudden death of one of the RISE international volunteers. The compassion of the RISE team and support from the wider VSO organisation enabled the RISE team to cope with this difficult situation and continue to deliver an impact for children and families in Kamachumu.



Rachel Thomas and Neywa are tailors from the last cycle of entrepreneurs of the RISE project in Tanzania.

Improving the lives of mothers and newborns in Gulu District, Northern Uganda

Uganda has the third most rapid growth in population of all countries in the world. Maternal death is 24 times higher than in the Netherlands, and infant death is 14 times higher. The 'Improving the lives of mothers and newborns in Gulu' programme aims to tackle the three main delays that contribute to maternal and infant death and serious birth complications.

The aims of the programme are the increased availability, accessibility and uptake of quality, appropriate and effective sexual, reproductive, maternal and newborn health services for young people, pregnant women, mothers and their newborns.

As part of this project, VSO applies its "Volunteering for Development" model to train and mentor healthcare staff at six health units on clinical skills, referral, health facility management and data management. In addition, District Health Teams are coached to provide effective referral and data management, supervision of health facilities and prevention activities in our target communities. Furthermore, Village Health Team (VHT) members, peer health educators and healthcare staff are trained and supervised to improve mutual coordination, strengthen the quality and management of referrals and engage the community on sexual, reproductive, maternal and newborn health issues.

Research shows that the support of husbands, other male family members and VHT's is crucial for the uptake of maternal and newborn health services. One crucial element is the early detection and referral of mothers and newborns detected with danger signs of complications. That is why 24 fathers and 24 VHT mentors have been selected by the community to function as role models. VSO volunteers helped them acquire basic maternal and newborn health knowledge. Together they now work on engaging more males in maternity care and creating awareness in their communities about the importance of male engagement. Moreover, VHTs track and follow up with pregnant and lactating mothers to ensure that they are referred to the nearest health facility for check-ups.



Programme monitoring, evaluation, research and learning

The main purpose of programme monitoring, evaluation, research and learning is to measure throughout the programme cycle if we achieve VSO's objectives, the specific objectives per programme and to ensure quality programming.

VSO has a participatory Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MILE) system. At the start of each programme, we develop a Theory of Change and a logical framework together with our partners and stakeholders. A Theory of Change is a visual diagram that includes causal assumptions, which helps to make sense of and navigate the complex environment in which a programme operates. A log-frame provides an overview of a project's goal, activities and anticipated results. On at least a quarterly basis, we are in contact with staff in the countries where we implement our programmes to monitor the progress of the implementation against the log-frame and budget. A risk register is kept to identify, monitor and control risks on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, baseline and endline studies are conducted to measure the status before and after implementing the programme. Last but not least,

yearly learning exercises are undertaken, triangulating the monitoring data with input from primary actors and other key stakeholders. The learning exercises are used to reflect on what went well and what can be improved in our programming.

At VSO, we encourage research to ensure evidence-based programming. In this past year, two Returned Volunteers of VSO Netherlands defended their thesis. Both had performed research during their placements. Tienke Vermeiden studied the determinants of the utilisation of maternity waiting homes in Southern Ethiopia and Leandra Lok studied the use of digital video in the professional development of teachers in Cambodia.

VSO and Randstad: empowering people for 15 years

VSO Netherlands and Randstad are working together to empower people by offering Randstad employees the opportunity to share their skills and knowledge by volunteering in VSO's projects.

Randstad is one of the biggest and leading HR services providers in the world and has been a partner of VSO since 2004. With the motto 'Imagine what we can do together' Randstad contributes to strengthening VSO, provides professional volunteers for our projects, allowing their employees to share their professional knowledge with our local partners and staff by volunteering for a period of between six weeks to nine months. Over 150 Randstad employees have made a lasting impact by doing so.

The anniversary year was celebrated with several activities, sharing knowledge, encouraging collaboration and raising funds for VSO's projects. 2019 marked the 15th year of this successful partnership.

Sports events

6 April marked the international day of sports for peace and development, and in the following week, Randstad organised sports events in 20 countries. Randstad employees participated in sporting activities to raise money for VSO. More than 3,600 participated and raised a total of € 31,741. The money that has been raised was donated to the Youth Employment Enhancement Project in Uganda and will be used to support young entrepreneurs in growing their business and becoming sustainably self-employed.

“A partnership should not be a win-win between the partners, but a win-win-win. How do you maximise the results for vulnerable youth? Let the youth be the real winner.”

Patrick Obonyo, IKEA Foundation



During the Partnership for Sustainable Youth Employment Seminar, the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment was launched.



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22 Randstad employees participated in the Randstad-VSO Kilimanjaro Challenge.

Kilimanjaro challenge

As part of the activities to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Randstad-VSO partnership, 22 Randstad employees participated in the Randstad-VSO Kilimanjaro Challenge. Each participant raised at least € 5,000 for VSO projects in Tanzania. Participants made a five-day trek on Kilimanjaro and to the top of Mount Meru. After this challenge, the participants visited the project they had raised funds for: the Lake Zone Youth Empowerment Project. With their donations, among other things, 200 marginalised youth (especially girls and young women) are receiving Vocational Education Training and Life Skills Training (including on gender equality).

Seminar Partnership for Sustainable Youth Employment

On 22 November, the anniversary year was closed with a seminar, looking back on 15 years of partnership, but also looking forward. The seminar provided a platform for discussion and

strategising. How do we ensure a future-proof approach to employment in Africa? We concluded that for a stable and sustainable development in the future of employment in Africa, it is necessary that economic growth is inclusive. The interests of youth, and specifically the interests of women, must be at the heart of both policy and measures. In order to create enough jobs, we need an enabling policy environment to stimulate investment in the African continent



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Fundraising and partnerships

In 2019, we invested time and efforts to build new relations with other organisations including the Dutch government, the EU and foundations. On 15 April 2019, we organised a roundtable discussion on how to prepare youth in low income countries for jobs and entrepreneurship. Hosted at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague we had a fruitful discussion with interesting guests including representatives from Randstad, Achmea Foundation, Philips and the Maastricht School of Management. Important trends and insights on the future of work in Africa were shared and relations were built.

We received donations from Dioraphte for our health programme in Uganda and from Wees een Kans for education in Ethiopia. For 2020/2021, we will focus on building relations with, for example, IKEA and AFAS Foundation and deepening the relations with our current foundation partners including Dioraphte, Sint Antonius Stichting, Nefkens Stichting Ontwikkelingshulp, Wees een Kans, GSRD Foundation and Weeshuis der Doopsgezinden.

In 2019 we also started our partnership on corporate volunteering programmes with Achmea. This collaboration allows Achmea employees to take part in volunteering assignments at VSO programmes worldwide for a maximum period of 2.5 weeks. During this time, they focus on a special assignment, sharing their expertise in business, marketing, finance, risk management, HR and communication.

