Final

Mid Term Review

Evaluation of DFID's International Citizen Service (ICS) Pilot Stage

UK Department for International Development

October 2011

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Acronyms

CRB	Criminal Record Bureau
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
GX	Global Exchange
ICS	International Citizen Service
KAP	Knowledge Attitude and Practice
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NCS	National Citizens Service
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NV	National Volunteer
PCB	Programme Coordination Body
PCR	Project Completion Review
THET	Tropical Health Education Trust
UKV	UK Volunteer (ICS)
VFM	Value for Money
VSO	Volunteer Service Overseas

Executive Summary

The 18 month pilot programme, International Citizen Service (ICS) is supporting young British citizens to contribute to development through international volunteering and generating knowledge to inform future youth volunteering programmes. A core aim of the pilot is that the cohort of volunteers is representative of UK society and a means test has been included in the recruitment and selection process to support broad participation.

A consortium of 6 agencies[1] led by VSO are implementing the pilot programme and each is testing different approaches to the volunteer placements and the engagement of volunteers in the UK. The Programme Coordinating Body (PCB) manages the programme and ensures that each stage of the volunteer's journey is quality assured through the creation of core standards.

The volunteer journey includes a placement of 10 - 12 weeks in a developing country and is expected to generate impacts in three key areas: on the volunteers themselves, development impact in the placement community[2] and increased global citizenship activity in the UK. Indicators for the logframe need to reflect this more clearly at output and purpose level and weighting of each area would clarify both DFID priorities and areas where further work is needed to create the impacts and demonstrate change.

The Mid Term Review (MTR) was undertaken before the first cohort of volunteers had returned to the UK, limiting assessment of impact and effectiveness, but initial findings suggest that the overall theory of change is valid and field visits provided clear evidence (from volunteers, host organisations and agency staff) of profound and positive emerging impacts upon volunteers as a result of their participation in the ICS programme. It is important to ensure that on-going lesson learning and emerging criteria for good practice are fed into the roll-out programme, starting in March 2012.

Systems are now in place for the first stages of recruitment and selection, pre-departure training and volunteer placements. The recruitment (resulting in on-line applications) and selection (applicants invited to an assessment day) phase is largely agency based, making good use of existing agency networks and brand awareness but potentially limiting flexibility and currently the geographical spread of selection events is limited. Whilst agency led selection allows the agency to start putting placement teams together it is demanding of staff time and the opportunity to start creating regional links among volunteers is missed. The relatively weak ICS branding and complex on-line application process need to be critically reviewed (at present little data is available to allow such a review). The roll-out ICS programme should include a strategy to generate more applications and "raise the bar" for selection of the strongest volunteers within the aspirational diversity targets.

Means testing is clearly not working either as a way of ensuring diversity or generating income. Whilst income may be retained as a criterion of diversity, fund raising (possibly

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[1] International Service, Progressio, Resteless Development, Skillshare International, THET and VSO
[2] Contributing to poverty reduction and achieving the Millennium Development Goals

supported by scholarships) is likely to be a more effective and acceptable way of generating funds among volunteers and the Consortium.

Pre-departure training appears effective for the younger volunteers (under 23 years), but feedback from the placements suggests that further development could add value and more targeted training for the Team Leaders is needed.

Factors which influence the effectiveness and impact of placements are already emerging. Some good practice has also been identified, including strong partnership working between consortium partners, in-country partners, host agencies and volunteers. Approaches to guided learning are well structured in some agencies and the creativity of the volunteers is being incorporated effectively. The weakest aspect of placements at the time of the field visits was demonstrable development impact. This is to be expected because of very short lead-in times and the very early timing of the MTR, but in some placements visited, clarity about objectives and stronger working relationships between host agencies and local partners were needed. Evidence of outputs (activities) can be expected after 2-3 months, but a wider monitoring framework is needed to allow agencies to track change over a longer period and/or demonstrate how the placement contributes to the wider programme that its outcomes feed into.

For VFM to be measured and managed by ICS there needs to be substantially better tracking of the financial data (including the consistent use of budget/ expenditure lines between agencies, a consistent way of comparing subsidisation, better disaggregation of the data by phase, a full disaggregation by placement model, and also by the means testing criteria, such as harder-to-reach groups). Suggested indicators are detailed in the annex to the report. Also, appropriate benchmarks should be agreed to provide a basis to assess whether costs and efficiencies are on- or off- track.

For the ICS programme an overall typography of placement types, volunteer groups and anticipated outcomes would make comparative learning easier to manage.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to ICS Pilot

The Department for International Development's (DFID) International Citizen Service (ICS) is a global volunteering experience which supports young people to make a real difference to some of the world's poorest people. **The purpose of the 18 month Pilot** phase is to **"1, 250 British citizens contribute to development through international volunteering and generate knowledge to inform future youth volunteering programmes"**. A core aim of the pilot is that the cohort of volunteers represents the true diversity of UK society, providing volunteering opportunities to people from a range of economic backgrounds and from all four countries of the UK. To support such broad participation, a means test is included in the recruitment and selection process.

The volunteer journey in the pilot has been conceptualised into six distinct phases summarised in Figure 1 and is expected to generate impacts in three key areas: on the volunteers themselves, increased global citizenship activity in the UK and poverty reduction and delivery of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The pilot is being implemented by a consortium of volunteering agencies, allowing comparison of a variety of approaches in a range of countries to inform how the longer term ICS programme should be rolled out. In order of the number of volunteers they manage, the six agencies in the ICS Consortium are: VSO (lead agency, sub-contracting to the other 5 agencies), Restless Development (referred to as Restless), International Service, Skillshare International (referred to as Skillshare), Progressio and THET. The programme management is undertaken through the Programme Coordinating Body (PCB) whose staff are employed through and based at VSO and Restless Development. The PCB provides support to Consortium members and co-ordinates at a programmatic level: media and marketing (including ICS branding), training, data management, monitoring and evaluation.

1.2. Objectives of the Evaluation of ICS and limitations of the Mid Term Review

ITAD Ltd was commissioned in August 2011 by DFID to conduct a Mid Term Review (MTR) and Project Completion Review (PCR) of the ICS Pilot. The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the extent to which the outputs and purpose of the pilot have been achieved, to generate knowledge to inform the scale up of ICS and to analyse the value for money (VFM) of each stage of the ICS volunteer journey. As an MTR, this report focuses on the lower levels of the logframe i.e. programme design, procedures, systems, efficiency and initial indications of the effectiveness and impacts that will be considered in greater depth during the final evaluation. Innovation and "testing" is also an important aspect to evaluate at both stages because this is an opportunity for Consortium Agencies to explore theories of change.

A wider roll-out programme is being put out to tender in October, so to feed MTR findings back into this tender process the MTR has been undertaken at a very early stage of the pilot when data limitations mean that some findings are predictive rather than clearly evidenced based. Where this is the case, recommendations are made about actions that may be need to be taken by the Consortium, DFID or the roll out programme to complete an analysis or review forthcoming data.

Since no volunteers had returned from their placements, comments on UK engagement are confined to reviewing the conceptual framework and logframe.

Figure 1: Simplified Overview of ICS (activities, outputs, outcomes)
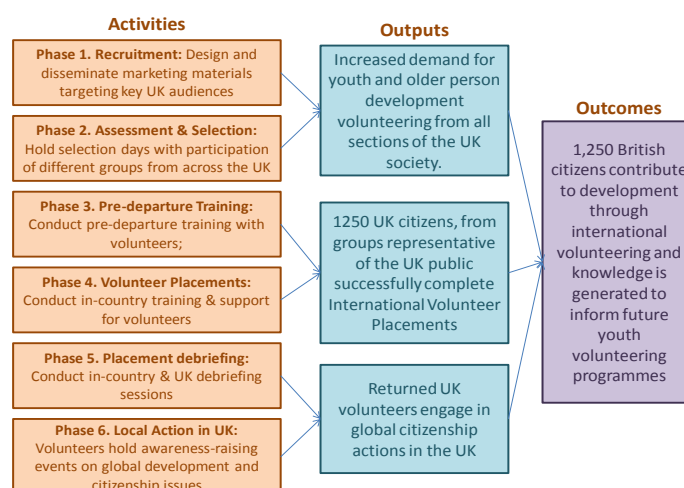
1.3. The evaluation framework and methodology

The DAC evaluation criteria provide the overarching framework for the evaluation. Key evaluation questions were grouped according to these criteria and associated data collection tools were defined for each key question. A mix of desk based review of programme and monitoring data, tools and systems in place, in combination with interviews and consultations with DFID, members of the PCB, implementing agencies, volunteers, host organisations and local partners generated our evidence base and informed our findings for this MTR. Field visits to sites in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda were conducted which provided an opportunity to review the work of four agencies on the ground – VSO, Skillshare, THET and Restless. Assessment and training were observed and the assessors and volunteers were consulted at these events.

2. Relevance and Design

2.1. Relevance

The ICS Pilot is an ambitious programme. It seeks to innovate and break new ground in international youth volunteering programmes. Core aspects of ICS that set the programme apart from other international youth volunteering programmes include its ambitions concerning **achieving diversity in the cohort of volunteers** as well as **development impact** objectives[3].

A considerable body of research on the value of youth participation in development confirms its contribution to positive **outcomes in the personal, social and civic development** of young people and this is reflected in the design of the ICS programme which is based on the principle of guiding participants along a supported learning journey enabling them to develop knowledge, awareness and understanding of the processes involved in development and empowering them to make active choices in responding to the objectives of the programme.

However other key impacts of ICS – the extent to which **on-going engagement in the UK** contributes to longer term impacts on development and the **development impacts** of youth volunteering on host communities - lack a definitive body of evidence at this stage[4]. The

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[3] Annex 1 includes a table comparing different objectives and approaches taken to international youth volunteering by 5 donors and Operation Raleigh: DFID is unique in setting a combination of targets to attract volunteers from a diversity of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, the application of a means-testing mechanism to determine the financial contribution of all volunteers, and the strong emphasis on volunteer placements demonstrating wider development impact in the host community.
[4] Machin (2008) emphasises the need for further research on the return engagement of volunteers and the impact on raising development

innovative nature of the ICS Pilot thus has the capacity to generate significant insight into these types of impacts.

2.2. *Programme Design and coherence*

The design of the ICS Pilot is set out in the Proposal document and in the accompanying logframe (Annex 2). The programme documentation sets out comprehensively the aims of the Pilot, the rationale for intervention and the process aspects of its delivery. Box 1 sets out the main issues arising from the current design.

Box 1: Logframe and programme design weaknesses

- While the results indicators (P1, P2, P3) focus on diversity targets, satisfaction of partner organisations hosting placements, and the generation of criteria for effective international youth volunteering programmes, there is a gap in the specification of results around the Local Action in the UK part of the ICS journey (although output 3 focuses on this area). It is recommended that this gap is addressed in the design of the roll out of the programme.

