

The power

OF CONNECTION



**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
2022/23 VSO NETHERLANDS**





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**IN 2022-23 WE REACHED
10.9 MILLION PEOPLE!**



1. Foreword

The power of connection

The communities that VSO works in faced many challenges in the past year. With the COVID-19 restrictions now lifted, these communities still have a long way to go to make up for ground lost in health, education and livelihoods. At the same time, the effects of climate change are being felt hard in these communities and the space for civil society is declining. These complex issues can only be taken on through the power of connection, and that is exactly what we as VSO have focused on this year. Establishing connections with changemakers, our civil society and private sector partners and our donors to reach the most marginalised and tackle the complex issues of this time.

We are incredibly proud of our collaborations this year and the impact we have managed to achieve together, both with existing partners and new partners. These collaborations have led to new programmes with significant impact over the coming years. Together with Taka Taka Solutions and ICDI, and with support from IKEA Foundation, we have started the From Waste to Work project in Kenya (page 48). Every year, over one million young people enter the Kenyan labour market without any skills. With this project we are addressing the issue of unrecycled waste and youth unemployment. The collaboration of civil society and private sector partners, each adding their own expertise, network and skills, is what makes this project so impactful. We will reach 3,900 of the most vulnerable youth active in the waste sector to generate income through waste-picking that gets fed into renewable resources.

TRIPLE NEXUS PROGRAMME

In Ethiopia and Kenya, we have started the Integrated Peacebuilding, Development and Humanitarian Efforts project, with the support of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), to reduce conflict and enhance resilience and peaceful coexistence of cross-border communities

at the Ethiopia-Kenya border (page 51). The border between Kenya and Ethiopia is inhabited by cross-country clans and people on the move. It is heavily affected by drought, caused by climate change and overgrazing. With this triple nexus programme that addresses the interlinkages between humanitarian aid, development and peace, we aim to contribute to a foundation for stability and resilience on the Ethiopia-Kenya border, on which long-term sustainable development and poverty reduction will be possible.

As gender rights and SRHR are more and more under pressure, the Make Way project (page 31) continues to promote affordable, accessible and quality sexual and reproductive health services for vulnerable youth in Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia. These types of youths are largely invisible to public policy-making and implementation due to their multiple vulnerabilities arising from gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and socio-economic background. Working in a consortium, with organisations such as The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians and Akina Mama Wa Afrika, we see real strength in our connection and collaboration in tackling these complex issues.

“We see real strength in connection and collaboration in tackling complex issues.”

PRESENTING OUR WORK

Throughout the year, we were also able to present our work, providing a platform for volunteers and primary actors to share their experience at a range of global and regional events. These included: the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women where we were able to demonstrate the use of education technology to promote gender equity in education, health and livelihoods; the International Conference on Family Planning where we shared innovative technology to deliver integrated reproductive health and family planning services to marginalised young people; and the One Young World conference in Manchester where we showcased how young entrepreneurs can benefit from Intersectional Feminist Leadership.

This annual report gives an overview of what we have achieved during 2022-2023 and examples of the difference we are making in a wide range of contexts worldwide through our support of changemakers, using the power of volunteering for development and creating connections with partners across the world.

Irene Sleven and **Merijn de Jong**
Co-directors VSO Netherlands



IRENE SLEVEN



MERIJN DE JONG

FEMINIST LEADERSHIP

Merijn de Jong and **Irene Sleven**

have been appointed as co-directors of VSO Nederland as of 1 February 2023. In addition to their co-directorship, the two will also remain responsible for Fundraising and Communications and Programs and Partnerships.

“That is a deliberate choice; VSO is committed to feminist leadership. That means dividing power, being aware of your own privileges and being as inclusively as possible.” Read the entire interview at vso.nl/interview

2. Our year in numbers

VSO Netherlands is part of VSO, a global organisation working in 35 countries. These pages show the results that we have achieved together in 2022-2023.



7,786 PEOPLE

VOLUNTEERED WITH VSO

**VSO WORKED WITH
COMMUNITIES IN**

35

COUNTRIES.

4%

of the people we worked
with were people living
with disability



51%

of the people
we worked with
were women

10.9 million people

were reached, nearly 7.4 million indirectly and over 3.5 million directly including:



OVER

2.8 MILLION

THROUGH OUR

EDUCATION PROJECTS



ALMOST

546,000

THROUGH OUR WIDER
WORK ON RESILIENCE,
INCLUSION AND SOCIAL
COUNTABILITY



ALMOST

136,000

THROUGH OUR
RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS
PROGRAMME



OVER

65,000

THROUGH OUR
HEALTH PROJECTS
WITH VSO



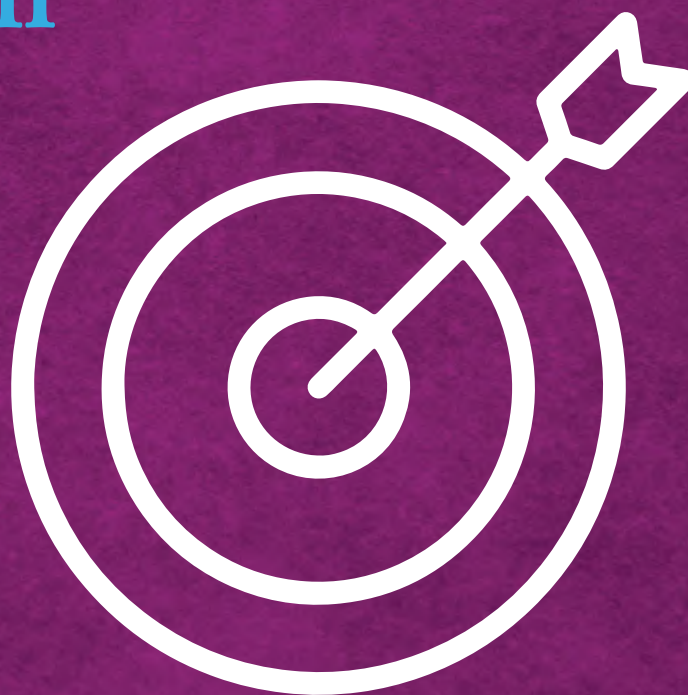
Pratibha Tharu (13, with her mother) is one of the ENGAGE (Empowering a New Generation of Adolescent Girls with Education, see page 23) project's primary actors and resumed school.

3. Our vision and values



Our vision

A fair world
for everyone



Our purpose

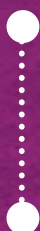
Creating lasting change
through volunteering



- 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



COLLABORATION



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

OUR

VALUES



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



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





4. Our approach

4.1 OUR THEORY OF CHANGE: DOING DEVELOPMENT DIFFERENTLY

VSO's volunteering for development method provides opportunity for everybody to build a more equitable society. It does that by focusing first on those who are left out by society – those living in extreme poverty, or with disability and illness, those who face discrimination and violence for their gender, sexuality, or social status. These are not passive “beneficiaries” of aid. They are the “primary actors” at the heart of our work. It is from their viewpoint and actions that we seek to define the issues, opportunities, and solutions that deliver sustainable and locally led change.

Why do we use that term? ‘Primary’, because they are principal contributors to VSO’s work, and they shape the design and delivery of programmes. ‘Actors’ because they are active agents. VSO does not do development to communities; we work alongside them.



What do we mean by primary actors?

Primary actors are those marginalised persons in the communities we work with. They are the ones at the heart of our projects, helping us to understand the community’s needs, and working with volunteers on delivering the most impactful solutions. 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.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Our Volunteering for Development method recognises the importance of relationships in forging a shared understanding and commitment and building collective action for lasting change. Through teams of community, national and international volunteers, it brings together a diversity of perspectives and experience to generate insights, innovate ideas and undertake actions that can address the underlying causes of complex problems facing our communities. It inspires and ignites the potential for active citizenship all over the globe, for everyone to step forward and drive the change that will create a fair world for everyone.

“Our teams of community, national and international volunteers brings together a diversity of perspectives and experiences.”

FUTURE ECONOMIES START WITH YOUTH: THE PODCAST

In 2022, the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment (see page 38) launched the 'Future Economies Start with Youth' podcast series. Through this initiative we unite experts and young people to establish joint visions for the most pressing issues in youth employment.

A BLENDED APPROACH TO VOLUNTEERING

In episode 4, host and Youth Policy Advisor Kevin Eustatia explores the increased recognition that volunteering contributes to long-lasting, sustainable change. He is joined by researchers, national and international volunteers and private sector representatives in unpacking the complexity of the approach and gathering practical insights.

Inge Boudewijn is a post-doctoral research fellow at Northumbria University's Centre for International Development. She is part of Northumbria University's research team on the 'Volunteering Together: Blending knowledge and skills for development' project.

ADAPTABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY

"Previous research by VSO had already highlighted how volunteers contribute to development in terms of innovation, inspiration, inclusion, participation and ownership. Our research into the blended approach to volunteering further highlighted how this approach can lead to increased adaptability and flexibility within different projects. We saw evidence of volunteers on the ground taking up activities in response to project needs, for example in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic when everything changed. That was really made possible by having these different types of volunteers working together. We also found that the blended approach can lead to increased sustainability and longevity of project outcomes. That is particularly through the use of community volunteers, who are drawn from the local communities themselves, where the project is taking place. They are essential to reach those

that are most in need, most vulnerable, and also to engage the communities. So engaging and empowering those kind of actors leads to increased sustainability for projects, because when a project ends, many of these people will remain in their communities. They will retain those skills and connections that they have made."

Find the entire podcast here:

<https://fundforyouthemployment.nl/podcast>



The relational model came out of research by VSO and Institute of Development Studies (IDS). Through the research, VSO was able to pull out the unique contributions volunteers make as they work alongside communities, partners, and VSO staff. **These contributions have been summarized through the following 5 dimensions:**



INCLUSION

Volunteering extends the reach of public services to the poorest and most marginalised by working on power dynamics

INNOVATION

Volunteering generates new ideas and creates new forms of collaboration that lead to social innovation through a mix of internal/external perspectives

OWNERSHIP

Volunteering enhances trust and strengthens local ownership of development processes

PARTICIPATION

Volunteering creates a pathway to people's participation, active citizenship, and social action

INSPIRATION

Volunteering exposes communities to different cultural norms and ideas

All our programmes address the root causes of marginalisation by focusing on three areas – what we call “core approaches” – that reliably tackle the structures, systems and conditions that make people vulnerable. These core approaches are fundamental to our Volunteering for Development method, ensuring the people we work with have the confidence and ability to bring about change in their own lives. These core approaches are the ones through which we define our programmes.

VSO'S THREE CORE APPROACHES

• Social inclusion and gender

Millions of people face discrimination because of their gender, age, disability, cultural background, sexual orientation. VSO aims to dismantle the causes behind exclusion in all its forms.

• Resilience

Disasters, disease outbreaks and other shocks and stresses can have a devastating effect on communities. Those who are already vulnerable are most at risk. Our goal is to help communities and societies prepare and adapt to disasters, as well as reducing their vulnerability to shocks and stresses.

• Social accountability

Many people around the world are denied their basic rights. Corruption, fear, and unequal power dynamics stop people from speaking up and demanding what they are entitled to. VSO works to support people in exercising their voice, no matter who they are or where they come from. We also help authorities respond to the needs of the people that they are there to serve.

The following section dives deeper into these three core approaches.

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND GENDER

As part of the efforts to ensure no one is left behind, VSO uses and promotes the Washington Group of Questions - questions designed to identify people with a disability. These are tools which allow us to get better data on people living with disabilities. This, in turn, ensures our programmes include and support them.

Last year, in Nepal, we trained teachers in 203 government schools to use these tools as part of the Empowering a New Generation of Adolescent Girls to Learn and Earn (ENGAGE) project. Over 14,000 learners were assessed and, as a result, we identified 382 children (3% of learners) with disabilities. By informing teachers and the local authorities of the extent of disability in government schools, we supported their ability to respond to the needs of those learners. This is crucial if we are to live up to the principle of leaving no one behind which underpins the Sustainable Development Goals. This approach will be rolled out to other schools in Nepal. In both Nepal and Kenya, we supported Gender Education Inclusive Networks (GEIN) of schoolgirls, teachers, and youth mentors, to sensitise girls to their rights and to support them in raising concerns about abuse and violence from teachers and other children to the relevant authorities. In both countries, we are seeing girls growing in confidence to speak out.

We also supported the strengthening of gender policies and sought to influence governments on inclusion. In Cambodia, we helped the government develop a gender-sensitive action plan for fisheries administration via the RECOVER project (see page 61). In Tanzania, VSO developed the mitigation strategy to overcome social exclusion and improve gender equality in the extractives sector as part of our interventions on the EU-funded Collective Action for Rights Realisation in Extractive Industry (CLARITY) project (see page 45). This strategy highlights areas for ensuring safety, security, and protection of women.

RESILIENCE BUILDING

Over the past year, alongside education and health providers, VSO volunteers collaborated with communities on the frontline of climate crises to apply VSO's volunteer-led resilience process. This process supports locally led responses to climate change through community risk assessment and action planning. It also identifies the wider systemic changes that help communities and local authorities adapt to the impacts they face from climate change. VSO volunteers have been training climate specialists as well as youth volunteers, to work alongside community representatives, local government and education and health providers before a crisis happens. They identify and address vulnerabilities within communities, as well as support responses when disasters occur. VSO has developed a digital dashboard to support our volunteers and stakeholders to evidence climate impacts, identify resilience building priorities and to monitor new risks and actions. Following major flooding in Nigeria, VSO led a team of 10 volunteers to evidence the loss and damage incurred by over 1,000 households, and to identify priority areas of support. The results were digitised and submitted to provincial disaster-response

agencies to support the design of their response. VSO volunteers worked with affected communities to develop climate resilience plans and to establish drainage systems to reduce vulnerability to future floods. Climate resilience plans were developed in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, where volunteers supported communities to take forward climate adaptation actions such as agro-ecological farming and emergency preparedness to reduce risks from cyclones and flooding. This is even more critical as cyclone frequency and intensity has continued to escalate in the region. In Mozambique, VSO worked with the National Youth Council and National Disaster Management Authority in the lead-up to cyclone Freddie, to train young people in emergency response skills including simulation of floodings. We have developed innovative digital technology to support partner organisations and government ministries to be able to map, assess and respond to climate risks. In Nepal, VSO

The CLARITY project is addressing the challenges that exclude women, youth, and people with disabilities from equally benefiting from the extractive sector in Tanzania's Lake Zone districts.



supported climate risk assessments and action planning in over 30 schools and 16 health centres to identify actions which can be taken forward to address reduced access and quality of services due to climate disruption. Also in 2022, VSO started a new programme, Integrating Peacebuilding, Development and Humanitarian efforts on the Ethiopia-Kenya border (IPDHE), addressing the triple nexus between climate change, conflict and humanitarian aid. In the region no significant rain was seen for 6 years, resulting in extreme drought and loss of cattle or any other source of income. Humanitarian aid has been delivered by the UN and other organisations, but for the long term, this needs to be accompanied by sustainable solutions. VSO's programme aims to strengthen local initiatives for alternative livelihoods and the peaceful resolution of conflicts over natural resources.

VSO developed innovative digital technology to support partner organisations and government ministries to be able to map, assess and respond to climate risks.

Active Citizenship through Inclusive Volunteering and Empowerment (ACTIVE)

Except for IPHDE program, all the interventions in this section were funded under the Active Citizenship through Inclusive Volunteering and Empowerment (ACTIVE) project. This exciting new initiative, covering 18 countries around the world, is supported by the UK government, and it builds on work we have done under the UK government funded, Volunteering for Development Programme.

