VSO - A journey through time and space
Northumbria University 19 May 09
Judith Brodie, Director, VSO UK
VSO vision and purpose

- A world without poverty in which people work together to fulfil their potential.
- VSO promotes volunteering to fight global poverty and disadvantage. We bring people together to share skills, creativity and learning to build a fairer world.

VSO is an international development charity that works through volunteers
VSO’S development goals

- Education
- Secure Livelihoods
- Participation and governance
- Health
- HIV and AIDS
- Disability

link to Millennium Development Goals
HOW DOES VSO GET SO MUCH FROM SO LITTLE?

We deliver targeted help and support through long-term, short-term, diaspora, national and youth volunteers, and lead the way in enabling global citizens to have a lasting impact. Federation Members secure resources for programmes with the support of individuals, corporations, funders and partners who contribute both financially and through their people.

THAT'S HOW.

- FEDERATION MEMBERS
- RECRUITMENT BASES
- WHERE WE WORK
- FEDERATION MEMBER WITH PROGRAMME OFFICE
- CUSO'S LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN PROGRAMMES WILL BE MANAGED BY CUSO-VSO FROM OTTAWA UNTIL MARCH 2010 AT THE LATEST
- VSO INTERNATIONAL: STRATEGY, CO-ORDINATION AND SUPPORT

VSO IS AN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHARITY THAT WORKS THROUGH VOLUNTEERS

UK REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBERS: ENGLAND AND WALES 112277, SCOTLAND SC039117
VSO - A journey through time

How VSO has evolved over its 51 years

The young volunteers ......
The VSO (r)evolution

- Volunteer-sending ⇔ programmatic
- UK volunteers ⇔ international recruitment
- School-leavers ⇔ experienced professionals + specific youth programmes
- 2 year placements ⇔ 2mths - 2 year placements
- single approach ⇔ diverse approaches
- 75% DFID funding ⇔ 50% DFID funding and significant charitable income
Diverse volunteers/activities

- Long-term volunteers (6 mths to 2 years)
- Short-term volunteers (up to six mths)
- Youth volunteers
  - Youth for development
  - World Youth/Global Xchange
- Diaspora volunteers
- National volunteering
- Links (exchanges, study tours)
Professionals and professional development

Significant partnerships, eg
- Accenture
- Randstad
- Astra Zeneca
- Welsh Assembly
- National Association of Headteachers
.....and others
## Partnership examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accenture</th>
<th>Welsh Assembly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$3m over five years support to our secure livelihoods goal</td>
<td>Leadership programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff fundraising: treks/challenges</td>
<td>25 volunteers pa from public service management in Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accenture volunteers</td>
<td>Short-term assignments of up to 8 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic support inc from Accenture Development Partnerships (ADP)</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Professional development benefits

- interpersonal skills
- communication skills: influencing, persuading
- problem-solving,
- facilitation and coaching
- team-working
- flexibility and adaptability
- cross-cultural working
Youth vs experience
In the move to more “professional” volunteers, are we neglecting the transformational impact on young people?
Diaspora volunteering programme

- VSO works in partnership with UK based Diaspora organisations, sharing our experience of international volunteering to support them in developing their own programmes.

- VSO is currently working with 13 Diaspora organisations on programmes in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Cameroon, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Guyana, Ethiopia, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal.
Diaspora volunteering programme

Africa Foundation
Stone volunteer
Jeremie Alamazani
advising a
Cameroonian entrepreneur on
developing his business ideas

Supported by
The National Lottery®
through the Big Lottery Fund
Migration $\Rightarrow$ Diaspora
$\Rightarrow$ remittances + volunteering

How do we harness this potential?
VSO - A journey through space

Active citizenship globally
- the connection between north and south
  - Public engagement
  - Reciprocal volunteering
  - National volunteering
Why public engagement in the UK?

- we can increase public understanding of and support for development through engaging returned volunteers (RVs) and supporters
- public engagement activities contribute to maintaining relationships with RVs and supporters increasing their propensity to be active global citizens with VSO
- DFID keen to increase public support for international development, and VSO has a unique contribution to make to that
Public engagement

- Volunteering
- Individual fundraising
- Campaigning
- Active communities
- Networking

⇒ Lifetime engagement in global citizenship
Placement impact vs lifetime value
We assess impact in placement or in UK - how do we capture the lifetime value of global citizenship stimulated by international volunteering?
Reciprocal volunteering

Global Xchange

- 9 young people from UK and 9 young people from a partner country
- Three months living and working in a community in each country
- Volunteering in community organisations, living in host homes
Reciprocal volunteering

“The Davao volunteer experience tore me to pieces. It made me feel embarrassed for the prejudices I had about Muslims which were, I believe now to be, worse than ignorance.”

“My World Youth exchange has been an incredibly valuable cultural learning experience which has taught me not only a lot about Sri Lankan culture, but also about my own Indian culture and heritage. After living in a developing country and having experienced and observed the lifestyles and realities lived by the people, I have come to understand and appreciate why parents are how they are”

“I now have a purpose in my life and am on my way to being the person I want to be.”
National volunteering (NV)

Vision:  *A peaceful and just society, where an inclusive culture of volunteering for sustainable development, is valued and supported by citizens and their governments.*

- our international experience in volunteering is being transferred to local contexts
- our work in NV is to strengthen the volunteer programmes of our partner organisations - we do not recruit our own ‘national volunteers’

⇒ contributing to development and to civil society globally

...... dvd
Active (global) citizenship or volunteering?

If volunteering is a route to active citizenship, what does that mean for “professionalisation”? And for inclusion?
Youth vs experience

Placement impact vs lifetime value

Diaspora - how do we harness this potential

Active (global) citizenship or volunteering?