- The levels of impact specified in the Programme Document (pg. 27) are not aligned with the indicators at results level specified in the logframe.

- The programme documentation provides little detail on the types of projects which will engage the recruited volunteers. Setting some broad criteria around the projects including their links to the MDGs (although these should not be seen as exclusive) is recommended.

- While logframe specifies the purpose is to contribute to "development" and the programme documentation (pg 3) specifies that volunteers will contribute towards "*accelerating delivery of the Millennium Development Goals*" there is a lack of clarity concerning the development impact of the programme. The pathway of change from activities through to outcomes and impacts needs to be detailed and the development impacts of the programme defined. If the intention of ICS is to contribute to the MDGs, then this should be clear at the purpose level and P2 should relate to satisfaction of the hosting organisations in relation to these.

- The specification of Output 2 for the Pilot fails to address drop out by volunteers while on placements, although it does assume a 10% drop out rate tied to recruitment. Therefore the most recent Progress Report suggested that the indicator be revised to reflect participation on the programme rather than successful completion due to this oversight. This deficiency is likely to mean that the numbers achieved by the Pilot overall fall short of the 1, 250 volunteers successfully completing the programme. There were 37 early returns in the first round of 313 volunteers.

- Age of volunteers. Presently young volunteers are in the 18-22 year age group and older volunteers are 23 years upwards. 18 to 25 years would align ICS better with norms of the UK Youth Services and offer scope to recruit Team Leaders from the 22 – 25 year age range.

Thus the design of the Pilot suffers from a number of weaknesses, several of which directly relate to a lack of clarity around the relative importance of and thus programme focus on the three pillars discussed in 2.1 above: a) developing volunteers knowledge, awareness, understanding, and skills b) direct contribution to development impact, and c) enhanced and on-going volunteer engagement as global citizens[5]. Although interdependent and mutually reinforcing to some extent, none the less, their relative weighting should be established in order to benchmark monitoring and evaluation processes and clarify the theory of change on which the programme design is based.

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awareness in the home community. The recent Demos report on ICS highlights the gap in research on the volunteer impact on host communities, noting that external evaluation and research into which projects have the greatest impact are uncommon (Birdwell, 2011: 12-13). While the report found that a high proportion of volunteers surveyed felt that the project was valued by the host community (89%) or made some material difference (75%); many questioned the impact of the volunteering on host communities and whether any benefits were passed on (ibid: 39). However in spite of the scant evidence base for demonstrating the impact of international youth volunteering on wider development goals, a number of studies note some of the possible positive impacts that volunteers may have on the host community, for example: fostering social networks for change (CIDA, 2005), enhancing community relations (McBride et al., 2007), and bringing fresh ideas to working successfully at the community level (CIDA, 2005).

[5] This may in part be a result of changing messaging from DFID. Initially DFID wanted less emphasis on development impact so the logframe was changed but recently more attention is again being paid to this area.

2.3. Risk Management

Risk management has been thorough and, to date, effective. As the lead agency, VSO undertook thorough risk assessments of partner organisations whilst developing partnership and contractual relationships. Nonetheless, partly because of the tight time frames, high levels of trust were also needed.

The Consortium partners with significant experience of working with young people (Restless Development and VSO), led the development of risk assessment and management related to youth volunteering. Detailed discussions about the duty of care, ground rules, pastoral support and existing youth work practice led to development of core standards and the VSO Security Manager was consulted for in-country risk assessment and security procedures[6].

The approach to duty of care taken by the Consortium is that, as young adults, the volunteers should develop responsibility for their behaviour and this is introduced at the assessment stage. They are involved in risk assessments of their individual and group activities during their placements and some agencies allow groups to define the limits of ground rules in-country (for example in relation to alcohol consumption). Incidents that have occurred during the first round of placements have been discussed by a working group and simulations of emergencies have been held. Reputational risk is significant for a programme of this nature and care has been taken to address this through the emergency procedures in partnership with DFID and through agreed media strategies and procedures.

During the recent field visits to ICS placements, there was evidence that in smaller communities there is a degree of "community risk monitoring" which reinforces safe behaviour, but that in larger cities where this does not happen it is particularly important for in-country staff to make sure that a) volunteers are taking responsibility for their actions, b) Team Leaders/ placement supervisors feel able to take leadership decisions or to manage group decision-making effectively and c) that sending a volunteer home as a preventative measure is acceptable. Incidents are reviewed by the PCB and lessons incorporated into ongoing risk management. It is important to continually update these procedures and refresh in-country staff regularly as the pilot progresses.

3. Effectiveness

This section measures the extent to which the ICS Pilot is progressing towards its objectives. In particular, it answers two key questions:

- To what extent were the objectives achieved / are likely to be achieved?

- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

Given the weaknesses in logframe indicators at Purpose level described in Box 1 and the early stage of the pilot, this section will explore the effectiveness of the first four phases of the ICS journey in relation to the diversity of recruitment and the three areas of change intended.

3.1. Factors affecting effectiveness in the first four phases of the ICS Journey

Phases 1 and 2: Recruitment and selection of volunteers

The two main objectives during these phases were a) to establish an ICS brand and loyalty to that brand; b) to recruit a target number of "suitable" volunteers (capable of completing the

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[6] International Service volunteers in Palestine are not allowed use public transport and this additional cost has been assumed by the agency. Higher risk contexts such as this one are discussed in the PCB and dealt with on a case by case basis.

programme and reflecting diversity targets) - c) cost effectiveness is considered elsewhere.

a) Branding:

Agencies differ in targeting their promotional material and media releases. A steady stream of media coverage has been achieved, particularly at regional level, with a focus on the "personal interest" of individual volunteers. Messaging is checked where possible to ensure the ICS brand is included, but among volunteers it remains weak because of the Agency specific path they follow during recruitment and subsequently on their placements.

This has the advantage of piggy backing on existing Agency networks and brand value, but limits sustainability for ICS overall.

b) Recruiting "suitable" volunteers

Volunteers apply on-line centrally although they can do this through any of six agency websites or the central ICS site (http://www.dfid.gov.uk/ICS). All agencies follow the same basic model (except for THET) for selection. The quality standards developed by the PCB for different stages in the ICS journey ensure consistency where agencies are developing their own approaches[7]. Each agency screens its own applications using a scoring sheet[8] and once applications have been processed, the applicants are invited to an assessment day which involves a combination of individual interviews and group assessment to gauge their commitment to the aims and values of the ICS programme and their ability to adapt to a different living and working culture – flexibility, tolerance and initiative. Generally, the volunteer feedback on the recruitment process was positive.

Within overall recruitment Progressio has had some difficulty reaching its target for applications and International Service is attracting particularly high numbers. The reasons behind these differences should be explored further.

All stakeholder groups agreed that within the parameters of a short-term volunteering placement involving young, relatively unspecialised volunteers a focus on personal characteristics and broad capabilities was more important than specific levels of skill, experience or knowledge. However, within a number of the more *challenging* placement models[9] certain volunteer capabilities enhanced the effectiveness of placements:

- Independence;
- 'Grit' (perseverance and passion for long-term goals);[10]
- Some experience of working in a formal organisational setting (through paid employment or volunteering) or experience of international volunteering.

As some agencies are nearing their recruitment target, there is limited scope to amend systems in the Pilot, but Box 2 outlines some weaknesses that need to be addressed.

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[7] The quality standards are intended to ensure consistency in the core approach across the programme and particularly during their placements, as the models that each agency uses vary quite considerably. Consortium members have valued the process of discussion leading to these standards as well as the framework that they provide for quality assurance and they are seen as "work in progress" which is being strengthened as the programme develops.

[8] Applications are scored according to essential participation criteria, motivation and diversity.

[9] For example, where volunteers were expected to drive their own activity, where they worked in pairs or where the placement activity itself was challenging such as capacity building in Restless Development Uganda.

[10] Duckworth, A.L., Peterson, C., Matthews, M.D., & Kelly, D.R. (2007). "Grit: Perseverance and passion for long-term goals". Personality Processes and Individual Differences, 92 (6), p. 1087.

Box 2: Weaknesses in recruitment and selection

- **Weak monitoring**, the lack of website tracking systems and the lack of a central communication and marketing strategy during this stage of the Pilot means no clear evidence is available about the effectiveness or efficiency of marketing as a recruitment tool, the use of Agency specific websites for fronting on-line applications, nor how these strategies and systems affect ICS branding. These weaknesses are now starting to be addressed.

- While generally on track for certain **diversity targets**, the key challenges are that better-off young people are either not being reached, or are deciding not to apply; conversely a far higher proportion of low income volunteers are applying than anticipated; more Black and Asian are applying than aspirational targets suggested and fewer White and disabled young people; there is bias towards the South East in terms of geographical spread of volunteers. Annex 4 provides further information. Efforts are being made to re-orientate the system to attract under-represented groups: several agencies are making efforts to reach excluded groups such as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and disabled young people, developing partnerships with voluntary organisations already working with specific groups and looking at ways of making placements more accessible (e.g. by reducing the length of time, allowing investment in additional support). More recently similar efforts have been started to address the shortfall of young men applying. Less has been done to address the shortfall in higher income volunteers – nor has a systematic effort been made to understand the reasons behind this.

- **"Best fit"** between volunteers from different target groups and different placement types at this stage has been through self-selection. As understanding of how different placement types and their "fit" to volunteer groups is strengthened, there will be potential to feed this back into recruitment and selection processes.

- **Inter-agency transfers:** There is no agreed process for transferring applicants between agencies.

- **Oversupply:** There is no system for selection in the event of oversupply – at the moment applicants are simply put "on hold". For the roll out higher levels of applications should be anticipated and thought will be needed about how to address this. To add value to the ICS roll out, a strategy to attract applications from "the best" volunteers whilst retaining and valuing diversity will be needed. Whether overtly competitive or not, the marketing will require clear messaging and recruitment more specific selection criteria to achieve this.

Phase 3: Pre-departure training

All ICS volunteers (except THET volunteers) undertake the generic ICS training through a three day residential (two days generic ICS training and one day agency specific training). Some information regarding the placement is given at agency specific training. This is then supplemented by email and telephone communication.

Many of the volunteers interviewed wanted more information about their placements at an earlier stage and this is likely to contribute to feedback that pre-departure training lacked sufficient placement-specific content. With placements now set up and longer lead-in times, these criticisms can now be addressed by Consortium partners:

Feedback on the training content was varied, although there was concern that some areas were repeated in the generic ICS, agency specific training and then in-country orientation (YA VSO Kenya). There is also a tension between clear guidance on likely placement content and arrangements that volunteers are asking for and the adaptability that volunteers need where inevitable last minute changes have to be made.

The current mix of ICS generic training and the additional agency specific day makes any team training very difficult given the available budget and logistics.