Small-scale farmers participating in a training on agroecology in Chimanimani district in Zimbabwe. The Empowered and Resilient Communities project is aimed at increasing food and nutrition security among communities prone to natural disasters.
©VSO/Calvin Tome



BUILDING SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF SERVICES

The Make Way project, funded by the Dutch government, seeks to promote affordable, accessible and quality sexual and reproductive health services for vulnerable youth in Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia. These types of youths are largely invisible to public policy-making and implementation due to their multiple vulnerabilities arising from gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and socio-economic background. Through the concept of “intersectionality”, the Make Way project recognises the interconnectedness of these multiple vulnerabilities which create complex systems of discrimination or disadvantage for vulnerable young people. Utilising an Intersectional Community Scorecard (ICSC) as a social accountability tool, the project has given these young people a platform through which they can share their experiences. VSO national and community volunteers in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia have supported vulnerable youth to use the ICSC. This provided community-generated evidence which has been used to engage service providers to improve the delivery of local health services. It has also informed health policy reform among local governments in Kenya and Zambia. Continued use of the ICSC is expected to deepen the involvement of vulnerable youth in strengthening the health systems in all five countries where the Make Way programme is being implemented. See also page 31.

**Our Monitoring & Evaluation
methodology promotes
ownership and includes
long-term impacts.**

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

VSO's Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) methodology is called Measuring Impact for Learning and Empowerment (MILE). It blends the technical rigour of programming with active beneficiaries' participation and feedback. MILE also promotes ownership through co-creating, joint monitoring, mutual learning, and mutual influencing of programme design, implementation and learning. It recognizes that VSO project beneficiaries, particularly the most marginalized, excluded, and vulnerable, have a central stake in the programme and the monitoring and evaluation cycle of every individual project/programme that is meant to positively and sustainably change their lives. Lastly, this approach enables us to include more long-term impacts in our monitoring & evaluation.

**Through the concept of “intersectionality”, the Make
Way project recognises the interconnectedness of
multiple vulnerabilities which create complex systems
of discrimination or disadvantage for
vulnerable young people.**

4.2 BUILDING KNOWLEDGE, DELIVERING INFLUENCE

Building and using a body of knowledge from our programmes, engaging on policy, and advocating on key issues that will deliver a fairer world, are a crucial part of VSO's work. Our focus here is on advancing and supporting the delivery of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ensuring that the rights of the poorest and most marginalised communities are secured.

VOLUNTEERING FOR DEVELOPMENT METHOD

In this year, VSO's thought leadership on Volunteering for Development (VfD) and the insights we generated through our VfD method, were a significant part of our global impact. We developed thirteen VfD knowledge products covering our work in health, education, and livelihoods. Six of those, showcasing VSO's knowledge and thought leadership in VfD, were presented and published in the proceedings of a wide range of strategic international conferences including the Human Development & Capability Association (HDCA 2022), the Royal Geographical Society (RGS 2022), the International Volunteer Cooperation Organisation (IVCO 2022), the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR-Asia Pacific 2022), the International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP 2022) and UNESCO's World Conference on Early Childhood Care & Education.

In addition, we submitted an oral statement on 'bridging the education gap through technology for gender equality' at the Commission on the Status of Women conference 2023 (CSW67), and made representations on climate justice at the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2022 (COP27).

RESULTS IN 2022-2023

In 2022-2023, we worked directly in over 35 of the least developed and most fragile countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia-Pacific, but the impact of our wider engagement and leadership work reaches many more countries and many more places.

We continued to use our robust research and evaluation practice to generate evidence and learning on VSO's unique Volunteering for Development (VfD) models that are scalable globally. VSO's blended volunteering approach – which brings together community, national and international level volunteers – helps to promote the voice of primary actors and build their networks, bridging the gap between government or service providers and marginalised groups. For example, youth volunteers from the ACTIVE programme in Kenya, Malawi, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe, and the Make Way team in Zambia, have been working with the World Health Organisation (WHO) to monitor the provision of local essential health services following the coronavirus pandemic.

DELIVERING SDGS

In this year, VSO's programmes have engaged with and contributed to the development of volunteer policies and frameworks in a range of countries including in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Nepal, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe. Citizen and civil society monitoring of progress in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is also an important advocacy intervention that VSO supports around the world. In Nepal, Cambodia, and Pakistan, VSO supported local volunteers to share their experience of SDG implementation in their communities through what is known as the Voluntary National Review process run by governments and reported back to the United Nations.

We worked directly in over 35 countries, but the impact of our wider engagement and leadership work reaches many more places.

In 2022-2023



we worked
directly in over

35

OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED
AND MOST FRAGILE
COUNTRIES IN

Africa,
the Middle East
& Asia-Pacific.

Citizen and civil society monitoring of progress in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is an important advocacy intervention that VSO supports around the world.

YOUTH-LED ACTIONS

We have continued to strengthen youth volunteer networks for their effective engagement, active citizenship, and enhanced influence & impact. From leading birth registration right campaigns in fragile settings in Philippines, to challenging duty bearers to commit to youth-responsive health services in Tanzania, youth-led actions are driving our advocacy particularly to amplify the voices of those who are most vulnerable.

GLOBAL VOLUNTEERING STANDARD

VSO is immensely proud of the work we are doing to promote the Global Volunteering Standard – ensuring that people around the world can volunteer safely and responsibly, making a positive impact to the communities where they are working. In this year we have worked with a

wide range of governments including Cambodia, Thailand, and Malawi to help them adopt the standard, and VSO is working in the Philippines and Thailand to develop local versions of the standard. The African Union (AU) has used the Global Standard to develop the continental model volunteer policy. The policy is being used to support adoption of the standards in AU member states, which is expanding its influence beyond the countries where VSO has a presence on the ground such as Burundi.

The African Union (AU) has used our Global Standard to develop the continental model volunteer policy.



5. Impact

How we fought poverty & inequality in 2022-2023

VSO Netherlands is part of VSO, a global organisation working in 35 countries. These pages show the results that we have achieved together in 2022-2023. The programmes marked with a Dutch flag are VSO Netherlands' projects.



5.1 Our work in education

Our inclusive and resilient education work gives every child the opportunity to learn literacy and numeracy at the right level. This year, around the world, VSO has made significant contributions to improving learning outcomes and recovering the learning losses that children have experienced because of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have also been working to break down social barriers to inclusive education and to strengthen education systems.



EMPOWERING NEW GENERATION OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS WITH EDUCATION (ENGAGE) PROJECT

Our Empowering New Generation of Adolescent Girls with Education (ENGAGE) project in Nepal (2020 – 2023) is addressing socio-cultural norms which do not prioritise girls' education, raising awareness of the support available for girls with disabilities, and building the skills and capabilities of educators through training and mentoring.

ROLES AND BEHAVIOURS

Girls in southern Nepal face unique barriers to accessing quality, inclusive education. Girls are not only far more likely to be out of school than their national peers, but they are also 25% more likely to be out of school than boys within the region. Girls from ethnic and religious minority groups face cultural biases and discrimination that shape expectations about their roles and behaviours. Disability is also a major predictor of poor educational achievement; thousands of girls with disabilities have never been to school in part because their condition has not been evaluated. ENGAGE aims to help improve learning opportunities for thousands of marginalised out-of-school girls, and girls with disabilities in three districts in Nepal. The project also teaches and empowers girls to have control over their own sexual and reproductive health.

RESULTS 2022-2023

Last year, we helped over 5,600 of the most vulnerable out-of-school girls and over 26,000 other children across 203 schools to improve significantly their ability in maths and reading. Overall, children increased their early grade mathematics assessment scores by 45%. In early grade reading assessments, their scores improved by 160%.

The project also teaches and empowers girls to have control over their own sexual and reproductive health.





BUILDING LEARNING FOUNDATIONS (BLF)

In Rwanda, VSO is developing long-term, sustainable solutions to improve basic teaching for every child through the Building Learning Foundations (BLF) programme, funded by UK Aid. We are working with schools, teacher training colleges and the Rwandan Government to overcome these challenges and improve basic education for all – ensuring no child is left behind.

VSO volunteers on the project have worked with local authorities to develop the roles of district Special Needs Education Coordinators (SNECOs). These SNECOs provide sustained and inclusive education technical support to teachers and headteachers. The Rwandan Government has adopted SNECOs into its education policy with a commitment to institutionalise the newly established Special Needs and Inclusive Education Unit within the Rwanda Education Board. VSO volunteers have also established Teacher-Led Communities of Practice and District Training Teams to promote child-centred pedagogy, teachers' Continuous Professional Development

and inclusive practice for learners with disabilities in the classroom. The Rwandan Government has adopted the Community of Practice for Teachers as part of their education policy, and across Rwanda 80% of headteachers are now financially supported to attend the monthly Teachers Community of Practice as a professional teacher learning community. As Musanze, a Rwandan education official highlights: "Nowadays, teachers are able to identify children with different learning difficulties and set classroom learning objectives according to individual differences and needs."

RESULTS 2022-2023

In 2022-2023 we worked with more than a million boys and over a million girls, including almost 90,000 children with disabilities, in primary education across 30 districts to improve their skills in English and mathematics. Post COVID-19, we have been supporting children to catch up on learning and make improvements in English and maths.

Launch of the Building Learning Foundation tool kit in Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda.





EDUCATION FOR LIFE

In Kenya, we worked to improve the literacy and numeracy of over 5,000 out-of-school girls aged between 10 to 19 years in Garissa, Isiolo, Kilifi, Migori and Kisumu counties through the UK government funded Education for Life (EFL) project. These girls have lived through violent cattle-rustling and inter-ethnic conflict. Many are survivors of sexual abuse, gender-based violence and modern-day slavery. Although they are children, many of them already have children of their own because of sexual abuse. VSO has established Catch-Up Centres for accelerated learning and supported the girls to transition into formal schools, to access apprenticeships and vocational training and to build opportunities for decent employment.

ADVOCATING FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION

VSO volunteers working on the project have worked with communities to increase community, family, and husbands' awareness of and support for education for girls and children with disabilities as well as support for continued learning for adolescent girls and youth. As a result, community groups have emerged to champion and advocate for girls' education. As a male champion in Isiolo, Kenya explains: "I ensured that girls at my village attended classes daily and I kept passing by their homestead to inform them about a class day and keeping time... While I attended training, my husband would fetch water and buy firewood because I would typically come back home late. I would also find the house clean." They also offered support by taking care of the children. (Girls Focus Group Discussions, Kisumu County)

INFORMED CHOICES

VSO also integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights awareness into the accelerated learning programme. This has given girls the confidence to make informed choices on the use of contraception. Girls are now more aware

Although they are children, many girls already have children of their own because of sexual abuse.

RESULTS 2022-2023

Last year, we saw an 85% increase in school attendance by providing learning materials, hygiene kits, assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, and mobility canes, and through community engagement to build support for education for girls and for children living with disabilities. Of those who came back into education, 10% of girls aged 10-14 years returned to formal schools. Of those girls aged 15-19, 17% went into vocational training, 37% into entrepreneurship training and 26% into apprenticeships. The girls showed improvement in numeracy and in reading and writing in both Kiswahili and English. The girls who enrolled in entrepreneurship and apprenticeship have been supported to start small-scale businesses that are now enabling them to meet their basic needs.

of negative practices that violate their rights. Nevertheless, social norms relating to stigma on teenage pregnancy and marriage continue to disrupt some girls from enrolling in accelerated learning.

STRENGTHENING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Finally, VSO volunteers developed a strategic partnership with the Adult and Continuing Education, Technical Vocational Education Training and Special Needs Education teams in the Ministry of Education to advance policy and systems change. The government used evidence from the improved learning amongst girls to

develop Accelerated Education Guidelines. These strengthened the Kenyan education system to respond to the needs of girls and young people who have been out of school for a variety of reasons. School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations have reviewed and formulated school policies which they are using to bring girls back into education and to support them to transition to entrepreneurship, apprenticeship, and vocational training.

Nancy (18) with her mentor Gati (38, left) and her teacher Margret (24, right) really enjoys learning at the catch-up centre. "Gati advises me on different issues, normally about life and school. I feel good because I know there is someone thinking about me and concerned."





ALL PUPILS LEARNING FOR ULTIMATE SUCCESS (A-PLUS)

In Uganda, VSO is implementing the ACTIVE & UN-funded All Pupils Learning for Ultimate Success (A-PLUS) projects.

In the ACTIVE & A-PLUS projects in Uganda, volunteers worked with 204 Parent Teacher Associations and 136 School Management Committees to better understand their roles and responsibilities and to build their awareness and confidence to lead a back-to-school campaign for children after the COVID-19 lockdown. They mentored teachers and supported parents to monitor the quality of home-based learning during the pandemic and to ensure teachers are held accountable for the quality of teaching.

RESULTS 2022-2023

VSO volunteers worked in 93 primary schools and 8 Early Childhood Care and Education centres in Yumbe. They mentored and coached teacher educators and early grade teachers to build their confidence in using the curriculum and making effective use of child-centred teaching methods in large classes. This has improved numeracy and literacy skills among early grade learners.

EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY

In Sierra Leone, the ACTIVE project is working in 52 schools in the rural districts of Pujehun and Kailahun to expand the use of cost-effective education technology that raises learning outcomes of marginalized children. This is directly contributing to the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education's goals of improving foundational learning, strengthening the education system, and effectively using education technology to reach marginalized children in remote areas.





Interview

EZEKIEL ESIPISU

EZEKIEL ESIPISU IS HEAD OF PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY AT VSO AND BASED IN SOUTH AFRICA:

“I’m immensely proud of the work we do with out-of-school girls”

“I joined VSO because of this whole idea around being people-centred. I worked for quite a few development organisations, but the people-first principles really blew me away. Being evidence based, being reflective in our practice, being accountable.

VSO is also intentional in its approach. We believe in the strength of inclusion, the strength of leave no one behind, the strength of breaking the structural barriers that hold people back, especially girls.

MORAL QUESTION

And we worked in some places that were the most difficult to reach. And because we had the volunteer element, we had volunteers embedded right there. They are there constantly, even before you design. They are part of that process, so they speak the language of the community. It’s easier for them and if the project fails, it’s a personal failure for them because they stay with them there. So there’s a moral question around how VSO is doing it. That moral question doesn’t exist in many other NGOs.

A PATH TO SELF-EMPLOYMENT

One of the things that I’m immensely proud of is the work we do with the out-of-school girls. These are youthful girls who in certain instances have become mothers, and so they are out of school. Usually in this context that we are talking about, once you get pregnant as a teenager and in certain other instances you actually get married off. There’s absolutely no opportunity open for you. You remain at the mercy of your husband and your husband’s family, the in laws. What do you expect will happen? She’ll end up having another child for sure.

VSO, through its projects in Kenya (RELI), Nepal (ENGAGE) and Mozambique (EAGLE), has been able to give them an alternative lifeline and a path to self-employment. So, within those projects, girls can pursue and take back their lives, regain the initiative and be more self-independent, which is really great.

We do that not only by giving them education and vocational training, but also by looking at the wider system. For example, in the most developed

countries we have child support. But in rural communities, nobody even understands this concept.

But it's also about breaking stigmas around this. Because in a pregnancy, two people are involved, but the community condemns only the girls. Nobody condemns the young men. They continue with their lives.

TRADITIONAL THINKING

I think what we've also done very well is engaging male partners in being able to get that project succeed. Because who are the custodians of patriarchy? Who are the custodians of customs? Who are the custodians of rules? It's not the ladies.

