



Programme Partnership Arrangement: Self-Assessment Review

Reporting Year	2010–2011
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Part A – Basic Information

PPA partner	VSO						
Niche statement	VSO is the world's leading independent, international development organisation that works through volunteers to fight poverty in developing countries. It recruits skilled people worldwide, from a wide range of professions. Volunteers work in partnership with colleagues and communities to share skills and achieve positive change. ¹						
	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
PPA funding (£)	24,860	27,960	27,960	27,960	28,800	31,660	28,550
As % of total organisational income	74%	72%	70%	65%	58%	59%	52%
	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
Other DFID funding (£)	2,092	3,359	4,173	3,967	2,205	2,136	3,518
Please note that at the end of 2009/10 VSO received an advance of £2m from DFID from the 2010/11 PPA funding. The figures above reflect the actual cash received in each year, rather than the annual grant amounts.							
List of country offices and policy teams you would like to comment							
<p>Country Offices: Tanzania, Nepal, Kenya, Ethiopia</p> <p>Policy Teams: Education and Skills Team, Human Development Department; Disability, Civil Society Department (Lorraine Healy, Relationship Manager, Children Youth and Disability – interim arrangement); HIV/AIDS Aids and Reproductive Health Team, Human Development Department; Support for Development Outreach and Stakeholder Relations Team, Communications Division</p>							
Summary of partnership with DFID and other DFID funding							
<u>Contracts 2010–11</u>							
<p>Strengthening Quality and Access of Health Care in Hospitals in Sierra Leone, September 2010–March 2013 (£395,749)</p> <p>Addressing Exclusion of Disabled People in India, April 2009–March 2012 (£553,945)</p> <p>Health Programme (Phase II) Malawi, July 2008–March 2011 (£ 1,779,758)</p> <p>Diaspora Volunteering Programme UK, April 2008–March 2011 (£ 2,936,693)</p> <p>Cambodia Secure Livelihoods Programme, May 2008–May 2010 (£12,500)</p> <p>Strengthening Education in Kenya (Kaduna, Kano and Kwara), August 2009–September 2012 (£338,632) through Cambridge Education</p> <p>Support to Ministry of Education to Rejuvenate Parent Teacher Associations, Guyana, April 2008–March 2010 (£20,000)</p> <p>Pacific Feasibility Study, December 2009–January 2010 (£21,000)</p> <p>Improved Education in the Far North Region of Cameroon, January 2009–December 2011</p>							

¹ After its strategic review, VSO's niche can be better described as bringing people together in a range of ways, including exchanges of good practice and learning nationally and internationally, and the development of local or National Volunteering (see last section).

<p><u>Contracts within PPA period</u></p> <p>Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (RAISA), April 2005–March 2009 HIV and AIDS Programme Area – Vietnam, April 2007–October 2008 HIV and AIDS Programme Area – Nigeria, April 2007–October 2008 Strengthening Nigeria's Response to HIV and AIDS – Nigeria, September 2004–August 2009 Support to Realise the Rights of Disabled People – Rwanda, May 2006–April 2009 Higher Diploma Programme – Ethiopia, April 2005–December 2009 Education Project – The Gambia, March 2005–February 2010 Education Teacher Development Centres – Malawi, January 2005–February 2010 Gender Based Approach to the Prevention of HIV and AIDS – April 2006–March 2009 Health Programme – Malawi (Phase 1), April 2005–March 2008</p>
<p>Approximate % of total organisational expenditure allocated by sector or theme</p>
<p><i>Education – 21%, HIV & AIDS – 16%, Disability – 7%, Health – 11%, Secure Livelihoods – 20%, Participation & Governance – 14%, Cost of generating funds: 7%, Governance costs: 4%</i></p>

Part B – Progress against PPA Strategic Objectives

<p>Progress to date against PPA purpose statement</p>
<p>VSO's purpose is to develop the capacity of government and civil society partners to realise the rights of poor and marginalised groups, especially women. Using this experience, to build the support of the UK public for development.</p>
<p>From 2008 to 2011, the PPA has enabled VSO to grow into a multi-resourced international federation that offers a unique approach to development through volunteering, described in its new corporate strategy, <i>People First</i>. Its role in development is to bring people together to share knowledge, strengthen civil society, advocate for lasting change, and build strong local organisations that deliver basic services in a way that is accountable to beneficiaries. Building support for development in the UK through people-based connections adds value to VSO's work overseas. In 2008, VSO started PPA reporting on 'windows into our work' in Disability, HIV & AIDS, and Education, as well as reporting more comprehensively on UK development work. Based on the results, VSO is confident that VSO's strategies lead to improved quality of services for poor people, especially women and girls, and that better health, education and livelihood opportunities are the end result for the poor and excluded. Over three years, numbers of partner beneficiaries – the ultimate beneficiaries – have remained stable or increased moderately and real progress has been made in the quality, relevance and responsive nature of partner services (see table below).</p> <p>VSO strategies can be summarised as accountability to beneficiaries through consultation that guides our priorities on key strands of work. Examples are transparency in local education management and national implementation of disability rights. In addition, consultation informs VSO about the <u>kind</u> of quality service beneficiaries are seeking (e.g. paramount need to secure a livelihood for those affected by HIV, respect for beneficiaries by medical professionals, safety of girls at school and inclusion of disabled women by membership organisations). VSO has used these priorities to shape partner capacity building agreements. With the aim of making the desired impact on partner beneficiaries, VSO has offered a range of interventions: coaching staff, small grants, development of national volunteering, making links between organisations, and building capacity for action research that in itself raises awareness of the issue. Through these, VSO has clarified that its <u>direct</u> contribution is to partner-level capacity change (e.g. trained staff), and that its <u>indirect</u> contribution is to the positive impact on the ultimate beneficiaries – the partner beneficiaries. This is illustrated below:</p>
<p>The VSO Malawi programme provided small grants and international volunteer capacity building support to an HIV & AIDS partner (NAPHAM) to train 21 trainers (all people affected by HIV from local peer support groups) in fish farming. Small grants helped establish fish farming projects to generate income. Some beneficiaries have confirmed that they are able to pay school fees for their children from the incomes they generate from the fish-farming project. One beneficiary, a member of Chisenga Support Group in Chitipa said:</p> <p>“Look at me. Do I look like I have HIV? Look at these fish ponds. Thanks to VSO and NAPHAM for supporting us to do this kind of farming. With fish-farming, I am able to pay school fees for my son who is in secondary school and we have plenty of food.”</p> <p>Over the same period, the increased access to drug therapy, coupled with healthier food from 'nutritional' gardens has</p>

improved health status. This positive effect enables people living with HIV to spend more time working in their gardens and undertaking other economic opportunities.

An important trend over the last three years is the increasing ability of programmes to use their evidence base to **engage in policy work with decision makers**. Working with partners to make changes in the system ensures that VSO's contribution to development is sustainable. For example, working intensively at different levels of the system within, firstly a DFID funded programme and subsequently a World Bank funded programme, VSO Cambodia has the status to initiate research in informal school fees and recommend their abolition. VSO supported the collation, NGOs Education Partnership, to lobby successfully for this change. The government abolished these fees and since then 10,000 more children in the Kingdom of Cambodia completed primary school in 2009–10 than in 2008–09 (see 2.5 case study below).

In each of the three 'windows' into VSO's overseas work, a representative sample of partners (a balance of government and civil society organisations; large, small; weak, strong) within a representative country sample (a balance of Africa, Asia; strong, weak programmes) assessed their progress on a Quality Scale from 1–4. Scales were developed on the basis of beneficiary priorities and in the process of partner self-assessment, beneficiaries were involved as much as possible. VSO staff facilitated discussions, asking for evidence to validate scores, and ensuring some consistency across partners. In general, this qualitative reporting is the strongest area of partner Monitoring and Evaluation, having been practised by VSO partners since 2004. This is in contrast to challenges faced in quantitative reporting discussed below.

Results of VSO support for quality to build partner capacity to deliver quality services to ultimate beneficiaries

2008–11 'Windows into VSO' Scale of VSO's work and sample size used	Number of partners in sample of representative countries assessing changes in quality	Percentage of partners making progress on quality over three years	Percentage of partners making more than one step on quality scale over three years
HIV & AIDS 14 country programmes (collected data out of a total of 17) with 157 partners Sample of six countries with 94 partners	33/94 HIV prevention, care and support partners	74%	36%
Education 17 countries with 212 partners Sample of five countries with 88 partners	25 /88 Education partners	80%	20%
Disability 13 countries with 100 partners Sample of six countries with 63 partners	27/63 Disabled People's Organisations	92%	63%

Learning and Challenges

Establishing partner reach Although quality is our focus, VSO experienced over-estimates in initial data collection on partner beneficiaries – its ultimate beneficiaries – by its staff and the staff of partners in 2009–10. Although these have largely been corrected in 2010–11 reporting, it remains a concern. It is unclear, for example, to what extent overall increases in ultimate beneficiary reach are the result of improved data collection and what are real increases as a result of improved services. These concerns mean that VSO has to be very careful about how it uses numbers from partner beneficiaries (i.e. for internal learning and planning, for donor reporting) and needs to invest both in its own organisational capacity for data collection, as well as in the capacity of partners.

Supporting partners' own data collection systems In its partnerships VSO will have to work hard in the future to strike a balance between helping to develop stronger data systems and imposing systems that overlays its own and other donors' data requirements, creating an unmanageable workload and restricting resources for core work.

Ensuring a focus on practical action in the UK VSO is committed to growing its network of supporters, including Youth Volunteers and connecting them to development issues with an emphasis on practical action. Future UK-based work will focus on the impact that individuals can make on poverty through links with communities in developing countries, advocacy, and volunteering.

Progress against PPA Performance Framework by each Strategic Objective

Strategic Objective 1: Improved capacity of partner organisations, including coalitions and networks of people living with HIV & AIDS, to advocate for and increase access to quality prevention, treatment, care and support services to men and women, girls and boys, affected by HIV & AIDS in 19 countries.

The chosen indicators are:

1. Quality of prevention interventions
2. Quality of care and support services
3. Internal capacity development of partners
4. Policy change in respect to HIV and AIDS
5. Workplace policy development.

The indicators were informed by internationally recognised goals in HIV & AIDS (Universal Access and the UNGASS core indicators), whilst also reflecting VSO's niche approach to development through long-term capacity development of partners and evidenced-based national and international policy work. It was extremely valuable for VSO staff to speak directly with target focus groups of beneficiaries (e.g. sex workers, men who have sex with men, orphans and vulnerable children, community members, youth and drug users) to establish their key areas of quality within these indicators.

Methodology It was agreed with DFID in 2008 that six programmes would act as the sample for impact assessment in HIV & AIDS (Bangladesh, Cameroon, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal and Zambia) and would be a reliable guide to the progress made in the 13 countries where VSO now works on HIV & AIDS issues. Beneficiaries were often included in partner review workshops to validate changes identified by partners in terms of quality improvements to services. This provided a deeper insight into changes in beneficiary experience. Improvements in quality of prevention (indicator 1.1) and in care and support (indicator 1.2) have been measured through assessing progress in the three key areas of quality below. These were identified in 2008 through focus group discussions with target groups.

Key areas of quality as prioritised by target groups:

1. Continuity of services
2. Respect and participation
3. Appropriate access (e.g. for rural citizens, information tailored for specific groups).

In 2011, 30 partner organisations² from the six sample countries used a standard **progress scale 1–4** to measure changes in these areas of quality. **Level 4** had a standard descriptor so that comparison across different partners was possible. All 30 partner organisations – 15 related to prevention services and 15 related to care and support services – scored themselves in all three areas of quality on this scale:

1. No progress
2. Some progress
3. Good progress
4. Excellent progress

Changes in improved systems, structures and skills of partner organisations (indicator 1.3) have been captured in reviews held between VSO and all their partner organisations, as part of VSO's annual planning and review cycle.