In 2019, three Achmea employees were deployed to Tanzania for a total of 7.5 weeks. Their volunteering assignment and goal was to support and coach SMEs under the Tanzania Local Enterprise Development (TLED) project, a five-year project that supports small to medium-sized local businesses. The capacity development of these small enterprises focused on business skills and IT-related competences.

Finally, a lot of work has been done in the past year to apply for the grant instruments Power of Voices and SRHR Partnerships by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Placement of Volunteers

VSO's Volunteering for Development approach lies at the heart of our work with local partner organisations, with the ultimate goal of improving the lives of marginalised people. Our VSO volunteers are part of a very diverse team of professionals, each with their own strengths: local community volunteers provide a link with the communities, national

volunteers (recruited from within the project country) contribute technical expertise available in the country itself and international volunteers (recruited from across the globe) bring specific technical skills not available in-country.

A total of 47 professional volunteers were recruited, trained and sent through VSO Netherlands to support our work in livelihoods, health and education. Some of the highlights:

- 6 Education specialists worked with national volunteers and partners in Myanmar, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Malawi to make primary education more inclusive (especially for girls and minority ethnic groups), coached selected primary teachers to become teacher trainers in their schools and supported the introduction of new technology in primary education to boost literacy and numeracy skills development among students.
- A gynaecologist supported the Maternal & Newborn Health project in Uganda, aiming to improve access to, and quality of care for rural women and their babies.
- Working alongside national volunteers, 24 employability professionals seconded by Randstad have supported our youth employment programmes in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Identified by the community themselves, disadvantaged young people were offered life skills training, entrepreneurship training in their chosen trade, coached in developing their business plan and further supported and mentored in the start-up of their business.
- 11 Experienced volunteer professionals (10 from Randstad) provided strategic organisational advice to VSO livelihoods programme teams to focus their work in youth employment, developing and introducing new approaches in, for instance, entrepreneurship development, life skills training, business development services, on-line matching and labour market analysis.

European-wide marketing

Since August 2019, VSO Netherlands has been responsible for the recruitment of professional volunteers across mainland Europe, working closely together with our marketing colleagues from the VSO International office. In the past, we mainly focused our recruitment marketing activities on the Netherlands and to a much lesser extent on Belgium and Germany. An initial labour market survey indicates that especially Germany, Scandinavia, Portugal, Spain and Italy may be good countries to

recruit the highly skilled professionals needed for our programmes.

Safeguarding and integrity

Protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm is central to achieving our mission of ending global poverty. At VSO we are committed to ensuring that the experience of our organisation is free from any form of abuse or exploitation. VSO International has a Global Safeguarding Policy that VSO Netherlands adheres to, and which is aligned with the CBF guidelines on integrity. VSO Netherlands has appointed a part-time integrity officer. All staff have attended a safeguarding training course, focusing on preventing, reporting and handling safeguarding issues. All VSO volunteers and staff members are familiar with our Code of Conduct, which sets out the standards and expectations of employees and volunteers in terms of professional ethics, integrity, acting as a representative and safeguarding, which support our vision, mission and values. The Code of Conduct of VSO is signed by all employees, the local (office) volunteers and VSO volunteers who are going to work in developing countries. The Code of Conduct has also been published on the VSO Netherlands website. Employees, volunteers and other (external) stakeholders are obliged to report safeguarding incidents to the appropriate integrity officer/ safeguarding lead. An external counsellor (vertrouwenspersoon) is available at all times to provide support for our employees. All incidents are investigated and dealt with by VSO Netherlands and VSO's Global Safeguarding Lead according to the global safeguarding directions, if necessary, with the aid of external parties. Support and care is available for victims through the Dutch organisation Slachtofferhulp.



15 VSO supporters took on the challenge of climbing Mount Meru in Tanzania, raising funds for the project RISE (Raise Income for School Education).

One safeguarding incident involving a volunteer recruited by VSO Netherlands was reported in the last fiscal year. An International VSO Incident Management Team was immediately established, and the incident was reported to the relevant authorities as per protocol. The incident has in the meantime been fully investigated and resolved and an independent external evaluation is being carried out to review the incident management response for organisational learning.

Public fundraising and communications

We are pleased to have welcomed many new supporters, such as donors and volunteers, who, by choosing to support us, support our mission of creating a fairer world. In the meantime, we are trying to engage more supporters for VSO, telling VSO's story and showing all aspects of our work.

Supporters

We are grateful for all the support that is given to us to execute our work and programmes, and proud to say that during the past year, 28,920 individual givers supported our work financially. In addition, we have seen an increased engagement from our community of supporters which, among other things, have produced excellent results at fundraising events, such as the VSO Kilimanjaro Mount Meru Challenge.

Kilimanjaro Mount Meru Challenge

We organised two fundraising events this year; the first being an event that marked the 15th anniversary of the partnership between Randstad and VSO. A total of 22 Randstad employees from five different countries climbed Mount Meru in five days. Afterwards, the group visited VSO's Lake Zone Youth Empowerment Project for which they collectively raised over € 150,000.

In March 2020, 16 VSO supporters took on this same challenge. This time, they raised funds for the RISE (Raise Income for School Education) programme in Tanzania. They raised an amount of € 92,428 from 1,853 individuals and businesses. The participants in this challenge received support from our volunteers who organised hiking days, provided practical advice and helped them raise funds. Unfortunately, the project visit that was part of the challenge had to be cancelled due to COVID-19, but the participants were able to complete the Mount Meru climb. Afterwards the team awarded VSO with an average score of 8.0 for Covid-19 communications, crisis management and rapid response.

Resilience and emergency response

VSO is actively working on resilience building within communities. Our presence in local communities allows us to respond swiftly to emergency situations. For example, over the past years, VSO has trained 750 community volunteers in Mozambique in risk preparedness. When cyclones Idai and Kenneth caused a lot of damage in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi, we launched a campaign to ensure that our volunteers could provide emergency aid, such as food, clean water and clothing, immediately after the cyclones hit. VSO will keep assisting families in the affected areas to rebuild their lives and homes. In the Netherlands, a total of € 7,621 was raised for immediate aid.

Legacies

As in prior years, we honoured our late colleague Caroline van der Wal and followed up on her impactful work. At the Heart of VSO event, two projects - run by returned volunteers - were awarded the Caroline van der Wal Award. This year, the winning projects were: 'Cervical cancer education in Uganda' and 'Safe mother and childcare in Nepal'. The first project aims to raise awareness about the causes, symptoms and prevention of cervical cancer. The second project aims to increase awareness about the importance of using the maternity centre for pregnant women from the remote village of Chamrangbesi in Nepal. Both projects received a cash prize of € 10,000, a small sculpture and a huge round of applause!

Telling VSO's story

VSO is undergoing a period of change. We want more people to know who we are and what we do and tell the story about all aspects of our work. Therefore, in the second half of the year, we redefined our international vision, mission and values. Until now, VSO was mostly seen as a volunteer sending organisation. Even though this is part of our method to create a fairer world, we have started to highlight the broader spectrum of our international development work, the expertise and partners we work with to make an impact on the lives of the people we serve: marginalised groups and communities in 23 countries all over the globe. During this past year we have done so at all VSO events and on our updated website. In the coming year, we will take our positioning strategy to the next level and work on a brand story and concept that shows the unique character of VSO and provides new and existing supporters, organisations, the Dutch government and private sector a clear view and understanding of who we are and how we work.

Successes

- We succeeded in diversifying our public fundraising programmes by setting up fundraising events, both within the Randstad partnership and for VSO supporters, raising a total of € 250,000 and gaining a lot of supporter engagement.



At the Heart of VSO event, the projects 'Cervical cancer education in Uganda' and 'Safe mother and childcare in Nepal' received the Caroline van der Wal Award.



- As a result of our fundraising campaigns, people who donated to VSO in the past started donating to us again, supporters donated more and pledged to stay with us for five years by making their donations tax-deductible.
- We invested time in engaging with our community. We have set up a foundation of community volunteers (+100). Next year, we will explore the possibility of engaging this community in fundraising.
- We developed a new website that is technically up-to-date and offers supporters ways of contributing to VSO by giving their time, a donation or by joining or organising a campaign.
- The VSO Community (+100) and their engagement is growing (see box above).

Challenges

- Our face-to-face fundraising was halted completely due to disappointing results. On top of that, the face-to-face agencies are currently facing difficulties due to shortage of skilled staff. As a result, our expenditure was lower than expected, but our donor base decreased. A new fundraising strategy will be developed and executed next year to move towards a replacement of the face-to-face channel.
- The Covid-19 pandemic had no influence on public fundraising income this year, but will shape campaign themes and income in the future as the financial crisis deepens and prolongs. International event fundraising events are in danger due to travel restrictions and possibilities for offline community events are uncertain next year

A growing community

We have worked on building and strengthening a powerful network of people who support our mission by donating their time. They can do so by joining the VSO Community. The community provides an online platform for its members to actively engage with VSO's work and one another. They also meet in real life during training courses and events, like the heart of VSO. Members who want to structurally spend more time on VSO can participate in a volunteer pool by being a peer supporter, trainer of new volunteers, selector of new candidates, editor, fundraiser or in diverse roles within the VSO office. In total, 77 members of our volunteer pools contributed 2,591 hours to the mission of VSO! We greatly appreciate all the work they have done.

Organisation and management

VSO Netherlands

VSO Netherlands is an independent organisation that works fully aligned with the global VSO network. Besides VSO Netherlands, this network consists of the 22 country offices in Asia and Africa, the international office in Kingston and an establishment in Ireland and United States. VSO Netherlands contributes to the international network through programme development, raising funds, placement of voluntary experts abroad, providing information and strengthening the programmes of our country offices by building partnerships in the Netherlands.

Governance

VSO Netherlands has endorsed the principles of good governance that have been defined in the SBF-Code Good Governance for Charities. These principles are included in the Qualification System for Charities, which replaces labels such as the CBF/CBF Certificate, the RfB label and the Label for Charities from 1 January 2016.

VSO Netherlands has a one-person board of directors. As from March 2017, VSO Netherlands works with a supervisory board. The primary responsibility for the organisation's actions lies with the director/manager and his management team. The director fulfils his duties according to the regulations of the board of directors.

Erik Ackerman started as the director of VSO Netherlands on 12 March 2018. In addition to his position at VSO Netherlands, he has an additional position as chairman of the board of the 'GroenLinks in de Europese Unie' foundation.

The Supervisory Board has determined the remuneration/salary and terms of employment of the director. The Board uses the 'Beloning Directeuren van Goede Doelen' Advice Scheme, which indicates a maximum standard for the annual income, based on weight criteria. The remuneration of the director of VSO Netherlands is in accordance with function group E of the Scheme (BSD-score 330). The director's maximum annual income, which is relevant for assessment, is € 88,310 (from 1 January 2020). During the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, the director's total annual income amounted to € 83,582, while the total income including employer's contributions amounted to € 110,797.

Monitoring

The Supervisory Board, the supervisory body of VSO Netherlands, serves as an advisor and interlocutor to the management and as the employer for the director. The members help the organisation to reach the highest possible level in terms of its mission, goals, plans and internal working methods. They do this by monitoring as constructively and critically as possible and by giving solicited and unsolicited advice to the management. The composition and duties of the Supervisory Board are determined in the articles of association. The members receive no compensation for their duties. Members of the Supervisory Board are appointed for a period of four years. They can be reappointed once. During this financial year, there were no changes to the composition of the board.

The Supervisory Board had four regular meetings during this financial year. In addition, one update call was scheduled, as well as a self-evaluation meeting. In this period the Supervisory Board's attention was focused on, among other things:

- Progress updates of the organisation
- The multi-annual strategy and budget 2020-2023
- Challenge Fund for Youth Employment
- International developments within VSO international
- VSO's institutional and partnership funding strategy
- Fundraising and community building
- Preparation and approval of annual plan 2020-2021 and budget
- Annual accounts and report 2018-2019
- Self-evaluation of the supervisory board

The self-evaluation was conducted in December 2019. In preparation for the meeting, the board used a standardised questionnaire to identify key topics for reflection. As part of the self-evaluation, the board discussed the collective functioning of the board, the relation with the director, as well as the role of the chair. In general, the board found that it worked in an effective manner, characterised by openness and mutual respect. Improvements compared to the previous self-evaluation include a better connection to the organisation, a better spread of expertise among the board, and good onboarding of new members. A number of next steps were identified, including: stay more connected between board meetings, e.g. through regular short update calls, further strengthening of the relationship with the

International Board of VSO International, an annual planning of strategic items that will be discussed throughout the year.

The Supervisory Board has two subcommittees. The audit committee (Fons de Zeeuw (chair) and Nynke Runia) and the remuneration committee (Guus Eskens and Maria Verheij). The audit committee met four times in the financial year. It focused on the preparation of the 2018-2019 financial statements, the budget for 2020-2021, the multi-annual budget and financial monitoring.

The remuneration committee met twice to discuss the objectives and work plan of the director, as well as the director's appraisal, contract and salary.

Supervisory Board	
Guus Eskens	<p>Starting date: March 2017</p> <p>Chair Board VSO Netherlands, Utrecht Trustee Board VSO International, Kingston, UK Board member Healthnet TPO, Amsterdam Board member Netherlands Society for Tropical Medicine and International Health, Wijk Chairman Stichting "Drie Straatjes", Rotterdam</p>
Dr. Philip Goodwin	<p>Starting date: March 2018</p> <p>Other positions: CEO VSO International Trustee, Royal Nation Lifeboat Institution</p>
Fons de Zeeuw	<p>Starting date: May 2016</p> <p>Other positions: director international at Oost NL, member of the Supervisory Board of NDL</p>
Maria Verheij	<p>Starting date: January 2019</p> <p>Other position: As of October 2019 director internal communications at Ahold Delhaize, previously director communications at AkzoNobel</p>
Nynke Runia	<p>Starting date: January 2019</p> <p>Other positions: freelance consultant</p> <p>Until November 2019, Member of the Supervisory Board of IVN Natuureducatie</p> <p>Until May 2019, Member of the Supervisory Board at Stichting Petje Af, Amersfoort</p>

In 2019, Goede Doelen Nederland established the Stichting Intern Toezicht Goede Doelen (Foundation for Internal Supervision of Charities, which focuses on the professionalisation of the supervision of Dutch charities. VSO is a member of this foundation.

Structure and staff

VSO Netherlands continued to operate as a flat organisation in which the professional responsibility of the employees is most important. They work in both permanent but also in project-based teams. These teams align closely with their counterparts in the global VSO organisation, dispersed over 25 offices across the world. This enables us to make the most use of the knowledge and skills within our international network.

The four permanent teams within the organisation are:

- Volunteering
- Programmes & Partners
- Fundraising & Communications
- Support & Finance

As of September 2019 a management team of three persons has been installed with a focus on close cooperation between the departments to properly guide the organisational development. This is composed of the director, the manager fundraising & communications and the manager operations. Following the new strategic plans, VSO Netherlands recruited for a number of new staff positions that are key to help realise the ambitions. These positions sometimes add to the team and sometimes fill vacancies that arose. In 2019-2020, four fixed staff members and two temporary colleagues left the organisation, while eleven staff members were added to the team.

On 31 March 2020, 28 paid staff members (21 FTEs) were employed by VSO Netherlands. Twenty-one women and seven men were employed. We expand our permanent team with flex workers when necessary; in 2019-2020 we had two flex workers. Throughout the year, two interns worked at VSO Netherlands. Our sick leave rate is exceptionally low, at 2.2% on average throughout the year.

The age of our employees:

Age category	Woman	Man	Total
25-35	3	2	5
35-45	10	4	14
45-55	7	0	7
55+	1	1	2

VSO Netherlands adheres to the Sociaal Werk collective labour agreement in the remuneration of all employees. All positions are scaled in accordance with the positions referred in the Code of Conduct for Charities Netherlands. VSO Netherlands provides co-determination for its employees through staff representation (PVT). In 2019-2020, the PVT consisted of three employees.

Volunteers in the Netherlands

In 2019-2020 there were 64 volunteers active for VSO in the Netherlands, more than twice as many as last year. Of these volunteers, 27 are 'alumni': returning experts. They support VSO in many different ways, depending on their knowledge and expertise. For example, six volunteers work in our office, supporting colleagues with our Customer Relations Management (CRM) system, reviewing our health strategy or helping to write project proposals. 12 volunteers support us by writing articles, taking photographs and conducting interviews with volunteers who have returned from the field. VSO volunteers are united through the VSO Community, you can read more about the community on page (XX).

VSO Netherlands also offered the possibility to organisations to have their employees perform part of their re-integration at the VSO office. In 2019-2020 two people did so. In accordance with the Code of Conduct for Charities, our volunteer policy dictates which activities our volunteers can perform and which they cannot. We also set out how we interact with our prospective volunteers, how we inform volunteers and how we communicate with them about their input. Thanks to this policy we guarantee the legal position of volunteers, we make sure that they and other involved parties know what they can expect, and we ensure volunteers will continue to find it appealing to work with us.

Complaints, ideas and wishes

VSO Netherlands takes all complaints, ideas and wishes of stakeholders seriously. VSO Netherlands records almost all comments and complaints from donors because they offer the opportunity to improve our work. For this, we have a special complaints procedure, which can be found on our website. We have received 41 complaints from individual givers compared to 113 complaints last year. We record every complaint and handle them in accordance with our internal quality guidelines. We distinguish three kinds of complaints: general complaints, complaints from volunteers and complaints from individual givers. In 2019-2020, no general complaints or complaints from volunteers were filed.



Moses Masesi sells samosa and sausages around the town centre in Mwala, Kenya. VSO helped him to buy a selling trolley to enhance his mobility around the centre and to better store and display his products. Through VSO's training he gained knowledge on business planning and entrepreneurship, especially in the areas of marketing and financial management.

Complaints, questions and comments are opportunities for VSO Nederland to improve our work. Last year, we updated our complaints policy for donors. We have improved the registration of complaints so that we have a better overview of the complaints. In addition, we reviewed communication on complaints and improved them where necessary.

Last year, we received 41 complaints (compared to 113 complaints in 2018-2019) from donors, 16 comments and three questions. All complaints have been handled properly. We receive most complaints as a result of face-to-face recruitment. Because recruitment unexpectedly stopped this year, we received fewer complaints.

Most complaints came from donors who had a complaint about face-to-face recruitment. The

agreement to donate with the recruiter was not properly processed after the visit. In addition, we received complaints from people with money being debited from their account and who had not issued a debit authorisation.

Systematic use of resources

It is very important to us to carefully handle the resources that are entrusted to us by donors, business partners and individual givers. VSO Netherlands continuously strives to work as effectively and efficiently as possible. We use a multi-annual strategy, based on the strategy of the global VSO network. This serves as a starting point during the drafting of annual programmes and budgets. We work with specific, measurable goals based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and target values. Evaluation results are incorporated in the development of the following annual plan. The multi-annual strategy, annual plans and their respective budgets are drafted under the responsibility of the director. The Supervisory Board confirms them.

All projects developed by VSO have a custom 'monitoring and evaluation framework'. In association with the VSO Country office, we draft this protocol to be in line with the wishes and needs of the donor, and the capacities of our local partners. We monitor each project annually, and adjust budget and/or goals where necessary. The international VSO network uses various instruments for assessment. We gather results from our programmes through our Annual Reviews. At these stakeholder meetings, at which all partners, volunteers and individual members of target groups are represented, we discuss the impact and learnings of that year. Their feedback is input for the planning of the following year or development of new programmes. Where we work with NGOs and CSOs for capacity strengthening, learning is part of the process, including annual partner reviews. In addition, programmes are evaluated during mid-term and end-term evaluations, by internal or external evaluators. And we perform our own participatory research on specific issues.

An evaluation report is delivered periodically by country offices, where the most important learning points are outlined per project. These learning points are considered in future projects. Our management evaluates the results of our projects annually. The results of this evaluation could lead to adjustment of budgets and/or goals. Adjustments are always deliberated upon with the country office involved and the local partners. In the annual report, the director accounts for the followed policy and expenditure of financial resources. We publish the annual report together with our financial statements, which are approved by the Supervisory

Board and furthermore verified by our external accountant (Dubois & Co).

Fundraising expenditure

We spent € 501,949 on fundraising in 2019-2020 and we raised € 3,582,846. The percentage expenditures on raised funds is 14 percent (22 percent in 2018-2019). Due to an increase in total income in combination with lower fundraising expenditure, the percentage expenditures on raised funds fell sharply during this financial year.

Investment in fundraising did not only lead to financial resources. People are increasingly aware of the work of VSO and development cooperation in general. We therefore allocate 50% of fundraising campaigns to provide information.

Long-term vision “Taking Volunteering for Development to Scale”

People First

VSO International has set its long-term vision and objectives in the People First strategy and the operating plan 2019-2022. Our People First strategy focuses on supporting the delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically on the principle of “Leaving No-One Behind”. It sets down three strategic shifts we want to make as an organisation:

- Firstly, we want to extend and deepen our impact through a portfolio of Global Programmes that harness the power of our volunteering for development approach and through a focus on social inclusion, social accountability and resilience.
- Secondly, we want increased Global Engagement by leveraging our relationships with communities, partners and volunteers, in order to mobilise active global citizens across the world in support of the SDGs.
- Thirdly, building on our Global Programmes and Engagement, we will step more fully into our Global Leadership role to position volunteering as a powerful contribution to delivery of the SDGs.

Growing our impact

We aim to increase our effectiveness, adaptability and sustainability as an organisation. Our overarching targets are as follows:

We will become more effective as an organisation, increasing the reach of our programmes from 1.5 million to 5 million people in the next three years. This will include:

- two million children and young people supported to read and write
- 500,000 mothers and newborns supported to have safe births
- 500,000 young people equipped to make positive sexual and reproductive health choices
- 500,000 people in rural communities supported to improve their livelihoods
- 500,000 young people equipped to find decent work
- one million people in fragile contexts equipped with increased resilience to withstand conflict and disaster

Within this total we will ensure:

- one million young people are equipped to hold duty bearers to account or supporting Sustainable Development Goal processes (“youth engagement”)
- 600,000 people with disability are reached
- four million women and girls are reached

We will deliver impact by applying our volunteering for development (VfD) approach in our programmes. This approach brings together i) the People First Programme Framework ii) our relational model of volunteering and iii) the core approaches of building inclusion, resilience and social accountability. Our volunteering for development approach is what differentiates us as an organisation.

VSO in the Netherlands

VSO Netherlands is a full part of VSO International. In the years to come, VSO Netherlands aims at growing its positive impact on the lives of our primary actors through enhancing our success as a fundraiser, recruiter and programme developer. We aim to grow our impact by means of more and larger, effective programmes, enabled by successful recruitment and fundraising. In that way, we help build and grow VSO’s portfolio.

We will develop as the European Union hub for VSO, engaging effectively with partners, donors and candidates in this region. We aim to double our income and therewith the spending on our mission by the end of 2021 compared to 2019.

For the next two years, key priorities for VSO Netherlands are:

- Implementing larger and complex programmes. These include new programmes such as the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment and the new SRHR Partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This requires a strengthening of our capacity in the field of programme

management, financial capacity as well as monitoring and evaluation.

- Continuing to develop new programme opportunities in the fields of education, livelihoods and health, but also related to VSO's core approaches: social accountability, social inclusion and resilient communities.
- To do so, we will build on existing partnerships and create new ones with other NGO's, research institutes, private sector, trusts and foundations and institutional donors.
- Strengthening VSO's volunteering for development approach by recruiting highly skilled volunteers in the Netherlands, as well as other European countries. We strive towards better integrating programme work and volunteering. We expect the recruitment activity to grow, due to new and larger programmes that bring new vacancies, as well as growing reach into European countries beyond the Netherlands, tapping into a wider market.
- Strengthening our brand: VSO's brand awareness is low and the understanding of what we do among those who know us is limited. We will focus more on the impact of our work and positioning volunteering for development as an effective approach.
- We will develop a more balanced income mix. Public fundraising income is currently our main source of income and will continue to be a key pillar. Whereas the share of public fundraising in our total income was around 80% in early 2019, we expect it to be around 33% by the end of 2021, with other sources and our total income growing. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs is once again an important partner for VSO. In addition, in the post-Brexit era, VSO Netherlands is positioned to lead VSO's engagement with other European donors. Furthermore, we will aim to build sustainable relations in the field of trusts and foundations and the private sector, based on joint vision and impact.
- Building a strong community: the first results of our focus on the community is shown in this report. We have just started. The large group of people who volunteered in the past are important ambassadors for VSO. We see potential to engage more with this group. In addition, we seek to engage other groups who in one way or another want to contribute to our mission. This can be either as office volunteers, trainers or selectors, fundraisers or communicators. Fundraising with and by our community will also be a priority in the years to come.

Costs of operating expenditure

VSO Netherlands had operating expenditure of € 337,731 in 2019-2020: 9 percent of our total expenditures, well below our own maximum of 11 percent. This internal standard equals the percentage VSO Netherlands uses to pass on the costs of management and administration to the programmes to be implemented.

Continuity reserve

VSO Netherlands is a financially healthy organisation, with an adequate financial 'buffer'. At VSO, this buffer (continuity reserve) consists of the disposable equity. This enables us to meet our financial commitments even during periods of negative results. The Supervisory Board together with management determines the minimum and maximum level of the continuity reserve using research on the financial risks of the global VSO network as a whole as the basis.

In February 2020, the management reviewed the reserve policy, which was subsequently approved by the Supervisory Board. It was determined that VSO's reserve level should be around € 1.1 million. The surplus can be used as an investment in the growth of VSO Netherlands and our impact. This year was the second year of a four-year investment path. On 31 March 2020, the continuity reserve was € 1,904,085, a decrease of € 3,827 compared to the previous financial year.

The effect of the Corona pandemic will certainly be reflected in the future income of VSO the coming years, at the moment we estimate that the continuity reserve and liquid assets are sufficient to withstand these future effects.

Investment policy

VSO Netherlands has a risk averse investment policy. We also do not have any direct investments in stock funds at the moment. We therefore act in accordance with the Guideline on Financial Management (Richtlijn Financieel Beheer) of Goede Doelen Nederland.

Annual financial statements

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2020

	31.03.2020 €		31.03.2019 €	
Assets				
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets		40,769		32,308
Current assets				
Debtors	10,261		-	
VSO current account	93,208		263,187	
Other receivable, prepayments, accrued income	335,023		431,376	
		438,492		694,563
Cash at bank and in hand		1,976,629		1,904,974
		2,455,890		2,631,845
Liabilities				
Funds				
Continuity reserve	1,904,085		1,907,912	
Designated reserve	129,037		160,000	
		2,033,122		2,067,912
Provisions		40,755		12,181
Current liabilities				
Creditors	54,598		170,454	
Taxes and social insurance	46,476		31,311	
Other payable, accruals and deferred income	280,937		349,985	
		382,011		551,750
		2,455,890		2,631,845

Statement of income and expenditure for fiscal year 2019-2020

	FY 2019-2020 €	Budget 2019-2020 €	FY 2018-2019 €
Income			
From private individuals	2,478,886	2,631,500	2,425,073
From companies	89,643	144,532	0
From government grants	135,375	100,000	34,462
From affiliated (international) organisations	227,191	358,050	250,730
From other non-profit organisations	651,752	845,000	487,558
Total income	3,582,846	4,079,082	3,197,823
Expenditure			
Expenditure on objectives			
Education	592,267	588,944	831,655
Health	358,874	433,376	22,493
Livelihoods	802,353	1,052,111	610,617
Core approaches	324,764	277,401	25,387
Provide information	699,127	959,266	905,876
	2,777,385	3,311,098	2,396,028
Raising funds expenditure	501,949	757,193	717,798
Operating expenditure	337,731	268,319	229,385
Total expenditure	3,617,064	4,336,610	3,343,211
Balance income and expenditure	-34,218	-257,528	-145,388
Balance financial income and expenditure	-571	-500	-349
Net expenditure / income	-34,790	-258,028	-145,737
Movement designated reserves	-30,963	0	-40,000
Movement to continuity reserve	-3,827	-258,028	-105,737
	2019-2020	2018-2019	
Expenditure on objectives as a percentage of total expenditure	77%	76%	72%
Raising funds expenditure as a percentage of total income	14%	19%	22%
Operating expenditure as a percentage of total expenditure	9%	6%	7%

Cash flow statement

		2019-2020 €	2018-2019 €
Cash flow from operational activities			
Net expenditure / income		-34,790	-145,738
Depreciation		18,286	19,136
Working capital			
- Decrease / increase current assets	256,071	-517,097	
- Increase / decrease provisions	28,574	-17,868	
- Decrease / increase current liabilities	-169,739	155,162	
		114,906	-379,803
		98,402	-506,405
Cash flow from investment activities			
Investments minus disposals	-26,747	-20,096	
Equalisation	0	0	
		-26,747	-20,096
Decrease / Increase Cash at bank and in hand			
		71,655	-526,501
Balance at 1 April 2019 / 2018	1,904,974	2,431,474	
Balance at 31 March 2020 / 2019	1,976,629	1,904,974	
Decrease / Increase Cash at bank and in hand			
		71,655	-526,500

The cash flow statement has been compiled according to the indirect method

Valuation principles

General

VSO Netherlands has compiled the annual financial statements in conformity with Directive 650 for reporting by charitable organisations.

Assets and liabilities and the results are valued on the basis of historical costs.

Assets and liabilities are stated in nominal values, unless otherwise stated in the balance sheet heading. Income and expenses have been allocated to the year to which they are applicable. Profits are only included if they were realised by the closing date. Loss and risks originating before the end of the reporting year are included if they were known before the annual financial statements were compiled. The income from legacies is included in the fiscal year for which the amount can reliably be determined.

Affiliated parties

From 20 March 2018, Stichting VSO Nederland and VSO International have entered into an association. This replaces the former federation agreement. The Affiliate Agreement stipulates that VSO International is entitled to appoint three of the five members of the supervisory board of VSO Nederland (provided they fit in with the frameworks of independent supervision as stipulated by the CBF directives and in the articles of VSO Netherlands). The Agreement also stipulates that the chair of the supervisory board of VSO Netherlands is a member of the Board of Trustees of VSO International. Furthermore, mutual settlement provisions have been made regarding recruitment costs, programme funding, and other activities which are jointly undertaken.

General basis of the annual financial statements

Conversion of foreign currency

Receivables, liabilities and obligations in foreign currency are calculated according to the exchange rate on the

balance sheet date. Transactions in foreign currency during the reporting period are calculated in the annual financial statements according to the exchange rate at settlement. Exchange rate differences arising from conversion on the balance sheet date are included in the Statement of Income and Expenses.

Tangible fixed assets

We have measured tangible fixed assets at the acquisition price, less depreciation. Investments made with funds VSO Netherlands had made available for that purpose have been entered as liabilities in the balance sheet by means of an equalisation reserve. We decrease this equalisation reserve with the yearly depreciation. The investments have been capitalised at the acquisition price, less depreciation. The actual value of the tangible fixed assets is the same as the book value.

Receivables

Receivables are stated at nominal value. Any provisions for irrecoverability have been deducted from the amount.

Provision

The provision has been stated at nominal value.

Notes on the annual financial statements

Inception and aim

Foundation VSO Netherlands was established on 22 September 1989 with the aim of combating poverty, underdevelopment, and social exclusion in developing countries. The Foundation aims to achieve this by

various means, including strengthening the knowledge and capacity of people, organisations and governments that are involved in this objective, and by disseminating information and conducting research.

Address

Stichting VSO Nederland Weg der Verenigde Naties 1
UTRECHT

Funding

The Foundation derives its funding from:

- subsidies;
- donations, gifts, bequests and legacies;
- contributions and donations from third parties and benefactors;
- other income.

The Foundation does not have the aim of generating profit.

Entitlements and obligations not included on the balance sheet

On 1 January 2020, VSO Netherlands entered into a new lease for the office space at Weg der Verenigde Naties 1 in Utrecht for a period of five years. VSO Netherlands has extended the contract by five years. The rent per annum for the coming financial year amounts to approximately EUR 86,000. Furthermore, VSO Netherlands has a leasing obligation for photocopying equipment for the coming year of EUR 6,500.

Notes to the balance sheet as at 31 March 2020

Assets (in euros)

Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets	31.03.2020 €	31.03.2019 €
Book value as at 1 April	32,308	31,348
Additions	26,747	33,932
Disposals	0	-46,899
	59,055	18,381
Depreciation	18,286	19,136
Depreciation on disposals	0	-33,063
Book value as at 31 March	40,769	32,308

The total acquisition value of the tangible fixed assets amounts to EUR 178,336. The cumulative depreciation amounts to EUR 137,567. The insured value of the tangible fixed assets is EUR 148,000.