So if we hadn't figured out a way around how to engage the men, the elders in this community, there would have been absolutely no chance of succeeding.

I think we really are a leader in this – not many organisations are going to that kind of space and creating these pathways, and then trying to link it to the larger community and traditional thinking. So that is a real positive for me.

However, I think the tragedy with quite a few

organisations like VSO is that our interventions are donor funded for two years, after two years we are gone. That's why in Kenya we built monitoring mechanisms with the local government, so that they can be the one to follow up.

STRENGTH AND INSPIRATION

And we ensure that within these projects, we really get model girls who can be the flame, the torch, the case story. Other community girls look at them and they are like: Ok, she came out of this, it didn't stop her. That's important. In Nepal we call these mentor girls Big Sisters. They play a fundamental role.

I'm very happy to have seen girls who have been able to make it. I've heard some of these girls speak very eloquently about how the project has lifted them. Also, at the Commission on the Status of Women's Conference at the UN in New York in March 2023. One of the ladies who spoke during our side event was a teenage mother from Mozambique. She had a lot of confidence and was talking about how this project has impacted her very positively. Because of the position she holds and how the community looks at her, she's been an inspiration to very many young women in that community. And that gives me strength and inspiration as well."



Pascoa, a community supporting teacher and Amelia, a primary actor. The EAGLE project aims to empower adolescent girls aged 15-18 years who dropped out from school in Mozambique.

5.2 Our work in health

Our global health strategy aims to ensure that all adolescents and youth realise their rights to quality Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent (SRMNCA) health and well-being. This includes transforming structural barriers and negative social and harmful traditional norms and practices to ensure that adolescents and youth fully exercise their SRMNCA rights.



MAKE WAY: breaking down barriers to SRHR by applying an intersectional lens

Marginalised young people with compounded vulnerabilities are particularly at risk of being discriminated, disempowered, and excluded from mainstream sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, policy and planning. Because of this, they are unable to fully realise their sexual and reproductive health and rights, resulting in consistently poorer sexual and reproductive health outcomes and a vicious cycle of poverty and exclusion. VSO and its partners (see text box), as part of the Make Way programme (2021-2025, funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs), aim to break down those barriers by applying and promoting an intersectional lens.

In several contexts, including at regional level, Make Way lobbied for the EAC SRH Bill 2021 and participated and supported others in taking part in public hearings and consultations. In Kenya, Make Way co-organised an event to celebrate the Women's International and also participated in several workshops to influence the National Health Advocacy Guidelines. Throughout all these processes, Make Way invested in specifically national processes, e.g., around reviewing or developing new national health strategies, disability policies and/or adolescent health policies to draw attention to the

RESULTS 2022-2023

Despite the challenges that have arisen with a rapidly shrinking civic space, the Make Way programme has used the findings from the Intersectional Context Analysis (ICA) and Intersectional Community Scorecard (ICSC, see text box) to roll out a number of lobby and advocacy actions targeting governments centred around endorsing the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) Commitment on Sexuality Education and SRH Services beyond 2020, and passing the East African Community Sexual and Reproductive Health Bill 2021 (EAC SRH Bill 2021). In this past year Make Way emphasised comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in Rwanda and Zambia, where opportunities came up to leverage the evidence gathered through our processes with the governments.



needs of youth with compounded vulnerabilities and promote the intersectional approach through consultations, in technical working groups, in meetings with policymakers and through international monitoring mechanisms. Make Way Rwanda also submitted a shadow report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) where the SRHR needs of women with disabilities were put on the list of issues for the Commission to raise with the Rwandan government. Make Way Uganda also provided recommendations at a high-level, regional meeting on the Sustainable Development Goals, promoting an intersectional approach to advancing gender justice. Make Way Regional and Global advocated for investment in health systems that leave no one behind. The programme targeted global actors like the ACT-Accelerator partnership (co-convened by the World Bank, the WHO and the GFTAM) and the Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF).

FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY

Finally, the Make Way programme continues to contribute towards recommendations through the Dutch Global Health Alliance in association with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to actively work towards the development of a

As a result, the government of Rwanda has agreed to take up the recommendations without yet endorsing the ESA Commitment. The government of Zambia has fully endorsed it and will implement the CSE curriculum nationwide. Moreover, the Zambian Ministry of Education also announced that the CSE curriculum would continue to be implemented in government schools, thereby providing further opportunities for our programme.

Feminist Foreign Policy, which has potentially positive implications in the ways the Netherlands contributes to the development work in our countries of implementation.

Read more about Make Way and how we build social accountability to improve the delivery of services on page 31.



Intersectional Context Analysis

The Intersectional Context Analysis (ICA) is a tool to reflect on and map the systems of social exclusion and gender inequality and provide clarity about how the two relate to marginalisation and vulnerability within communities. This tool provides an analysis that examines how political, economic, social and cultural power are distributed, identifies decisive factors and influential actors within a policy environment and determines how to engage these duty bearers to initiate change in improving access to and provision of services.

EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES

The ICA tool combines two evidence-based VSO approaches, the Social Exclusion and Gender Analysis (SEGA) and the Political Economy Analysis (PEA). These approaches identify critical areas of exclusion, who is excluded, the forms of

discrimination people face, the underlying factors that cause systemic exclusion and inequality, and those aspects which sustain patriarchal norms, attitudes and practices. These approaches are also used to understand the political, social, cultural and economic realities of a context in which a programme intervention is being applied. This in turns helps to identify the most influential actors and decisive factors within those contexts, and thus guides development practitioners in how to engage with those actors and factors to initiate change. These complementary processes help to understand and articulate the drivers of social exclusion and gender inequality that marginalise and impoverish primary actors in their specific context and in the wider socio-political system in which they live.

Intersectional Community Score Card (ICSC)

The Intersectional Community Score Card (ICSC) is a scoring tool that is designed together with the affected youth to assess the acceptability, accessibility, affordability, and quality (AAAQ) of SRH services using an intersectional lens. The data that the tool generates are then used together with and by the youth/primary actors themselves to advocate health system strengthening and improving the AAAQ of SRH services towards duty bearers and other power holders. VSO is applying its 'volunteering for development' methodology in this process, by teaming national volunteers with global experts on social accountability and youth engagement.

The Intersectionality Consortium

The Intersectionality Consortium, which leads our Make Way programme, consists of Akina Mama wa Afrika, The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, Kenya, Forum for African Women Educationalists, Liliane Foundation and Wemos, and we work in partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We implement the programme in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia, the (Eastern and Southern) African region and at the global level.





“After delivering a stillbirth baby, she was given a family planning method without her consent”

Furaha Mariga Leonard (27) works as a stylist at a beauty salon in Kenya. She was born with a hearing impairment.

“I often have communication problems because of a lack of interpreters. I also experience negative attitudes from service providers, and a lack of communication has sometimes even led to the wrong medication being given.

I also often face harmful stereotypes. People in the community, when they see a deaf person who is pregnant, they think maybe she's been raped. They don't understand that we can be loved and that we can have a strong family.

STILLBIRTH BABY

A friend of mine is also deaf. After delivering a stillbirth baby, doctors at the hospital gave her a family planning method without her consent. When she wasn't getting pregnant, she was upset and then discovered she had been given contraception. This caused a lot of pain and anguish for my friend.

The advice I would give to SRH programmes is to look for more sign language interpreters for deaf people. Also, the labour beds in the hospital should be adjustable for the people with physical disabilities, and also the toilets should be suitable for all disabilities.”

Furaha told her story in Inside the FP Story, a podcast developed with and for the global family planning workforce. For Season 5, VSO and Knowledge Success explored the reasons why an intersectional lens is essential for sexual and reproductive health programmes, throughout our three episodes.

You can find the podcast here:

<https://knowledgesuccess.org/inside-the-fp-story>

The Inside the FP Story podcast – season 5 explores the intersectionality approach in the Make Way Programme.



**SIETSE BLOM, TEAM LEAD
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

"Seeing the launch Kenya youth panel in Make Way in which three highly skilled and inspiring young people advise our programme made me very proud to be a part of VSO's work. These three activists have faced difficult conditions themselves with one of them living with a disability and one of them dealing with discrimination and stigma around being non-binary. These young

advisors really enrich our work by ensuring that it is relevant for young people and that issues young people face and find important are put at the heart of our work. The fact that they are so brave themselves to advocate and make their voice heard in sometimes challenging environments adds to their ability to complement and complete the Make Way programme in Kenya."

“*These young advisors
really enrich our work*”





SPEAK IT LOUD

In 2022-2023, VSO contributed to reducing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) against women and girls through primary actors' collective action under the United Nations Women Trust Fund (UNTF) Speak it Loud project in Zimbabwe. VSO volunteers on the project led training and awareness-raising on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse with primary actors, and they built up the capacity of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and local partners in Mashonaland. As a result, local CSOs put in place tracking mechanisms to prevent and address GBV cases and primary actors started to speak out and act against GBV and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in their communities. After training in social accountability, a group of women volunteers in Mashonaland Central came together to engage with local authorities for improved access to health

Local CSOs put in place tracking mechanisms to prevent and address cases of gender-based violence.

services for GBV survivors. Following a series of engagements and meetings, the local authority agreed to work together with the community to construct a clinic within their locality. As many GBV cases went unreported because of distance, in Mashonaland West community members influenced the police department to set up a police station in their community to improve reporting of and access to justice for GBV survivors. Efforts for further and sustained collective action against GBV are now increased through the additional support of the ACTIVE project.



Tugwell, a national volunteer, training community volunteers about their legal rights under Zimbabwe's constitution.



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

VSO also contributed to reducing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) against women and girls through the United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA) Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Project (GBVPR II) in Nepal. Here, we have been focusing on supporting women and men, including girls and boys, to prevent, report, and address GBV, including child marriage. VSO has trained community volunteers so that they can conduct reflection sessions on social norms with couples to build their awareness of GBV. They have also been trained in supporting family dialogues – or *rupantaran* in Nepali – which target adolescent girls and boys. Alongside this, the project has led to interactions with community opinion leaders along with civil society representatives, to build awareness and to influence the Nepali government to institutionalise guidelines and protocols on GBV. One of the adolescent girls from Biratnagar shared that “before the session, I was not able to speak freely with my parents regarding our choices and decisions but now that I have come out, I ask for clothes and other requirements according to my need.”

As part of this project, VSO has also engaged with government officials to highlight their obligations as duty bearers towards survivors of GBV, including how to utilise funds earmarked to support survivors. As a result, government officials have been proactive in seeking out GBV survivors instead of waiting for cases to be reported. Advocacy efforts have also helped adolescent girls over the age of 16 to become aware of their rights to access citizenship records which in turn provides them with access to education. This has helped girls to re-enrol into formal education and improve the long-term outlook for their lives.

INCREASED KNOWLEDGE

The community volunteer-led couple sessions – using the Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) – have been successful in improving understanding of harmful social norms and practices that increase the vulnerability of women and girls to GBV. Couples reported an increase in knowledge on sexual and reproductive health and rights, the health consequences of GBV as well as the health services available for survivors. Married men participating in couple sessions reported internalizing the learning on how important it is to have good knowledge of sexual and reproductive health and rights to improve their relationships. Women participants from Kailal and Bajura shared that after attending the couple sessions, they realised they could say “no” particularly in their sexual relationships. As one female participant shared, “Now we have a consensual sexual relationship”.

**They realised they could say
“no” particularly in their
sexual relationships.**

5.3 Our work in livelihoods

Over the last year, we have effected a strategic shift in our livelihoods portfolio, deepening the focus on resilience by investing in 'green' skills and supporting a shift to agroecology or climate resilient farming. VSO agroecology volunteers and youth climate champions were integral to this change. Under the ACTIVE project, VSO continued to promote the voice and agency of primary actors. We strengthened our partnerships with key smallholder producer organisations including the Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers Forum (ZIMSOFF), and the National Farmers Group Federation (NFGF) in Nepal. Youth engagement continues to be a central pillar of our livelihoods work.



CHALLENGE FUND FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The Challenge Fund for Youth Employment (CFYE) is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is managed by VSO Netherlands, Palladium and Randstad. Running from 2019-2025, the fund supports private sector initiatives in Africa and the Middle East, working towards scalable solutions to youth unemployment.

As the largest population of young people live in low-income countries across Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa, youth unemployment remains these economies' biggest obstacle to achieving economic growth and stability. If this challenge continues unchecked young people will continue to feel excluded, restless and lack hope for a prosperous future. Youth unemployment can also lead to other serious and lasting wider social consequences.

PROSPEROUS FUTURE

In response to these issues, the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment aims to create a prosperous future for 200,000 young women and men in the Middle East, North Africa, Sahel & West Africa and

RESULTS 2022-2023

In 2022, we had doubled the number of challenges launched, taking the total to 18 across four Call rounds (with Uganda launching its second call). The programme is currently operating in 11 countries with investment into 73 projects and has 70 active Implementing Partners (IPs). Call 4 has been the largest thus far, having contracted implementing partners in Ethiopia (5), Burkina Faso (4), Senegal (5), Morocco (6), Tunisia (7), Uganda (4) and IPs in the thematic 'Scalable Employment Models' (SEM) (4).

Horn of Africa. We work through co-investment in private sector initiatives to create, improve or match jobs for young people between the age of 18-35. Initiatives will offer youth, particularly young women, opportunities for decent work that delivers better prospects for personal development, is productive, and offers a stable income, social protection and safe working conditions.

SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS

To date we have created, matched, or improved 14,110 jobs for young people, including 7,020 for young women. In addition to this, thousands of young people gained access to technical training, mentorship, entrepreneurship support, career support/matching services, and business

development support and/or finance.

One of biggest challenges faced by IPs is ensuring equal female participation in the workforce through difficulties in attracting and recruiting young women. Despite this and other challenges, 78% of IPs made significant progress towards their end goals. To support achieving greater impact, CFYE offered Technical Assistance (TA) and supported IPs in finding solutions to their challenges. Some of the TA has been delivered in the form of either national or international volunteer placements. The table below shows the different areas of expertise provided by the volunteers.

To date we have created, matched or improved 14,110 jobs for young people, including 7,020 for young women.

Figure 1

Country	Youth Champion / Youth Engagement	HR	Curriculum Development	Sales and Marketing	Gender equality and social inclusion	wHealth & Safety
Uganda	5				2 (1 IV)	
Kenya	5	4 (2 IV)	3	2		1
Nigeria	7					
Ethiopia	4					
Total	21	4	3	2	2	1

YOUTH JOURNEY TO QUALITY WORK

CFYE initiated roll-out of the Social Impact Growth Matrix, its pioneering diagnostic tool that allows its Implementing Partners to assess their performance against the Youth Journey to Quality Work Journey (YJQW); that is how they *attract*, *select* and *retain* young talent and their youth employees.

Conversely, CFYE utilises a youth-centred approach to work with youth networks to ensure young people are *aware*, and can *access* and *perform* in these quality work opportunities.

WIN-WIN SITUATION

With the YJQW comprising 10 building blocks, IPs gain insight into how they can optimize the journey, which creates a win-win situation for youth and IPs. CFYE offers the debrief sessions on the Social Impact Growth Matrix scores as a form of Technical Assistance.

Figure 2: Youth Journey to Quality Work: 10 building blocks

Following the completion of a highly successful prototyping roll-out phase with 16 Implementing Partners across four CFYE countries (Nigeria, Sudan, Kenya and Morocco), working with the tool has produced promising results and insights. These insights enable CFYE to identify opportunities to deliver targeted Technical Assistance leading to transformative and catalytic growth in the areas of meaningful youth participation and quality jobs. They also feed directly into the CFYE Learning & Innovation agenda, pointing to opportunities for (Youth-Led) Impact Stories that demonstrate the business case for investing in impact. CFYE actively documents and distributes such good practice in the portfolio, for example on Gender-Inclusive Hiring by Shortlist (Kenya) and The Power of Youth Employee Networks by Salalem (Jordan).

Variation in experience among IPs indicates that there is an opportunity for cross-learning and knowledge exchange across portfolios, facilitated by CFYE. In 2023, the full TA offering across 10 building blocks of the YJQW will be rolled-out. This consists of lower intensity, more standardized TA (for example Digital learning platforms and webinars) as well as higher intensity, more tailored TA (for example Expert exchange sessions, one-on-one coaching, training sessions).

Figure 2



MEANINGFUL YOUTH PARTICIPATION

CFYE is keen on embedding Meaningful Youth Participation (MYP) in its private sector driven work, and this has been custom designed in a 3-phased learning approach. In line with the Fund's Theory of Change, CFYE applies a youth lens throughout activities and core process steps. Based on the success and learnings of 2021 Youth champions

phase 1, the initiative was scaled-up and formalised in 2022 (phase 2). The success criteria factors included: Youth-led approaches create value for CFYE; Being a youth champion creates value for youth; Quality fund level and country specific data relevant to CFYE; Youth champions initiative has scaling potential across CFYE countries.





Interview

PEACE TIZARU (27) IS A VSO NATIONAL YOUTH CHAMPION FOR THE CHALLENGE FUND FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN UGANDA. SHE WAS ONE OF THE SPEAKERS AT THE CONNECTIONWORKS! CONFERENCE, DURING WHICH SHE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF MEANINGFUL YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN TACKLING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

“Young people are better placed to find solutions that affect other young people”

“I studied Social Work and then started working for social organisations. My mother has been a great inspiration to me. She is a single mother and didn’t have much, but made sure that we went to good schools and became educated, and that we were able to do whatever we wanted. She always told us to aim higher and always work hard, It inspired me a lot to really do better. But above all, I just want to make an impact in someone’s life, whether I make one person smile, or help thousands of people.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

When I left university, I volunteered and became a peer educator at Naguru teenage information and health centre. We would work around adolescent sexual reproductive health and rights. I provided a lot of comprehensive sexuality education, especially in communities in the rural areas of Uganda. I found it important because in our culture, many people cannot freely talk about sexuality. Young people are suffering because they don’t know their sexual and reproductive health and rights and are unable to make the right reproductive choices because they lack accurate



information. So I felt there was a need to speak about sexuality more among young people. Also in terms of teenage pregnancies, which are increasing in Uganda, many young people access information from unreliable sources that have

poor reproductive choices. These girls don't know what they can do or how to do things so that's why I felt the need to talk more about sexual reproductive health and have young girls in the rural areas of Uganda able to get reliable information and make the right reproductive choices and also provide them with tools and knowledge they need to understand their rights and decisions about their own bodies.

ENERGETIC, INNOVATIVE AND FULL OF IDEAS

Then I became a youth Think Tank Researcher in a programme with MasterCard Foundation and Restless Development Uganda. We were doing youth-led research on the different topics, from youth unemployment to gender equality to climate change. It was here that I also developed a lot of passion for things around meaningful youth engagement, decent work and youth employment. This developed my leadership skills which helped me serve my community better. I also gained a keen interest in research and this strengthened my capacity for informed advocacy. So that was what prompted me to actually apply for the youth champion role under the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment.

It's very important to let young people participate in decisions about the matters that concern and affect them right from the start, during the programme design. Often solutions are designed for young people without actually involving them and in most cases their solutions are not captured. But young people are better placed to find solutions that affect other young people. They are energetic, innovative and full of ideas and their abilities to do something are unique. Young people should be brought in as partners and integrate their experiences and ideas into the programme design while building on their skills and strength. Let them find solutions that work best for themselves.

The Challenge Fund for Youth Employment creates, makes and improves 200.000 jobs for youth in Africa and the Middle East. We pledged to amplify youth voices and to partner with young people to build a better, more resilient world for all generations. Some of our Youth Champions tell you why in this video.

CHANGING LIVES

It also helps young people to feel like they are being taken seriously as partners, instead of just being brought in because they want young people to be involved; involve and engage them from the grassroots instead. This gives them the opportunity for their voices to be heard and captured and also to amplify the voices of other youth.

It's nice to see that so many young people have taken interest in the issues that are affecting us these days and that they are trying to find solutions. We are a diverse group of people and we are passionate about different things. It is really helping and changing lives in one way or the other."



ENHANCING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EMPLOYABILITY (EYEE) IN TANZANIA, UGANDA AND ZAMBIA

Africa as a continent has the youngest population, with youth comprising more than a third (34.2%) of the continent's total population. However, they often struggle to find long-term formal employment or may remain in poverty despite working, due to low wages. In Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, VSO, with support from Randstad, is implementing the Future Makers Project, funded by Standard Chartered Foundation. This project, along with the Enhancing Youth Entrepreneurship and Employability (EYEE) project (2021-2023), equips marginalised youth in acquiring market-relevant skills and knowledge to set up their own businesses and identify employment opportunities. The project in Zambia specifically focuses on young women and young people living with disabilities.

POVERTY DESPITE WORKING

Africa as a continent has the youngest population, with youth comprising more than a third (34.2%) of the continent's total population. However, they often struggle to find long-term formal employment or may remain in poverty despite working, due to low wages. In Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, VSO, with support from Randstad, is implementing the Future Makers Project, funded by Standard Chartered Foundation. This project, along with the Enhancing Youth Entrepreneurship and Employability (EYEE) project (2021-2023), equips marginalised youth in acquiring market-relevant skills and knowledge to set up their own businesses and identify employment opportunities. The project in Zambia specifically focuses on young women and young people living with disabilities.

RESULTS IN 2022-2023

In its first year, the project has already supported over 1,400 young people and youth with disabilities to acquire entrepreneurship skills and start their own business or find secure employment. Furthermore, we supported 80 youth-led businesses to grow, employ more youths and become more resilient. The positive results led to funding for a second year, providing the opportunity for continued coaching and increasing the number of beneficiaries to the project.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

As part of our partnership with Randstad, additional support was given in specific areas. Randstad corporate volunteers worked alongside National Volunteers and local partner organisations to provide market linkages for youth-led enterprises, offer apprenticeships for skills development, coach Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in areas such as business planning and marketing, increase understanding and knowledge of HR and ILO's Decent Work principles and to maximise stakeholder engagement.



COLLECTIVE ACTION FOR RIGHTS REALISATION IN THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY IN TANZANIA

The Geita and Mara districts in north-western Tanzania are incredibly rich in mineral resources (particularly gold) and as a result, mining companies are extremely active. Yet despite the mineral riches, little of the wealth is trickling down to ordinary people. Geita and Mara are two of the poorest districts in the country and young people face many challenges. VSO, together with local partner organisations (see text box) and with support from the European Union, addresses the challenges that these communities face with the Collective Action for Rights Realisation in Extractive Industry (CLARITY) project (2021–2023).

We are assisting 4,000 people to hold the mining industry to account, support the implementation of policies that should protect and support local communities, report rights abuses and environmental damages and importantly, to ensure that marginalised groups benefit from the sector through support in income generation.

RESULTS IN 2022-2023 CITIZEN-LED MONITORING

Together with local partner Lawyers Environmental Action Team (LEAT), we supported local organisations to gather information regarding the extractive sector via citizen-led monitoring. They developed policy briefs and reached key ministries on issues such as land rights, the right to a clean and safe environment, the right of community participation in mineral sector governance and a financial model for small-scale miners in Tanzania. As a result, the Ministry for Minerals ensures CSR regulations as highlighted in the policy briefs are in the pipeline, as quoted by Newspapers as such the Citizen in Tanzania.

RESOLVING DISPUTES

83 trained paralegals reached more than 1,500 community members, in particular marginalised women, youth and people with disability. Disputes ranged from child maintenance, land, environment, matrimonial disputes, gender-based violence, inheritance and labour disputes. A Ward Tribunal established in the Geita District Council managed to amicably resolve land and matrimonial disputes.

INFLUENCING GOVERNMENTS

Regional governments were influenced to form environmental management committees in over 300 villages. A tree planting programme was launched, in which more than 150,000 trees were planted in the last year. The Geita Regional Government is preparing a Regional Environmental Action Plan.

GENDER DESKS

To ensure the safety of women working in the mining sector, including pregnant women, by not being exposed to chemicals, Gender Desks were established, and women were helped to access justice. A group of women miners was supported to secure a special area for mining, which had been delayed for many years.

WOMEN AND YOUTH LED BUSINESSES

With the support of the Tanzanian Women's Chamber of Commerce (TWCC), regional governments started to support women and youth-led business environments. Geita regional government designated an area for business premises that enables Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to attain certification from regulatory authorities, such as the Tanzania Bureau of Standards.

The CLARITY project is distinctive, since it is bringing together all relevant stakeholders acting in the extractive sector.

SERVICES

Together with Randstad volunteers (see also page 61), our local partner organisation Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO) was supported to offer a variety of services to SMEs, like Business Development Services, support in networking and links to low-interest credit and to mining companies.

UNDERSTANDING DUTIES

Randstad volunteers also supported local government authorities to understand their duties and respond to the needs of the right holders, including multi-stakeholders' dialogues and the facilitation of legal aid services to marginalised communities around mining areas.

IMPROVED SAFETY

Fourteen small-scale miners improved their working conditions regarding safety at the workplace. They formed a committee among themselves to monitor compliance to safety at the workplace. Two large-scale mining companies, Barrick Gold Mining Company and Geita Gold Mining Company, were engaged for sustainable impact and mitigation of corporate abuses. Community leaders joined the committee monitoring implementation of CSR.

CLARITY gets strong endorsement from the EU

The CLARITY project is perceived as distinctive, since it is bringing together all relevant stakeholders acting in the extractive sector: large and small goldminers, community organisations and local government authorities. CLARITY opens a common space of interaction; it broke a barrier. The project contributes to promoting accountability and transparency mechanisms at the community, private sector and government level. It strengthens equitable and responsive due diligence mechanisms and responsible business practices within the extractive sector, including access to justice. The CLARITY project must continue investing in the sustainability of strengthened SMES through building linkages. It must continue investing to tackle the exclusion of marginalised women, youth, and People with Disabilities (PWDs) from equitably benefiting from the extractive sector, by enabling them to realise their rights to quality jobs, income, social inclusion, well-being, protection, and civil society support and protection (EU-ROM report, 2022).

📍 Local partners organisations

The CLARITY project is funded by the European Union, supported by Randstad and designed and implemented by VSO, the Lawyers' Environmental Action Team (LEAT) and the Tanzanian Women Chamber of Commerce (TWCC).



FROM WASTE TO WORK

In 2022 VSO, in partnership with Taka Taka Solutions (TTS) and Stichting International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI) and with support of IKEA Foundation, has started the From Waste to Work project (November 2022 - February 2025) in Kenya. Its objective is to strengthen green youth-led startups so that they can create decent jobs through waste recovery and value addition.

Youth, who form 35% of the Kenyan population, have the highest unemployment rate in Kenya of 67%. Over one million young people enter the labour market annually without any skills, some having either dropped out of school or completed school and not enrolled in any college. Besides lacking competencies, other constraints to youth transitioning to the labour market include health problems, abuse and exploitation, and limited access to information.

Next to that, Kenya's most important economic sectors, including tourism, fishery and agriculture, depend highly on natural resources. The impacts of climate change and environmental degradation threaten economic activities and pose challenges to a well-functioning national labour market.

OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP SOLUTIONS

There are opportunities to address both environmental and the growing youth

unemployment challenge in Kenya by helping young people to become job creators in the green and circular economy. The green and circular economy provides interesting opportunities for young entrepreneurs to develop solutions that increase efficient consumption of energy and raw materials; reduce greenhouse gas emissions, minimises waste and contamination; protect and restore ecosystems; and contributes to adaptation to climate change.

HOW VSO SUPPORTS YOUTH IN THE WASTE SECTOR

The project is designed to create lasting impact for 3,900 most vulnerable youth active in the waste sector to build successful enterprises and earn a sustainable (living) income.

The program is centred around four strategic buckets that will strengthen grass root solutions from green entrepreneurs and loop them into the circular economy.

- The first bucket is the Mobilise Bucket, which is the foundation of the programme. It looks at the market demand and private sector needs. It mobilises grass-roots green entrepreneurs and supports them to self-organise in Youth Business Clubs to increase peer support, increase leadership skills, combine strengths, networks and assets and strengthen social capital.

The project creates lasting impact for 3,900 most vulnerable youth in the waste sector to build successful enterprises and earn a sustainable (living) income.

- The Spark Bucket supports vulnerable young people in starting their waste businesses. This bucket contains technical and entrepreneurship training through a blended learning approach combined with starter kits to generate innovation and offer new perspectives.
- The Nurture Bucket is there for those front-runners ready for Business Development Services and provides access to business networks and seed investments.
- The Link Bucket is the bucket that enables sustainability of actions by expanding market demand, creating market linkages, and developing connections to formal finance and business networks

VSO sets up a strong engagement with the private sector to ensure that the youth enterprises access new markets.

6,000 TONNES OF WASTE

The upcoming year will be focused on implementing a human-centred design (VSO's MILE) approach, which enables the partnership to learn and scale quickly. At the end of the project, 3,900 young people will be part of youth business clubs and linked to markets to have improved livelihoods, 960 green youth-led start-ups will create decent jobs for marginalised young people (of which 60% young women). Lastly, 6,000 tonnes of waste will be collected and 4,000 tonnes of emissions will be saved.

RESULTS 2022-2023

The partnership started engagement with actors in the circular economy sector to set up strategic alliances. On county level, this involved mapping of existing policies, practices and guidelines aligned to waste management and green economy as well as other development actors in the space. On national level there several waste pickers associations active. Waste pickers find a lot of value affiliating with associations that lobby and advocate for their wellbeing and protection. The project will work with these associations as special purpose vehicles to influence implementation of policies in waste sector and negotiate with recyclers and manufacturers for better compensation and recognition of those in the lowest cadre of waste value chain.

The project works closely with private sector partners. Mapping of material recovery centres, aggregators, recyclers in the value chain has started in a bid to link up the green entrepreneurs enrolled in the project. Additionally, project partner and waste company Taka Taka Solutions is currently extending its operations and constructing more buy-back centers to be able to buy more materials directly from vulnerable waste picking communities.





ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING

Between the months of March and May 2023, a total of 1031 waste pickers and collectors were mapped, assessed and enrolled for the first cohorts. A total of 400 waste pickers started with the first cohort. They will be organized into business clubs, stimulated to form smaller businesses, and provided with entrepreneurship training. High levels of illiteracy among waste pickers, especially those at the dumpsite, is evident. The project, therefore, adapted training manuals through a co-creation workshop where waste pickers, aggregators and recyclers were invited to help tone down the content to the target audience user level. In general, the project will learn and innovate with the entrepreneurs to create optimal models within the mobilize, spark, nurture and link bucket.

5.4 Our work in emergencies

Over the last year, we have effected a strategic shift in our livelihoods portfolio, deepening the focus on resilience by investing in 'green' skills and supporting a shift to agroecology or climate resilient farming. VSO agroecology volunteers and youth climate champions were integral to this change. Under the ACTIVE project, VSO continued to promote the voice and agency of primary actors. We strengthened our partnerships with key smallholder producer organisations including the Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers Forum (ZIMSOFF), and the National Farmers Group Federation (NFGF) in Nepal. Youth engagement continues to be a central pillar of our livelihoods work.