Progress towards policy implementation (indicator 1.4) has been measured using **VSO's Advocacy Success Scale**. This scale is a monitoring and evaluation tool, which features eight possible stages of a policy and advocacy initiative:

- Stage 1. Identify the issue
- Stage 2. Research conducted
- Stage 3. Strategy developed
- Stage 4. Issue in debate in public realm
- Stage 5. Policy makers agree need to address issue
- Stage 6. Policy change/blocks to effective implementation removed
- Stage 7. Policy change implemented
- Stage 8. Monitoring and evaluation.

Progress in the development of workplace policy (indicator 1.5) has been assessed by reviewing the baselines set in 2008 against the four headings:

1. No workplace policy
2. Policy in development
3. Policy developed
4. Policy fully developed and implemented.

The figures included in indicator 1.2 give a sense of VSO's reach. Reach is shown as number of beneficiaries and is defined as the number of poor and marginalised women and men who have **accessed** a service that a partner is

² This figure has decreased from 33 in 2010. Programmes have stopped working with the other three partner organisations

providing, with VSO support (for example, HIV testing).

Results Summary There has been excellent progress in quality over the lifespan of this PPA in all HIV & AIDS indicators across the six sample countries. Quantitative and qualitative evidence from programmes demonstrates that VSO has supported partners to increase quality of services, leading to an increase in access for marginalised groups, for example.

A specific learning that has emerged from the PPA impact assessment process is around economic development opportunities for people affected by HIV & AIDS, as part of broader social protection mechanisms. Focus groups held with target groups in 2008 highlighted access to Income Generation Activities (IGA) opportunities as a key area of quality that was not addressed by partners. Throughout the lifespan of this PPA, VSO has supported many partners to increase access to livelihood opportunities in response to beneficiary voice. There has been a strong drive to make IGAs profitable so that community-based and primary carers, people living with HIV, and other marginalised groups are able to improve their nutrition and increase their economic independence. These initiatives have seen incredible success. In Malawi for example, the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA), established by a VSO volunteer placed in the national HIV network, has made a huge impact in the communities in which it was started, and has become a self-sustaining entity. Qualitative evidence from programmes shows how the IGAs have increased income and improved economic rights for people affected by HIV & AIDS. VSO is now established as a leader in the field of care and support.

Since 2010, progress in quality and policy change has mostly remained stable rather than increasing significantly. This reflects both the challenging funding environment that partners have experienced over the past year but also the relatively short time period between reporting (12 months as opposed to 18 months in 2010) which has resulted in most partners maintaining high levels of quality and progress in policy work rather than seeing step change as in 2010.

Partners have strengthened their internal capacity, with more than half establishing workplace policies. Weak partner monitoring and evaluation systems have made quantitative data gathering a challenge. VSO has been working with partners over the past three years to strengthen their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and to refine their definitions of direct and indirect beneficiaries. As such, over the course of the PPA, quality scores seem robust but total beneficiary reach figures are unpredictable. More work needs to be done in this area.

Indicator 1.1: Improved quality of 3,375,000 prevention interventions³ in six sample countries (Bangladesh, Cameroon, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal and Zambia).

Progress Achieved and Challenges Faced

Summary statement

There has been good progress since March 2010 and excellent progress since the start of the PPA in 2008.

Improvements in quality

Improvements in quality have been measured by 15 prevention partners in the sample six countries, in three key areas identified by partners and beneficiaries:

1. In 2011, 80% of sample partners reported **improved continuity of prevention services** since 2008. 40% reported further improvements in this area over the past year.
2. In 2011, 73% of sample partners reported **improved respect towards service users and increased participation of service users** since 2008. 27% reported further improvements in this area over the past year.
3. In 2011, 87% of sample partners reported **improved accessibility of services** since 2008. 40% reported further improvements in this area over the past year.

Sample reach (interventions)

- Total number of prevention interventions in the six sample countries increased from 10,917,000 interventions in 2010 to 11,245,000 in 2011. Across the entire PPA period (2008–2011) total number of prevention interventions by VSO partners across the six countries has increased by 7,870,000.⁴

Analysis Over the past year, VSO has continued to work with partners to improve the availability and quality of prevention services, especially to marginalised groups through, for example, the decentralisation of services and the adjustment of service times. Throughout the duration of the PPA funding period, partners in all sample programmes have either expanded or commenced prevention work with specific marginalised groups, including sex workers, men

³ Prevention interventions are: prevention of mother to child transmission, voluntary counselling and treatment, peer outreach, education, awareness raising, information education and communication, positive prevention, harm reduction, condom awareness and distribution, behaviour change communication, comprehensive sexuality education, gender programmes and male circumcision.

⁴ Cameroon started prevention work in 2010 and are now included in prevention interventions

who have sex with men and prisoners. For example, in Malawi, VSO has worked with the prisoner service to increase the HIV & AIDS service provision in all 30 Malawi prisons, including scaling up HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT), Anti Retro Viral Therapy (ART) and peer support education. Many partners have worked on improving ethical considerations and confidentiality within HCT services, which has led to increased numbers of service users accessing testing and counselling sites. In addition, integration of services has steadily improved with services expanding to offer prevention of mother-to-child services, tuberculosis testing and antiretroviral treatment.

Numbers of interventions have increased significantly over the PPA period. However, it should be noted that of the 11,245,000 interventions undertaken, nine million relate to condom distribution and programming. The total intervention figures in the sample countries have to be treated with caution as some partners collected data on interventions and others collected data on the recipients of interventions. VSO will continue to work with partners to strengthen their own monitoring.

List any documentary evidence of achievements

Summary of anecdotal evidence

- VSO Zambia – The impact of radio in influencing behaviour change in communities
- VSO Vietnam – Improving the quality of prevention services for intravenous drug users.

Indicator 1.2 Improved quality of care and support services received by 348,000 women, men, girls and boys infected and affected by HIV & AIDS in six sample countries (Bangladesh, Cameroon, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal and Zambia).

Progress Achieved and Challenges faced

Summary statement

There has been good progress since March 2010 and excellent progress over the duration of the PPA funding period (2008–2011) in the improvement of service quality.

Improvements in quality

Improvements in quality have been measured by 15⁵ care and support partners in the six sample countries, in three key areas identified by partners and beneficiaries:

1. In 2011, 60% of sample partners reported **improved continuity of care and inter-relatedness of services** since 2008. 20% reported improvements in this area over the past year.
2. In 2011, 73% of partners reported **improved respect towards service users and increased participation of service users** since 2008. 40% reported improvements in this area over the past year.
3. In 2011, 73% of partners reported **improved access** since 2008. 20% reported improvements in this area over the past year.

Sample reach (beneficiaries)

Over the past year, total numbers of people reached in the sample countries decreased by 441,000, which is reflective of more robust partner M&E systems and a more realistic assessment of the causal links between VSO's interventions and partner reach.

Global reach (beneficiaries)

In 14⁶ countries, VSO partners are reaching a total of 1,630,000 women, men, girls and boys with comprehensive care and support services⁷ compared to 1,433,000 in 2010. This increase reflects new work in Ethiopia in HIV & AIDS as well as an increased global focus of VSO's HIV & AIDS work on care and support.

Analysis There has been excellent progress in the quality of partner care and support services since 2008 and these quality levels have been maintained over the past year. Partners have been supported to increase training and resources for care providers (e.g. with small grants for home-based care kits resulting in the improved quality of home-based care services). This material support is seen as making a critical difference in care providers' ability to improve the quality of services and increasing retention rates of care providers. There has also been a visible increase in the number of males involved in home-based care provision in Southern Africa programmes (e.g. in Zimbabwe, 29% of the community-based carers were male at the end of 2010, compared to 21% at the start). This has significantly shifted the burden of care from women and girls, as well as improving the quality of care for male patients. Reducing the burden of care for both men and women is a key focus of VSO's HIV & AIDS programme and advocacy work with partners.

⁵ 16 partners collected data in 2010. However one organisation has since ceased to be a VSO partner

⁶ Globally, VSO has 17 HIV & AIDS programmes, 14 of which have completed data collection on reach. This is one more than last year since Ethiopia has only started work in HIV & AIDS since 2010.

⁷ Care and support services include: psychosocial, clinical, social-economic and human rights and legal support.

Provision of IGA and economic development opportunities emerged as a key area of quality in all six countries during the focus group discussions with beneficiaries in 2008. In response, partners in all countries have been supported to develop or scale up provision of IGA or economic development opportunities. Reports from focus groups have indicated more economic independence as a result. In Malawi for example, the start-up of the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) has resulted in the establishment of 71 successful VSLA groups reaching 1,100 households. There are currently 1,500 members of the VSLA schemes with 1,800 Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) already benefiting through the provision of school fees and uniforms. In addition to other benefits, such as increased ART adherence, reports from this year highlight an unintended positive outcome of the IGAs, such as the psychosocial support members of IGA groups experience when they come together to discuss not only the business venture but also share experiences and provide emotional counselling. Learning has been shared with all programmes, and this year an inclusive livelihood grant was established to support HIV & AIDS or Livelihood partners to promote economic development opportunities for those infected and affected by HIV & AIDS.

In lower prevalence countries, there has been a specific focus on ensuring care and support services are accessible for marginalised groups. Many partners have tailored services or started delivering services at different times of the day, (e.g. the development of female-only drug user clinics in Nepal). Overall, qualitative reports demonstrate there has been an increase in those marginalised groups accessing services.

Challenge Comprehensive care and support remains the forgotten pillar of the Universal Access framework; it is scarcely accounted for in formal, funded national AIDS responses or policy-making. As such, smaller community-based organisations that are at the forefront of care provision in the community have seen a reduction in funding availability. VSO will continue to focus on ensuring comprehensive care and support, and recognition of those providing this care, is at the forefront of the response, recognising that universal access to prevention and treatment is impossible without it.

List any documentary evidence of achievements

Summary of anecdotal evidence

- VSO Zimbabwe – Reduction of burden of care on care providers through National Volunteering
- VSO Malawi – Increased economic independence and schooling for OVCs through income generating schemes
- VSO Mozambique – Psychosocial support for care providers
- VSO Malawi – Making support groups and group therapy meetings functional
- VSO Zimbabwe – Mobilising volunteers to strengthen HIV & AIDS care and support work and reduce the burden of care on women

Indicator 1.3 Improved systems, structures and skills (e.g. financial management, planning and review systems, and improved donor relations) will be achieved by 173 partners in 19 countries by March 2011.

This indicator should read: *Improved systems, structures and skills (e.g. financial management, planning and review systems and improved donor relations) will be achieved by 157 partners in 14 countries by March 2011.*⁸

Progress achieved and challenges faced

Summary statement There has been excellent progress since 2010 and across the entire reporting period (2008–2011).

