

SPREADING AWARENESS OF THE SDGS

Sharing your volunteer story and showing the powerful impact volunteering for development can have also emphasises the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These Goals were set by the UN in 2015 and will guide global development until 2030. Here are the main things you need to know about the SDGs:

- There are 17 Goals which cover everything from gender equality and environmental sustainability to hunger and quality education. The most relevant Goals to VSO's work are the following:
 - Goal 1: No Poverty
 - Goal 3: Good Health
 - Goal 4: Quality Education
 - Goal 5: Gender Equality
 - Goal 8: Good Jobs and Economic Growth
 - Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities
- The Goals call on all countries to take action and responsibility for their role in fighting inequality and poverty around the world. The Goals are not legally binding, but every country is expected to report to the UN on their progress in achieving the Goals.
- The Goals recognise that we need to tackle climate change if we are to achieve sustainable development.
- The Goals also demonstrate how local action is critical for global development. Individuals in all countries, both in the Global North and South, have their role to play in fighting poverty and inequality.
- The Goals are committed to "leaving no one behind" by adopting an equality-focused and rights-based approach at all levels.
- The Goals are universal – they apply equally to all countries, North and South. So the Irish government will be implementing the Goals and reporting to the UN on their progress.
- VSO worked hard to ensure the Goals recognise the unique role volunteers can play in achieving sustainable development. Volunteering brings people together, allowing them to participate in their own growth and reach out to other people, including those in marginalised communities.

SO HOW CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE SDGS?

As a VSO volunteer, you embody the spirit of the Goals every day as you share skills with local counterparts and work towards creating a fairer, more equal world. Sharing your volunteer story with local media or online goes one step further – it documents the power volunteering can have and encourages others to follow in your footsteps. When writing about or discussing your experiences with VSO, it's helpful to consider the following:

- Which of the 17 Goals are most relevant to the work you did on placement
- The aspects of your placement that involved skills exchange
- The ways in which spaces were created on your placement for marginalised people to contribute to their own development
- How your volunteer placement contributed to "leaving no one behind"
- How gender equality and climate change were considered on the programme you worked on



If you have any questions about the Sustainable Development Goals, please contact Annette O'Sullivan, VSO Ireland's Marketing and Communications Manager, on annette.osullivan@vso.ie.

You can also find out more about the SDGs by visiting www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals.