

Programme Area Summary

Country: Zambia

Programme Area: HIV & AIDS 2005-2009

What is the aim of the programme area?

To contribute to women, youth and children's realisation of their rights to reproductive health and education, and care and support, in response to the HIV&AIDS pandemic.

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

The impact of the HIV&AIDS pandemic continues to be alarming in Zambia. It is a major contributor of ill-health and death among the young and middle-aged adults depriving Zambia of a critical human resource base. There has been a sharp decline in life expectancy between the 1991 and the 2001 census from 52 to 37 years only, and has had a pervasive impact on all aspects of development and society in Zambia.

Key beneficiaries and partners

Disadvantaged women, youth, and vulnerable children are the key beneficiaries. VSO has more than 31 partners that include Government departments, Zambian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and small community based organisations (CBOs)

Key objectives of the programme and the cross-cutting themes

- Increase women and youth access to appropriate and gender sensitive reproductive and sexual health information and services
- Enhance the capacity of CBOs working with and for people living with HIV&AIDS, to enable individuals to claim their rights
- Enhance the availability of literature in counselling, testing and care
- Strengthen community home-based care programmes in rural areas
- Increase the capacity of community schools and other childcare institutions to improve children's well-being and development

Current programme activities

Focus of International Volunteer Placements

- The HIV & AIDS programme currently has 17 volunteers building capacity in partner organizations to increase access to appropriate information and develop skills in monitoring and evaluation, fundraising, finance and grant management, organizational development, promotion of workplace policies, supporting ART delivery and fundraising. This includes working with home-based care, special needs and community schools NGOs.

Advocacy and Global Education

- The sector is currently working with 3 key advocacy partners that include Network of people living with HIV & AIDS, Treatment Action Literacy Campaign (TALC), and Zambia AIDS Law Research & Advocacy Network (ZARAN).

Other partnership activity

- The programme has gained a lot of experience in mainstreaming and integration work in the Education sector. In its new Country Strategic Plan, VSO Zambia will no longer be working in education in the traditional way of placing volunteers. As such, opportunities for mainstreaming and integration work are being identified as new

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placements are being developed in Gender Governance and Citizen Participation and Gender and Food security programs.

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

The work that VSO Zambia is implementing puts the organization among the leaders in development practice in Zambia. The approaches of partnership, empowerment and commitment to learning have presented an opportunity to understand Zambia's development context and learn from experience of working in the field in communities and placing disadvantage in the human rights context. This kind of work has brought clarity in the process to address both the symptoms and structural causes of poverty, HIV&AIDS and disadvantage in Zambia. The programme in its participatory partnership development processes highlights how essential the principle of participation is and that this be fully embraced. Participation is a basis for empowering both people and processes, including staff in partner organizations working in development. VSO is the only organization in Zambia that is bringing new and alternative perspectives to development work using our distinctive competence.