Phase 4: Volunteer Placements

Annex 5 provides a summary of the placement models in use by the six implementing agencies of the ICS Pilot, highlighting the richness of the Pilot as a testing ground for new approaches.

In essence two broad placement models are being tested:

- Model 1: UK volunteers work and live with national volunteers (NVs) on a 1:1 basis. Placement Supervisors are paid members of staff. (Global Exchange (GX)/ Youth Action (YA) VSO and Restless Development in Uganda);

- Model 2: Small groups of UK volunteers work as a team with an older volunteer taking the role of Team Leader (IS, Progressio, Skillshare International, THET). Restless Development straddles these broad approaches by identifying NVs to work with the teams of UK volunteers.

A third model includes a reciprocal visit to the UK.

- Model 3: GX includes a reciprocal UK visit and the programme lasts for 6 months. International Service is hoping to use this approach for one group over a much shorter time frame. Both rely on additional match funding. At this stage of the ICS pilot, it has not been possible to assess the added value of the full reciprocal exchange used in GX.

Within the main models, the structuring of the teams, guided learning strategies, targeted recruitment of volunteers (for future groups) and approaches to monitoring and evaluation are being explored in a variety of ways by the different agencies.

At present there is no placement "typology" through which to systematically investigate how different groups of volunteers might be best able to learn about or contribute to development impact. Such a typology might place the key features of volunteer groups (group size, skill level and so on) on one axis, with placement types (sector, development objective, time frame and so on) on the other.

Early evidence is emerging that the placements are impacting positively on the volunteers, despite less convincing evidence on the development impact of the placements on host organisations or communities. Factors identified as influencing the effectiveness of the placements are noted below:

Figure 2: Factors influencing effectiveness of placements[11]

Placement Planning
- Successful models involved clear placement planning between the UK agency, country partner and the host organisation before the volunteers arrived; placement objectives driven by needs of the host organisation; and design guided by an understanding of the different levels at which ICS objectives are operating. Volunteers then have a clear framework in which to input around specific activity plans. Some agencies plan for involvement over several rounds or volunteers;
- Activities that identified a clear rationale involving relatively unspecialised UK youth (e.g. Skillshare's THT project in Tanzania and successful placements in Restless Uganda) were more effective than volunteers simply being included in on-going work (e.g. YA VSO Kenya and unsuccessful Restless Uganda placements);

In-country orientation
- Language training has been valuable, combined with careful mixing of stronger linguists (Latin American placements) or support from local students studying English (Mali);
- Where placement activity was challenging (e.g. Restless Uganda) substantial training was important (at least two weeks). Host organisations saw this as particularly important;
- Hold the training in (or close to) the host community to aid orientation;
- Training/orientation should cover the placement activity, practical training and facilitate wider understanding of development issues in the host country;

Involving local partners
- Involving host organisations in training helps them to understand what the volunteers can offer, increases their engagement in planning and wider volunteer activities, and seems likely to increase the sustainability of activities;
- Where host organisations have little experience of involving international young people in their activities, training has been valuable. Most agencies have tried to work with well-established partners who have expressed interest in ICS;

Homestay arrangements
- Interviews confirmed existing research showing the added value of a 1:1 relationship (with a peer volunteer or with a family through home stays) is a powerful mechanism for intercultural exchange and understanding (e.g. YA VSO Kenya);
- A balance between experiential learning and living standards also has to be maintained; where volunteers are provided very basic living accommodation, motivation has been affected (some Restless placements visited in Uganda) and conversely providing "luxury" accommodation can affect community perceptions of volunteers (Skillshare Tanzania).

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[11] Largely drawn from field visit analysis. Fuller details of these visits are given in Annex 7

Guided learning

- The quality and extent of training offered within different models varied and the field visits showed that the effectiveness of learning tools/ programming provided by agencies is always dependent on the skills of the staff/ volunteers facilitating, the group dynamics and the placement context;
- Several models include space in the weekly programme for guided reflection on the development issues that volunteers are dealing with and materials are being developed to support these processes, e.g. the Empower model includes a faith element. Materials have been developed for groups to use on Faith issues and also on key development themes;

Team structure and Support in placements

- The role of Team Leader can be very challenging for volunteers. Feedback from the first round of placements has highlighted how much support can be required if there are difficulties. Poor group dynamics can fundamentally change placement activities and outputs and the potential for personal development through managing such experiences has to be balanced against possibly limiting the impacts on development outcomes;
- Pastoral care offered is variable and affects group dynamics considerably. It varies both in extent and the way it is offered. For example, VSO uses paid staff on a 1:10 ratio that provides programmed and ad hoc support to individual volunteers.
- Criteria for effective support include:
  - Regular contact with the agency (emails, telephone and face-to-face contact);
  - Clearly timetabled support and supervision;
  - Clear structure and roles – where multiple support networks exist (i.e. host organisations, agency staff, agency volunteers and Team Leaders);
  - Focus on placement as well as pastoral support. Models that involved host organisation staff in the support arrangements were the most effective;
  - Balance between support and dependence established (clear boundaries/ roles).

Some weaknesses in placements seen during field visits that were limiting their effectiveness include:

- unclear roles and expectations across the different stakeholders involved;

- situations where volunteer skill sets were not adequate for the tasks they had been assigned;

- limited capacity to support volunteers (insufficient work or staff were too busy to supervise effectively);

- the motivations of the host organisation did not match ICS outcomes (related to profile-raising in some Restless Uganda placements, accessing funding through the ICS volunteer in some YA VSO Kenya placements, or relating more to a national programme objective (work experience) in YA VSO Kenya[12]). Where the motivations of the host organisation were not based around the inherent value of the ICS volunteers activity they were less likely to support and facilitate the ICS placement. To overcome this more stringent selection and more effective sensitisation to the aims of the ICS programme should be carried out with host organisations.

Although these can only provide a snapshot of the much wider programme and some placement arrangements had clearly been made under considerable pressure[13], the extent of the weaknesses seen highlights that further work is needed to ensure quality outcomes are the norm rather than the exception across the programme.

3.2. *Overall Conclusion concerning likely effectiveness:*

It is expected that the Pilot will achieve its purpose to facilitate 1, 250 British citizens contributing to development although at this stage, the level of this contribution [which is explored further in the impact chapter] is expected to be weak.

Knowledge is also being generated to inform future youth volunteering programmes and this will increase over time.

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[12] The National Volunteer Scheme is managed by VSO Jitolee in partnership with the Government of Kenya Youth Department (joint funding) and is aimed at profiling youth volunteering and work experience, NOT development impact per se.

[13] In Kenya the National Supervisors had one month to identify 10 placement hosts, 10 host families, undertake risk assessments, raise awareness in the community about ICS objectives and negotiate working arrangements with the Ministry of Youth Placement partner.

Factors influencing effectiveness are varied – from placement planning to team structure and support while on the placement. There is a pool of valuable feedback already at this early stage from the Pilot which is highly insightful to informing the roll out of the programme.

The effectiveness of the two main placement models – one to one approach with NVs versus a team approach with a Team Leader or NVs – cannot be deciphered at this stage in view of the limited evidence on the two models.

4. Impact

Reasons for the predictive nature of this section are outlined earlier in the review (Sections 1.2 and 2.1). The order in which impacts are likely to emerge (simplifying a cyclical process) is: impacts on the volunteers→ short term development impacts → UK action → longer term development impacts and active (global) citizenship. This section reviews impact on volunteers, host organisations and communities.

4.1. Emerging impacts on volunteers

The site visits provided clear evidence (from volunteers, host organisations and agency staff) of profound and positive emerging impacts upon volunteers as a result of their participation in the ICS programme.

Civic engagement refers to any individual or collective activity aimed at addressing particular social issues. The capabilities that a volunteer would need for active civic engagement include civic orientation (a desire to tackle social issues), civic knowledge (an understanding of problems that exist and ways to overcome them) and civic skills (the ability to enact change e.g. letter writing, public speaking or project management). **Placements appear to be strengthening civic orientation: many volunteers expressed an increased commitment to continued involvement in international development and UK civic engagement post-placement**.

On civic knowledge, important emerging impacts were found around the volunteers' awareness and understanding of international development issues. All volunteers felt their experience and understanding of the realities (and difficulties) of life in poor countries had increased considerably. Many volunteers' preconceptions about life in poor countries were positively challenged through their experience. The models differed in the extent to which a deeper understanding of development issues (such as aid architecture or challenges to mainstream development theory) was engendered and apparent during the field visits. Models that involved pairing of volunteers with national volunteers and host families (Youth Action VSO Kenya) seemed to be particularly effective. However, not all of the emerging impacts relating to international development were necessarily positive. Some volunteers had experienced a reduced commitment to international development due to the perceived corruption and inefficiency they had experienced, or lack of agency within communities who they perceived as very passive and unwilling to strive for change (Kenya, Kaloleni).

Box 2: Hard and Soft Skills acquired by volunteers

On civic skills, *all* models showed the potential for the ICS programme to increase soft skills such as confidence, 'grit' (perseverance and passion for long term goals), patience, flexibility and communication skills.

The placements differed more significantly in terms of the development of hard skills resulting from participation. These include project management, teaching, public speaking and research skills. Three characteristics of placements were seen as important in fostering the development of hard skills.

Substantial training or mentoring;

- Challenging activities e.g. where volunteers had access to advanced development opportunities such as teaching adults, writing funding applications and negotiating with senior management within organisations); and

- Involvement of the host organisation in supporting the activities and development of the volunteer;
- Community Action Days in the Global Exchange/ YA VSO models, provide further opportunities for volunteers to build both hard and soft skills as do the reporting/ media roles given to some volunteers within teams (International Service and Progressio).

Measures of wellbeing[14] are not specifically mentioned in the programme documentation, but the evidence collected (from all stakeholder groups but most importantly ICS volunteers) highlighted a clear shift in volunteers' perceptions of what constitutes wellbeing. In particular, the experience of living and volunteering in a poor country context precipitated a reassessment of material consumption and its role in happiness. The experience was also seen to help put problems within the volunteers' own lives into clearer perspective when compared to some of the problems faced in host communities.

4.2. Emerging impact on host organisations and communities

During the field visits, although evidence of positive impacts on organisations and communities was collected in some of the placements, within many placements only tenuous and insubstantial positive impacts were seen. During field visits, the youth-led capacity building programme developed by Restless in Uganda offered the clearest rationale for the added-value of ICS volunteers in a peer education context within host organisations. However, the potential impact (that was recognised by all stakeholder groups) was not being realised in the majority of placements. Positive impacts varied considerably more between individual placements than between models.

Box 3: Examples of emerging, positive impacts (field visits and reported in PCB monitoring)

- ICS volunteers offered host organisations different perspectives on a range of activities such as organisational management, processes and procedures (e.g. Restless in Uganda).
- Some added-value of involving young international volunteers was seen such as the ability to galvanise interest in the activities of the organisation within the local community. This was seen in adult training events (e.g. Skillshare Tanzania), child education (e.g. YA, VSO Kenya) and student engagement in online training modules (e.g. THET Tanzania).
- A PCB monitoring visit of International Service Palestine and informal conversations with both the Country Director and one of the volunteer Team Leaders in Bolivia indicate that clear objectives and shared planning of International Service placements seems likely to lead to some quantifiable impacts. One specific example is changing attitudes of Bolivian service providers and the parents/ carers of young people with learning difficulties towards the capacity of these young people to access leisure facilities.

- Lack of monitoring data from any further placements make it impossible to draw significant conclusions from the limited snapshot provided through the field visits.

- Of the field visits, THET Tanzania model was delivering a rich and well managed experience with substantial and tangible positive impacts to the host organisation. However, in terms of the wider pilot and lesson learning, THET offers a small programme which has limited replicability because of its reliance on volunteers with significant specialist knowledge.

4.3. However, the evaluation revealed a number of key constraints on impact:

- *The severe resource needs of the majority of the host organisations* This was identified as by far the biggest constraint on organisations having a positive impact on the communities they work with. These stark resource needs limited the support organisations could offer volunteers such as travel and classroom materials.

- *The characteristics of volunteers*. The most important of these were the lack of specific

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[14] Frameworks of well-being usually explore objective measures of wellbeing such as economic well-being, health and safety, educational well-being, relationships and risky behaviours. However, the frameworks also often include subjective measures of wellbeing (i.e. they ask people to assess their own wellbeing). E.g. Michaelson, J (2009) *National Accounts of Well-being: bringing real wealth onto the balance sheet*, New Economics Foundation available at: http://cdn.media70.com/national-accounts-of-well-being-report.pdf

skills that were needed by the host organisation and a lack of 'grit'.

- *The characteristics of host organisations.* Key constraining characteristics were the lack of commitment from the organisation in supporting the activities of the volunteers and a lack of functioning activity within the organisation.

- *The lack of a clear activity plan.* This led to considerable underutilisation of volunteers. In some cases the volunteers had very little activity to carry out within their placement and were left frustrated and aimless. A lack of advanced planning also meant that, in some cases, volunteers had only begun carrying out productive activity up to halfway through their placement.

- *The substantial time required for effective orientation to the host country, community and organisation.* Although explicit orientation is scheduled for 1-2 weeks at the start of the placement, in practice "settling in" takes considerably longer. Some placement models are addressing this through the supported learning programme e.g. the youth resource corner[15] in Restless Uganda and Community Action days in YA VSO Kenya which facilitate orientation whilst also delivering positive impact.

- Finally, there were general *concerns over the sustainability of impact* on intended beneficiaries. This relates to the amount of contact that was possible in some placements and in others to the ability of host organisations to maintain changed ways of working after volunteers have left.

5. Assessment of the means testing system

5.1. Performance of the Means Testing system to date

As well as aiming to partly finance the ICS programme, a means test was put in place to ensure volunteers from a cross section of society are able to participate in ICS. The ICS means testing framework aims to be both fair and transparent.

The current means test *neither* ensures that a diversity of volunteers from different income backgrounds participate in the ICS nor raises the level of financial contributions that was originally expected because fewer volunteers are assessed as having to make a contribution than was anticipated.

Figure 3: ICS targets versus Actual data on Income Distribution of Volunteers

	< £25K	£25K to £40K	>£40K
ICS Youth Volunteer Targets	33%	25%	42%
ICS Volunteers – actual	81%	11%	8%

Source: Proposal for ICS Pilot and Progress report 1 June to 31 August 2011.

As Figure 3 shows, at the moment ICS is mainly appealing to young people from lower income households, perhaps 'who wouldn't normally volunteer abroad'. It is suspected that those who would be assessed as having to make a contribution are being put off from applying. With the data skewed so heavily towards the lower income band, there is a risk of ICS becoming seen as 'the government scheme for poorer young people'. A key question raised is whether diversity can be achieved through a system focused only on assessing financial means[16].The

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[15] Youth resource corners are space in community centres/halls/health centres and with some small funds, volunteers purchase materials on sexual, reproductive health, livelihoods etc which they use to run sessions in these areas and have discussions with in and out of school youth.

[16] A fuller discussion of the issues involved is given in Annex 3

diversity to reflect broader society is seen as important by some of the organisations involved in the ICS because they feel that it contributes to the personal development of all the volunteers. For others, the criterion of success is that the young people best able to make a difference overseas and in the UK are recruited irrespective of their income background.

At present (as of August 2011) the scheme is expected to generate £298, 915 which represents a significant shortfall of some £701, 085 in projected income for the pilot.

5.2.   *Findings on the Effectiveness of the current system*

Advantages

- The current means test makes it clear that the ICS is for people from lower income backgrounds too and it is easy to understand.
- The random spot-check on household income has not revealed problematic dishonesty and volunteers and their parents/carers have cooperated in supplying documentary evidence of their income.
- Administration costs are low since the system is relatively easy to administer. Various teams in the VSO are involved in administering the scheme, estimated to cost in the region of £20-£40 per volunteer to administer.

Disadvantages

Organisations expressed the view that "the means testing system is perverse, counter-productive, divisive, and sends mixed messages". A number of weak aspects of the system were identified:

- The means test appears to be "putting off" volunteers from better-off backgrounds.

- Reference to 'contributions' makes it unclear whether the £1,000 or £2,000 is a fee or an amount that should be raised by fundraising since those who do not have to pay a contribution are also encouraged to fundraise. Few volunteers who have had to pay a contribution have done this solely through fundraising. The initial tight deadlines between selection and departure posed a major constraint in this regard.

- Where a young person's parent/carer pays the contribution, it carries with it expectations of the 'service' they feel they are paying for, which can have repercussions on participation. Conversely, one agency reported that there can be less commitment to the project among those not having to pay a contribution.

- The income bands are perceived to be unfair and the means test crude.

  - Application of criteria concerning parents'/carers' income is inconsistent with the ICS approach of enabling young people to do things for themselves.

  - Assessment of students' incomes and whether they are considered as dependent on their parent's/carer's household is problematic.

  - The £25,000-£40,000 bracket is very wide. Parents/carers from the 'squeezed middle', whose income is at the lower end of the £25,000-£40,000 bracket, find it most difficult to help their children raise the contribution. The system does not take into account households where parents care for additional children or support a former partner, or areas in the UK with high housing costs.

  - Use of P60 as evidence of income can rapidly become out of date if the household/ volunteer's circumstances change.

5.3.   *Alternative options appraisal*

A number of options were examined as alternatives to the current system*.*

Option 1: selective bursaries based on the circumstances of volunteers. Volunteers could be selected for bursaries by widening the current selection criteria to include their family situation, where they live, and pressures affecting their ability to fundraise.

Option 2 – Adjustment of the Current System. To make ICS more attractive to volunteers from middle income households, the income bands could be adjusted or the contribution levels reduced (e.g. reduce the £1,000 contribution to £500, the £2,000 contribution to £1,000). Another income band could be introduced to break down the range of the £25,000-£40,000 bracket. The means test should take family size into account. Higher income brackets for households supporting two or more children in full time education would be a possible model.

Option 3 – Application of a Quota System. Quotas (formal or informal) could be introduced for the numbers to be accepted in each income band.

Option 4: Fundraising. Setting all volunteers fundraising target is the option favoured by most of the Consortium Agencies as a viable alternative to the means test. Their experience suggests a target of £600-£850 for a specific project is achievable for most volunteers *given sufficient time and support (e.g.* a pack of ideas or peer support from volunteers who have fundraised). Fundraising is seen as a vital experience and promotes engagement with the project. In the past the VSO GX programme, where volunteers when given a target of £600 per volunteer, 73% of the volunteers raised their target or above it, with the average amount raised being £833.95. Such a target for ICS would raise more contributions than under the current system.

Fundraising figures are likely to increase as the pilot continues and volunteers have more time prior to departure. Proof of fund raising activity from participants would ensure parents/carers are not providing all the funds required. Some groups of marginalised young people may experience difficulties with the fund raising approach so bursaries or grants might also be offered to volunteers if they are able to explain why fundraising was not achievable for them or for up-front costs that not all young people can carry[17].

Some of the issues and likely impacts on the objectives related to the current system are summarised in Table 1.

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[17] This is a complex area. The hardest to engage are young people with additional disadvantages. To overcome this bursaries could be awarded to those young people who are most marginalised, or they could be given a lower fundraising target (perhaps £300). Volunteers who might fall into this category are ex-offenders, care leavers, NEET young people, and those from households receiving Income Support or JobSeekers Allowance. Exemptions should be arranged on a case-by-case basis. Partnership working with 'bridging organisations' (e.g. probation services, Connexions, youth clubs, Prince's Trust) is essential to identifying volunteers with disadvantaged backgrounds, who may be lacking in confidence. However, it is important that the ICS is not publically perceived as a 'reward' for offending behaviour or receiving benefits.

Table 1: Pros and cons of alternatives to means testing

	Selective charges	Selective Bursaries	Adjust the present system	Quota system	Fundraising
Funding the scheme	Status quo – provides a benchmark for other options	Unclear. Assumes participation of higher income groups	Might improve the current situation but not a total solution	Dependent on achieving quotas	Requires sufficient lead-in time
Promoting diversity and social mix		Could put some low income applicants off applying	May distort targets within "middle income" applicants	Might constrain selection of volunteers most suited for ICS	Additional support required for some target groups
Promoting fund raising as a skill		N/A	N/A	N/A	
Promoting commitment to ICS objectives[18]		N/A	N/A	N/A	
A fair and defendable charging system		N/A	N/A	N/A	Evidence of fund raising would be needed
Cost effective implementation		Intensive selection process likely	Additional administrative costs[19]	Potentially significant recruitment costs for "hard to reach" income groups	Up-front costs to develop support systems and partnership working likely to be required

6.   Efficiency and Value for Money Assessment

6.1.   *DFID: ICS Consortium partnership working*

DFID has taken a very "hands-on" approach to the management of this contract, reflecting the level of political interest in ICS and the reputational risks involved. However, some challenges should be noted: changes in key staff, particularly in marketing and communications (both DFID and the PCB), have influenced the strategic overview and led to differing expectations[20]; changing messages from DFID around the relative importance of development impact have been discussed in earlier sections; the level of trust in DFID was affected by late changes to launching ICS.

There is an urgent need to develop a marketing and communication strategy which has only recently been recognised. Once this is in place, monitoring systems will need to be created: the efficiency and effectiveness of using agency specific websites for recruitment needs to be tested, as well as the costs for generating a completed application (for which virtually no data is available).

Government-wide cost reduction measures limiting marketing apply to ICS. An exemption was given for the launch, but this makes the UK engagement (Phase 6) in particular more challenging for the Consortium, already trying to deal with the mismatch between their objectives for this Phase and the (reduced) budgets available.

6.2.   *Consortium arrangements*

The ICS programme management arrangements outlined in Box 4 below are intended to allow for a quality assured volunteer journey in which agencies have significant autonomy to develop their own models for achieving the programme outcomes. Co-ordination is provided through the PCB and making sure that this model runs efficiently is a significant management

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[18] Rather than viewing ICS as a holiday because a volunteer has paid to participate
[19] To overcome potential difficulties, an interactive ready reckoner could be made available on the ICS website where an individual can insert their income and find out whether or not they have to make a contribution.
[20] For example, DFID did not realise that the PCB Communications manager would not take on responsibility for marketing, a mis-understanding which is now being addressed.

challenge.

Communication – the communication within the different PCB groups is clearly working well in the sense that timely decisions are being made; there is considerable trust between the agencies and a willingness to bring issues to the table. The challenge has been to keep this level of communication going until it reaches country partners and staff on the ground and ensuring a feedback flow, particularly in these initial set-up phases of the pilot when so many systems and processes are being established from scratch.

Information management - There has been a time delay in establishing a working database to deal with the huge volume of information being generated – in itself creating further pressure as agencies have had to spend more time moving data across into the new system.

Box 4: Programme Management Arrangements

PCB/ Agency specific	Main Features
Phase 1: Recruitment	
PCB & Agency. Agency specific screening using centrally agreed processes and systems.	There is central co-ordination (through which applications can be transferred to other Consortium agencies on request), a standard application form, agreed selection criteria and scoring[21]. Prospective volunteers perceive this as agency based because they apply on-line through agency specific websites.
Phase 2: Assessment and Selection	
Agency specific.	Using standardised dimensions and scoring and based on activities with common features. Criteria for matching volunteers to placement are shared across the agencies, but each decides at what stage and the extent of information that is given to volunteers about the placements. All pre-departure preparations are agency specific (visas, CRB, flights etc.).
Phase 3: Pre-Departure Training	
Managed by the PCB. Last day is agency specific.	2 days generic training led by central trainers (who may be employed by one of the Consortium agencies or through the PCB). The third day is agency specific. No differentiated training for Team Leader volunteers. (NB VSO supervising staff have separate training of 5 days.)
Phases 4-6: Volunteer Placements; Placement De-briefing; Local Action in the UK	
Agency specific.	Quality standards have been agreed for the placement activities, covering Arrival, Orientation, Common Features, Preparation, Evaluation, De-briefing, Programme Support, Supervision and Conduct, In Country Partnership, inclusion and management, Health, Safety and Security Training, UK Action and Debriefing

6.3. Management of ICS Pilot

Phases 1& 2: Recruitment and Selection

There is currently no mechanism for monitoring the website application until a full application is submitted. However, feedback from volunteers suggests that unless a young person is guided by loyalty to a particular agency, the initial web searches can be confusing and time consuming, with needless repetition of core elements which appear on all the agency websites.

Where a potential applicant has familiarity with an agency it seems that there is a certain degree of "brand loyalty"/ confidence in what the "product" (placement) will offer. However, for applicants who are not familiar with agencies, the application process can seem to require a complicated set of choices.

An alternative approach could be to guide all applicants to the DFID ICS site and allow them to search using a checklist of preferences (selecting up to three from each list): country; activity type; agency. Volunteers would then be able to make choices from the alternatives generated.

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[21] With the exception of THET which has a slightly different system in order to assess the specific skill set volunteers will need for their placements.

Care may be needed that different agencies do not target the same voluntary agencies in the UK for support in volunteer recruitment or re-engagement in UK – the PCB and Skillshare had both contacted LEAP (London) and the Saint Georges Trust (Birmingham) in the weeks prior to interviews, highlighting the challenges in achieving good communication and avoiding duplication.

While data from the last progress report (1 June to 31 August 2011) shows that over 3000 people applied to the programme and 830 were selected, no analysis has been done on the reasons for rejecting participants, the profile of this group in terms of diversity indicators or how many are re-applying following feedback.

Phase 4: placements

Due to high transaction costs for finance staff (in Kenya at least), weekly reconciliation of accounts for each volunteer group has been necessary because of the limit to the amount of funding that can be transferred locally, liability is limited and does not cover staff wages, which have been assumed by VSO directly.

6.4.   *Value for Money offered by the ICS Pilot approaches*

Value for Money (VFM) is an assessment of the results achieved in relation to costs. It is concerned with whether an organisation or intervention can achieve the same results with fewer resources, or more results with the same resources. For the Mid-term Review (MTR), the VFM focus is on whether the ICS is operating in an efficient, effective and cost-effective manner. In other words, is ICS making the best use of its resources?

VFM Overview

For the purpose of this review, VFM is defined as "t*he optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes*".[22] Reaching one overall quantitative figure for the VFM of the ICS appears to be difficult to achieve in practice, and would underplay important issues around operational performance (such as the comparison between different agency models, and a more centralised approach). With this in mind, a suitable approach is to consider VFM through a number of different lenses. The 3Es approach is a widely accepted way to achieve such a systematic assessment.[23] In short, the 3Es provides three views of VFM:

1) **Effectiveness:** the qualitative and quantitative measures of outcomes, which show that a programme "*is effective in achieving its intended objectives*";

2) **Efficiency:** "*a measure of productivity, in other words how much you get out in relation to what is put in*", e.g. this may be in terms of input-to-output ratios; and,

3) **Economy:** "*a measure of what goes into providing a service*". This focuses on the costing of inputs, such as unit costs (e.g. cost/ flight, or cost/ m^2 of office space).

Considering whether VFM has been optimised, requires a strong element of *informed judgement*. There are two basic ways to reach an informed judgement for VFM purposes. Firstly, whether the identified performance was **better or worse than planned** (internal comparison); and secondly, how performance **compares with benchmarks** beyond this particular case and point in time (external comparison). In the case of ICS, and where appropriate, the analysis makes reference to benchmarks of performance but mostly, because of a lack of appropriate benchmarks, the analysis focuses more on relative comparisons between different agency models.

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[22] Definition used by the UK National Audit Office in their "Analytical framework for assessing Value for Money".
[23] The 3Es approach is used by the UK National Audit Office for its VFM Studies, and is being adopted by DFID in its Business Case Guidance.

Limitations of the analysis

This is the first time that the ICS has been assessed in terms of VFM, and the financial and monitoring systems were not established to realise these measures from the outset – despite this being a pilot. This has severely limited the assessment that can be made, but instead the MTR should be seen as the opportunity to now put in place the necessary systems to provide substantive evidence on VFM for the final evaluation.

Key data gaps include:

- **There is little data on effectiveness** for reasons already covered in previous sections.[24] This greatly undermines the VFM analysis as there is little measurement of the 'value' side of the equation. This is an important challenge in assessing the VFM of ICS; where the resource inputs and activities are *spent in the short term*, but the true value is *not realised until much later*. This also means that there is currently insufficient evidence to make a true VFM judgement – as it is unclear whether any cost savings will lead to a greater loss in effectiveness.

- **There is a lack of disaggregated data to explore the issues around different recruitment strategies,** and how effective and efficient they are relative to cost. This is potentially important information to help inform ICS decisions about the relative value and costs of different recruitment strategies (for different regions, income bands, etc.). So for instance, when money is *s*pent on recruiting harder to reach groups, the value added cannot be assessed because **there are no expenditure breakdowns for specific recruitment exercises that target these groups**. Similarly, there is no disaggregation of the data by placement model – so again it is not possible to reach judgements on these matters.

- There is **a lack data for some stages of the ICS process**. For example, data on pre-departure training costs (sent a few days prior to writing), are central PCB costs. Based on this data alone, it is not possible to assess the cost variations associated with holding the training in different locations (travel by staff, volunteers), or whether one approach is more efficient and effective than others.

- Finally, it is important to note that **each agency's subsidisation of different elements of the scheme** results in a model that does not lead to full cost recovery. Therefore a roll out which is expected to operate on a full cost and scaled-up basis will be more expensive in relation to these elements, and a VFM assessment of the pilot in this respect will not serve as an entirely accurate predictor of VFM of the main programme. The THET placement model is a case in point.

A financial figure for the level of subsidisation is not available although we provide information on the types of costs which are subsidised by each agency in Annex 9. The table shows the range of different subsidisation strategies which undermine the comparison between agency approaches.

In the following sections, the focus of the assessment is primarily on the *process aspects* of ICS, such as the efficiency levels of management practices and economies of scale around the procurement of flights, etc. – rather than an overall judgement of value relative to cost. The assessment has been conducted on a stage-by-stage basis comparing different agency models, and whether these represent good VFM. The central question is whether there are more economic, efficient and effective ways to implement each stage of the ICS.[25]

Annex 6 offers a matrix of suggested VFM indicators for each phase of the volunteer journey

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[24] For instance, the KAP survey has so far been completed by just 27 post-placement volunteers.
[25] General caveats: a) all data provided for analysis here is up to 31st August; b) due to technical difficulties that some agencies have had with uploading data to the central database, costs per volunteer and unit costs are not 100% accurate – data integrity decreases after selection phase; c) costs for each budget line differ in terms of when they are paid (fixed monthly, variable, ad hoc) and so like for like comparison across agencies is difficult to measure accurately.

which should be measured going into the next phase of the evaluation.

The Effectiveness of ICS

Although the quantitative evidence base is currently limited, it is apparent that volunteers who have reached the end of their placement so far have highly valued the placement itself as well as the overall programme. In-country placement support is also highly rated overall although with more dissatisfied volunteers. The greatest concern at this stage surrounds the training, both pre-departure and in-country, where **no more than 1 in 5 volunteers felt that the training has either moderately or substantially met expectations** (see Figure 4).

While the sample size is small, this does raise concerns about the quality and value of the training provided both pre-departure and in-country, particularly as volunteers on the whole rated the placement experience highly. If volunteer satisfaction is being met overall on placement **in spite of the training**, then this raises serious questions about the time and money that is being invested in pre-departure and in-country preparation. This is an aspect that should be monitored more closely and considered in preparation for the final evaluation.