Progress in capacity development The outcomes resulting from internal capacity strengthening of partners have been reported under indicators 1.1 and 1.2. The five areas of internal capacity below were highlighted as common areas identified through partner organisational assessments across 30⁹ partners (as a sample of 157 partners) in the last year:

1. The trend of **increased participation and inclusion** of target groups within partner organisations continued over 2010–11. Partners in six countries reported increased levels of **inclusion** within their organisational structures and programmes. Increased participation and confidence in contributing meaningfully to organisational governance was highlighted as a result.
2. Partners in four countries mentioned **improved management capacity**, including capacity to manage service decentralisation and provision, as well as management of testing and counselling data in a confidential way and ART management/distribution. As a result, there has been an increase in service coverage and services have been developed to reach rural areas or specific marginalised groups (e.g. prisoners in Malawi).
3. **Improved co-ordination and networking** between district AIDS committees, Community Based Organisations (CBOs), NGOs or government services was reported in five countries, reducing the amount of duplication of services and strengthening referral systems
4. Partners in three countries reported **improved capacity to conduct evidence-based advocacy in order to influence**

⁸ See Baseline report 2008 for rationale

⁹ The partner sample has decreased from 33 in 2010 since VSO has ceased working with three partners.

policy change. This has seen increased funding allocations to replenish ARTs, and the development of HIV & AIDS services in rural areas and for marginalised groups (e.g. prisoners) and the establishment of policies to recognise care providers at national level.

5. **Improved information dissemination** was highlighted in three countries. Community-based carers have been trained to continuously pass information related to, for example, prevention, nutrition or ART adherence, on to their clients. In many of the rural areas, this is the only way that communities can access up-to-date information.

Sample reach (partners): 30 partners in six countries.

Global reach (partners): 157 partners in 14 HIV & AIDS programmes.

Analysis Capacity building is at the heart of VSO's work and the organisational development and capacity-building strategies respond to partners' changing needs and contribute to their improved capacity, confidence, credibility and motivation. VSO believes that strengthening organisational capacity is the most sustainable and equitable way to realise the rights of poor and marginalised people and that by strengthening organisational capacity, the performance of an organisation (for example, related to their service delivery or advocacy work) will improve. The results of this logic can clearly be seen under indicators 1.1 and 1.2. The focus on inclusion over the past three years of the PPA has been seen to have a great impact at partner level. All countries report improved levels of inclusion within organisational structures and representation of beneficiary groups in programme management and governance decision-making. As a result, a greater number of marginalised groups and women and girls are accessing partners' services, as highlighted through qualitative reports gathered. VSO plans to build on this success and continue to invest in support to partners.

An ongoing challenge across all countries is weak partner monitoring and evaluation systems. This is an area where VSO has been focussing support and there have been some improvements over the course of the PPA period. Since 2010, data collection has improved, although challenges remain. VSO plans to continue focussing on this area with partners to strengthen their M&E systems and to use the learning to inform ongoing programme development work.

List any documentary evidence of achievements

- VSO Bangladesh – Establishment of a training, education and research centre to provide quality trainings and research support to different partner organisations
- VSO Cameroon – Breaking down cultural barriers to facilitate gender equality
- VSO Zimbabwe – Actively involving volunteers in child protection society (CPS) activities in Zimbabwe

Indicator 1.4: 24 policy initiatives (seven national, 17 local) in four sample countries (Bangladesh, Nepal, Malawi, Zambia) will make significant progress on their 2008 baseline position by March 2011. These are policy initiatives that aim to realise women and men's rights with regard to prevention, treatment, care and support services.

Progress achieved and challenges faced

Summary statement There has been excellent overall progress in this indicator since the start of the PPA in 2008, resulting in many initiatives reaching high levels on the Advocacy Success Scale. These high levels have been maintained since 2010.

Progress in advocacy: Out of the 24 policy initiatives, VSO Malawi and Bangladesh have phased out six partners but results are based on the original sample.

Of the 18 initiatives:

- 25% of the initiatives are in level 3 and above.
- Significant progress has been made by 3 of the initiatives.
- None of the initiatives still being supported declined on the Advocacy Success scale.

Global reach (policy initiatives)

- As of April 2011, VSO is working with 48 partners across 14 countries to advocate for the policy formation, review or change of policies both at the local, district and national levels.
- In addition, VSO has been working at the regional level in Southern Africa with partners such as South African Development Community Parliamentary Forum to advocate for policy change, development and implementation.

Analysis Since 2008, VSO has conducted vigorous advocacy activities; these included advocacy skills building workshops; advocacy strategy development, advocacy researches and organising regional advocacy events; as well as sponsoring programme managers, partners and volunteers to participate in international events such as the International HIV and AIDS conference. The latter was only possible because of the cumulative effect of developing the VSO Policy Handbook

<p>for Care and Support together with WHO and VSO partners. The principles of the Policy Handbook are around gender, psycho-social care, and social protection. VSO was asked to make one of the three presentations at the UN Southern Africa consultation to generate asks for the International Conference and also presented in Namibia at the All Africa consultation as part of the same process.</p> <p>All these activities have resulted in empowerment of partner staff who can now speak with confidence, reflected in the significant progress made in progress in the policy initiatives. However, for 2010, only four initiatives made significant progress mainly because it can be difficult to move policies especially above level 5; policy making processes tend to be slow and therefore progress is difficult to demonstrate within the short reporting time frame of 12 months.</p>	
<p><i>List any documentary evidence of achievements</i></p>	
<p>Summary of anecdotal evidence from VSO Programme Area Reviews and Donor Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSO Zambia – Advocacy for improved access to counselling and testing and ART in rural Zambia • VSO RAISA – Care provider national policy development • VSO Bangladesh – Advocacy for commitment to reduce harassment and abuse of AIDS outreach workers and peer educators in Chittagong City, Bangladesh 	
<p>Indicator 1.5: 50% of partner organisations in six sample countries (Bangladesh, Cameroon, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal and Zambia) have workplace policies in place by March 2011.</p>	
<p><i>Progress achieved and challenges faced</i></p>	
<p>Summary statement There has been excellent progress in this indicator. There has been an increase from 35% to 52% since 2010 in the number of partners with workplace policies in place therefore exceeding the original target of 50%.</p> <p>Sample reach (progress in workplace policy development) As of April 2011, in the six sample countries, 54 partners reviewed progress against their baseline positions with excellent progress seen. Numbers of partners without workplace policies have decreased drastically from 20 to nine and those with a policy fully implemented and monitored has increased from four in 2010 to 15 in 2011.</p> <p>There has been good progress by partners in low prevalence countries, where recognition of the need for a policy has previously been a challenge. Of the 28 partners with workplace policies now in place, 16 of those are from lower prevalence countries.</p>	
<p>Global reach (partners with workplace policy) Globally, 46 partners out of 88 who set baselines now have workplace policies in place, equating to 52%.</p>	
<p>Analysis A reduction in donor funding has caused resourcing difficulties for some partners and prevented their ability to fully implement the policy. Many partners are now working towards a more holistic inclusive policy that is part of a broader HR policy that includes provisions, not just related to the impacts of HIV & AIDS but also other illnesses and social issues. VSO is promoting this broader focus across all programmes, in line with VSO’s new <i>People First</i> strategy that has holistic, inclusive responses to development at its heart. The confidential nature of a workplace policy means that information around increased uptake in benefits and the results is generally unavailable.</p>	
<p><i>List any documentary evidence of achievements</i></p>	
<p>Evidence for this indicator is quantitative. Data sheets available on request</p>	
<p>What is the likelihood that Strategic Objective 1 will be achieved? Rate 1 to 5</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Strategic Objective 2: Improved Capacity of schools, teacher training colleges, and professional development centres to deliver quality education for disadvantaged learners in 19 countries</p>	
<p>All six indicators set under this objective are included to report on VSO’s approach to education as fully as possible. The indicators were chosen to reflect VSO’s multi-layered systemic approach to education that the three areas of improved teaching methodology, education management and community engagement, when addressed simultaneously, will have the greatest long-term impact and lead most directly to an improved quality of education for girls¹⁰.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indicator 1 is concerned with the overall quality of education in summary of indicators 3, 4 and 6 2. Indicator 2 focuses on improved enrolment rate of girls 3. Indicator 3 focuses on improved teaching methodology 	

¹⁰ See VSO PPA baseline report 2008 for a more in depth explanation of multi-layered approach to education programming.

4. Indicator 4 focuses on improved education management
5. Indicator 5 focuses on education policy initiatives
6. Indicator 6 focuses on the level of community engagement in school management.

Improvements in quality of education (indicators 2.1, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.6) have been measured through assessing progress in the three key areas of quality as outlined above. These were defined in 2008 through focus group discussions with beneficiary groups of children in school, parents and teachers.

Distinctive interventions by VSO Education Volunteers *VSO brings people together to work for development in a number of different ways – exchanges, supporting National Volunteering partners, placing short and long term volunteers, etc. In education, the following were adopted for each indicator. VSO supports improvements in teacher skill (indicator 2.3) through volunteers working as teacher trainers and continuous professional development (CPD) co-ordinators with clusters of schools and within teacher training colleges. VSO also supports improvements in education management (indicator 2.4) through volunteers providing short-term head teacher accompaniment, long-term organisational development support for district education offices and improving the reliability of management systems data. Finally, VSO supports improvements in community engagement in education (indicator 2.6) through volunteers supporting community advocacy initiatives and mobilising CBOs and PTAs (parent-teacher organisations). In addition, in some countries, regional and national-level research and advocacy interventions (indicator 2.5) through volunteers, including national volunteers, building the capacity of civil society organisations and teachers' unions, also contribute to national-level efforts to improve the quality of education.*

Results summary over the three years

Quality and capacity of VSO partner organisations to support delivery of quality education services has been maintained during 2010–2011, and overall quality has improved between 2008 and 2011. 80% of partners in the five sample countries have increased quality between 2008 and 2011. 20% of partners increased quality score between 2008 and 2011 by more than one point on the quality scale. Key areas of quality improvement are around building the individual capacity and skill of teachers to use more inclusive and child-centred practices and strengthening organisational capacity at different levels of the education system to embed best practice in government partners' systems and processes. An example of VSO's strategic, joined-up approach is in Ghana, where VSO partners with three districts. One of the district education directors spent three months on the VSO-managed Commonwealth Fellowship with the UK Department of Education and a London Education Authority, and implemented his learning on education management issues and inclusive education. With the support of international volunteers, he rolled out an in-service teacher-training programme in his district and made key management changes within the District Education Office.

Complementing VSO's capacity building of government partners, the quality of VSO's work to support community engagement and promote the inclusion of girls in school has resulted in improvements in Cambodia, Ghana and Cameroon. In Cameroon, this area of work has been scaled up and involves both the efforts of international volunteers (IVs) working in school clusters paired with National Volunteers. Creating and supporting Mother Teacher Associations (MTAs), resulted in active female community leaders ensuring schools are better funded (both through IGAs and effective fee collection), more responsive to the needs of students, and increasingly accessible to girls.

Reach figures across all indicators, except girls' enrolment, have been maintained or increased over the lifespan of the PPA but have reduced significantly in the past year because of a combination of the following:

- The **impact of the implementation of VSO's new strategy *People First* over the last year** has included a commitment to strategic resource allocation to poor and fragile states, resulting in a number of education programmes in countries experiencing high levels of economic development, scaling down considerably. Those countries that are scaling down include **China, Mongolia, Namibia and Guyana and had a previous global (or total) reach of 1,531,000 children; in 2011 this has reduced to 857,000 children; a 5% reduction from the previous global reach.**
- **In-country and external funding coming to an end** resulting in working with fewer partners/in fewer geographical areas – **Cambodia** (mainstreaming inclusive education project funding from EU and World Bank; **Malawi** – DFID in-country funding); **Thai-Burma** – EC funding coming to an end later this year. These countries had a previous total reach of **2,971,000 children; in 2011 this has reduced to 426,000 children; a 17% reduction from the previous total reach.**

Nigeria, Ethiopia and Rwanda Education programmes (who all had comparatively large reach in previous years) have reduced reach as a result of gathering data for VSO's new Global Baseline where there is a stronger attribution to VSO's interventions demonstrated through separating out indirect and direct outcomes. This has led to a better understanding of how to measure reach in those countries for education (e.g. not counting all children enrolled in a province/region where VSO input is primarily focused on pre-service teacher training through teacher training institutions). In the new baseline 2011—14, partners have been asked to count teachers (intermediate beneficiaries) and not children. These countries **had a previous global reach of 5,098,000 children, in 2011 this has reduced to 1,964,000 children; a 21% reduction from the previous global reach.**

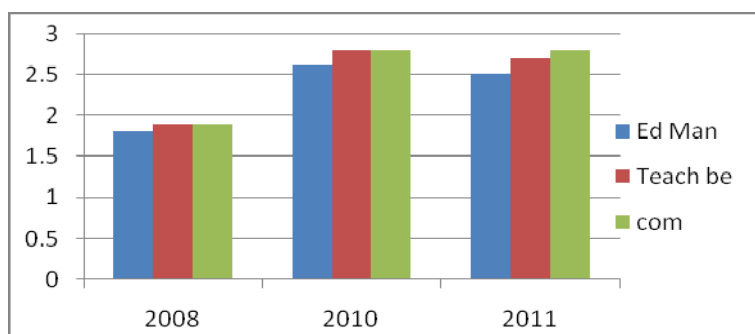
Indicator 2.1: Improved quality of education for 473,000 girls in five sample countries (Ghana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Namibia, and Thailand) by March 2011.

