

# Disability

## BACKGROUND

The interest in disability and inclusive development triggered by the ratification process of the Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities has continued. DFID has organised a series of consultations and expressed the commitment to monitor the percentage of PPA<sup>1</sup> budget spent to include disabled people.

Internally VSO has gone through a process of strategic review. One of the outcomes of the new strategy is an increased focus on social inclusion and on marginalised groups.

Six disability programmes conducted an evaluation against a baseline set in 2008 including 27 focus group discussions with 169 disabled men and 161 disabled women. Focus group discussions were conducted with disabled people who have been members of VSO partners since before 2008 and with new members that have been reached after 2008.



## PROGRESS TOWARDS CORPORATE PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

In eight low-income countries, Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs), networks and national federations improve their capacity to represent their member organisations, and to advocate for equal rights for all their disabled members, especially disabled women.

### 1) Disabled People Organisations increase their capacity to reach more disabled people, increase their awareness and access to their rights.

Good progress registered in this area. Between 2009 and 2010 75 Disabled People organisations in 11 countries have increased their capacity to reach more disabled people and to increase their awareness and access to their rights as a result of VSO's support.

Success has been reported in increasing the capacity of DPOs in the following three areas<sup>2</sup>:

- Being representative and inclusive of disabled people in rural areas and of disabled women;
- Good governance, leadership and transparency;
- Services and benefit provision (either as direct service provision or as referral or information)

All organisations have been supported by long term Organisational Development Volunteers (often shared amongst different organisations) that coached staff and boards of the organisations in strengthening their systems and mobilising resources. In all programmes the impact of these volunteers placements has been strengthened by the more specific inputs of short terms volunteers bringing in specific skills on advocacy, community mobilisations, research, adaptive technology and human rights.

<sup>1</sup> PPA: Partnership Programme Agreement.

<sup>2</sup> These areas have been indicated as priorities by disabled people during focus group discussion in 2008 and represent the focus of our support to DPOs.

VSO strengthened the capacity of organisations to network and engage with each other, at district, national and international level supporting exchange visits, study tours, by facilitating the creation of national forums and by encouraging partners in sharing the resources and knowledge brought in by international volunteers.

In the six countries that conducted in depth evaluation for DFID<sup>3</sup> 37 DPOs moved from score 2 (some progress) in 2008, to 3 (good progress) and 4 (excellent progress) in 2010. These 37 DPOs increased their membership and became more inclusive by extending their reach to rural areas and to more disabled women. The total membership of 18 DPOs in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, The Gambia and Nepal more than tripled in a two year period, moving from 36,811 in 2008 to a total of 135,863 people in 2010.

In Kenya and Rwanda, VSO volunteers supported the establishment of new National Councils of disabled persons contributing to a huge nationwide increase in registration and membership of disabled people.

In The Gambia, five DPOs have been supported by VSO volunteers to open two rural branches.

In Uganda, VSO volunteers supported district level DPOs in targeting their awareness raising towards women with disability, thus increasing the women membership in their organisations and in working in a more concerted way with other organisations. VSO volunteers also supported district DPOs in producing situation analysis with people with disabilities and develop strategic plans. As a result they have been invited to represent disability issues in District Local Government budget meetings.

In Rwanda, VSO volunteers supported the Umbrella for People with disabilities UPHLS<sup>4</sup> to work with health centres resulting in more than 8,000 disabled people accessing HIV and AIDS testing and counselling services.

In Nepal, VSO supported all disabled people's organisations to engage in the development of the new constitution through a shadow constitutional assembly. This resulted in the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. VSO volunteers also supported Disabled Human Right Center (DHRC) to perform theatre for development, hence allowing 9,000 disabled people to have a say about the new constitution and the disability law.

VSO also helped the Nepal Association of Disabled Women extend their reach to ten districts from two. The association has also been able to access maternal health services for the first time as a result of the increased capacity of their organisation.

In the Gambia and Rwanda the increase membership in deaf associations that resulted from VSO support has allowed an increased access to sign language classes and opportunities to communicate.

Success has been reported in the remaining five programmes. In India, VSO supported the creation of two new state level networks of disabled people in Orissa and West Bengal. In Vietnam, VSO is successfully supporting the two national DPOs.

## **2) Co-ordinated Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) strategies that respond to the voice of disabled people, especially women, are established.**

Good progress has been recorded in strengthening 45 organisations delivering CBR services for disabled people in seven countries. Success has been achieved where the strategy has

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<sup>3</sup> Guyana, The Gambia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Nepal

<sup>4</sup> The Umbrella of People with Disabilities in the Fight against HIV and AIDS

been focusing on strengthening links amongst institutions and service providers and community groups.

In Uganda and Ghana, VSO programmes supported District Local Governments in strengthening service provision for disabled people. In Uganda, Community Based Rehabilitation has helped bringing disability in the District Local Governments agenda. VSO volunteers supported local government office, district education offices and DPOs to maximise the services available to disabled children and adults in the community. As a result 30 DPOs leaders trained in disability centred planning and 70 disability sector plans have been submitted to be included in DLG<sup>5</sup> plans.

In Guyana, strong linkages between maternal and child health department and CBR helped increasing the number of patients seen and referred. In India, VSO strengthened the creation of the Orissa CBR forum.