**Figure 4: Satisfaction of Volunteer Expectations with Aspects of ICS[26]**
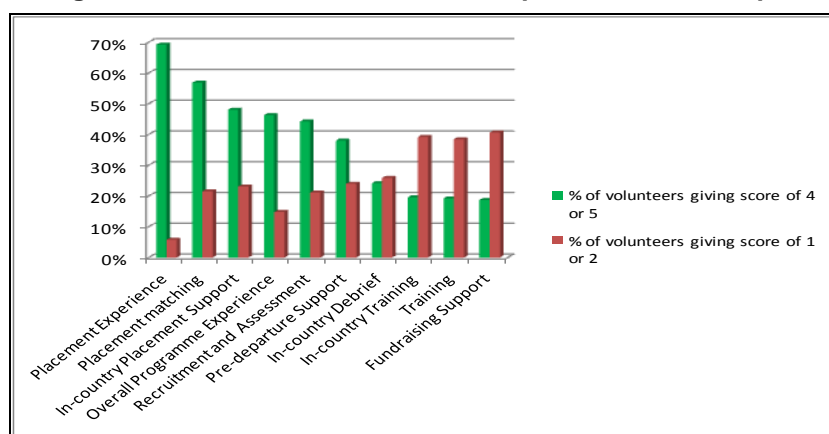
The Efficiency of ICS

Phases 1 and 2 – Recruitment and selection[27]: The THET recruitment and selection process has yielded the lowest cost per volunteer (£26 PV, i.e. £259 PV less than Restless Development) and therefore the highest efficiency for phases 1 and 2. Some of this can be explained by the particularities of the THET approach – something that works for small numbers of recruited volunteers but is unlikely to be replicable at scale. Also, cost savings have been achieved through using existing facilities and networks of partner institutions as well as subsidisation of staff resources and overheads. This means that the THET approach (while apparently efficient and subsidized) does not provide a model for future cost savings and improved efficiencies.

Even excluding the THET figures from the analysis, there is still a £100 difference per volunteer between International Service and Restless. Skillshare, Restless and VSO have had to schedule more assessment days than originally planned, hence the higher cost. Restless has also had to pay for the venue and external selectors whereas other agencies have used their own staff or pro-bono time from partners (e.g. International Service and Progressio). International Service have recorded the lowest cost per volunteer and thus the greatest efficiency (aside from THET) for assessment days although have incurred no costs for selectors, venues or volunteer travel (see Figure 5).

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[26] A score of 5 denotes "substantially exceeded expectation; conversely, a score of 1 denotes "did not meet expectation (substantially)
[27] Recruitment and selection have been grouped together as this is how the agency data has been categorised. Ideally, there would be a separation between these two phases.

Figure 5: Cost per volunteer for Recruitment and Selection[28]
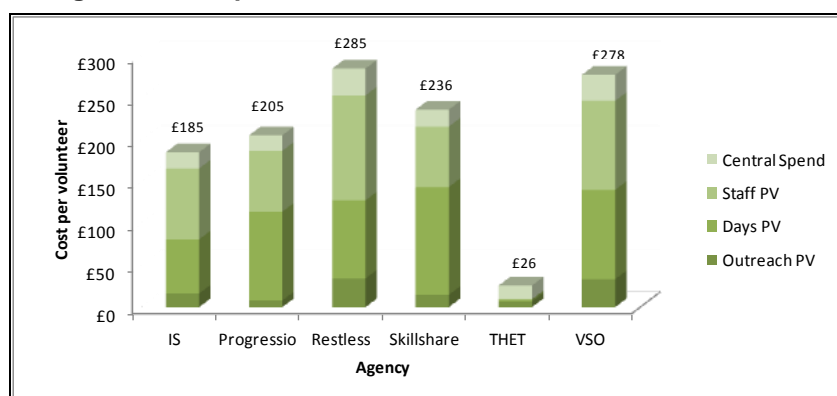
Outreach costs vary across agency, with Progressio and THET making use of existing networks and achieving greater efficiency. Assessment days have been combined in the data so it is therefore not possible to extrapolate variance in agency spend. Skillshare and VSO have recorded the highest costs here, although Skillshare has been more successful at recruiting from harder-to-reach groups. VSO and Restless have recorded the highest overall cost per volunteer, even though both agencies have had existing youth programmes for a number of years. Both have recorded particularly high costs per volunteer for agency staff although this is in part due to lower staff subsidisation compared with other agencies.

Phase 3 – Pre-departure training: We are unable to assess the efficiency of pre-departure training as within the centralised training expenditure data there is insufficient disaggregation between budget lines.

Phase 4 – Overseas placements: Skillshare has recorded by far the highest cost per volunteer for the overseas implementation phase, due to the high spend on logistics (particularly in-country accommodation) as well as in-country programme design/risk management. The lower efficiency for project design suggests that in-country management costs are too high with a Country Programme Coordinator and Programme Assistants for all countries. The Evaluation Team has not been able to ascertain any further reasons for the high expenditure against the programme design/risk management budget line. International Service also has a large staff team for each country but some of these costs are subsidised. VSO and Restless have achieved higher efficiency with logistics due to the wider provision of home-stays (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Cost per volunteer for Overseas Implementation[29]

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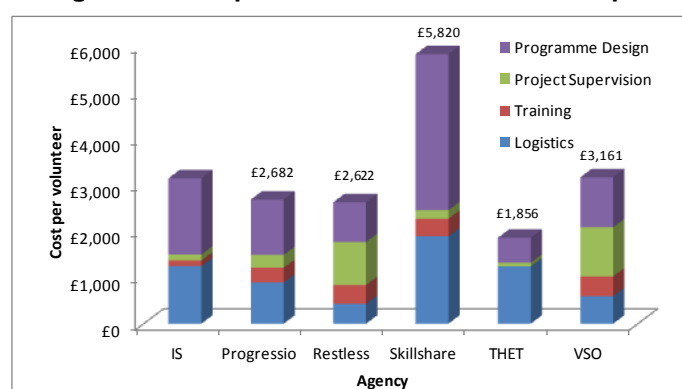
[28] Note: a) calculations based on 846 volunteers who have applied and been selected before 31 Aug; b) PCB allocations have been included and distributed across agencies proportionally to the target number of recruited volunteers.
[29] Note: a) calculations based on 313 overseas volunteers; b) data incomplete as not all costs have been provided by agencies yet, and placement data for September has not been included; c) data under project supervision line not complete as some partner grants and supervisors have not been paid yet - this explains in part, for example, the low cost PV for THET.

VSO and Restless placement models have recorded a much higher cost per volunteer for project supervision than the other agencies, although these are the only organisations to employ a formal 1:1 or 2:1 international to national volunteer ratio. VSO also has a larger number of project partners and therefore higher expenditure on partner grants, and is the only agency to employ programme supervisors in place of Team Leaders. **However, due to the lack of disaggregated data by type of placement (existing versus new placement, or challenging placement), it is not possible at this stage to conduct an analysis of the different costs associated with different placement types and whether one model is more efficient and effective than another. This is far from ideal, and should be rectified for the remainder of the programme.**

The Economy of ICS

Figures 7a and 7b below demonstrate the percentage and total value of costs distributed across the different phases of the volunteer journey for each agency.[30]

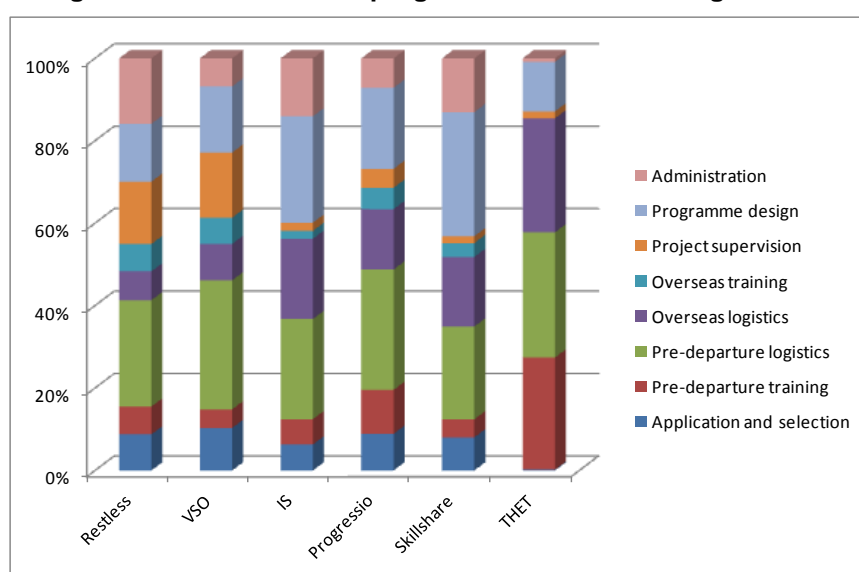**Figure 7a: Distribution of programme costs across agencies**

Figure 7b: Distribution of programme costs across agencies

AGENCY EXPENDITURE BY PHASE (£)	Restless	VSO	IS	Progressio	Skillshare	THET
Application and selection	31,161	54,786	28,194	20,014	44,057	189
Pre-departure training	23,985	23,985	27,443	23,985	23,985	24,418
Pre-departure logistics	91,681	166,207	108,616	65,755	123,411	27,282
Overseas logistics	24,875	46,919	87,014	32,960	92,553	24,831
Overseas training	23,616	33,803	8,533	11,716	18,518	0
Project supervision	53,753	83,843	8,882	10,308	9,029	1,509
Programme design	49,843	85,189	115,374	44,247	165,072	10,771
Administration	56,479	36,233	62,935	16,123	71,648	784

We also include in Figure 8a below a graph showing the distribution of costs across the different phases of the journey for ICS as a whole. The data itself is insufficient which means that it does not provide a clear basis for making economies through cost savings. This is particularly so as the expenditure data cannot be analysed by placement model type, and because the different levels of subsidisation (e.g. using own venues, part payment for staff time) are not factored in. Nevertheless, **the data should be used as part of a broader discussion between DFID and the ICS agencies on appropriate areas for cost savings, and efficiencies**.

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[30] The phases selected for analysis are based on the budget lines against which expenditure is allocated and recorded by the ICS consortium, e.g. phases 1 and 2 are merged under the line "Application and Selection". Volunteer Development and Evaluation are not included in the analysis due to very little being spent here so far; pre-departure training costs allocated to the PCB have been distributed evenly across the agencies; other PCB costs (under "application and selection" and "administration" are not included)

Figures 8a and 8b: Costs distributed by phase
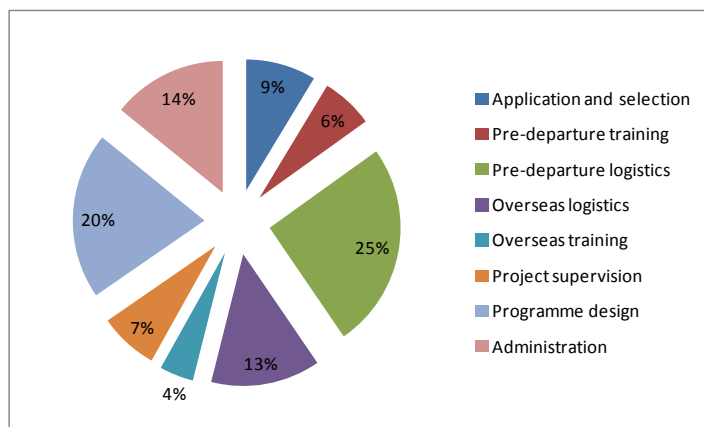
CONSORTIUM EXPENDITURE (£)	
Application and selection	198,957
Pre-departure training	147,798
Pre-departure logistics	582,953
Overseas logistics	309,152
Overseas training	96,186
Project supervision	167,324
Programme design	470,496
Administration	324,713

The remaining sections consider unit costs that are common across all agencies, and where these appear to be out of line with a benchmarked figure.