Progress achieved and challenges faced

Summary statement Overall good progress continues to be made towards this indicator and levels of quality have been maintained.

Summary of progress 64 partners in the five sample countries are being supported by VSO to improve the quality of education¹¹ (15 more than in 2010). Of these, 25 partners set baselines in 2008 and are monitoring progress towards improved delivery of quality education, in three key areas identified by partners and beneficiaries: teacher behaviour, attitude and skill, and education management and community engagement.

In general, the quality of education supported by VSO partners rose in 2010 and was maintained or dipped slightly in 2011. In all cases, there is a considerable rise between the 2008 scores and 2011. The slight decreases reflect a few large partners and hide the fact that 77% of partners maintained or improved their level of quality over the last year.



1. Progress in teacher behaviour, attitude and skill

Average quality scores = 1.9(2008), 2.8 (2010), 2.7(2011)

2. Progress in education management

Average quality scores = 1.8(2008), 2.6 (2010), 2.5(2011)

3. Progress in community engagement

Average quality scores =

Sample reach (girls reached by quality education)

- In total **1,109,000 children (543,000 girls and 565,000 boys)** in have benefited from improved quality of education¹² since 2010 in the five sample programmes. For girls, this is a slight decrease of 5% from the figure reached in 2010 (572,000) but a **15% increase in total from the baseline figure for girls (473,000) in 2008.**

Global reach (girls reached by quality education)

Globally, VSO is contributing to an **improved quality of education for a total of 3,663,000 poor and marginalised children** (1,866,000 boys and 1,797,000 girls) in 17 countries. This is a reduction from the 884,000 children reached in 2010 for the reasons described above.

- **Teacher behaviour, attitude and skill:** 165 VSO partners are supporting **135,000 teachers** to improve the quality of their teaching across 17 countries; this is an overall reduction from the original 188 partners supporting 264,000 teachers in 2010.
- **Education management:** 151 VSO partners (including district education offices and colleges of teacher education) are continuing to reach **11,000 education managers** (including head teachers, school inspectors and Management and Information System (EMIS) advisers) to make improvements in **education management** across 17 countries. This is the first time this data has been collected.
- **Community engagement:** 66 VSO partners are supporting **5,000 schools** across 17 countries to **engage more effectively with their school communities through PTAs and School Management Committees (SMCs)** on education issues; this is an overall reduction from the original 101 partners supporting 13,000 schools.

Analysis Quality of education is a summary indicator for all other indicators. Therefore evidence of the impact of quality at beneficiary level is an overriding concern for assessing progress towards this indicator. Impact on children's learning outcomes has been reported by VSO Guyana where literacy rates have increased in three VSO-supported regions, significant improvements in exam results were achieved in one district in Rwanda, and in five VSO-supported wards in Tanzania, girls' exam results improved by 19%.

In many countries the trend of rapid increased enrolment rates in order to meet MDG2 (see 2.2) has led to available resources being overstretched and inequity in resource allocation (for example, teachers being inequitably distributed between and within regions and districts), all of which continues to have an adverse impact on quality. As a result there is a strong government/Ministry of Education commitment to improving quality rather than 'quantity' of education.

¹¹ These constitute partners where two or three of VSO's key areas of intervention aimed at improving the quality of education are in place: in-service teacher training (indicator 2.3), education management (indicator 2.4) and community engagement (indicator 2.6).

List any documentary evidence of achievements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rwanda: sustainable training programme to improve quality of learning for poor and marginalised children • Thai-Burma: education project improved access and quality of education for disadvantaged boys and girls.
Indicator 2.2: A 5% increase in the number of girls enrolled in schools from 1,467,000¹³ in November 2008, as a result of VSO interventions, in five sample countries (Ghana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Namibia, Thailand) by March 2011.
Progress achieved and challenges faced
<p>Summary statement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good progress in increasing enrolment of children with disabilities; the number of children with disabilities enrolled in VSO-supported schools has increased from 0.7% to 1.1% of all children enrolled¹⁴ • Excellent progress in increased enrolment in Cameroon (especially for girls) • Total reach figures have decreased slightly due to the factors explained below and in the context of overall decrease in VSO education programmes and partners. <p><i>Progress in girls enrolment</i></p> <p>Sample reach (girls enrolment) There has been a 7 % decrease (from 492,000 in 2010 to 457,000 in 2011) but only a 0.3% decrease over the three-year period (from 458,000 in 2008 to 457,000 in 2011) in the number of girls enrolled in schools reached by VSO partners in Ghana, Cameroon, Namibia and Thailand (excluding Ethiopia). This overall decrease disguises the fact that in Cameroon there has been an increase by 75% of the numbers of children enrolled in schools supported by VSO partners and 80% for girls. Overall (including Ethiopia), the numbers of girls enrolled in schools reached by VSO partners has reduced from 1,467,000 in 2008 to 1,385,000 in 2010 to 601,000 in 2011. This is due to the fact that Ethiopia, Thailand and Namibia are all affected by the factors described above.</p>
<p>Global reach (girls enrolment) Globally VSO is reaching a total of 5,252,000 children (2,719,000 boys and 2,533,000 girls) enrolled in schools in 17 programmes, compared with a total reach of 14,604,000 children (7,375,000 boys and 7,229,000 girls) in 2010.</p>
<p>Analysis A number of the barriers to enrolment are being addressed by VSO partners through strategic interventions; for example in Cameroon intensive focus on barriers to girls' access to education through community engagement and awareness-raising activities (see 2.6) has led to a significant increase in girls' enrolment in schools and districts supported by VSO partners. In Cambodia, the established girls counselling in schools helped reduce the drop out of girls in higher grade in primary schools (in Mondulseima, Koh Kong, 13 dropped-out girls returned back to school as a result of girls counselling and student councils' work).</p> <p>The proportional increase in enrolment of children with disabilities in VSO-supported schools comes as a result of increased awareness at community level and volunteers supporting the diagnosis of children with disabilities as well as improved collection of management systems data at all levels of the education system; particularly national level prioritisation by ministries of education in Mozambique, Ghana, Cambodia and Guyana, where data wasn't previously systematically collected for children with disabilities.</p> <p>Implications for data collection 2011–2014 It has proved very challenging to accurately assess progress towards this indicator due to many changes to VSO programmes over the last year. This indicator focuses on enrolment and so unless a like-for-like comparison of partners over a specific time frame is made, aggregating at country level and globally disguises where there have actually been increases in enrolment rates for particular partners (for example, in Cambodia despite overall programme decreases in reach, in schools, districts, and provinces with VSO intervention, enrolment and promotion rates increased, especially within the target groups (girls, children with disability, ethnic minority children) while dropout rates generally decreased). Based on the evidence in the EMIS 2009–10, in the six VSO supported provinces, the overall enrolment rate of children to grade 6 has been increased by 2.1% in Battambang, 1.4% in Kampot, 2.7% in Koh Kong, 0.1% in Mondulki, 7.2% in Ratanakiri and 2.7% in Ratanakiri while the promotion rate has also been increased by 10.9% in Koh Kong, 2.0% in Kampot, 7.0% in Mondulki and 0.1% in Battambang. The above figure indicates a significant improvement compared to last year's figure.</p>

¹² These constitute schools where two or three of VSO's key areas of intervention at district and school level aimed at improving the quality of education are in place: in-service teacher training (indicator 2.3), education management (indicator 2.4) and community engagement (indicator 2.6).

¹³ This is the number without Pakistan.

¹⁴ In 2010 only 0.7% of children enrolled in schools supported by VSO partners globally were children with disabilities; in 2011 while the actual figure has gone down (reflective of overall decreases in reach figures) proportionally the number of children with disabilities enrolled in schools supported by VSO partners has increased to 56,000 children of whom 25,000 are girls.

List any documentary evidence of achievements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cameroon – Increased number of children receiving birth certificates leads to increases in enrolment and completion rates. • Cambodia – VSO support for increased enrolment for children with disability gives access • Nigeria – Improved data collection helps planning for a better education for poor children- Annual School Census Centrally Produced
Indicator 2.3: Improved skills in using child-centred methodology will be demonstrated by 187,000 teachers in schools, teacher training colleges and professional development centres in 19¹⁵ countries by March 2011.
Progress achieved and challenges faced
<p>Summary statement Good progress continues from 2010 against this indicator.</p> <p><i>Progress in improved teacher skills</i></p> <p>Quality in the sample countries: 82 partners in the five sample countries are being supported by VSO to improve teacher skill in using child-centred methodology. Of these 82 partners, 22 set baselines in 2008 and 20 of these assessed their progress towards improved teacher skill, attitude and behaviour in 2011. 14 out of these 20 partner organisations have maintained or increased their level of quality in supporting improved teacher skill</p>
<p>Global reach (teachers)</p> <p>The total number of teachers currently reached by VSO through support to in-service, continuous professional development and pre-service teacher training is 135,000 (63,000 of whom are female) across 17 education country programmes. This is a reduction from 264,000 teachers reached under this indicator in 2010 due to factors described above. However the proportion of female teachers reached in 2011 has risen from 41% to 46 % since 2010.</p>
<p>Analysis 10 VSO education programmes have reported improved use of child-centred, inclusive methodology by teachers and teacher trainers. For example, in Cambodia, teachers in all six VSO-supported provinces have been observed developing their own resources and using them in their teaching after training. Individual mentoring has enabled them to continue to develop. As a result of these workshops, classrooms have a more stimulating learning environment. Teachers are more motivated, confident and friendly, and engage better with the students.</p> <p>VSO partners continue to support teachers to improve their skills, knowledge and attitude in a variety of ways. These include building the capacity of teacher trainers on pre- and in-service training programmes and support to continuous professional development and distance-learning programmes in order to reach as wide a range of teachers as possible, particularly those in rural areas or previously unqualified teachers. For example, in Mozambique, 1,500 primary teachers (40% female) received professional training through distance-learning programmes.</p> <p>There are significant improvements in the use of inclusive methodology, particularly on the inclusion of children with disabilities in the classroom. For example in Mozambique, Ghana, Thai-Burma, Guyana, Tanzania and Cambodia, teachers trained through VSO partners all expressed an increased confidence in how to effectively engage children with disabilities in active classroom learning. In Ghana, as a result of training teachers in 154 schools in Talensi Nabdum district to use strategies to encourage equal participation of girls and boys in class, there is evidence that girls are more confident to participate actively.</p>
<p>Challenges While there is a strong programme of work in VSO Ethiopia to address the shortage of female teachers as a result of the affirmative action policy backed by the Ethiopian Government to maximise the number of female entrants to tertiary level institutions, targeting female students specifically within VSO's Education programmes is a challenge as working within the education system doesn't always allow for positive discrimination interventions. Many teachers during partnership reviews and focus groups (Ghana, Cameroon and Thai-Burma) expressed an awareness and desire to be more inclusive in their practices, but many still struggle to apply their learning. VSO programmes are addressing this through supporting school supervisors and head teachers to monitor the application of skills and VSO's new Global Baseline aims to capture 'effective' application of skills learnt as opposed to just those who receive training.</p>
List any documentary evidence of achievements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethiopia – Gender equality project, increasing numbers of female teachers as role models for girls • Nigeria – Deaf children more actively engaged in classroom learning as a result of adapted curricula

¹⁵ We are only reporting on 17 countries for this indicator since Education programmes in Pakistan and Eritrea closed for reasons outside of VSO's control in the last two years.