INTEGRATING PEACEBUILDING, DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS ON THE ETHIOPIA-KENYA BORDER

In Ethiopia, VSO, funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation, has started the Integrated Peacebuilding, Development, and Humanitarian Efforts project (2022-2024). With this triple nexus programme, that addresses the interlinkages between humanitarian aid, development and peace, we aim to contribute to a foundation for stability and resilience on the Ethiopia-Kenya border area, on which long-term sustainable development and poverty reduction will be possible.

The border between Kenya and Ethiopia is inhabited by cross-country clans and people on the move. It is heavily affected by drought caused by climate change and overgrazing: the areas have not seen rain for six years, causing loss of 80% of its cattle, this being the main income for most people. Many people are on the edge of starvation. As a result, the region, which is inhabited by millions of people, is prone to conflict and violence.

TRIPLE NEXUS

Humanitarian aid is trying to address the urgent needs, but tensions between communities, clans and cross-border populations need to be addressed also by strengthening the moderate voices. This Triple Nexus project works on the nexus between humanitarian aid, peace building and livelihoods, which often shows good results in such fragile areas.

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RISK VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

In this project VSO works together with local partner organisations Horn of Africa Development Initiative (Kenya) and The Centre for Development and Capacity Building (Ethiopia). It starts with a 'risk vulnerability assessment' that enables communities to identify and prioritise the causes of grievance from their perspective and to identify what they see as solutions. This process is led by local volunteers so that the programme is well rooted in society and is done with many different groups to ensure a range of perspectives are heard. The communities develop an action plan, in which we support them to deliver, while they own the responsibility to deliver the plan. VSO and partners facilitate, build bridges and support where necessary. We work with local governments and support them to respond to the needs of the communities they serve.



RESULTS IN 2022-2023


In the past year, the project was affected by a violent conflict in the Ethiopian project area and the emergency drought situation resulting in death of livestock and loss of livelihoods, malnutrition and an increase in displaced people. The situation is severe, and the risk to the project is that people are so impacted by food insecurity that they will not wish to attend workshops or consider anything other than the daily struggle for food.

To this effect, we decided to provide more nutritious food during workshops, and where needed cash transfers. We also decided to increase the funding for resilient livelihood actions around the community action plans. VSO has identified an opportunity to utilise its expertise in agroecology in drought affected areas and establish kitchen gardens, seed banks, etc to contribute to reducing food insecurity.

CONFLICT ASSESSMENTS

Also, core activities undertaken are conflict assessments and establishing networks and relationships with government and other stakeholders in the cross-border region. The triple nexus approach has been discussed in depth with the partners, who





are used to working in silos, with their own thematic expertise. The approach is still quite new to the area but gaining momentum.

STRONGER LOCAL PARTNERS

During this period, we also learned that our implementing partners in the area are sufficiently well-organised to take over more implementation roles that were originally assigned to the VSO offices. This stronger local presence and visibility is important to increase trust and legitimacy with the local communities.

Overall, with some delays, the project is getting on track and there is confidence that the planning this year will be achieved. On both sides of the border there is a keen willingness to work with and support the project and this period of building trust will be critical to success as we deliver the project. The core project team has also been trained in the risk and vulnerability process to enable the primary actor-led action plans to be developed.

VSO utilises its expertise in agroecology in drought affected areas to contribute to reducing food insecurity.

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITIES HOSTING REFUGEES IN BANGLADESH

In Bangladesh, VSO, together with partner organisation Action Contre la Faim (ACF) and with support from the GSRD Foundation, has started the Youth and Women Empowerment through Skill Development and Social Enterprise (2022-2025). The impact of this programme is two-fold: young people and women have increased incomes through decent jobs or entrepreneurship, and social cohesion is promoted by engaging youth in volunteering to improve their communities.

SUPPORTING YOUTH AND WOMEN

Bangladesh hosts around one million Rohingya refugees, most of whom fled for their lives from Myanmar in the past six years. The country set an admirable example of solidarity with the refugees despite its resource constraints, especially in Cox' Bazar region, where most refugees are located. However, in the host communities there is a perceptible shift from this rather unconditional solidarity to an anti-refugee sentiment. Over the years, solidarity with the plight of Rohingya refugees evolved due to economic instability as a result of the wage fall and price hike, unequal access to humanitarian aid and uneven distribution of resource opportunities created through substantial donor support to the refugees. Because of the disrupted economy that comes with hosting so many refugees, the tension between host communities and refugees increased. To address these tensions, supporting youth and women in host communities in livelihoods and peaceful coexistence is key.

A PROVEN APPROACH

VSO has extensive experience, also in this area, in organising youth for positive engagement and supporting women and youth in employment, self-employment and self-realisation. ACF has also been working for many years in the

region, especially in the refugee settlements. Acknowledging the need to expand their work to the host communities, ACF was looking for a partner with proven approaches. By combining our efforts, we can offer a holistic programme to improve employment, food security and self-realisation of youth and women in host communities and reduce tensions arising from the refugee crisis.

**By combining our efforts, we
can offer a holistic programme
and reduce tensions arising from
the refugee crisis.**

RESULTS IN 2022-2023

The project started in October 2022 with identifying potential participants together with local governments and religious leaders, by household visits and visiting communities with the transect methodology: a participatory exercise that quickly gets to the bottom of the topics that move the community.

The project places women and girls at the heart of the action. We carried out research to identify businesses that women and girls can start. At the same time, we support local youth groups who will strive to convince families to send their girls for skills training.



'MODEL MOTHER' APPROACH

Food insecurity is an increasing problem in the region, a problem that often rests on the shoulders of women who are socially and culturally seen as responsible for feeding the family. This will be addressed by a 'Model Mother' approach where selected model mothers will receive advanced training in nutrition information and investment for establishing a vegetable garden and buying animals such as goats and/or poultry, with the obligation to support others with nutrition training and advice on gardens and animals.



Case story

Her children are now going to school and with her help, her husband has been able to set up his own vegetable business.

Sara Khatun (36) lives with her husband and four children in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

The family could not make ends meet financially. They only had a small piece of land, and like many other local farmers, they lacked knowledge about how they could make the best use of their land (in a sustainable way), resulting in disappointing harvests and low earnings. Since then much has changed and she has become a successful entrepreneur.

Our changemakers taught Sara about modern and climate-resilient farming techniques for vegetable and livestock production. She applied these techniques right away. She borrowed some money, bought five chickens and doubled her farmland. Within our Agricultural Sales and Service center, she gained access to products and services that allowed her to expand her market. For example, our changemakers helped her create a business plan.

PAID-OFF LOANS

The output of her farm has since greatly increased. She has already paid off her loan, leases an even larger piece of land, grows more vegetables and now has two cows, four goats, twelve pigeons and twenty-five chickens. Her

children are now going to school and with her help, her husband has been able to set up his own vegetable business. In the future, she hopes to buy an acre of land, to set up a large poultry farm and to renovate her house.



6. Our partners & supporters

Together we make change happen

6.1 PARTNERSHIPS

In 2022-2023, VSO Netherlands' partnerships with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union (EU), European governments and international foundations were deepened and invested in further. We shared findings and lessons learned with these partners and engaged with them at various moments to provide (policy) recommendations and learn from each other. VSO has also increased the engagement with Dutch embassies, EU delegations and representations of European governments in its priority countries and we will build on this in the coming year.

Besides our engagement in the Dutch context, we ensured that at country level, VSO further built up the relationship and engagement with Dutch embassies, EU delegations and representative offices of other European donor countries like Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), SIDA and Enabel.

SHOWCASING OUR WORK

In support of EU engagement, VSO has focused its efforts on creating support for and visibility from its successful current projects. Our EU-funded programs CLARITY (Tanzania) and SAHAYATRA (Nepal) are highly appreciated by the EU, as evidenced by their reports and the projects and from discussions with them. The projects are also used by the EU as best practice examples to showcase the work they finance to other embassies active in similar thematic fields and to relevant UN bodies.

Our programs CLARITY (Tanzania) and SAHAYATRA (Nepal) are used by the EU as best practice examples.

6.2 NETWORKS AND LOBBYING & ADVOCACY

In 2022-2023, VSO invested in the relationships with partner civil society and knowledge institutes that are active in the same fields and are working towards similar goals within the (Dutch) field of development cooperation. Throughout our advocacy work, we have raised the importance of investing in active citizenship and Volunteering for Development. By being active in these networks, VSO has been able to translate issues arising from the countries we work in and the primary actors we support to the Dutch policy and political levels and agendas.

Last year VSO Netherlands continued its involvement in Dutch networks active in the fields of inclusive education, global health and resilient livelihoods. By aligning even more strongly with the global advocacy agenda of VSO in these three practice areas, we have been able to deepen our impact and amplify the voice of (youth from) the Global South at different occasions like the Partos Innovation Festival and One Young World Conference.

PARTOS INNOVATION FESTIVAL

At the Partos Innovation Festival, VSO co-hosted a session with Wemos and Liliane Foundation from the Make Way programme involving National Youth Engagement Network (NYEN), one of the partners from Uganda. The session centred around the Intersectional Community Score Card and how we use this tool to support our evidence-based advocacy. It was attended by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs contact person for Make Way and 40+ persons representing civil society and youth.

ONE YOUNG WORLD CONFERENCE

At the One Young World Conference, VSO organised a session on Intersectional Feminist Leadership and how young entrepreneurs can incorporate the principles in their businesses. The session was attended by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, RVO, Orange Corners and 30 young entrepreneurs from the MENA region. In the session, various examples of how biases and prejudice can play a role in hiring people, in promoting them and in how decision-making is structured were discussed in a personal and open way.

MAKE WAY

From the Make Way programme, VSO supported the advocacy undertaken around Intersectional SRHR, youth participation and Global Health in Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Zambia and Rwanda and together with Wemos and Liliane Foundation, VSO actively advocates for an intersectional lens in the Dutch SRHR policy. VSO (as part of Make Way, as well as the Dutch gender platform WO=MEN) drafted a policy letter to influence the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take on an intersectional lens in its expected Feminist Foreign Policy. The MFA responded in a positive manner to this and indicated that our recommendations would be seriously considered and taken on board in the process of formulating the new policy.

CHALLENGE FUND FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

We enhanced the knowledge dissemination of lessons and evidence derived from the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment in the Dutch and international context, among others through a joint webinar on decent youth employment together with ILO, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Generation Unlimited. In this event we offered a platform for Youth Champs and companies we work with in the Challenge Fund to share their advice on what needs to happen to create sufficient quality decent jobs in Africa. A piece of research that was performed by VSO's Youth Champions was central in our advice during the webinar, which was attended by over 300 people and offered a good platform to exchange and engage partners.

DUTCH GLOBAL HEALTH ALLIANCE

VSO joined the Dutch Global Health Alliance (DGHA) to strengthen its lobbying & advocacy for Global Health and SRHR, and to learn from its members. Together with the DGHA, VSO shared policy advice for the Dutch Global Health Strategy and the health priorities at embassy levels. We, among others, ensured that the advice emphasized reaching the most vulnerable and included meaningful youth participation as an essential component.

VSO joined the Dutch Global Health Alliance (DGHA) to strengthen its lobbying & advocacy for Global Health and SRHR.

PERSPACTIVE

VSO also joined PerspActive, a network of 5 NGOs — Woord & Daad, Dorcas, Red een Kind and Edukans — to coordinate its youth employment and participation advocacy.

GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR EDUCATION

We remained active in the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) Netherlands, until the end of 2022 as holder of the Presidency, and from 2023 as holder of the vice-Presidency. From the GCE, a network body of 8 member organisations including a company and the Dutch teacher's union and 6 NGOs, VSO coordinated its advocacy for inclusive education.

DUTCH RELIEF ALLIANCE

We organised a webinar on Education in Emergencies together with the Dutch Relief Alliance. During the webinar, VSO's Global Technical Lead Hiruy Teka, presented VSO's work on EiE in Pakistan and worldwide and what makes our approach unique. It was an excellent moment to position ourselves at a lively online session attended by Education Cannot Wait, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and various civil society organisations.

WO=MEN

As a member of Dutch gender platform WO=MEN, VSO raised awareness for gender equality and supported policy recommendations for the expected Feminist Foreign Policy of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Via its representation in WO=MEN's working group on Gender and Sustainable Economic Development Working Group, VSO was able to share lessons and expertise from the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment.

PARTOS

VSO is also an active member of the branch organisation for development cooperation in the Netherlands, Partos, and VSO's co-directors started participating in Partos' Diversity Equity and Inclusion Trajectory. VSO recently joined Partos' Climate justice Community of Practice. Together with Partos, Vice Versa, Cordaid and Netherlands Food Partnership, VSO organised the main public

debate on the policy note for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation for policy officers, researchers and politicians. Moreover, VSO coordinated the Chapter on Youth Employment and Private sector development of Partos' recommendations to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its expected Africa Strategy.

Together with Partos, Vice Versa, Cordaid and Netherlands Food Partnership, VSO organised the main public debate on the policy note for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation for policy officers, researchers and politicians.



“Young people have a pleasant and disarming way of working”

As the Ambassador for Youth, Education and Work at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jurriaan Middelhoff is committed to creating opportunities for young people through investment in skills and jobs.



JURRIAAN MIDDELHOFF, AMBASSADOR FOR
YOUTH, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT,
DUTCH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

“In most of the countries where we operate, more than 70% of the population is under the age of 35. That is why the Netherlands puts young people at the center of its development policy. We find it very important to involve young people and hear their perspectives and opinions. I strongly believe in this and have worked a lot with young people at embassies. They are honest, come up with creative solutions, can think out-of-the-box and are genuinely engaged. They have a pleasant and disarming way of working, and I am grateful to propagate this policy.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

As a ministry, we work closely with the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment. The focus on education and work aligns perfectly with our Youth at Heart strategy, and my impression of the consortium is extremely professional.

With my presence at the ConnectionWorks! conference I hope to inspire other organizations to join, connect and create new partnerships. The inspiring location, the Randstad Experience Center, and the presence of the young people themselves have undoubtedly contributed to this goal.”

“My impression of the CFYE consortium is extremely professional”



6.3 PARTNERSHIP WITH RANDSTAD

VSO and Randstad have been global partners since 2004. The focus of the partnership is to empower marginalised youth in the partnership focus countries to attain decent and sustainable work. This typically includes making connections with local industry and matching young people with jobs or entrepreneurship opportunities; developing curricula and rolling out training in the field of employability, soft skills and career counselling.

The focus of the partnership is to empower marginalised youth in the partnership focus countries to attain decent and sustainable work.



RESULTS IN 2022-2023

- 6 projects in 4 countries
- Supported by 22 Randstad employee volunteers
- Totalling 12,680 volunteer hours
- 523 hours remote mentoring for young entrepreneurs and job seekers
- 24,050 donated as part of the Sports Week for Development Challenge

RANDSTAD VOLUNTEERS

Six VSO projects were supported by Randstad through in-country assignments for Randstad employees. VSO Cambodia hosted Randstad volunteers in support of two projects focusing on increasing employment opportunities for marginalised people in the lake Tonle Sap area: RECOVER and GREEN. Randstad employee volunteers also supported the Future Makers youth employment programme in Tanzania and Uganda, providing expertise on areas such as small and medium enterprise business development, youth start-ups, HR & decent work, work-readiness training and private sector/stakeholder engagement. Lastly, as part of the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment, Randstad provided volunteer advisory services in Kenya and Uganda on inclusive recruitment & HR.

"WORKING TOGETHER IS SO POWERFUL"

Through VSO's Enhancing Youth Entrepreneurship and Employability (EYEE) project, Randstad colleagues from around the world are paired with a national volunteer counterpart to support young entrepreneurs with the skills they need to succeed.

Nicole Hoksbergen was a Randstad/Yacht consultant in the Netherlands and Margareth Bendera was a marketing specialist in Tanzania. Together, they provided skills training and coaching to Tanzanian entrepreneurs – from soap makers to bakers, and tailors to food producers.

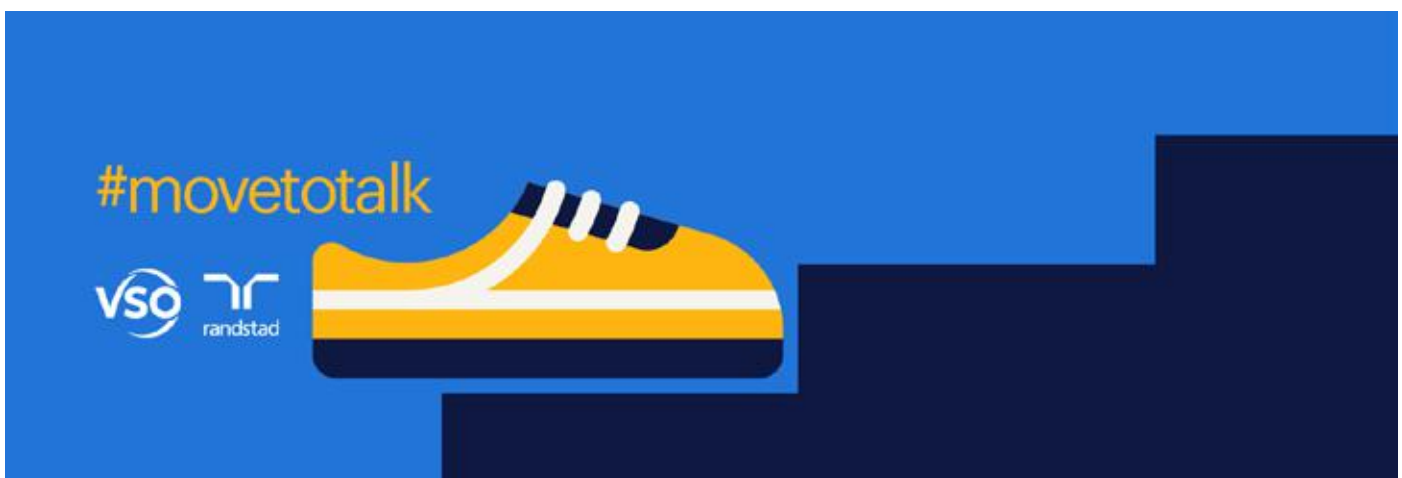
"Our collaboration is so valuable, not just for the people we're training but for each other. We share ideas and draw from our unique experiences, perspectives and cultures. Our differences strengthen us as individuals, pushing us to think outside our comfort zones and come up with fresh ideas and ways of doing things."

In addition to in-country placements, the VSO Mentoring Programme connects Randstad employees with young people from Tanzania and Kenya who are at the beginning of their career and are looking for career guidance. The mentors are able to inspire their mentees to see their potential and support them to succeed in their career endeavours.

"The mentorship has really shaped me into a better version of myself, all the skills that I wanted to work on were covered appropriately. My biggest success is that I was paired with a mentor that really understood how to help me develop into a more critical and sustainable individual. I am now a very good communicator and know how to apply for different jobs and I am also building new networks." Daniel Robert, 2022 Mentee, Tanzania.

VSO SPORTS WEEK FOR DEVELOPMENT

As part of the annual Sports Week for Development which coincides with International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (6 April) 995 Randstad employees came together in pairs or larger groups for 96,200 active minutes. And in those 96,200 minutes, people engaged in discussions about the employment situation facing many young Tanzanians' and others around the world. A total of € 24,050 was raised and donated to VSO's Employability and Entrepreneurship for All in Zambia (EEAZ) project. The funds went a long way towards making a big difference in the lives of 50 young Tanzanians through an apprenticeship program with master trainers in their community. This was an important stepping stone in finding a job or paving the way for them to start their own businesses through an accelerator programme. For the young people involved in the programme, it empowered them to access decent employment and to exercise their right to equal economic participation, thus transforming families and communities. Together, VSO and Randstad will accompany them in the process.





6.4 INDIVIDUAL DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

Our individual supporters are essential to achieving VSO's mission. VSO Netherlands is supported by over 26,000 active donors. They support our work through donations, by spreading the word about VSO and some of our donors also support us by volunteering in our office. In order to keep our individual donors updated about the work they support, they receive Changemakers magazine twice a year. This magazine features stories about our work and the changemakers that make it possible. After the lifting of coronavirus restrictions, it was also possible to meet our supporters in face-to-face meetings again. We organised two events for our supporters, one to inform them about the possibility of leaving a legacy to VSO and a Meet the Changemakers event in the week before Christmas. During this event, we established a digital connection between our supporters and our changemakers. Both events were well appreciated by our supporters.

DONOR RESEARCH

We love to hear from our donors and to learn more about them. That is why we asked our individual donors to fill in a questionnaire, asking them about their experience and engagement with VSO. One important outcome: although our donors feel more inclined to keep supporting VSO than before (2018), they do feel less connected. As a result, we will be focusing on creating a stronger connection with our donors. We would like to thank the 696 donors that took the time to share their thoughts with us.

To spread the word about the work of VSO, and in particular girls' education in Nepal, we collaborated with Dutch children's book author Tosca Menten (known for the *Dummie de Mummie* books). She wrote a book called 'A dream in Nepal' (*Een droom in Nepal*), which those interested in the work of VSO could request through our website. Over 10,000 people did so, which allowed us to spread the word about our work to teachers, parents and everyone else who was interested.





Interview

ARJAN BROER SUPPORTS VSO AS A DONOR AND PARTICIPATED IN VSO'S KILIMANJARO - MOUNT MERU CHALLENGE IN 2020:

“*The idea of volunteering for a local salary really appeals to me*”

“As a young person in the mid-eighties, I was already someone who cared about the world. I supported charities and was annoyed by things like plastic on the roadside. VSO didn't yet exist in the Netherlands at the time, but I heard about an organisation that sent volunteers abroad for a local salary. That fact really grabbed me. It means that money is not the trigger to do this work. That is also my own philosophy: I am a social entrepreneur and making money is not my motivation. And why should you earn more than you need?”

KILIMANJARO - MOUNT MERU CHALLENGE

VSO stuck in the back of my mind: if I ever get the chance to do development work... That chance came in 2020 with the Kilimanjaro - Mount Meru Challenge in Tanzania. Finally, I could do more for VSO than I had done until now. It turned out to be a great experience, which unfortunately ended way too soon because the world was hit by the coronavirus pandemic. During that period, I also realised that I was not even a VSO donor yet. I arranged that immediately, because the idea of volunteering for a local salary still appeals to me.”



6.5 OUR VOLUNTARY WORKFORCE

VSO continues to generate opportunities for active citizenship, demonstrating its leadership in volunteering for development with many returned international volunteers continuing to contribute their expertise. This year over 100 people actively supported the operational delivery of VSO's objectives contributing over 3,500 hours in designing learning materials and content for education projects, research, and evaluations of the effectiveness of tools in projects, assessment of applicants, coaching, mentoring, and providing training sessions.

Dr Adrienne Miao, an Occupational Therapy consultant, continued her engagement with VSO, after her placement in Uganda. As a member of the Disability Advisory Committee, Adrienne supported VSO Social Inclusion and Gender team in reviewing health care access for people with disability, designed content on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in inclusive education and delivered training sessions on the use of 'Washington Group of Questions' to collect data on disability.

VSO SCHOOL APP

Sandra Ford, Christopher Stevens, and Michael Ramires developed content on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) for Teachers, students and parents, delivered through online webinars in Kenya and Myanmar. Teachers found the training sessions an invaluable resource to maintain their own mental well-being, it was particularly helpful working in these challenging fragile and conflict zones, in enabling learning of techniques to cope and make the environment safe for children and parents.

The VSO School App has also benefited from voluntary workforce input – now used in 8 countries, the App empowers learners, teachers, teacher educators and parents to access interactive learning content and resources both online and offline. Learning content was created and training provided by Catherine Horsburgh and Elizabeth Caldwell, specialists in Early Child

Education, with Eden Kassahun and Shamila Tabassum working tirelessly on keeping the app running.

EXCELL AWARD

Age does not constrain at VSO; Vivien Marles, A Social Research and Evaluation Specialist first volunteered with VSO in 1974-1976 in the Fiji Islands, is now supporting in Eswatini and Zambia to produce evaluation reports and case studies. Our partnership with London School of Economics continues to produce excellent opportunities this year with 21 students producing learning reports and case studies on Agroecology as a means to building resilient livelihoods fostering buy-in between smallholder farmers, producer associations and government – The case of Mozambique; Fostering Citizenship for Primary Actors – Case Study Report Pakistan; and Assessing the outcomes of the youth volunteers' engagement in the Volunteer for My Community (VMC) programme towards effective citizenship action – Cambodia Case Study Report.

The VSO presence at the global International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP 2022) was effectively coordinated by Kirsty Buxbom, who built on her work in Rwanda to manage and co-ordinate abstract submission, conference presentations, a VSO open stall, logistics and admin. The was celebrated with a VSO Volunteer with hearing impairment receiving the EXCELL award that recognises Excellent leadership in Family Planning work.

To all of these and the
many others, we say
Thank You.



7. Our organisation

VSO NETHERLANDS

VSO Netherlands is an independent organisation that works in full alignment with the global VSO network. Besides VSO Netherlands, this network consists of country offices in Asia and Africa, the international office in Kingston and a representation in the 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 Certificate, the RfB label and the Label for Charities from 1 January 2016.

As per 1 October 2022 VSO Netherlands has a two-person Board of Directors, with our co-directors Irene Steven and Merijn de Jong as its members. Besides their tasks as co-directors, they each fulfil their tasks as Head of Programmes & Partnerships and Head of Fundraising and Communications for 50% of their time. VSO Netherlands works with a supervisory board. The primary responsibility for the organisation's actions lies with the co-directors and the management team. The co-directors fulfil their duties according to the regulations of the Board of Directors.

Irene Steven and Merijn de Jong started as co-directors of VSO Netherlands on 1 October 2022, replacing Erik Ackerman. The Supervisory Board has determined the remuneration/salary and terms of employment of the directors. The Board uses the Remuneration Scheme for directors of charitable organisations of Goede Doelen Nederland, which sets a maximum standard for

the annual income, based on weight criteria. The remuneration of the co-directors of VSO Netherlands is in accordance with function group D of the Scheme (BSD score 292). The co-director's maximum annual income, which is relevant for assessment, is € 83,539 (from 1 July 2022). Up to September 2022, the remuneration of the director was in accordance with function group E (BSD score 335), as a different function group applies if there is only one director. The director's maximum annual income, which was relevant for assessment, is € 92,975.

From 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022, the director's total income amounted to € 49,172, while the total remuneration, including employer's contributions, amounted to € 64,914. During the period from 1 October to March 2023, the co-director's total income amounted to € 42,751, while the total remuneration, including employer's contributions, amounted to € 53,191.

REPORT OF THE SUPERVISORY BOARD

The Supervisory Board of VSO Netherlands oversees the work of the organisation, serves as an advisor and interlocutor to the management and as the employer of the director. The members help the organisation to reach its greatest potential 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.

As per the articles of association, the board is composed of five members, who receive no compensation for their duties. Members of the 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. Ms Nynke Runia and Ms Maria Verheij were re-appointed as members of the board for a second term.

Guus Eskens (chair)

Starting date: March 2017

- Trustee of VSO Global, Kingston, UK
- Board member Healthnet TPO, Amsterdam
- Board member Netherlands Society for Tropical Medicine and International Health
- Chairman Stichting "Drie Straatjes", Rotterdam
- Board member of the Otto van Kranendonk Fund
- Board member of the Knowledge Centre for Global Health

Dr Philip Goodwin

Starting date: March 2018

- Other positions: CEO VSO International
- Trustee Royal National Lifeboat Association

Fons de Zeeuw

Starting date: May 2016

- Other positions: Director International at Oost NL
- Member of the Supervisory Board of HIDC

Maria Verheij

Starting date: January 2019

- Other position: Global Head of Communications at Ahold Delhaize

Nynke Runia

Starting date: January 2019

- Other positions: Manager Service & Support at Library Zuid-Kennemerland
- Board member Amnesty International Nederland
- Board member Stichting ITGD (per March 2022)



MEETINGS AND AREAS OF OVERSIGHT

The Supervisory Board had four regular meetings during this financial year. In addition, two update calls were held. In this period the Supervisory Board's attention was focused on, among other things:

The planning and budgeting cycle – the board approved the annual and financial reports 2021-2022, updated the multi-annual budget and discussed and approved the annual plan and budget 2023-2024. Quarterly progress updates and financial updates were presented to the board for the monitoring of activities and the oversight of financial management.

Programmes and partnerships – the board took note of the positive developments regarding engagement with new partners and donors, such as IKEA Foundation. In addition, the board was informed on progress in the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment and the start of the From Waste to Work project (see also page 48).

Public fundraising – the board was presented with the results on public fundraising and discussed the different fundraising channels and investments. The board took note of the developments in face-to-face fundraising, the questionnaire among our individual donors, the efforts to increase loyalty among our supporters and a children's book as a TW proposition for our online donor recruitment.

Relationship with VSO International – the board discussed relevant developments within VSO International as well as the collaboration between VSO Netherlands and VSO International. The board discussed where further collaboration between the two organisations could take place, and met with VSO's International Board to discuss collaboration.

Recruitment of new director(s) – As of 1 October 2022, the board appointed Irene Sleven and Merijn de Jong as interim directors and set out to recruit a new director. As of February 2022, the co-directors were appointed for a period of 2 more years.

SELF-EVALUATION

In September 2022 the board held a self-evaluation. During this evaluation, the board discussed the governance structure between VSO Netherlands and VSO and the way the board collaborates and receives information from the Board of Directors. The recommendations from the self-evaluation are being followed up, and a follow-up session will take place in the new financial year.

AUDIT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

The Supervisory Board has two committees: the audit committee (Fons de Zeeuw, chair) and (Nynke Runia) and the remuneration committee (Guus Eskens, chair) and Maria Verheij. The audit committee met four times in the financial year. It focused on the budget for 2023-2024, the multi-annual budget, financial monitoring, the internal audit that was conducted in October 2022 and the monitoring of the risk register.

The remuneration committee met two times to discuss the objectives and work plan of the director and progress. The last conversation was an exit conversation to discuss the director's departure from the organization. Furthermore, the remuneration committee consulted the Staff Representation on the appointment of the two co-directors and decided on their appointment and remuneration.

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 either fixed teams or project-based teams. These teams align closely with their counterparts in the global VSO organisation. This enables us to make the most use of the knowledge and skills within our international network.

The five permanent teams within the organisation are:

- Recruitment
- Programmes
- Partnerships
- Fundraising & Communications
- Support & Finance

The management team is composed as follows: the two co-directors (1 FTE total), also in their capacity as the head of fundraising & communications (0.5 FTE) and the head of programme & partnership development (0.5 FTE). The head of operations (0.89 FTE) is the third member of the management team. A key focus of the management team this year was to enhance collaboration between the VSO Netherlands team and the VSO teams across the world. We worked on integrating processes and fostering collaboration. After the departure of Erik Ackerman as director, the management team focused on the rearrangement of tasks and responsibilities.