Flight Costs

The benchmarking of flight costs against those recorded by VSO in 2010 show that the average volunteer flight should be around £875, with around 21% costing over the budgeted amount of £950. The graph below shows that the budgeted cost was exceeded for 7 countries for a total of 85 volunteers (27%) (see Figure 9). The VSO benchmarking guide also demonstrates that some of the countries under ICS for which flight costs have exceeded the budget are typically expensive destinations.

Figure 9: Average Flight Cost per Country (£s)[31]
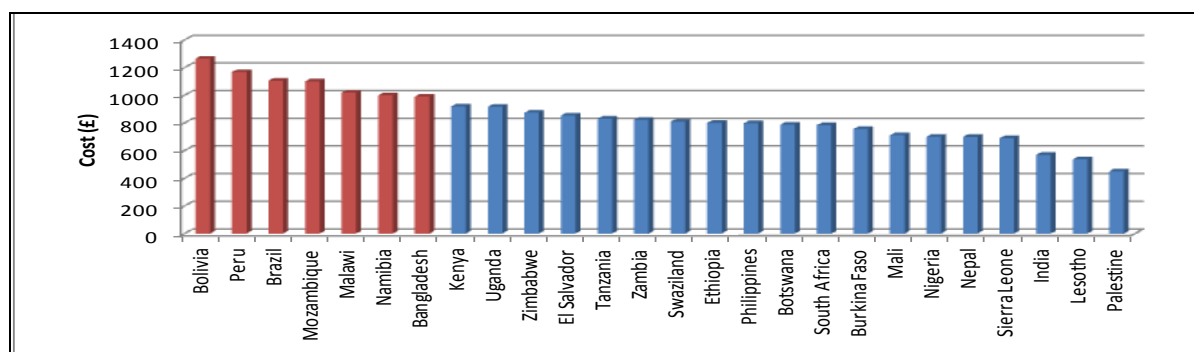
Progressio is the only agency to exceed the budgeted average flight cost of £950, although the countries visited are at the higher end of the expense scale (as shown in Figure 10 below).

Figure 10: Average Flight Cost by Agency

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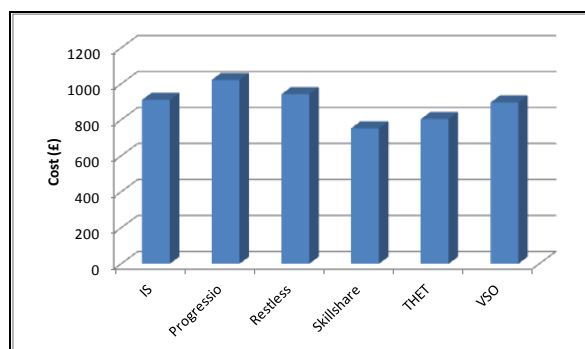
[31] Note: a) additional flight costs incurred by returnees not included; b) some flight (and visa) cost data for some agencies not available

Visa Costs

Visa costs have overall been procured at the expected level, except for India and Tanzania which are in excess of expected cost (see Figure 11). Visa costs are widely variable across agency, partly due to the absence of data from some agencies which explains the high average cost for THET (Tanzania). The statistics for Skillshare are also skewed by the higher than expected visa costs for India and Tanzania.

Figure 11: Average Visa Cost per Country
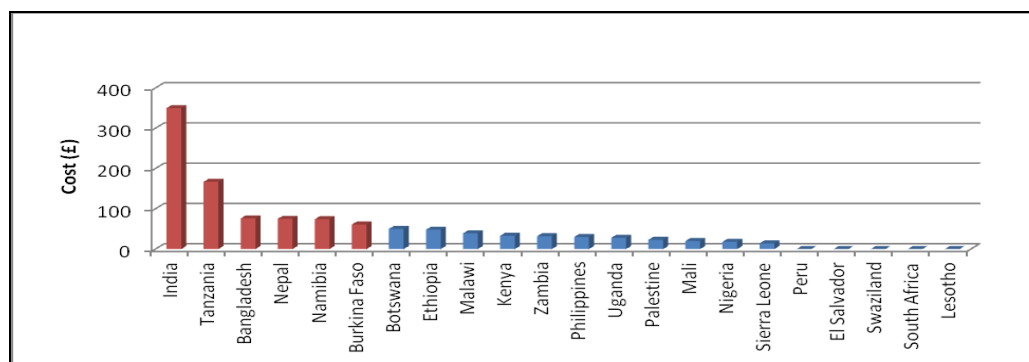
Accommodation and Subsistence Costs:

Accommodation and subsistence costs vary widely due to different country and agency models (Figure 12). Some countries, such as Nepal, where agencies operate home stays yield significantly lower costs compared to countries such as Bolivia, Brazil and Palestine where accommodation costs are higher than the budgeted amount of £50 per volunteer.[32]

Figure 12: Average Accommodation and Subsistence Costs per Country
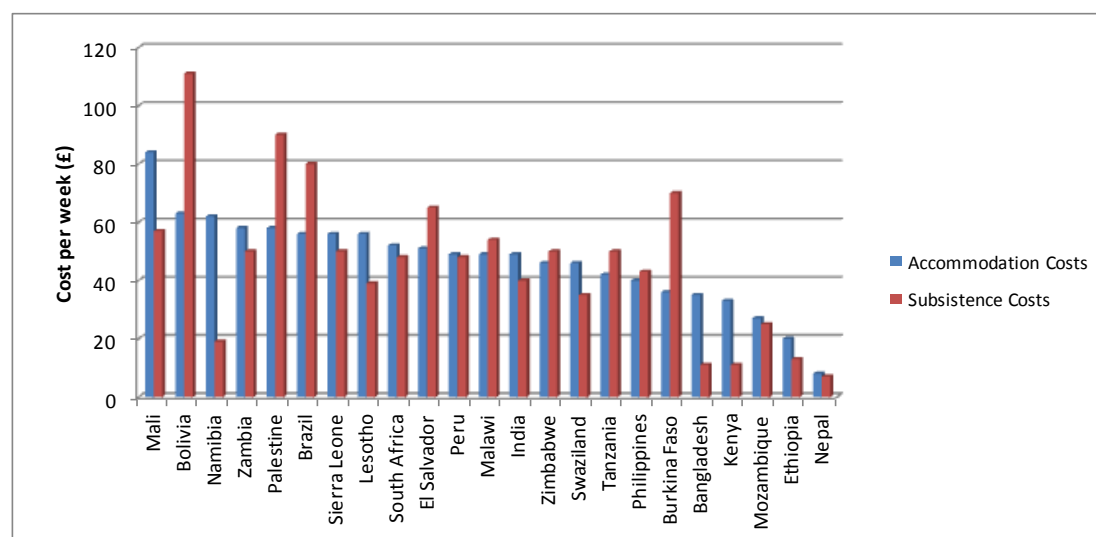
International Service and Progressio have recorded the highest expenditure for both accommodation and subsistence. Progressio costs have entailed extra expense in arranging volunteer houses (and are overall just within budget); International Service costs for both accommodation and subsistence are above budget and appear to represent less value for money, especially as host homes have been arranged in some countries. However, costs to

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[32] Note: a) calculations based on number of weeks spent in field up to and including 31/8 and excluding one week spent on in-country training; b) some accommodation and subsistence costs for some agencies not available at this stage; c) there are potential inaccuracies in the data due to difficulty in comparing costs across agencies as some accommodation costs are paid for in advance and others at a later date; some data from agencies has been inaccurate, e.g. Nepal where estimated placement costs for accommodation are £8 per volunteer but actual expenditure data shows a much higher spend.

house volunteers in shared accommodation have entailed set up costs and therefore higher than expected total costs for the first cohort of volunteers. VSO, whilst recording lower costs per volunteer for accommodation, still record costs higher than budgeted: the average weekly cost of £40 is significantly higher than expected given that most volunteers are placed in host homes (Figure 13). It must be emphasised, however, that due to wide variation in how costs have been met and recorded by each agency at this stage of the pilot, it is not possible to gain accurate data on accommodation and subsistence costs per country and therefore infer which country placements are providing the best economy and value for money. Moreover, agencies have not benchmarked accommodation and subsistence costs against cost of living measures which would be recommended to ensure that budgeted amounts reflect the actual cost of living.

Figure 13: Accommodation and Subsistence Costs by Agency
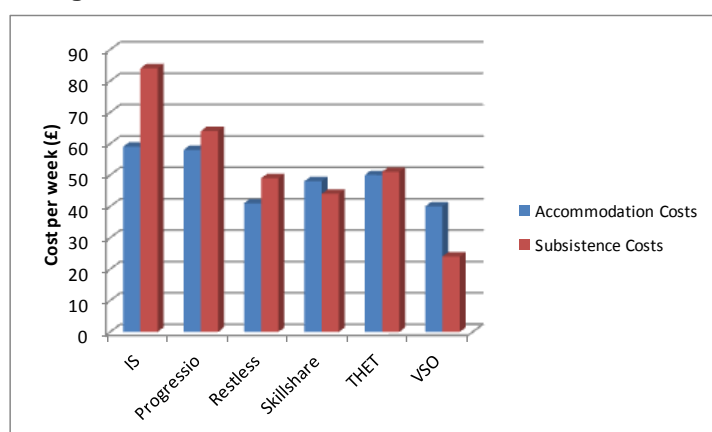
Figure 14 below shows the costs so far of delivering the ICS programme in each of the 26 recipient countries.[33] In spite of the caveats around data accuracy at this stage, it is clear that placements in Brazil and Bolivia, at over £2500 per volunteer, are very expensive to run due to the high flight and subsistence costs.