- Ghana – Increasing confidence and motivation of untrained teachers to help children learn
- Cambodia – Improved literacy and reading skills as a result of teachers applying child-centred methodology

Indicator 2.4: Improved capacity to support teachers in a variety of ways (for example, delivery of in service training, providing management support) in 239 partners (such as district education offices) in 19 countries by March 2011.

Progress achieved and challenges faced

Summary statement Good progress continues from 2010 against this indicator.

Progress in education management: Results from sample countries 67 partners (regional and district education offices) in the five sample countries are being supported by VSO to build their education management capacity. Of these 67 partners, 16 assessed their progress towards improved education management practices in 2011. 15 out of the 16 VSO partners have maintained or increased their level of quality. Namibia, Ghana and Ethiopia all reported **improved school management** through more regular and effective planning, management meetings and general management practices. Thai-Burma and Ghana specifically reported improved relationships, communication and collaboration on education issues between education authorities and other agencies at district and local levels.

Global reach (partners) 151¹⁶ VSO partners (including district education offices and colleges of teacher education) are supporting improvements in education management across 17 countries.

Analysis In 12 countries, VSO is currently building the capacity of **11,000 Education Managers** (head teachers, schools supervisors, district education office staff, etc); and of these **3,000 are female**. Rwanda, Ghana, Tanzania and Cambodia have all reported **improvements in quality supervision and support to teachers** as a result of VSO volunteers providing leadership and mentoring training to head teachers and education managers. **Improved partner systems and processes for collecting and analysing statistical data**, and increased capacity of partner staff to use information and technology as a result of volunteer support, has been reported by education programmes.

Challenges Despite promised decentralisation and delegation, there are still overly bureaucratic central systems for decision-making, which are inefficient in many countries. Infrastructure and communication are also often poor at all levels. Staff turnover within many local education authorities is high, creating challenges for sustainability. Addressing gender inequality also remains a challenge as the male–female ratio in education management and leadership positions is still very imbalanced – only 30% of education managers in VSO partner organisations are female (in some countries, e.g. the Gambia, it is as low as 20%) meaning women, and issues relating to girls' education, are often not well represented at higher levels. VSO is addressing this through the inclusion of a 'gender' equality measure for all VSO partners as part of the new Global Baseline.

List any documentary evidence of achievements

- Ghana: Shared values, cohesive teamwork and increased motivation for district education staff
- Ghana: Head teachers demonstrate increased capacity to provide professional support to their teachers

Indicator 2.5: Nine policy initiatives (four national, five local) in six sample countries (Ghana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Namibia, Pakistan, Thailand) will make significant progress on their 2008 baseline position by March 2011. These are policy initiatives that aim to realise girls' and boys' rights to education.

Progress achieved and challenges faced

Summary statement Excellent progress continues against this indicator. The total number of policy and advocacy initiatives has increased in 2011 as a result of increased partner confidence, collaboration between VSO country programmes and identification of advocacy opportunities during the baseline survey.

Progress in policy initiatives 90% partners have moved two or more steps along the scale.

17 policy initiatives from four countries were assessed by programmes and VSO partners against the Advocacy Success Scale last year. Of these, **six** have seen policy changes at **stage 7**, **three** are at **stage 6**, **seven** are at stage **4 and 5** and **one** is at stage **1**.

Sample reach (policy initiatives) 17 partner organisations have been supported by 16 advocacy volunteers to implement eight national and nine district/regional-level policy initiatives in the five sample countries since 2008. There have been some excellent examples of successful policy initiatives at national level in Thailand, Cambodia, The Gambia, Nepal, Zanzibar and Rwanda (see case studies below). For example, in Thailand, as a result of VSO advocating through the Migrant Working Group for the legalisation and recognition of over 100 migrant schools, the government has committed to develop a new registration law to allow migrant children to have access to Thai school systems.

¹⁶ This figure hasn't changed since 2010.

Analysis VSO capacity building of civil society benefits VSO as well as partners. Effective use of evidence from partners working with volunteers, and in partner coalitions enables VSO to have a bigger policy voice. More than 60% of VSO programme managers actively participate in, and contribute to, national education policy development, education sector planning and reviews and working groups. Rwanda, Cambodia, Nepal, the Gambia, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Tanzania are members of different working groups to monitor the progress of EFA (Education for All) goals. In Rwanda, VSO is well placed to feed in information and anecdotal evidence from VSO volunteers working in the districts, directly to the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC). One example is a case of a school that had been closed down because the land had been illegally requisitioned and used to establish a Colton mining operation. When VSO reported this to MINEDUC, action was taken immediately – the mining operation was closed and the school re-opened. At **international level**, VSO has been successful in increasing the participation of teachers and civil society organisations in policy dialogues on teacher issues. For instance, in the international conference on teachers for EFA in Africa, held in Nairobi in January 2011, representatives from a teacher union and national coalitions from Mozambique and the Gambia presented research findings that influenced the conference communiqué on contract and unqualified teachers.

List any documentary evidence of achievements

- Thailand – VSO lobbying results in change of regulations by Thailand Ministry of Education to legalise and recognise migrant schools
- Cambodia – VSO helps Cambodian partner ‘NGOs Education Partnership’ (NEP) to lobby successfully for the abolishment of informal school fees
- Zanzibar – VSO’s *Leading Learning* research influences Zanzibar Government’s policy and practice on school leadership and quality education
- National level achievements and success stories for VSO-supported policy and advocacy initiatives

Indicator 2.6: An increased level of engagement in school management will be achieved by 4,000¹⁷ parent-teacher associations and community organisations in five sample countries (Ghana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Namibia, Thailand) by March 2011.

Progress achieved and challenges faced

Summary statement Good progress continues from 2010 against this indicator, and while there is reduced reach, quality has been maintained.

Progress in parent/community engagement in education management

Quality in the sample countries In the five sample programmes, VSO is reaching 3,500 Parent Teacher Associations and School Management Committees in 2011 (decreased from 3,900 in 2010 and 4,300 in 2008) through 38 partner organisations to engage more effectively with education and school management issues. Of these 38 partners, 12 assessed their progress towards increased community engagement in school management in 2011 and **10 out of the 12 VSO partners from the five sample countries have maintained or increased their level of quality.**

Global reach (parent-teacher associations and community organisations)

- 78 VSO partners are supporting 5,200 parent-teacher associations and community organisations across 17 countries to engage more effectively with education and school management issues. This is an overall reduction from the 12,600 previously reached.

Analysis In Ghana, Cameroon and Cambodia, community engagement activities have continued to support increased enrolment, retention and transition. For example, in Ghana, the VSO partner NAWAG has supported 40 girls with mentorship and training to become ambassadors and over 60% of these girls transitioned from primary to secondary school. Safety and retention of schoolchildren – particularly girls – has also improved as NAWAG lobbied for the provision of boreholes in Nadowli to enable girls to spend less time fetching water, which increases their attendance at school. In Cameroon, VSO’s work in enhancing education management at the community level and promoting the inclusion of girls in school has seen a significant scaling up, involving the efforts of international volunteers paired with National Volunteers working in school clusters. Creating and supporting MTAs has resulted in active female community leaders ensuring schools are better funded both through IGAs and effective fee collection, more responsive to the needs of students, and increasingly accessible to girls. School mapping, enrolment campaigns and school planning development in Cambodia has contributed to increased transition rates of students from primary to lower secondary school by 1.7% (of which 2.5% female students increased compared to 2008–09 school year (EMIS 2009–10).

Challenges Increasing community engagement in school management is a difficult area to support as at the grassroots level, the participation of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Parents’ Associations is often very weak, despite increased participation of the civil society in education processes at national levels. However, this is a vital component

¹⁷ Updated number excluding figures for Pakistan.

of VSO's multi-level approach to improving the quality of education and there are strong linkages with other goal areas under this indicator. For example, 76% of girls in Southern Africa who drop out of school do so to take on caring responsibilities for family members affected by HIV & AIDS.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List any documentary evidence of achievements • Cameroon – VSO-backed education programme is changing deep-seated attitudes towards the value of education for girls, resulting in many more girls regularly attending school and continuing their education for longer. • Cambodia – VSO's National Volunteering programme contributes to increased transition rates between primary and secondary schools for disadvantaged children in Cambodia • Zimbabwe – a VSO-supported community school offering children affected by HIV & AIDS a chance of an education 	
What is the likelihood that Strategic Objective 2 will be achieved? Rate 1 to 5.	2

Strategic Objective 3: Disabled people's organisations (DPOs) at national and local level increase their capacity to raise awareness of women and men with disabilities, on how to access their rights to education, health, livelihoods and participation in decision making in 13 countries.	
<p>The two indicators reflect the fact that DPOs have been the primary or only providers of disability rights awareness, both amongst disabled people and amongst the general population in the 13 identified countries. The first indicator focuses on the capacity of DPOs to engage with and represent increased numbers of disabled people in a more accountable and transparent way. The second indicator focuses on disabled people's access to and awareness of rights and services as a result of VSO capacity-building interventions, including international volunteers, small grants, study tours and knowledge-sharing.</p> <p>In meeting the indicators since 2008, long-term and short-term VSO volunteers have worked alongside board members, employees and local volunteers of DPOs to strengthen organisational capacity and introduce new skills and learning in strategic planning, governance, advocacy, IT, communication and fundraising. At 31 March 2011, there were 114 long-term and seven short-term volunteers supporting disability partners globally. For the final report, DPO partners in 11¹⁸ countries were involved in the global baseline data collection exercise, while 27 partners in six sample countries (Gambia, Guyana, Kenya, Nepal, Rwanda and Uganda) participated in more detailed discussions on measurement of progress¹⁹ against the three areas of quality initially identified by DPOs in 2008:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Being representative and inclusive of disabled people in rural areas and of disabled women 2. Good governance, leadership and transparency 3. Services and benefit provision (as direct service provision, referrals to services or information on services). <p>Results summary <i>Both indicators have seen good progress over three years with the numbers of DPOs supported to increase their capacity growing to 100 – well above the estimated target of 26 in 2008. Quality has increased in all cases. However, the increased reach to 514,418 beneficiaries (800,000 when awareness raising is included) has been captured as a result of increased data management capacity rather than new work with more disabled people by partners.</i></p>	
Indicator 3.1: Increased capacity will be achieved by at least 26 national disabled people's organisations in 13 countries by March 2011.	
Progress achieved and challenges faced	
Summary statement <i>There has been good progress registered under this indicator since 2008, both in terms of increased numbers of DPO partners supported from 26 to 100 globally, and the levels of quality achieved in the 27 partners in six sample countries.</i>	
Improvements in quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In 2011, 89% of partners reported being more representative and inclusive of disabled people in rural areas and of disabled women since 2008. 93% of partners reported improvements in this area by 2010 and a further 19% reported improvements over the last year.</i> • <i>In 2011, 89% of partners reported improved governance, leadership and transparency since 2008. 96% reported improvements in this area by 2010 and a further 22% reported improvements over the last year.</i> 	

¹⁸ The number of countries has decreased from 13 to 11 with Sri Lanka refocusing into broader inclusion mainstreaming across programmes and Papua New Guinea incorporating disability programming into a broader Health programme.