### **3) Disabled people are included as volunteers and staff within VSO, engaging with partners and volunteers on mainstreaming disability, and improving the quality of programme work in all goals.**

During 2009-2010 we placed a total of 14 volunteers with reported disabilities. They were placed in Cambodia, Cameroon, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Kenya, Malawi, Nepal, Rwanda and Uganda. The volunteers were recruited primarily by VSO UK (eight) and VSO Jitolee (five). A minimal amount of money was requested to cover adjustment costs.

Efforts and achievements in promoting and supporting the inclusion of disabled people in the services offered by our partners across all goals have increased dramatically. All 17 education programme area reviews reported either increased access to education for disabled children or plans to start or continue working towards this.

Livelihood programme area reviews demonstrated an increased interest in promoting the inclusion of disabled people in the services offered by partners.

### **OTHER SIGNIFICANT WORK IN THE GOAL**

Three Global Xchange programmes were organised within the period with a focus on social inclusion for disabled people. The first all Deaf exchange has been successfully implemented between Preston (UK) and Nepal.

Africa Stone Foundation, one of the Diaspora partners, supported projects in Cameroon to improve livelihood opportunities for disabled women.

### **RECRUITMENT**

We placed a total of 77 long-term volunteers (including three YfD<sup>6</sup>) and 26 short-term volunteers this year. This means that our short-term target was met and that we stayed slightly behind on our long term target of 89. The shortfall is partly caused by problems on the demand side, such as the situation with Indonesia's MoU<sup>7</sup>, internal problems with VSO Sri Lanka's disability programme, and partly by the lack of supply for certain specialized skills, such as speech & language therapists, audiologists and special needs teachers.

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<sup>5</sup> District Local Governments

<sup>6</sup> Youth for Development

<sup>7</sup> Memorandum of Understanding

With the merging of Papua New Guinea disability PAP<sup>8</sup> and the change in focus in Sri Lanka, we have seen a significant drop in the demand for physiotherapists. As a result of the DFID funded programme in Kenya, we saw a significant increase of demand for speech & language therapists.

## **FUNDING**

Two applications were submitted with a specific focus on disability for a total ask of £679,549. One has been rejected.

## **LEARNING FOR FUTURE DIRECTION**

- DPOs, and especially district or regional DPOs have realised the positive impact that working collaboratively can have on their capacity to reach more members and advocate more effectively. Because of the network of partners that VSO supports, programme offices have been able to support DPOs in accessing a wider range of resources. Where we had volunteers working in local authorities DPOs have been able to participate in local development committees and influence local authorities inclusive practices. Where we had VSO volunteers working as inclusive education advisers, they have been able to facilitate the role of parents organisations in providing relevant information to members.
- Increasing number of national volunteering initiatives and programmes have started realising the importance of including disabled people as well as the potential for inclusion that their programmes offer.
- In The Gambia, Guyana and Nepal, VSO has established a Programme or Project Advisory Board where national DPOs are represented. DPOs have reported that being part of these boards has strengthened their networking and their organisational confidence.
- VSO programme offices supported a number of DPOs with study tours, visits and exchanges. DPOs reported on the importance and relevance of these learning visits – both at national and district level. DPOs reported that these visits improved organisations self-esteem, knowledge and ambitions.
- As part of supporting DPOs to become more inclusive, VSO encourages them in becoming more inclusive of disabled women and starting disaggregating numbers and data by gender. The disability movement is still in most countries highly unequal and women tend to be under represented in both governance bodies and general membership. On the other hand women are over- represented in organisations of partners of disabled children, which really tend to be merely organisations of mothers of disabled children.

## **FUTURE DIRECTION**

- Establishment of and inclusive livelihood grant fund for CPPA<sup>9</sup> funded programmes
- Strengthen the potential of national volunteering programmes for promoting opportunities for disabled people to become active citizens.
- Continue supporting the inclusion of disabled people in health, livelihood, HIV and AIDS, participation and governance and education programmes.

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<sup>8</sup> Programme Area Planning

<sup>9</sup> Canadian Programme Partnership Agreement

## KEY STATISTICAL INFORMATION 2009-10

Goal Area	No of Programmes	Volunteers (%) <sup>10</sup>	Partners <sup>11</sup>	Total Expenditure (£m)	Unrestricted Expenditure (£m)	Restricted Expenditure (£m)
Education	17	26.2	352	11.358	7.773	3.585
HIV and AIDS	17	16.3	198	8.420	5.035	3.385
<b>Disability</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>4.084</b>	<b>2.662</b>	<b>1.422</b>
Health	9	13.1	142	5.136	3.649	1.487
Secure Livelihoods	21	19.8	268	8.368	5.418	2.950
Participation & Governance	16	15	191	7.240	4.841	2.399

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<sup>10</sup> In total about 1,520 volunteers were working with partner organisations on long-term or short-term placements at any point during the year. The percentage for each goal only measures volunteers assigned to a particular goal. It does not capture volunteers who support work in more than one goal eg volunteers working in HIV and AIDS who also support health work.

<sup>11</sup> This is an estimate to reflect the number of work during the course of the year