Current assets

VSO current account	31.03.2020 €	31.03.2019 €
Amounts due from VSO International	93,208	263,187

No interest is calculated on the receivables in the current account. The current account is a balance sheet item for expenses advanced on both sides which are regularly settled by means of invoices.

Other receivable, prepayments, accrued income	31.03.2020 €	31.03.2019 €
Government grant receivable	99,583	0
Contributions for programme funding	121,761	0
Payments advanced to programme offices	3,320	372,538
Companies receivable	31,362	0
Rental deposit	21,768	13,280
Rent	19,695	13,006
Prepaid health insurance premium	4,943	3,818
Other	32,591	28,734
	335,023	431,376

Payments advanced to programme offices

These are funds made available via VSO Netherlands for programme activities.

Cash at bank and in hand	31.03.2020 €	31.03.2019 €
Saving accounts	1,804,811	1,661,309
Current account	171,683	243,509
Cash at bank and in hand	135	156
	1,976,629	1,904,974

De liquid assets are immediately payable

Liabilities (in euros)

Funds	31.03.2020 €	31.03.2019 €
Continuity reserve		
As at 1 April	1,907,912	2,013,650
Deficit for the year	-3,827	-105,738
As at 31 March	1,904,085	1,907,912
Designated reserve		
"Caroline van der Wal prize"		
As at 1 April	160,000	200,000
Movement financial year	-30,963	-40,000
As at 31 March	129,037	160,000

In the financial year 2017-2018, VSO Netherlands received EUR 200,000 from the estate of Caroline van der Wal. This is a bequest without right of usufruct. In memory of this former VSO staff member, the board decided to turn this legacy into a prize. The Caroline van der Wal Prize will be awarded annually to projects initiated or supported by (former) VSO staff members and dedicated to the well-being of girls and women, education, environment and/or the most disadvantaged groups.

Designation of result

From the debit balance of EUR 34,790 for the financial year 2019-2020, EUR 30,963 has been withdrawn from the restricted funds for the Caroline van der Wal Prize. The remaining EUR 3,827 has been withdrawn from the general funds.

Occurrences after balance sheet date

There were no occurrences after the balance sheet date which have to be included in the annual report. Based on the standard of 1.5 times the annual expenses of the work organisation, the maximum continuity reserve allowable amounts to EUR 3,078,311.

Provisions	31.03.2020 €	31.03.2019 €
As at 1 April	12,181	30,048
Donations financial year	40,755	2,089
Disbursed in financial year	12,181	19,956
As at 31 March	40,755	12,181

Uncertainty has arisen about the approval of the submitted hours for the European Union programme. Since the project audit has not yet been completed at the time of completing the financial statements, we have decided, for reasons of prudence, to make a provision for this.

Taxes and social insurance	31.03.2020 €	31.03.2019 €
Taxes and social insurance	39,535	29,037
Pensions	6,941	2,274
	46,476	31,311

Other payable, accruals and deferred income	31.03.2020 €	31.03.2019 €
Holiday allowance, leave and year-end bonus	100,227	76,085
Advance contributions for programme funding	89,245	242,500
Liabilities to programme	37,589	0
Audit fees	12,705	12,705
Other	41,172	18,696
	280,938	349,986

Notes to the Statement of Income and Expenses for the fiscal year 2019- 2020

Income (in euros)

Tangible fixed assets	FY 2019-2020 €	Budget 2019-2020 €	FY 2018-2019 €
From private individuals			
Donations	2,476,886	2,556,486	2,365,073
Legacies	2,000	75,000	60,000
Total	2,478,886	2,631,486	2,425,073
From companies			
Companies	89,643	144,531	0
Total	89,643	144,531	0
From government grants			
European Union	45,480	99,999	34,462
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	89,895	0	0
Total	135,375	99,999	34,462
From affiliated (international) organisations	227,191	358,048	250,730
From other non-profit organisations	651,752	844,995	487,558

Income from companies

Until December 2019 the income from companies is received via VSO International and therefore included in the income from affiliated (international) organisations. From January 2020 income from companies is directly received in VSO.

	FY 2019-2020 €	Budget 2019-2020 €	FY 2018-2019 €
Balance financial income and expenditure			
Interest on bank deposits	-571	-500	-349
	-571	-500	-349

Expenditure (in euros)

Total expenditure	FY 2019-2020 €	Budget 2019-2020 €	FY 2018-2019 €
Staff costs	1,416,471	1,502,566	1,251,520
Subsidies and programme contributions granted	796,585	1,482,785	1,324,720
Payments to affiliated (international) organisations	1,132,363	1,070,000	567,034
Communication	51,774	65,500	7,470
Housing	81,823	81,582	59,040
Other expenditure	138,047	134,170	133,428
	3,617,064	4,336,603	3,343,212

Total expenses

Staff costs concern the total sum of the wage costs and agency workers. Staff costs includes the direct wage costs incurred for the realisation of placements of EUR 311,624 and programme contributions of EUR 433,440.

The subsidies and programme contributions granted and the payments to affiliated international organisations, a total of EUR 1,928,949 cover all other direct costs to programmes for (continued) contributions to the capacity strengthening of VSO partner organisations, and, in some cases, other local organisations in collaboration with VSO Netherlands.

Please refer to paragraph 7(a) for the distribution of these expenses among the objectives.

Distribution of expenses

Total expenditure	FY 2019-2020 €	Budget 2019-2020 €	FY 2018-2019 €
Staff costs			
Wages	1,236,915	1,415,566	937,540
Social security costs	211,543	0	147,556
Pension	121,510	0	96,725
Wages charged on to VSO	-70,878	0	-87,135
		0	0
	1,499,090	1,415,566	1,094,686
Wages charged on programmes	-130,491	0	-29,655
Agency workers	47,872	87,000	186,489
Total staff costs	1,416,471	1,502,566	1,251,520

In this fiscal year an average of 20 FTEs were employed by VSO Nederland (2018-2019: 16 FTEs)

Name Position		Erik Ackerman Managing director
Employment		Undetermined
	Hours	36
	Part-time percentage period	100 12 months
Remuneration (EUR)		
Annual income	Gross wage/salary	73,126
	Payout 'IKB PG'	10,356
	Payout 'IKB NPG'	100
	One-time payment	0
Total annual income		83,582
Employers charges		
	Social security	6,647
	ZVW	3,874
	Pension premium	16,694
TOTAL		110,797

The "BSD"-score is 330 which relates to function group E

	FY 2019-2020 €	Budget 2019-2020 €	FY 2018-2019 €
Subsidies and programme contributions granted including payments to affiliated (international) organisations			
Costs related to placements	57,946	233,964	64,262
Costs related to programmes	1,132,363	1,070,000	610,172
Provide information	336,182	602,660	593,812
Raising funds expenditure	307,815	565,660	550,880
Operating expenditure	94,642	80,501	72,628
Total	1,928,949	2,552,785	1,891,754

Direct costs

Direct costs are lower than budgeted. There are three main reasons for this. The level of corporate placements was lower than expected and therefore there were lower costs and both the expenditure spent on providing information and for raising funds are lower than budgeted. Not all planned activities have been performed due to disappointing results on both lines.

Below you will find a further breakdown of the direct costs by sub-category.

	FY 2019-2020 €	Budget 2019-2020 €	FY 2018-2019 €
Costs related to volunteer placements			
Advertising and communication costs	16,000	33,000	20,788
"Meet VSO" and other events	55	5,000	953
Assessment and training	25,992	20,600	30,189
Placement costs	9,350	175,364	9,950
Returning volunteers	0	0	707
Other	6,549	0	1,674
subtotal	57,946	233,964	64,261
Costs related to programmes			
RISE - programme	263,729	230,000	193,054
Educational improvement in Ethiopia	110,950	110,000	198,354
Healthcare programme Ethiopia	0		11,003
Capacity-building programme Bangladesh	154,184	185,000	111,243
Health care programme Uganda	240,039	255,000	55,974
Challenge Fund Youth Employment	90,073	100,000	0
European Union BeCapable and P4R	48,066	15,000	40,544
Provision European Union BeCapable	40,755	0	0
Other	184,568	175,000	0
subtotal	1,132,363	1,070,000	610,172
Provide information	336,182	602,660	593,812
Provide information contains the allocated costs from fundraising, the costs for communities, annual reporting, social media and content gathering			
	FY 2019-2020 €	Budget 2019-2020 €	FY 2018-2019 €
Raising funds expenditure			
Donor recruitment	136,451	395,000	415,740
Acquisition of grants	0	0	0
Acquisition of private and company funds	54,744	38,160	25,418
Donor upgrading and loyalty	74,658	70,000	46,039
Donor database	18,258	17,500	33,729
One-off donations and legacies	0	22,500	4,905
Events	23,704	22,500	24,176
Other	0	0	873
subtotal	307,815	565,660	550,880
Operating expenditure			
Board costs	8,623	11,340	12,766
Audit fees	33,578	24,200	27,225
Payroll administration	6,196	6,068	4,743
Legal fees	2,570	7,500	9,467
Consultancy	36,141	21,493	17,915
Other	7,534	9,900	513
subtotal	94,642	80,501	72,629
Total direct costs	1,928,949	2,552,785	1,891,754

	FY 2019-2020 €	Budget 2019-2020 €	FY 2018-2019 €
Communication			
Public campaign	10,243	16,500	0
Other	41,531	49,000	7,470
Total communication	51,774	65,500	7,470
Housing			
Rent	69,644	69,492	48,621
Other	12,180	12,090	10,419
Total housing	81,823	81,582	59,040
Other expenditure			
Depreciation			
Inventory	18,286	18,000	19,136
Other staffing costs			
Commuting	25,880	18,500	23,061
Advertising	4,777	2,000	2,779
Other travel	13,488	8,500	6,417
Training	16,646	25,000	23,166
Health and safety service	156	5,550	616
Other	939	3,150	1,335
Office expenditure			
Office supplies	1,825	2,600	1,207
Mail	1,108	1,200	1,554
IT costs	13,842	14,611	8,385
Telephone and internet	12,836	11,430	15,399
Scanning and printing costs	16,882	17,459	17,297
Subscriptions	375	150	0
Other	11,009	6,020	13,074
Total other expenditure	138,047	134,170	133,426

Objectives	1.*	2.*	3.*	4.*	5.*	Raising funds expenditure	Operating expenditure	FY 2019-2020	Budget 2019-2020	FY 2018-2019
Subsidies and programme contributions granted	6,299	1,260	42,830	7,558	336,182	307,815	94,642	796,586	1,482,784	1,324,720
Payments to affiliated (international) organisations	374,679	240,039	333,077	184,568	0	0	0	1,132,363	1,070,000	567,034
Staff costs	177,290	98,655	357,824	111,294	304,541	162,894	203,972	1,416,471	1,502,574	1,251,520
Communication	6,480	3,606	13,079	4,068	11,131	5,954	7,455	51,774	65,500	7,470
Housing	10,241	5,699	20,670	6,429	17,592	9,410	11,783	81,823	81,582	59,040
Other expenditure	17,278	9,615	34,873	10,847	29,680	15,875	19,879	138,047	134,170	133,427
	592,267	358,874	802,353	324,764	699,127	501,949	337,731	3,617,064	4,336,610	3,343,211

Allocation of expenses by objective

For allocation of expenses to the designated posts, VSO Netherlands makes use of the document 'Recommendation for application of Directive 650 for management and administration expenses', which is compiled by the sector organisation Goede Doelen Nederland. This means that expenses falling under management, board of directors, general secretariat and finances, and planning and control are fully allocated to operating expenditure. Where the direct efforts of management, board of directors, general secretariat and finances, and planning and control have been devoted to objectives and/or acquisition of income, these expenses are, in that case, calculated pro rata. Expenses reported under IT, accommodation, facilities management and HR are calculated pro rata based on the FTEs budgeted. Staffing costs, legal fees and communication expenses are allocated, to the extent possible, to the objective for which they have been incurred, or calculated pro rata based on the FTEs budgeted. Investment in fundraising did not only lead to financial resources. People are more aware about the work of VSO and development cooperation in general. We therefore allocate 50% of the investment in fundraising campaigns to provide information and 50% to raising funds expenditure.

*) Objectives

1. Education
2. Health
3. Livelihoods
4. Core approaches
5. Provide information

Other information

Audit opinion

The audit opinion can be found in this annual report on pages XX and XX

Thank you

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.

The change is being felt by over a million people around the world, right now. Together, we're working towards a fair world for everyone. Thank you.

Here are just some of the individuals and organisations who made a vital contribution to our work in 2019/20.

AmplifyChange	Irish Aid
ARM	Jersey Overseas Aid
BT Supporters Group	KfW
Citi Group	Mastercard Foundation
Tanzania Citi Foundation	Medicor Foundation
Department for Foreign Affairs Trade and Development	Palladium Group
Department for International Development	Randstad
Dioraphte	Royal Norwegian Embassy
Dubai Cares	Scottish Government
Education Consortium	The British Asian Trust
European Commission	Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund
ERIKS	UNFPA
GIZ	UNICEF
Global Affairs Canada	UNOCHA
Greg Dyke and Sue Howes	UN Trust Fund
GSRD Foundation	USAID
Hempel Foundation	Weeshuis der Doopsgezinden
Imagine Worldwide	Wees een Kans



**If you would like to know more about
VSO's work, visit www.vso.nl**

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