

Programme Area Summary

Country: Nepal

Programme Area: Participation and Governance, 2006-2010

What is the aim of the programme area?

VSO Nepal Governance programme's main aim is to "Enable disadvantaged people to assert and protect their rights through building a movement to demand and promote good governance in Nepal."

Why is VSO working in that particular Programme Area and region?

People with disabilities, Dalits and women are the most disadvantaged groups of people in Nepali society. Issues like inclusion, non-discrimination, development, empowerment, integration, opportunities and access for these groups are not well addressed and they are deprived of personal, social, political and economical rights, ultimately having a very low status. We strongly believe that if governance and capacities of civil society organisations are improved, they can enable and empower people to claim their entitled rights for their improved living.

Key beneficiaries and partners

VSO Nepal Governance program is working with 17 partners in six district of Nepal. We are only working with those organisations who are working for the right of Dalits, people with disability and women.

Key objectives of the programme and the cross-cutting themes

- Enable partners to practice and advocate good governance principals to be reflected in civil society and in government policy and practice.
- Empower women, Dalit and people with disability to protect and advocate their rights.
- Promote unity and collaboration amongst civil society organisations in order to promote the rights of women, Dalit and people with disability.

All of VSON's three programme areas (namely Education, HIV & AIDS and Governance) are directly linked with each other because of similar target group and shared working approaches. Thereby, these programme area themes are cross-cutting themes to each other. All programme areas have envisioned non-discrimination and inclusion of Dalit, people with disability, women and people affected by HIV & AIDS.

Current programme activities

Focus of International Volunteer Placements

- International Volunteer placement for two years in each partner organization – on the job training, coaching and mentoring to partners (Capacity building of partner organization through volunteer placement)

Workshops, training & conferences

- Dalit and Disability stakeholder forums meeting
- Promotion of Good Governance -Theme based activities including workshops on Accountability
- Human Right workshop
- Workshop on Networking
- Annual partners training and sharing forum

Support to national volunteering

- VSO Nepal is on the process of national volunteering. From April 07, one of Governance volunteer is starting to coordinate national volunteering.

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Partner exchange visits/study tours:

- Within Nepal: Opportunities to exchange learning and best practice between project partners will be facilitated through exchange visits. This will provide partners with opportunities for effective networking; encouraging co-ordination and collaboration where common issues are identified.
- Within South/South-East Asia: Exchange visits for project partner representatives and project staff to organisations outside of Nepal, will also be facilitated where the potential to learn and exchange best practice is identified.

Providing grants and/or equipment for partners e.g. small grants fund:

- A Small Grant Scheme will be provided to support the implementation of the Organisational Development Plan of partner organisations. They will come with innovative and submit small concept paper.

Development of publications or other materials for training or communication:

- Produce and publish training materials and also advocacy material.

Other partnership activities:

- Annual Joint plan development.
- Annual partnership review based on joint plan.

What makes VSO's work in this programme area special?

Because of the distinct nature of volunteerism and the fact that VSO is not seen as a donor organization, we are very well placed to help bring organisations together. Given that division within civil society is a serious issue, we believe that VSON is also well placed to support the creation of alliances and to support networks based on a common agenda of our partner organisations. This will help organisations to better advocate for the right of the people that they represent.

This sustained presence and the commitment of VSON to develop 5 year partnerships will create the appropriate conditions and the necessary trust required to raise awareness about and promote good governance practices within partner organisations. Moreover, the neutrality of volunteers allow them to support and facilitate sensitive aspects of organisational change and to ask key questions that often cannot be raised by people within the organisations. Therefore our conclusion is that there is a specific niche for VSO Nepal to complement other donors and INGO efforts in NGO capacity building while promoting and supporting Good Governance (participation, accountability, transparency and democratisation) at organisational and institutional level.

We believe that VSO Nepal is very well placed to respond to this need of improved governance in Civil society and empower them to demand and promote good governance in the country. One of the key competence and niche for VSO in general is organisational and institutional capacity building. The sustained presence of volunteers within an organisation is definitely the main benefit that VSO can bring in building the capacity of NGOs. The volunteers can play an ongoing coaching role within the organisation, the volunteers can role model good practices, provide ongoing advice and support and they can support the integration of the learning from trainings into day-to-day practices.