¹⁹ As in other goals, the standard scale measures progress as: 1. No progress, 2. Some progress, 3. Good progress and 4. Excellent progress.

- In 2011, 89% of partners reported improved services and benefits provision since 2008. 93% reported improvements in this area by 2010 and a further 30% reported improvements over the last year.

Sample reach (63 partners)

- 27 DPOs in the six countries carried out deeper assessments of improvements in their capacity
- 63 DPOs in the six countries have been supported by VSO and gathered data about the increase in service provision.

Global reach (partners) Since 2008, VSO has supported 100 DPOs to increase their capacity to reach more disabled people and to increase their awareness and access to rights.

Analysis In 2011, the average score in the three areas of quality (see above) amongst the 27 sample partners is now 3 (good progress), compared to 2 (some progress) in 2009, and 3 (good progress) in 2010. The average score in 2011 remains the same as in 2010; however this indicates that DPOs continue to maintain good progress in the development of skills, systems and processes in areas identified as organisational challenges in 2008 (e.g. long term planning, governance and collaboration amongst themselves). In the assessment process, DPO partners particularly noted the significant contribution of VSO and volunteers to improvements in their capacity in the following areas:

- broadening DPO reach within rural areas through newly acquired action learning skills that has motivated district offices and chapters to become more active and participatory
- using the participatory action learning skills to involve disabled people in rural areas, especially women, in planning and decision-making, therefore making their organisations more representative
- raising the voice of disabled people through improved networking and a unified approach to advocacy with governments, local authorities and the public
- creating more robust data management and reporting systems that has improved organisational knowledge about their members and beneficiary reach, disaggregated by gender
- securing additional funding from national and international donors to fund more transparent, representative DPOs
- improving access to livelihoods by enhancing the entrepreneurial, vocational and technical training skills of DPO employees and local volunteers, who share their knowledge in community workshops and rehabilitation centres.

DPOs have faced challenges in keeping resourcing of the disability sector and policy-making on the political agenda but have had some success in overcoming the challenge through stronger networks working together and highlighting the obligations of governments that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

1. List any documentary evidence of achievements

1. Gambia – Most significant change in capacity of disabled people’s coalition, GADOH
2. Kenya – Kuria District Disability Network and youth outreach
3. Nepal – Disabled People’s Organisation (NDWA) and progress on the rights of disabled women.

Indicator 3.2: Increased awareness, knowledge and access to services that realise their rights to education, health, livelihoods and participation in decision-making is received by 65,000 women and men with disabilities in six sample countries by March 2011.

Progress achieved and challenges faced

Summary statement Good progress has been made under this indicator since 2008 with an increased number of DPOs reaching more disabled women and men, who have better awareness of and access to services.

Improvements in reach In 2011, DPOs reported increased reach in awareness-raising and access to services to 514,000 disabled people, including 264,000 women and 250,000 men, from a membership only reach of 37,000 reported in 2008. Through awareness raising activities on radio and in the print media DPOs estimate their reach to be over 800,000 disabled people and their families.

Sample reach (women and men with disabilities) 63 DPOs in the six sample countries reached 408,000 people with disabilities, including 209,000 women and 199,000 men against a projected reach of 65,000.

Global reach (women and men with disabilities) 100 DPOs in 11 countries reached 514,000 disabled people through membership and access to services.

Analysis VSO volunteer support has allowed DPOs globally to fully participate in the baseline data collection exercise and submit better quality disaggregated data on the numbers of disabled people accessing services and realising their rights as a result of DPO service provision or direct referral. The DPO’s reach in awareness-raising through the media has also improved but in numerical terms has decreased from over 1 million last year to over 800,000 in 2011, because of the end of a specific national census awareness campaign in Rwanda in early 2010.

<p>Better collaboration and co-ordination between DPOs in advocacy activities has increased the voice and participation of disabled people and the influence of their representatives in national and local-level policy and law-making. This has enhanced self-esteem so that people with disabilities, especially women, are more confident in requesting their rights, according to the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and national legislation. VSO support has increased access to training in sign language and Braille for teachers, children and youths with disabilities and their families, enabling better access to mainstream education and overcoming barriers to participation and interaction with the wider community. As VSO moves towards more inclusive programming with a less specific focus on disability, the challenge will be to maintain the current levels of advocacy so as not to lose leverage with governments. For partners, challenges have included mobility to reach the most rural communities and overcoming the sensitivity of families reluctant to allow women and girls to get involved due to lack of trust and fear of abuse.</p>	
<p>List any documentary evidence of achievements</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rwanda – RNDSC, advocacy and structural change 2. Guyana – Inspiring Individuals to contribute to development: Advocate and National Volunteer – Ganesh Singh 3. India – Right to Information Coalition in Orissa (For details, see: http://youtu.be/VQUHdSuyPHs) 	
<p>What is the likelihood that Strategic Objective 3 will be achieved? Rate 1 to 5.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Strategic Objective 4: Raise development awareness in the UK</p>	
<p>Building UK connections to development remains integral to VSO's vision and purpose. If people understand the nature of global poverty, and the inter-dependence between their actions in the UK and the impact of those choices on poor communities around the world, they are more likely to support state and non-state interventions to fight poverty and to take positive action. VSO raises development awareness by facilitating activities that 'increase understanding of global issues to promote action for international development'. VSO volunteers have 'double impact' – contributing to development outcomes in-country and promoting development awareness outcomes in their own UK communities too.</p> <p>Future VSO remains committed to supporting the UK public to take practical action for development. VSO hopes to further develop approaches to community and school linking, youth volunteering and exchanges, and advocacy and campaigning – building on the learning about good practice documented below. VSO is currently reviewing all its work in this area, which will take into account the findings of DFID's development awareness review.</p> <p>Targets In future baselines, VSO will use its learning to set higher targets, recognising that targets for this PPA period were too low. However, it would be difficult to interpret data if targets were changed midway through the process.</p>	
<p><i>Indicator 4.1</i></p> <p>15,000 learners within the education sector learn more about development Year 3 Target: 5,000 Achieved: 9,800 Total PPA Target: 15,000 Achieved: 28,000</p>	
<p>Progress achieved and challenges faced</p>	
<p>This year, global education and development awareness activity in the education sector has focused on training and supporting education Returned Volunteers and other supporters to take personal insights and experience of promoting education in the South into the classroom, as a tool for promoting active global citizenship. 115 Action Speakers were trained (linking in with the Global Poverty Project) and delivered interactive, inspiring presentations and lessons in primary and secondary schools, using creative resources drawing on VSO's extensive educational practice and expertise, to address themes of sustainable development, diversity, peace and conflict, social justice, and the MDGs.</p> <p>The Action Speakers have also extended into the higher education sector, with presentations at Reading University and the Institute of Education, where the focus was on motivating students to support the 1GOAL campaign. This campaign saw VSO mobilise its global network of volunteers, supporters and alumni, in our Federations and offices around the world, with the focus in the UK of providing additional activity resources and workshop training to Returned Volunteers to enable them to engage others in their workplaces and community groups. This year also saw VSO provide increased support to the highly successful Take One Action Film Festival in Scotland, reaching 2,500 people, and establishing a network of 19 Regional Global Educators. This hub of information and support for schools across the UK provides access to education professional networks, global education resources and contact with Development Education Centres, along with advice and guidance on developing North-South school partnerships (linking with the Global School Partnerships programme) and global citizenship curriculum inspiration and ideas.</p> <p>Challenges The development education in schools market is a competitive and highly saturated one, with many international development agencies providing a wide range of development education and global citizenship opportunities. Effective tracking, and robust monitoring and evaluation of development awareness / global citizenship activities in schools is challenging due teachers' limited time, motivation and capacity to report on activities.</p>	

List any documentary evidence of achievements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary children taking their education into their hands: A Global School Partnership Case Study • Awareness to Action: Higher Food Yields and Zero Waste • Teacher's Got Talent DVD • Teacher's Got Talent 11/12: Global Champion Awards • 6 Ways to Change the World teaching resource/presentation.
Indicator 4.2
10,000 people, through project or partner working, learn more about development Year 3 Target: 2,500 Achieved: 9,000 Total PPA Target: 10,000 Achieved: 33,000
<i>Analysis of progress achieved and challenges faced</i>
<p>VSO's commitment to working in partnership at all levels is demonstrated through its portfolio of Consortium-delivered UK programmes and its network of community, youth and Diaspora partners, supporter groups, Returned Volunteers and other supporters who are committed to advocating for development, through a wide range of campaign and social action projects. This network provides access into urban and rural geographical areas across the UK, and into diverse communities and interest groups, from Diaspora, youth and faith-based groups to universities and grassroots community organisations. VSO provides direct capacity-building support, mentoring, training, learning resources and materials (both hard copy and online) and small grants, to empower and equip partners and project groups to effectively engage, educate and mobilise their own local communities. A particular strength of this approach is the ability of partners to access and engage with particular sectors and groups in ways that VSO is less able to (for example, Diaspora partners' ability to engage their own Diaspora communities at a personal, local and grassroots level).</p> <p>Challenges With the creation in 2010 of a new UK Programmes department, all VSO's UK-based programmes have been brought into one portfolio, to maximise best practice, learning across programmes and activity, resource and networks. This portfolio includes Global Xchange and International Citizens Service, Diaspora Volunteering Programme, Global School Partnerships, Global Community Links and Commonwealth Professional Fellowships.</p>
List any documentary evidence of achievements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diaspora Partners creating platforms for collective action in Scotland: A Case Study • Community links redressing Gender Inequality: A Case Study • A Call to Action: Challenging HIV and AIDS Stigma and Discrimination • Kashmir is not 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind' in the Waltham Forest Community
Indicator 4.3
20,000 people become more development aware Year 3 Target: 8000 Achieved: 80,000 Total PPA Target: 20,000 Achieved: 277,000
<i>Progress achieved and challenges faced</i>
<p><i>This indicator focuses on the breadth of activity to increase awareness of development and VSO's work at a more general, 'lighter touch' level – often the first step in becoming an engaged VSO supporter or active advocate for development (e.g. through volunteering). This target gives an indication of VSO's ability to inform and inspire a wide audience, reaching a cross-section of society through its networks and range of communications channels. It includes those who have had direct and personal involvement with Global Xchange volunteers, such as host homes, volunteer placement colleagues and other community contacts involved in the exchange; recipients of Life Changes magazine and other online newsletters; and visitors to the Act Now section of the VSO website that provides a range of engagement opportunities for Returned Volunteers and UK supporters. Visitors to the Act Now pages increased by 107% this year, in response to highly improved natural and paid search activity, and increased social media presence, particularly on Facebook and Twitter, which has effectively driven traffic to the relevant information for getting involved.</i></p>
List any documentary evidence of achievements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Papua New Guinea to Morecambe Bay • http://www.volunteerlinking.org.uk/ashtin • http://www.volunteerlinking.org.uk/rebecca
Indicator 4.4