On 31 March 2023, 24 paid staff members (21 FTEs) were employed by VSO Netherlands. We expand our permanent team with flex workers when necessary; in 2022-2023 we had three flex workers. Our sick-leave rate stood at 1.7% on average throughout the year, which is virtually the same as previous year (1.8%). Especially long-term sick leave has been reduced. More attention was paid to employee well-being with an employee survey and a follow-up workshop.

VSO Netherlands adheres to the Social Work collective labour agreement in the remuneration of all employees. All positions are scaled in accordance with the positions referenced in the Code of Conduct for Charities Netherlands. VSO Netherlands provides co-determination for its employees through staff representation (PVT). In 2022-2023, the PVT consisted of three employees.

GLOBAL RECRUITMENT

Attracting the right kind of talent is key to any organisation. VSO's recruitment team in the Netherlands is part of a global team, recruiting for all types of roles for the global organisation and for specific VSO programmes. Although all programme staff and national volunteers are recruited within the project country, we recruit globally for international volunteers, consultants and staff supporting the wider organisation. In 2022-2023, 48 new hires were recruited and onboarded by VSO Netherlands's recruiters to contribute to VSO's programme implementation:

- 27 international volunteers (mostly supporting livelihoods work and education) started their assignments in one of our projects, including 14 Randstad employee volunteers and 9 volunteers who supported remotely from their home country;
- 5 national volunteers (support given to local VSO teams, as usually all national volunteers are recruited by the local project teams);
- 3 consultants, providing strategic or technical research and consultancy;
- 13 staff members, both supporting specific projects (e.g. HR managers, programme managers and officers) and supporting VSO's global organisation (e.g. health advisor, proposal writer, fundraising specialist).

RISK MANAGEMENT

In 2020, VSO Netherlands set up a risk register and identified all strategic risks for the organisation. The risk register is regularly assessed by the management team. Key risks are discussed on a quarterly basis with the audit committee. The Supervisory Board will discuss the risk register at least once annually.

		Impact		Likelihood		Score
Risks						
1. Financial sustainability partners and donors			4	4		16
2. Financial sustainability public fundraising			3	4		12
3. Compliance and duty of care			5	1		5
4. Operating model and governance			4	3		12
5. Operations and implementation programme specific risks			2	2		4
Risk matrix						
Likelihood	5 = Almost certain more than 90% chance of occurring	5	10	15	20	25
	4 = Highly likely 75-90% chance of occurring	4	8	12	16	20
	3 = Likely 50-75% chance of occurring	3	6			
	2 = Possible 25-50% chance of occurring	2	4	6	8	10
	1 = Inlikely less than 25% chance of occurring	1	2	3	4	5
		1 = Insignificant impact on achievement of programme objectives or reputation	2 = Minor impact on achievement of programme objectives or reputation	3 = Moderate impact on achievement of programme objectives or reputation, reducing what the programme delivers	4 = Major impact on achievement of programme objectives or reputation, setting the programme off-track	5 = Severe impact on achievement of programme objectives or reputation, setting the programme significantly off-track or making it non-viable
		Impact				

COMPLAINTS, IDEAS AND WISHES

At VSO Netherlands we value input from our stakeholders and supporters. We record comments, ideas and complaints in order to improve our work. We have a complaints procedure for this purpose. Stakeholders can reach us through our website and by phone. In 2022-2023 we received 105 complaints. 49 of these complaints related to our face-to-face recruitment campaigns. Other than these complaints about face-to-face recruitment campaigns, 42 general complaints were registered that relate to our communication and errors in our administration. At VSO Netherlands, we are improving our monitoring of face-to-face recruitment campaigns. For instance, we are currently working on a benchmark for VSO's face-to-face recruiters to determine whether complaints and above average loyal/unloyal donors can be pinpointed to specific recruiters. In a similar manner, we monitor the quality of our administration and will always have our monthly withdrawals checked by three employees of VSO, ensuring that errors such as donations that should not have been withdrawn are kept to a minimum.

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 next 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.

MEASURING IMPACT FOR LEARNING AND EMPOWERMENT (MILE)

All projects developed by VSO have a custom 'monitoring and evaluation framework' MILE, for example the From Waste to Work project, funded by the IKEA Foundation, in which we have integrated MILE and Human Centred Design. 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 if 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 next 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 assessed during mid-term and end-term evaluations, by internal or external evaluators. And we perform our own participatory research on specific issues.

We discuss the yearly impact and learnings with all partners, volunteers and individual members of target groups.

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 policy followed and for the 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 auditor (Dubois & Co).

FUNDRAISING EXPENDITURE

We spent € 608,945 on fundraising in 2022-2023 and we raised € 5,455,608. The percentage of expenditure on raised funds is 11% (16% in 2021-2022). Investment in fundraising did not only lead to financial resources. As a result of our campaigns, people are increasingly aware of the work of VSO and the importance of development cooperation in general. We therefore allocate 50% of fundraising campaigns to the objective of education and communication.

COSTS OF MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

VSO Netherlands had operating expenditure of € 267,045 in 2022-2023: 5% of our total expenditures. For allocation of expenses to the designated cost headings, 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, as far as possible, to the objective for which they have been incurred, or calculated pro rata based on the FTEs budgeted.

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 November 2022, 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 € 1.3 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. The planned investment in growth has

taken place on a smaller scale and the designated reserve is now fully used. This results in an increase of the total funds. On 31 March 2023, the continuity reserve was € 1,984,201, an increase of € 100,604 compared to the previous financial year. The designated reserves decreased by € 75,087. The total funds increased by € 25,517.

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.



8. Our ambitions

Looking forward

Looking into the future, our mission 'a fair world for everyone', may seem further away than ever. The consequences of climate change are felt by the most vulnerable, people are fleeing their houses as a result of war and disaster and hard-fought rights for women, LGBTI and those who are disabled are no longer self-evident. However, despite all of these hardships, many stand up and take action to better the lives of the people in their communities. These changemakers are at the heart of VSO's work and it is our great honour to be able to support them every day.

2023-24 Will be a year of growth and integration. New projects, such as the From Waste to Work project, financed by the IKEA Foundation, will take off, making a great impact in the lives of those we support. In order to achieve our mission, we will also continue to strengthen our collaboration with the global VSO organisation.

ACTIVE CITIZENS

We are a global organisation supporting the development of a global movement of active citizens. Active citizens take effective action on the issues creating exclusion and vulnerability. We support this action by accelerating funding, incubating ideas and relations, and creating space for local movements to join us in influencing, advocating and campaigning.

All with one goal in
mind: a fair world for
everyone.



9. Thank you!

Our work would not 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 are 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 2022-2023.

- Action Contre la Faim (ACF)
- African Union
- Akina Mama wa Afrika
- Austrian Development Cooperation
- Avert
- British Council
- Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians
- Civil Society and Indigenous People's Mechanism of the Committee on World food security
- Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Education Cannot Wait Education Education Consortium
- Education Development Trust European Commission
- Enabel
- ERIKS
- European Union
- Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
- Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)
- Global Affairs Canada
- Global Campaign for Education
- Global Health Alliance
- Global Partnership for Education
- GSRD Foundation
- Hempel Foundation
- IKEA Foundation
- Imagine Worldwide
- Institute of Development Studies (IDS)
- International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI)
- International Civil Society Centre (ICSC)
- International Forum for Volunteering in Development
- Irish Aid
- JBJ Foundation
- KfW
- Lego Foundation
- Liliane Foundation
- London School of Economics Mastercard Foundation
- MESH Guides (Education Future Collaboration)
- NHS Lewisham and Greenwich Trust
- Nyagatare Hospital in Rwanda
- Onebillion
- The Palladium Group
- Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA)
- Partos
- Population Services Kenya
- Randstad
- Robert Carr
- Civil Society Networks Fund
- Royal Norwegian Embassy
- SIDA
- Southern Africa Network of Prisons (SANOP)
- Standard Chartered Foundation
- Taka Taka Solutions (TTS)
- Tackle Africa
- UNESCO
- UNFPA
- UNICEF
- United Nation Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI)
- UNOCHA
- United Nations Women Trust Fund (UNTF)
- UNV
- UNWOMEN
- University of Northumbria
- University of Nottingham
- USAID
- Weeshuis der Doopsgezinden
- Wees een Kans
- WO=MEN
- Wemos
- WHO



ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Balance as at 31 March 2023

		31.03.2023 in euro's		31.03.2022 in euro's
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets		10,215		20,243
Current assets				
Debtors	350,836		376,108	
VSO current account	95,835		204,110	
Other receivables, prepayments, accrued income	2,210,091		1,984,566	
		2,656,763		2,564,784
Cash at bank and in hand		4,540,757		2,381,825
		7,207,734		4,966,852
Liabilities				
Funds				
Continuity reserve	1,984,201		1,883,597	
Designated reserve	0		75,087	
		1,984,201		1,958,684
Provisions				
		0		40,755
Liabilities				
Other		750,716		1,417,372
Current liabilities				
Creditors	56,768		76,049	
Taxes and social insurance	51,418		60,096	
Other payables, accruals and deferred income	4,364,630		1,413,896	
		4,472,816		1,550,040
		7,207,734		4,966,852

Statement of income and expenditure for financial year 2022-2023

INCOME	Financial year 2022-2023 in euro's	Budget 2022-2023 in euro's	Financial year 2021-2022 in euro's
From private individuals	2,171,169	2,147,579	2,142,880
From companies	266,462	324,000	273,088
From government grants	2,690,396	3,105,451	1,581,504
From affiliated (international) organisations	0	36,160	72,012
From other non-profit organisations	327,581	100,000	277,350
Total income	5,455,608	5,713,190	4,346,833
Expenditure			
Expenditure on objectives			
Education	26,277	110,795	374,613
Health	1,597,072	1,754,665	998,987
Livelihoods	2,329,259	2,204,726	1,379,922
Education and communication	598,766	709,866	631,808
	4,551,374	4,780,052	3,385,330
Raising funds expenditure	608,945	769,383	701,164
Operating expenditure	267,045	317,716	287,635
Total expenditure	5,427,364	5,867,151	4,374,129
Balance income and expenditure	28,245	-153,961	-27,296
Balance financial income and expenditure	-2,728	-3,500	-3,953
Net expenditure / income	25,517	-157,461	-31,249
Movement designated reserves	75,087	44,000	40,000
Movement to continuity reserve	100,604	-113,461	8,751
	2022-2023		2021-2022
Expenditure on objectives as a percentage of total expenditure	84%	81%	77%
Raising funds expenditure as a percentage of total income	11%	13%	16%
Operating expenditure as a percentage of total expenditure	5%	5%	7%

Cash flow statement

	2022-2023 in euro's	2022-2023 in euro's
Cash flow from operational activities		
Net expenditure / income	25,517	-31,249
Depreciation	10,028	10,166
Working capital		
• Decrease / increase current assets	-91,979	95,694
• Increase / decrease provisions	-40,755	0
• Decrease / increase liabilities	2,256,120	-1,137,260
	2,123,387	-1,041,566
	2,158,932	-1,062,64
Cash flow from investment activities		
Investments minus disposals	0	0
Equalisation	0	0
	0	0
Decrease / Increase Cash at bank an in hand	2,158,932	-1,062,649
Balance at 1 April 2022/2021	2,381,825	3,444,474
Balance at 31 March 2023 / 2022	4,540,757	2,381,825
Decrease / Increase Cash at bank an in hand	2,158,932	-1,062,649

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

VALUATION PRINCIPLES

General

VSO Netherlands has compiled the annual financial statements in accordance with Directive 650 for reporting by charitable organisations. Assets and liabilities and the results are valued based on historical costs.

Assets and liabilities are reported in nominal values, unless otherwise stated in the balance sheet heading. Income and expenses have been allocated to the year for 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 statement was compiled. The income from legacies is included in the financial year for which the amount can reliably be determined.

Affiliated parties

From 20 March 2018 Stichting VSO Nederland and VSO Global have entered into an association. This replaces the former federation agreement. The Affiliate Agreement stipulates that VSO Global is entitled to appoint three of the five members of the supervisory board of VSO Netherlands (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 Global. 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 valued tangible fixed assets at the acquisition price, less 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 valued at nominal value. Any provisions for irrecoverability have been deducted from the amounts.

Provision

The provision has been valued at nominal value.

Income

Income is recognised when it enters into an obligation to spend this income in accordance with the subsidy conditions.

NOTES TO 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 € 117,150. Furthermore, VSO Netherlands has a leasing obligation for photocopying equipment for the coming year of € 7,500.

Occurrences after balance sheet date

There were no occurrences after the balance sheet date that 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 allowable continuity reserve amounts to € 2,648,780.

**VSO Netherlands was established
in 1989 with the aim of combating
poverty, underdevelopment,
and social exclusion in
developing countries.**

Notes to the balance as at 31 March 2023

Assets (in euros)

Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets	31.03.2023 in euro's	31.03.2022 in euro's
Book value as at 1 April	20,243	30,409
Additions	0	0
Disposals	0	-
	20,243	30,409
Depreciation	10,028	10,166
Depreciation on disposals	0	0
Book value as at 31 March	10,215	20,243

The total acquisition value of the tangible fixed assets amounts to € 178,336. The cumulative depreciation amounts to €168,121. The insured value of the tangible fixed assets is €148,000.

Current assets

VSO current account	31.03.2023 in euro's	31.03.2022 in euro's
Amounts due from VSO	95,835	204,110

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

Other receivables, prepayments, accrued income	31.03.2023 in euro's	31.03.2022 in euro's
Government grant receivable	1,407,249	1,862,264
Contributions for programme funding	0	39,031
Payments advanced to programme offices	724,303	7,967
Rental deposit	21,768	21,768
Rent	29,287	20,321
Prepaid health insurance premium	0	0
Other	27,485	33,216
	2,210,091	1,984,567

The receivable from the government includes the total five-year unconditional contract with a total value of € 2,402,050 of which an amount of € 1,004,489 has been received. The remaining amount for this contract is € 1,397,561. In the total amount of payment advanced to programme offices, two programmes have been included, namely From Waste to Work € 417,387 and Integrated Peacebuilding, Development & Humanitarian Efforts across borders € 306,916.

Fixed assets

Cash at bank and in hand	31.03.2023 in euro's	31.03.2022 in euro's
Savings accounts	1,887,024	748,485
Current account	2,653,146	1,633,205
Cash at bank and in hand	587	135
	4,540,757	2,381,825

The liquid assets are immediately payable.

Liabilities (in euros)

Funds	31.03.2023 in euro's	31.03.2022 in euro's
Continuity reserve		
As at 1 April	1,883,597	1,874,846
Deficit for the year	100,604	8,751
As at 31 March	1,984,201	1,883,597
Designated reserve		
"Caroline van der Wal prize"		
As at 1 April	75,087	115,087
Movement financial year	-75,087	-40,000
As at 31 March	0	75,087

In the financial year 2017-2018, VSO Netherlands received € 200,000 from the estate of Caroline van der Wal. This is a bequest without right of usufruct. In 2022-2023 the reserve was used to co-finance the Integrated Peacebuilding, Development & Humanitarian Efforts across borders programme in Ethiopia and Kenya.

DESIGNATION OF RESULT

From the debit balance of € 25,517 for the financial year 2022-2023, €75,087 has been withdrawn from the restricted funds for the Caroline van der Wal Prize. The credit balance remaining of €100,604 has been added to the general funds.