2,000 VSO supporters take action to raise development awareness Year 3 Target: 800 Achieved: 8,900 Total PPA Target: 2,000 Achieved: 84,000	
Analysis of progress achieved and challenges faced	
<p>Who does this 8,900 represent? VSO returning volunteers and supporters who have undertaken an action that engages others with a development issue. Campaigners, action speakers, supporter group members, Youth for Development, Global Exchange and Parliamentarian advocates are included.</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of VSO's 'Make your Mark' General Election campaign, VSO supporters and Diaspora partners held seven 'community debates' around the UK, involving 28 Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPCs) in international development-focused hustings. 488 members of the public attended these events. In addition, 290 individuals contacted PPCs in 239 constituencies to stress the importance of the commitment to spend 0.7% of Gross National Income on aid. 72 of those PPCs were elected to parliament for the first time in the 2010 General Election. Supporters from all over the UK came to VSO's Godmothers campaign (see section F below) 'mass lobby of Parliament', to meet their MPs and lobby for strong support for the new UN Women agency. More than 30 MPs met with their constituents through this activity. As a result of strong political support generated through the Godmothers campaign, VSO secured a Backbench Committee debate on UN Women in March 2011. This year, VSO UK recruited and supported 13 Parliamentarians for advocacy-focused placements in 12 countries. Parliamentarian Volunteers contributed to programme work by raising partners' existing advocacy issues with local decision-makers. These placements assisted the ratification of an Act of Parliament (Mozambique), the harmonisation of a Bill (Nigeria) and an agreement by a Health Select Committee to advocate to the Government for the implementation of the partners' policies (The Philippines). Returned Parliamentarian Volunteers continued to raise awareness about the development issues they encountered on their VSO placements through writing articles for MP publications including <i>Total Politics</i>, <i>Epolitix</i>, and the <i>House</i> magazine. They also highlighted their experiences through Parliamentary debates (e.g. Backbench Business Committee debate on UN Women) and questions to the Secretary of State and Prime Minister. <p>Challenges A large number of charities, both development and non-development, had similar 'asks' and actions over the general election period which, anecdotally, may have reduced the number of people willing to take action specifically on development issues. Throughout the year, multiple requests to supporters who have other relationships with VSO (e.g. as donors and/or Returned Volunteers), or the delay of mailings to avoid over-saturation of supporters, may have hampered the uptake of some development awareness activities. In future, VSO will work towards having a clearer and more co-ordinated approach to customer journeys.</p>	
List any documentary evidence of achievements	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make Your Mark campaign evaluation 2. Godmothers campaign video 3. 1Goal Education for All campaign evaluation 4. PolVol evaluation 2010 5. Copies of VSO internal Parliamentary & Government bulletins 	
What is the likelihood that strategic objective 4 will be achieved? Rate 1 to 5.	1

Part C – Lessons Learned

What lessons are being learned from this PPA?
<p>1. Knowledge generation and 2. Dissemination A central theme of VSO's distinctive approach to development is to bring people together to share knowledge that has a practical application for poor people. The PPA gives VSO the flexibility to prioritise this work, responding to changing needs with research that involves stakeholders and can be acted upon through recommendations to government and donors, and dissemination events at national and international levels. Examples from 2010–11 are:</p> <p><i>National</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VSO Ghana and the Ghana Education Service collaborated to share experience through a national seminar, 'Making a Success of School Gender Clubs'; Mongolia, VSO shared its findings on the impact of International Volunteers in Education at national level Mozambique, research carried out with teachers themselves generated recommendations for the training of

unqualified teachers that have been incorporated into the government education strategy and have donor support for their implementation. The aim of the further training is to improve education results for poor children. (For details, see http://www.vsointernational.org/Images/teachers-talking_tcm76-30259.pdf) Gambian and Mozambique staff and partners (Civil Society Coalition and Teaching Union) went on to present the same findings at the Nairobi International Conference on Teachers for EFA (Education for All) and this work on contract and unqualified teachers was included in the communiqué: [Qualifying for Quality](#),

- In the UK, 100 people, including representatives of the Department of Health, DFID, professional health colleges and NGOs attended a joint VSO/AMREF event to share learning on 'The Human Resources in Health Crisis'. This was followed up by an article in *The Guardian*, on VSO and the health crisis in Sierra Leone, to reach key sections of the UK public. VSO research reports on the human resource crisis in health in Uganda and Malawi have been shared at national level and with the parliamentary committee for health in Malawi.

International

- VSO staff, volunteers and partners attended the WHO Second Global Forum on Human Resources for Health in January in Bangkok and presented initial findings from VSO's *Valuing Health Workers* action research from Cambodia, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Uganda and enabled partners to share experience in two side events and five poster presentations.
- VSO published a report consolidating its gender and education work and presented at the 2011 Commission on the Status of Women Conference in New York (For details see: http://www.vsointernational.org/Images/VSO%20gender%20equality%20and%20education%20paper_tcm76-32443.pdf) VSO Cambodia's report on the successes and challenges of more than five years of interventions on Inclusive Education (gender and disability) was presented by Cambodian staff at the 2010 Inclusive Education Conference in Belfast.
- VSO International and Ghana staff facilitated a seminar based on VSO's 'good practice' case studies at the 2010 International Inclusive Education Conference in Salamanca. This was in collaboration with the International Disability and Development Consortium.
- Due to its education sector experience, VSO sits on the steering committee of the International Task Force on 'Teachers for Education for All' – an international alliance of EFA partners working together to address the global teacher gap. It includes ministries of education, development partners, UN agencies and INGOs.
- VSO presented its findings from joint work with Accenture (entitled NGO-Private sector partnerships) on how to increase the opportunities and rights of poor women and men to access markets, at the 2010 CIVICUS World Assembly. (For details, see: <http://www.civicus.org/view/WA/2010/Workshop%206%20-%20Partnership%20NGO%20and%20Private%20Sector.pdf>)

3. VSO's impact VSO's conclusions on impact in the three sectors selected for PPA reporting is that the strategies adopted have worked. Data demonstrates this overall positive conclusion and qualitative reports confirm beneficiary satisfaction with more responsive partner services. In HIV & AIDS work, partner and beneficiary consultations led to a strategy of expanding work in care and support, including income generation activities, as part of broader social protection mechanisms. Partner capacity to deliver services and to advocate has been significantly increased as a result.

In Disability, initial challenges, such as how to work with low-resource DPOs, often dependent on one charismatic founder, have been largely overcome by VSO's strategic support for coherent advocacy and stronger networking for national disability movements. This strategy has been strengthened by national governments' commitment to implement the 2005 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In Education, strategy of strengthening the state system through interventions at different levels has borne fruit with increased quality of management, inclusive teaching and community engagement. VSO's focus on improving quality rather than access has been reinforced by many governments aiming to improve quality after the massive expansion of the education systems in recent years. Through this PPA, VSO has learned that its direct contribution is to partner-level capacity change (e.g. trained staff), and that its indirect contribution is the positive impact on the ultimate beneficiaries – the partners' beneficiaries.

Challenges Data collection over 2008–11 has been intensive for staff and partners but the challenge remains of how to translate this data into a clear demonstration of VSO's Value for Money, looking at inputs, outputs and direct outcomes as well as long-term impact. This is a priority for future learning.

4. Relationships with others for greater impact VSO works on programmes and advocacy with a range of partners. These allies include those receiving PPAs from DFID but relationships are not formed on this basis. The trend is towards European and international linkages that reflect national concerns and programme learning. VSO currently relates to:

- other NGOs, e.g. Oxfam, Help Age International
- the private sector, e.g. Cadbury, Accenture, the Netherlands-based Ramstad Group
- international institutions, e.g. UN volunteering (UNV), Directorate General for Humanitarian work in the European Commission, (DG ECHO) UN Women, WHO, UNAIDS, UNESCO, the WHO hosted Global Health Workforce Alliance (GHWA), the Health Workers Advocacy Initiative (HWAI) and Action for Global Health

- the UK sector, specifically, the BOND Effectiveness Programme to improve the quality of the work of all UK development agencies, the Gender and Development Network to lobby for gender prioritisation, the Centre for European Volunteering network (CEV), the Global Campaign on Education and the UK AIDS Consortium.

Specifically describe innovative learning, e.g. specific knowledge generation about new issues encountered or discovery of new means of solving specific problems

Investment for local innovators: One specific problem for poor people is the lack of start-up funding for their own innovative ideas for social enterprise. The PPA grant has enabled VSO to become an investing co-founder of FUCHSIA, an initiative designed to address this issue in an imaginative way. FUSCHIA is now scoping out its potential but in the future, co-founders will jointly manage a shared investment fund that is distributed to local NGOs and business in order to experiment with new ideas for social enterprise – whether selling low-cost mosquito nets or urban income generation. As it grows, the co-founders will be both NGOs and businesses, coming together to design solutions to poverty. The co-management of the fund is a vehicle for investors themselves to share learning, and apply it.

Ensuring quality of volunteers: VSO establishes quality standards for volunteering in development and the PPA has enabled this to happen. Its international volunteers must be qualified professionals with the soft skills and personal qualities that enable them to coach and accompany colleagues effectively, sharing their external perspective but not simply ‘handing out’ technical skills. In 2010–11, VSO has expanded to recruit volunteers from Sri Lanka and Indonesia, and innovative approaches to developing criteria for assessment and methods of training that can cross cultures have again been vital. Building on recruitment experience across cultures in the Netherlands, Canada, Kenya, UK, Ireland, the Philippines and India, staff from India and the Philippines have worked with local staff to ensure the methodology in use is culturally appropriate and allows VSO to select volunteers who have the same well-developed interpersonal skills as those from other recruitment bases. Assessment is conducted by local VSO staff, and staff from partner organisations who receive training on good assessment methodology, which they can adapt to the needs of their own organisations.

Part D – Partnership with DFID

Partnership with DFID

Financial Over the life of the grant 2008–11, the proportion of VSO’s UK funding received from DFID through its PPA has reduced from 58% to 52%. Over the same period earmarked funding awarded in country has increased from £2,205m to £3,518m, demonstrating VSO’s capacity to implement grass roots programmes that are distinct from DFID bilateral high-level support, but which add value to DFID’s impact for poor people.

Policy In 2010–11, there has been a number of areas where DFID policy priorities and VSO’s policy priorities, rooted in volunteer and partner experience, have aligned and where working together has worked well. DFID champions the mainstreaming of disability into development programmes, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. VSO is one of the largest UK-based agencies that works on disability in the same way (e.g. ensuring children with disabilities are taken into account in its education programmes). VSO has found it very useful to participate in the formal meetings organised by DFID for country offices and partners to share work and good practice and would like to see these continue. Other key areas where even closer collaboration would be welcome are:

- **HIV Care and Support** Together with WHO, VSO has worked with its partners in Southern Africa to develop a Care and Support Policy Handbook for this neglected area, lobbying at national, regional and international level for commitments to social protection and others forms of support for carers, 80% of whom are women and girls. The inclusion of care and support in DFID’s HIV strategy, and DFID’s commitments to women and girls at international HIV fora (such as the June UN high level summit) demonstrate common thinking in this area.
- **Education** There have always been a number of countries in which DFID and VSO have shared common concerns in education. In the last year VSO has been working in Mozambique on the problem of unqualified teachers, and DFID has shared the concern to train these teachers. There are plans to publish the VSO research in Portuguese for communication purposes.
- **Gender** In the last two years, VSO has been mobilising its UK supporters to campaign for the establishment of a well-funded, authoritative UN agency for women, knowing from experience that gender inequality is one of the main causes of poverty. DFID has been the most influential bilateral donor in ensuring that the new agency is founded, and VSO was pleased to co-host the UK visit of the new leader of the UN Agency in 2011. VSO has also given evidence from its gender programmes to the All-parliamentary Group on Debt, Aid and Trade.
- **Approaches to development** VSO has submitted evidence to the Bilateral Aid Review, the review of the India programme by the International Development Committee, and to the consultations on maternal health, malaria and the Independent Commission for Aid Impact.

- Direct links are particularly effective and VSO regularly attends the monthly NGO meeting with special advisers, and works with the UN and Commonwealth Department on issues around the new UN Women's Agency.

DFID – VSO programming relationships with VSO Following the Bilateral Aid Review, VSO and DFID share a geographic focus in 20, rather than 25, countries in Africa and Asia. This includes South Sudan where VSO is planning to start work with DFID support in 2011. This new programme represents an overall reallocation of resources by VSO from Middle Income to Low Income fragile states. VSO would also like to engage more closely with DFID country offices on both policy and programmes, making best use of the VSO presence at decentralised levels of government to which DFID has less access. However the current relationships are good. Out of the 20 countries, 13 have regular meetings with DFID staff, including eight who meet with the Head of Office. DFID offices offer local and international NGOs opportunities to meet them (e.g. regular quarterly meetings for NGOs) for consultations on strategy, and they also attend NGO learning fora. VSO participates in these shared events and welcomes them; as well as working on some key areas (e.g. with Ghana office on disability monitoring, with Rwanda office on the EFA fast track initiative). VSO has involved DFID in its new strategy planning processes in Bangladesh and will invite DFID participation in all programmes in the coming year.

Civil Society team VSO appreciates the professionalism of the team in East Kilbride. Information is timely and staff are accessible. The grant relationship works well because information is freely shared, there is mutual respect in a robust partnership where requirements are made clear.

Part E – Corporate Governance and Organisational Change

Provide evidence of how your organisation demonstrates good corporate governance, whether this has changed as a result of the PPA, and if so how.

Over three years, VSO has been continuously reviewing its governance to ensure upwards and downwards accountability, and ensure decision-making structures support innovation, factor in risk, and ensure resources are allocated to the maximum effect. The strategic nature of the PPA has also enabled VSO to look at the long-term future of the organisation, and explore what it means to be a Federation, isolating the key elements that will make it as effective and accountable as possible. For VSO, these are balancing the participation of federation members in decision-making with clear accountabilities, especially in the areas of resources and legal compliance. VSO wants to establish more Federation members from the range of low, middle and higher income recruitment and funding bases. As well as adding new strengths, this will make VSO more credible as an international organisation.

Currently, the governance arrangements are as follows, and they are the basis for sustaining Federation development:

The International Board of Trustees is the governing body of VSO, the UK-registered charity. It comprises representatives of each of the federation members and skilled professionals, all with expertise in international development. It has an established sub-committee structure (audit and risk, remuneration, nominations and UK committees), two of which – the UK and the Audit and Risk Committee – benefit from the skills of co-opted independent members. Risk management is analysed annually by the International Board and quarterly by the Global Management Team. VSO's approach to its work is informed by that analysis. The International Board is committed to ensuring VSO employs best practice standards of transparency and accountability in its corporate governance (in line with the Good Governance Code for the Voluntary and Community Sector).

In order to sustain a growing federation, the International Board has commissioned a working group to examine VSO governance and recommend improvements. As a result, the board has signed a new federation agreement on 17 May 2011 incorporating the following governance changes:

- A new federation council will be established comprising a representative from each federation member and up to one-third co-opted members.
- The federation council's key responsibilities will include recruiting trustees for the VSO international board and admission of new members of the federation.
- The VSO international board will comprise up to ten trustees appointed on the basis of their skills, experience and perspective. Those trustees will no longer be able simultaneously to serve on a federation member board.

At the same meeting, VSO also signed a (non-binding) letter of intent whereby it will enter into a strategic alliance with CUSO-VSO in place of CUSO-VSO's membership of the federation. Under this alliance, each will run programmes separately from the other (CUSO-VSO in Latin America and the Caribbean, and VSO in Africa, Asia and the Pacific) and each will treat the other as a primary partner, providing funding for one another's programmes as they wish. Work is in progress to fully implement these inter-connected changes, which are expected to come into effect during 2011–12.

Please provide any evidence to show how PPA funding allows you to take risks and innovate (if at all)

The non-earmarked nature of the PPA funding has enabled VSO to embark on an ambitious transformation agenda that supports its new international strategy, *People First*. Change is vital for relevance and to ensure that results bring added value. Although not without risk, VSO is actively managing these through strengthening internal capacity, bringing new skills into the organisation, using experienced trustees and bringing in corporate partners with private sector perspectives to offset risks. Specifically, the VSO Global Leadership Team (GLT) has initiated strategic change programmes to examine ways to maximise impact, grow global income and develop internal operational efficiencies. VSO views operational changes as an opportunity for innovation in staff development, and to make learning feed into management decision-making. The GLT has established a Wider Leadership Team to engage key staff in strategy implementation, and is actively responding to the results of federation-wide volunteer and staff surveys to ensure it is meeting expectations and addressing concerns. A keystone accountability survey of a sample of VSO partner organisations that enables benchmarking within the NGO sector is also underway.

Part F – Cross-cutting issues

Gender – With the prioritisation of gender as a cross-cutting issue in VSO’s new strategy, *People First*, a gender strategy is being developed that will guide the whole organisation in mainstreaming a gender-sensitive approach in programmes, systems and policies. However, the past three years has seen considerable progress on gender.

- Programme and advocacy work that addresses barriers facing women and girls, and men made vulnerable by rigid gender norms is strongest in VSO’s Inclusive Education and HIV & AIDS programmes. Learning confirms that VSO’s distinctive approach of promoting the involvement of men and boys in development is successful.
- The gender disaggregation of data for the PPA Performance Framework and the use of a self-assessment inclusion scale with partners, raised the quality of reporting on gender.
- The past year has seen more promotion of women’s political participation from VSO’s partners, which directly addresses women’s rights (including women with disabilities). This is in addition to work on basic services. Some examples are:
 - VSO Bangladesh: supports research into women’s participation in Chittagong Hill Tract governance structures, and supporting partner to promote greater women’s participation in local government and traditional governance. This local NGO partner has worked with Citizens Committees and boosted indigenous communities’ representation.
 - VSO India works with indigenous Adivasi women to become more involved in traditional governance and formal local government.
 - VSO Ghana works with Centre for Indigenous Knowledge On Development (CIKOD) to research and advocate for more women’s participation in Traditional Governance structures in the North and West regions of Ghana. The partner was supported by VSO to carry out and write up research to gather evidence to support CIKOD’s advocacy for the benefits of greater women’s involvement and leadership in a traditional setting. VSO Ghana also works with two partners to encourage and support more women to stand for community leadership, local district assembly and MP positions.
 - Jamaica: VSO supported database development in the Gender Affairs Bureau of national government to support better data analysis and planning.
 - VSO Zambia works with the national women’s lobby to support more women to become candidates at local and national elections. It has a major partnership with Caritas working to increase women’s participation in governance structures from local community level up.
 - VSO Cameroon supports women’s leadership development in local councils and community organisations (e.g. the training support for the North West Association for Female Mayors).
 - VSO Uganda works with Ugandan Media Women’s Association - reaching rural women and linking them to local government and agricultural extension outreach to support security of income and livelihood.

VSO UK has also led an advocacy campaign mobilising thousands of supporters and broad cross-party political support behind the establishment and funding of UN Women. In doing this, VSO has worked closely with the global GEAR campaign, as well as UK NGOs, through its chairing of the Gender & Development Network working group on UN Women. Activities have included presenting new research at the 2011 Commission on the Status of Women outlining what grassroots women’s organisations want UN Women to prioritise, organising a mass lobby of Parliament, and co-hosting the UK visit of the new Executive Director of UN Women, Michelle Bachelet.

Future With greater coherence provided by the gender strategy, VSO expects to benefit from a more systematic approach to gender. The basis for practical action to make this happen has already been laid:

- Learning from the past three years on the value of gender disaggregation as perhaps the single most effective way to prioritise gender, the new baseline for *People First* (and the strategic grant from DFID) data is gender disaggregated. There is also a specific indicator to monitor success in gender integration into the work of partner organisations that are supported by a volunteer.
- The country-level strategic planning process underway in all VSO programmes includes analysis of gender equity and equality as success criteria for all programme plans.

Faith VSO continues to work with large numbers of faith-based organisations as local partners, particularly in the area of care and support for people affected by HIV & AIDS in East and Southern Africa where the Christian church undertakes much of this work. However, VSO has an inclusive approach to faith-based NGOs rather than selecting partners on this basis or analysing impact in relation to faith.

Part G – Additional Information (Not mandatory)

This is an opportunity for you to highlight other strategic pieces of work or achievements through the PPA that you have been unable to bring out already. This section is not mandatory

VSO has developed its approach to National Volunteering and in 2010–11, worked with nearly 300 partners in 34 countries to support and promote local volunteering initiatives, helping strengthen the work of around 250,000 National Volunteers. Over the life of the PPA, VSO has shared its 50 years of expertise and experience in the recruitment, assessment, training, support and strategic placement of volunteers, enabling them to make their unique contribution to development. In addition to making best use of its experience in international volunteering in this way, VSO has been able to share its youth volunteering experience with local organisations, primarily from its Global Exchange programme where groups of young people from both low and high-income countries work in each other's communities. This is VSO's contribution to quality standards in volunteering for development in a range of contexts:

- Through placing international volunteers with skills in volunteer management, advocacy and monitoring in training positions with local organisations, who themselves work through volunteers.
- Through VSO staff's direct support and sharing of experience with these local partners (e.g. small grants, exchanges, offering short training courses, etc).
- Through volunteer programme development and management courses in Kenya and the Philippines that enabled 46 VSO partners and staff from across the world to share knowledge and plan for stronger volunteering programmes. The courses have resulted in the implementation of organisational volunteer policies that improve recruitment and retention of local volunteers, as well as increasing participants' confidence to take part in advocacy initiatives around volunteerism.
- Through support for more advantaged citizens who want to volunteer in Middle Income Countries (e.g. India) whether through practical action to help the disadvantaged or through campaigning.
- Through supporting its National Volunteering partners and networks to advocate for volunteering rights so that there is a favourable environment for volunteering that empowers people to volunteer, but does not substitute volunteer contributions for services to which the state is accountable. This work is at different stages but the most successful example to date is in Mozambique where VSO played a key role in bringing together representatives from government and civil society to draft Mozambique's National Volunteering Bill, which was ratified by parliament in December 2010. Its measures support local volunteers by defining their rights and recognising their contribution. This is particularly beneficial to service delivery volunteers, such as home-based carers, most of whom are women.

This approach is described in VSO's new strategy, *People First*, as inspiring individuals to work for change, and to have a voice, themselves learning from the experience. The value of volunteering for personal development is something that VSO will not lose as it focuses on development impact, and this has been part of its approach to the UK International Citizen Service pilot for young people that began this year.

There are many exciting stories of change in the National Volunteering publications at:

- http://www.vsointernational.org/Images/National%20volunteering%20%E2%80%93%20country%20case%20studies_tcm76-32438.pdf
- http://www.vsointernational.org/Images/National%20volunteering%20%E2%80%93%20introduction_tcm76-32437.pdf

For example, VSO Bangladesh supported 36 citizens' committees with more than 600 members. The committees have a real impact at grass-roots level, with evidence of improved access to services, participation in social and political processes, and action to address issues such as safe water, health, education, environment and community safety.

Finally, VSO is also committed to partnering with other influential volunteering and development bodies and has made

a commitment to the Africa Union Youth Volunteering Corps. It is currently in the process of partnering more formally with UN Volunteers (UNV) and Peace Corps. In November this year, VSO will be hosting the world conference for international volunteering organisations in Nairobi – the IVCO FORUM.