Provisions	31.03.2023 in euro's	31.03.2022 in euro's
As at 1 April	40,755	40,755
Donations financial year	0	0
Disbursed in financial year	40,755	0
As at 31 March	0	40,755

In 2022-2023 the provision was used to pay back the received funds as they were not allowed to be charged to the programme.

Liabilities	31.03.2023 in euro's	31.03.2022 in euro's
Other	750,716	1,417,372

The advance contribution for programme funding includes an unconditional five-year contract with a programme partner. The total amount of the contract is € 2,402,050 of which € 1,244,773 is still outstanding. A total of € 750,716 is due after one year. The remaining part of € 493,989 is presented in the current liabilities.

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Taxes and social insurance	31.03.2023 in euro's	31.03.2022 in euro's
Taxes and social insurance	30,313	38,503
Pensions	21,105	21,593
	51,418	60,096

Other payables, accruals and deferred income	31.03.2023 in euro's	31.03.2022 in euro's
Holiday allowance, leave and year-end bonus	134,716	116,622
Advance contributions for programme funding	3,189,069	12,542
Liabilities to programme	898,679	1,125,733
GCE balance	0	34,471
Audit fees	35,695	26,620
Other	106,470	97,907
	4,364,630	1,413,895

The advance contribution for programme funding is the remaining difference between received and spent funding. At March 31st this is built up from three different programmes of which one is From Waste to Work financed by IKEA Foundation. The amount relating to this programme is EUR 1,723,764. The liabilities for programme funding includes an unconditional five-year contract with a programme partner. The total amount of the contract is € 2,402,050 of which € 1,157,277 was used by the partner up to 31 March 2022. From the remaining liability, € 750,716 is presented as a long-term liability and € 493,989 is included in the current liabilities.

NOTES TO THE STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2022- 2023

Analysis of differences between the budget and the actual figures

The actual income from private individuals in 2022-2023 is in line with the budget and shows a slight increase in comparison with last year. The income from companies, government grants and other non-profit organizations are linked to the expenditure within the various programs. This means that when the spending on a certain program varies, the related income moves in the same direction. In 2022-2023 the spending on the grant from companies and government were lower and therefore income on those income lines are lower. The spending on grants from non-

profit organisations were higher and therefore the income was higher. In addition to this we matched € 90,000 of the spending from our reserves. Together this leads to a decrease in income from companies, government grants and other non-profit organizations of € 245,000. For more detailed explanation what work has been done on the different grants please refer to chapter 5 (Impact). In addition to the lower spending on grants, we also see a lower expenditure compared to budget in raising funds expenditures, education and communication and operating expenditure mainly due to lower salary costs in these categories. Overall, our budget was prepared with a negative balance of € 157,000, but due to the above mentioned reasons the balance of the income and expenditure for the financial year 2022-2023 is a positive balance of € 25,000.



Income (in euros)

	FY 2022-2023 in euro's	Budget 2022-2023 in euro's	FY 2021-2022 in euro's
From private individuals			
Donations	2,133,695	2,097,579	2,120,880
Legacies	37,475	50,000	22,000
Total	2,171,169	2,147,579	2,142,880
From companies			
Companies	266,462	324,000	273,088
Total	266,462	324,000	273,088
From government grants			
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2,546,143	2,705,451	1,581,504
Austrian Development Cooperation	144,253	400,000	0
Total	2,690,396	3,105,451	1,581,504
From affiliated (international) organisations	0	36,160	72,012
From other non-profit organisations			
IKEA Foundation	276,236	0	0
Other foundations	51,345	100,000	277,350
Total	327,581	100,000	277,350
Balance financial income and expenditure			
Interest on bank deposits	-2,728	-3,500	-3,953
	-2,728	-3,500	-3,953

FROM GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Make Way Policy Framework for Strengthening Civil Society - SRHR
Partnership fund:

Start date: 1-1-2021 **End date :** 31-12-2025 **awarded**

Challenge Fund for Youth Employment:

Start date: 16-9-2019 **End date :** 31-12-2025 **awarded**

FROM OTHER NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

IKEA Foundation

In November 2022, the From Waste to Work program financed by the IKEA Foundation started. The income of € 276,236 included in this annual report is related to the expenses incurred in this financial year. The total direct expenditure for the program amounts to € 272,219, the part of the overhead compensation related to VSO Netherlands amounts to € 4,017.

Expenditure (in euros)

Total expenditure on objectives 2022-2023	Education	Health	Livelihoods	Education and communication
Subsidies and programme contributions granted	1,576	392,034	606,103	430,660
Payments to affiliated (international) organisations	0	956,744	1,323,727	0
Staff costs	18,227	183,215	294,738	124,045
Communication	1,414	14,215	22,868	9,624
Housing	2,185	21,959	35,326	14,868
Other expenditure	2,875	28,904	46,497	19,569
	26,277	1,597,072	2,329,259	598,766

Total expenditure on objectives 2022-2023	Raising funds expenditure	Operating expenditure	Total
Subsidies and programme contributions granted	416,824	98,939	1,946,136
Payments to affiliated (international) organisations	0	0	2,280,471
Staff costs	141,766	124,045	886,035
Communication	10,999	9,624	68,745
Housing	16,992	14,868	106,197
Other expenditure	22,365	19,569	139,780
	608,945	267,045	5,427,364

Total expenditure	FY 2022-2023	Budget 2022-2023	FY 2021-2022
Staff costs	886,035	1,140,955	1,080,897
Subsidies and programme contributions granted	1,946,136	1,989,305	965,757
Payments to affiliated (international) organisations	2,280,471	2,412,632	2,057,821
Communication	68,745	81,000	54,634
Housing	106,197	103,157	98,170
Other expenditure	139,780	140,102	116,849
	5,427,364	5,867,151	4,374,129

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

Staff costs concerns the total sum of the wage costs and agency workers not directly funded by programme funds. In 2022-2023 more staff costs were funded by grants than expected. In addition to this we had 1 FTE planned in our budget which was not fulfilled. Together this leads to a lower amount of staff costs not directly funded by programme costs. The subsidies and programme contributions granted and the payments to affiliated international organisations, a total of € 3,912,813, cover all 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. Expenditure on communication, housing and other expenditure are in line with budget and relatively stable in comparison to last year. Please refer to section 7(a) also for the distribution of these expenses among the objectives.

Distribution of expenses

Staff costs	FY 2022-2023 in euro's	Budget 2022-2023 in euro's	FY 2021-2022 in euro's
Wages	1,319,409	1,694,289	1,318,627
Social security costs	243,230	pm	228,674
Pension	135,021	pm	139,636
Wages charged on to VSO/GCE	-144,568	pm	-94,164
	1,553,092	1,694,289	1,592,774
Wages charged on to programmes	-688,905	-568,334	-521,012
Agency workers	21,849	15,000	9,136
Total staff costs	886,035	1,140,955	1,080,897

In this financial year an average of 22 FTEs were employed by VSO Netherlands (2021-2022: 23 FTEs)

Name Position		Erik Ackerman Managing director	Merijn de Jong Co-director	Irene Sleven CO-director
Employment		Indefinite term	Fixed term	Fixed term
	Hours	36	18	18
	Part-time percentage	100	50%	50%
	period	6 months	6 months	6 months
Remuneration (€)				
Annual income	Gross wage/salary	€ 39,175	€ 17,178	€ 17,178
	Pay-out 'IKB PG'	€ 9,907	€ 3,029	€ 5,276
	Pay-out 'IKB NPG'	€ 90	€ 30	€ 60
	One-time payment	€ 0	€ 0	€ 0
Total annual income		€ 49,172	€ 20,237	€ 22,514
Employer's charges	Social security	€ 3,442	€ 2,019	€ 2,058
	ZVW	€ 2,015	€ 1,168	€ 1,192
	Pension premium	€ 10,285	€ 2,002	€ 2,002
TOTAL		€ 64,914	€ 25,426	€ 27,765

The 'BSD' score is 335 which relates to function group E for Erik Ackerman

The 'BSD' score is 292 which relates to function group D for Merijn de Jong and Irene Sleven

Subsidies and programme contributions granted and payments to affiliated (international) organisations	FY 2022-2023 in euro's	Budget 2022-2023 in euro's	FY 2021-2022 in euro's
Costs related to programmes	3,280,184	3,347,835	2,087,701
Education and communication	430,660	497,410	435,978
Raising funds expenditure	416,824	473,410	428,353
Operating expenditure	98,939	83,282	71,547
Total	4,226,607	4,401,937	3,023,578

	FY 2022-2023 in euro's	Budget 2022-2023 in euro's	FY 2021-2022 in euro's
Costs related to programmes			
Make Way	1,348,078	1,410,079	834,427
Challenge Fund for Youth Employment	1,101,582	926,327	664,638
Integrated Peacebuilding, Development & Humanitarian Efforts across borders	216,339	378,572	0
Randstad partnership relating projects	252,155	294,449	268,521
From waste to work	272,219	0	0
Capacity-building programme Bangladesh	62,644	95,249	118,031
Educational improvement in Ethiopia	0	0	162,961
Placement costs	6,130	128,160	29,880
Other costs related to programmes	21,037	114,999	9,244
	3,280,184	3,347,835	2,087,701
Education and communication	430,660	497,410	435,978
Raising funds expenditure			
Donor recruitment	303,077	326,500	348,845
Acquisition of private and company funds	30,427	32,510	15,528
Donor upgrading and loyalty	34,540	20,500	9,606
Donor database	25,086	25,000	20,305
One-off donations and legacies	15,468	33,000	30,386
Events	367	11,250	3,683
Other fundraising expenditures	7,860	24,650	0
<i>subtotal</i>	416,824	473,410	428,353
Operating expenditure			
Board costs	12,608	5,000	3,234
Audit fees	31,460	33,750	28,435
Payroll administration	7,021	7,282	6,783
Legal fees	12,417	5,000	2,669
Consultancy	35,363	19,950	28,502
Other operating expenditures	70	12,300	1,924
<i>subtotal</i>	98,939	83,282	71,547
Total direct costs	4,226,607	4,401,937	3,023,578

	FY 2022-2023 in euro's	Budget 2022-2023 in euro's	FY 2021-2022 in euro's
Communication			
Public campaign	64,130	75,000	17,368
Other communication	4,614	6,000	37,266
Total communication	68,745	81,000	54,634
Housing			
Rent	92,117	88,000	85,730
Other housing	14,080	15,157	12,440
Total housing	106,197	103,157	98,170
Other expenditure			
<i>Depreciation</i>			
Inventory	10,028	10,350	10,166
<i>Other staffing costs</i>			
Commuting	21,624	18,000	6,188
Advertising	17,209	2,000	1,264
Other travel	1,362	4,450	3,013
Training	21,082	35,000	21,726
Health and safety service	6,566	5,785	4,195
Other staffing costs	1,558	4,650	11,010
<i>Office expenditure</i>			
Office supplies	10,558	837	587
Mail	702	1,200	1,502
IT costs	34,464	41,274	31,306
Telephone and internet	6,747	9,240	13,538
Scanning and printing costs	7,880	7,316	6,942
Subscriptions	0	0	71
Other office expenditures	0	0	5,341
Total other expenditure	139,780	140,102	116,849

Notes to burden sharing

Specification and distribution of implementation costs according to objectives

Objectives	1*	2*	3*	4*	Raising funds expenditure	Operating expenditure	FY 2022-2023	Budget 2022-2023	FY 2021-2022
Subsidies and programme contributions granted	1,576	392,034	606,103	430,660	416,824	98,939	1,946,136	1,989,305	965,757
Payments to affiliated (international) organisations	0	956,744	1,323,727	0	0	0	2,280,471	2,412,632	2,057,821
Staff costs	18,227	183,215	294,738	124,045	141,766	124,045	886,035	1,140,955	1,080,897
Communication	1,414	14,215	22,868	9,624	10,999	9,624	68,745	81,000	54,634
Housing	2,185	21,959	35,326	14,868	16,992	14,868	106,197	103,157	98,170
Other expenditure	2,875	28,904	46,497	19,569	22,365	19,569	139,780	140,102	116,849
	26,277	1,597,072	2,329,259	598,766	608,945	267,045	5,427,364	5,867,151	4,374,129

1 Education

2 Health

3 Livelihoods

4 Education and communication

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, as far as possible, to the objective for which they have been incurred, or calculated pro rata based on the FTEs budgeted.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To: the Supervisory Board and the Board of Directors of
Stichting VSO Nederland in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

A. Report on the audit of the financial statements 2022-2023 included in the annual report.

Our opinion

We have audited the financial statements 2022-2023 of Stichting VSO Nederland based in Utrecht.

In our opinion the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of Stichting VSO Nederland as at 31 March 2023 and of its result for 2022-2023 in accordance with the Guidelines for annual reporting 650 "Fundraising Organisations" of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board.

The financial statements comprise:

1. the balance sheet as at 31 March 2023;
2. statement of income and expenditure for 2022-2023; and
3. the notes comprising a summary of the accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Basis for our opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Dutch law, including the Dutch Standards on Auditing. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report.

We are independent of Stichting VSO Nederland in accordance the Verordening inzake de onafhankelijkheid van accountants bij assurance-opdrachten (ViO, Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants, a regulation with respect to independence) and other relevant independence regulations in the Netherlands. Furthermore we have complied with the Verordening gedrags- en beroepsregels accountants (VGBA, Dutch Code of Ethics).

We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

B. Report on the other information included in the annual financial statements.

In addition to the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon, the annual report contains other information that consists of the report of the Board of Directors.

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Based on the following procedures performed, we conclude that the other information is consistent with the financial statements and does not contain material misstatements.

We have read the other information. Based on our knowledge and understanding obtained through our audit of the financial statements or otherwise, we have considered whether the other information contains material misstatements.

By performing these procedures, we comply with the requirements of the Dutch Standard 720. The scope of the procedures performed is substantially less than the scope of those performed in our audit of the financial statements. Management is responsible for the preparation of the other information, including the report of the Board of Directors, in accordance with the Guidelines for annual reporting 650 “Fundraising Organisations” of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board.

C. Description of responsibilities regarding the financial statements

Responsibilities of the Board of Directors and the Supervisory Board for the financial statements

The Board of Directors is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements, in accordance with the Guidelines for annual reporting 650 “Fundraising Organisations” of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board. Furthermore, the Board of Directors is responsible for such internal control as the Board of Directors determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

As part of the preparation of the financial statements the Board of Directors is responsible for assessing the foundation’s ability to continue as a going concern. Based on the financial reporting framework mentioned the Board of Directors should prepare the financial statements using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Board of Directors either intends to dissolve the foundation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Board of Directors should disclose events and circumstances that may cast significant doubt on the foundation’s ability to continue as a going concern in the financial statements.

The Supervisory Board is responsible for monitoring the financial reporting process of the organization.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objective is to plan and perform the audit assignment in a manner that allows us to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence for our opinion.

Our audit has been performed with a high, but not absolute, level of assurance, which means we may not detect all material errors and fraud during our audit.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. The materiality affects the nature, timing and extent of our audit procedures and the evaluation of the effect of identified misstatements on our opinion.

We have exercised professional judgement and have maintained professional scepticism throughout the audit, in accordance with Dutch Standards on Auditing, as well as ethical requirements and independence requirements.



Our audit included e.g.:

- identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, designing and performing audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtaining an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the foundation's internal control;
- evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board of Directors;
- concluding on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting, and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the foundation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause a foundation to cease to continue as a going concern;
- evaluating the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures; and
- evaluating whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant findings in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Amsterdam, 8 August 2023

Dubois & Co. Registeraccountants

J.J.M. Huijbregts RA

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

VSO Nederland

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