Figure 14: ICS in-country expenditure: accommodation, subsistence, visas and flights

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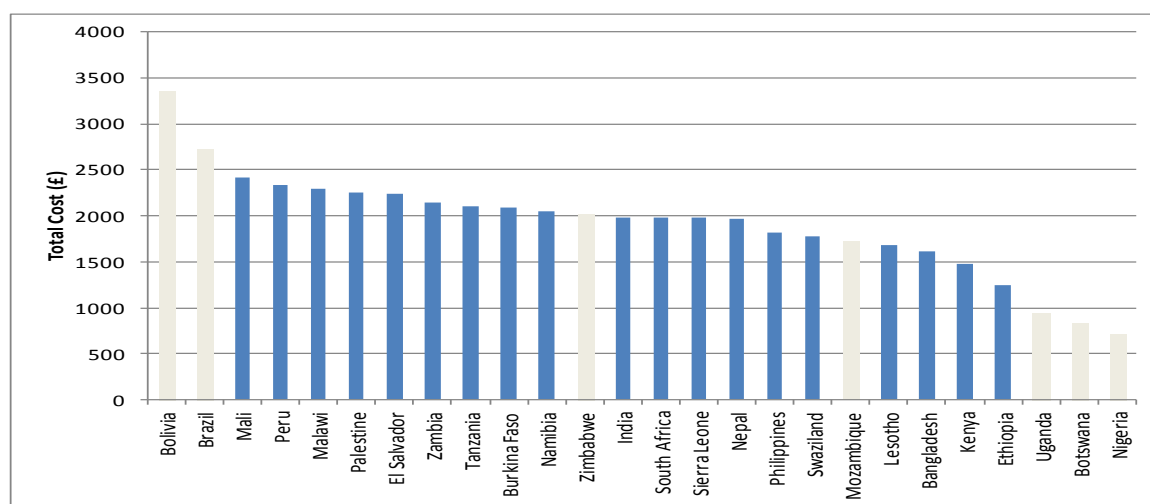
[33] Costs are based on 313 overseas volunteers and flight, visa, accommodation and subsistence costs for each. Accommodation and subsistence costs are multiplied up to 12 weeks in all cases. A country shaded in grey denotes missing data. Caution: potential inaccuracies in data due to some country costs having not yet been recorded centrally and others paid for in advance.

7. Lessons Learnt and good practice to inform sustainability and roll out of the programme

7.1. Programme design/ monitoring

- This ICS pilot is testing interesting approaches and different models to generate learning around the objectives DFID has set for the ICS programme. Initial feedback this early on is valuable in the context of the sustainability and roll out of the programme, but findings are limited, highlighting why **it is good practice to evaluate a completed pilot programme *before* rolling out to scale**.

- **Infrastructure for financial reporting systems has to be in place from the start** of a programme such as this where effective financial analysis, management and VFM assessment is such an important aspect. At present there are still inconsistencies in some costings and gaps in the information/ monitoring figures which have hampered budget reforecasting and the VFM analysis for this Review. This has also meant no judgement of the effectiveness/ efficiency of the balance between Consortium and Agency- led parts of the programme has been possible.

- **The means current means testing system is not effective in terms of the diversity aspirations of the programme or in generating revenue**: While young volunteers from lower income households are clearly keen to take up the opportunity offered by the ICS programme, other income groups have not been willing or able to make the required contribution proposed in the current means testing arrangements. However, there is a consensus among the Consortium partners and (importantly) the volunteers that universal fund raising, albeit graded or supported by scholarships would be equitable and help to generate commitment to participation as well as income for the programme.

- **Quality standards** are valuable tools in quality assurance and generating discussion about different aspects of the programme and enabling Consortium partners to add value to the programme where they have a comparative advantage or greater experience.

- **None of the agencies are running a full cost recovery model**. The pilot is demonstrating where this needs to be addressed for each agency in relation to their particular approach.

7.2. Phases 1 and 2:

- **The recruitment and selection system:** Using an agency specific process for recruitment and selection allows each agency to create a clear volunteer journey, supported from the application stage and resulting in strong "brand" loyalty.

- **The mix of agencies is adding value:** each has a brand value which allows efficient reach to different audiences; they cover a range of countries; local partnerships and ways of working cover a range of development issues and target beneficiaries which help to maximise opportunities for the diverse target audience to participate.

7.3. Phase 3:

- **Pre-departure training of older volunteers:** Team Leaders have a challenging role on placements and their pre-departure training should reflect this e.g. managing group dynamics, group development, leadership (see lessons in Phase 4). Careful consideration of their support needs and training in a future programme has potential to strengthen placements.

- **Pre-departure lead-in time:** Sufficient time is needed to develop placements well and to be able to give volunteers detailed information prior to departure.

- **Providing volunteers with clear and reasonably detailed information about placements**, including their likely placement activity and living arrangements can reduce anxiety of the volunteer (and their family); offer a narrative for fundraising, help to manage expectations of volunteers (which has been a problem in some placements) and allow volunteers to adequately prepare for their placement (both mentally and materially).

Box 5: THET and International Service – good practice for Pre-departure preparation

> THET and International Service volunteers knew which placements they would be on by the time they started their pre-parture training. International Service also used the assessment days to identify key characteristics of volunteers in order create a balanced team, and identify a "key worker" (UK staff) to support each volunteer from initial selection to departure.

7.4.   *Phase 4: Placements*

- **Effective management of volunteers while on placements can be a challenge:** The achievements of young volunteers working for an extended period in small groups to achieve development impacts is mediated through effective management of the group dynamics as the groups form, storm, norm and perform[34]. This can be a challenge for young Team Leaders with little experience and in turn, they require adequate support. Clear roles and responsibilities among the volunteer groups, Agency in-country staff and local partners help to establish boundaries and reduce dependency. As successive cycles of recruitment attract a more diverse range of behavioural challenges, this is likely to become more of an issue as the Pilot progresses.

- **Home-stays add considerable value** to the overall impact of international youth volunteering. Field evidence, although limited, confirms experience built up over many years in the GX programme[35].

- **As a group the volunteers have strong communication skills and considerable creativity:** Some placement models are using this to strengthen critical reflection e.g. by establishing team roles (Empower), developing additional activities (GX and YA VSO) and most agencies are strengthening their own website content with volunteer reports.

- **Lessons around factors which influence the effectiveness and impact of placements** are already emerging. It is clear that pre-placement planning is an important driver of success, and that involving local partners actively from the start of placement development helps to ensure that the placements fit within their wider objectives. The model developed by International Service is defined as good practice in relation to these aspects.

Box 6: International Service – Good practice re Placement Planning

> olunteers negotiate their placement objectives during their orientation and work with local partners to identify specific placement jectives. The volunteers then spend time devising their own programme plan which includes establishing a baseline, monitoring d evaluation framework, agreeing this with the local partner and reviewing it at 4, 8 and 12 weeks. A post departure follow up aluation allows the country partner to embed changes within a wider M&E framework.

- **Guided Learning is adding value to the placements:** Guided learning is an important element of the ICS programme and a structured approach adds value to the placements.

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[34] Stages in group development first identified by Bruce Tuckman in 1965. In a revision of the model in 1977 collaborating with Mary Ann Jensen, "Adjourning" was added to include the final stages of a group that is ending – an important phase for ICS to take into account as it will coincide with reverse culture shock as groups return to the UK

[35] "Global Xchange - What impact on the volunteer?" VSO 2011 forthcoming

Box 7: Global Exchange and Youth Action – Good Practice re Guided learning

Global Citizenship sessions are held one afternoon a week during placements. One volunteer pair prepares a participative session a key development issue which relates to their placement/ community. The session also includes time for planning a monthly community Action Day, also on a relevant development issue. This is organised by sub-groups taking responsibility for the programme, media/ publicity and risk assessments. In addition, each participant also has direct 1:1 supervision sessions with their supervisor every two weeks with part of the session used to identify personal learning objectives and tracking progress on these objectives.

- It is challenging to assess the comparative effectiveness of the approaches being tested. The experiences of volunteers on placements are highly context specific, so **good practice in one setting may not be appropriate in another**, or with a different group of volunteers.

- **Monitoring and evaluation at the end of placements can only capture activity level outputs** so it is important that the framework allows for later return to capture longer term impacts.

8. Conclusions

The ICS Pilot is an ambitious programme, seeking to innovate and break new ground in international youth volunteering programmes. Although it is early days in the delivery of the programme, the Pilot is succeeding in generating some emerging findings on the effectiveness of the new approaches and models being tested.

The design of the Pilot suffers from some weaknesses – most notably a clear understanding of the interdependence of impacts expected to result from the programme. There may be issues about investing aid money in the development of UK young people unless a longer term view is taken on the engagement and leadership of young people in international and/or UK community development continuing on their return to the UK. Clear weighting of these types of impacts would be valuable in terms of more effective programme design, clarity among stakeholders, and accountability of DFID's expenditure and evaluation of the programme.

The first round of placements has involved on-going adjustments and considerable learning for the implementing agencies. However despite the diversity of placement approaches, objectives and contexts, the pilot is demonstrating that the overall theory of change is valid: young people can contribute to international development, they can galvanise reactions in host communities, be incredibly creative and uncover unexpected opportunities for community engagement and development. The site visits provided clear evidence (from volunteers, host organisations and agency staff) of positive emerging impacts upon volunteers participating in the ICS programme.

Some solid criteria for good practice are already emerging and this review has shown that further work is needed to strengthen placement implementation and demonstrate the validity of the theories of change that the Consortium members are using.

The **consortium approach** is generating some lessons concerning what is working or otherwise in the process side of the delivery of ICS. The benefits of the consortium approach include "brand value" of the individual agencies as well as their considerable experience in managing international volunteer (and youth) schemes. Stronger ICS branding should be a priority for the Consortium to ensure sustainability when recruitment for the roll-out programme starts. Some inconsistencies in approaches to the delivery of the different phases of the ICS need to be ironed out and there is evidence of a struggle to generate an ICS consortium rather than a collection of six agencies implementing ICS. It remains a challenge to combine the agencies under the ICS banner, while also allowing the flexibility and variety of approaches which add value to the offer of the programme as a whole. Overall the Consortium bases its

activities in relation to the agency locations, incentives and resources rather than on volunteer demand/ potential demand and there are limited incentives for cross-programme activity unless it is agency driven (e.g. a particular focus on target groups of volunteers or sector based placements). Potential cost-efficiency benefits of centralising organisation of phases 1 and 2 for a roll out ICS programme needs to be examined carefully while retaining the added value of Agency branding.

Similar strengths and weaknesses are evident in the **government approach** to youth citizenship, and in particular global citizenship. DFID has maintained a hands-on approach to management of the ICS programme and similar effort in relation to cross-government policy development would help to validate and embed the ICS programme within the wider government understanding of youth participation and citizenship in the "big society". Strengthening the positive initial partnership working between DFID, the NCS and the PCB should help to link the ICS to an emerging UK youth citizenship framework.

It is too early to draw conclusive findings about **value for money** from the limited dataset and a strong lesson learned is that infrastructure for financial analysis and monitoring, and other areas of data monitoring needs to be in place from the start. Closer monitoring is needed to assess the **effectiveness** of each ICS stage including volunteer feedback from the KAP surveys and training, feedback from in-country partners, and some data around measuring the cost per audience targeted through UK re-engagement events. Much of this is already in place.

More is available to make judgements on **efficiency.** Variance in data for recruitment and selection costs (Phases 1&2) suggests that there is still room for improvement through a more consistent (and possibly centralised) approach which could deliver improved recruitment efficiencies. For the placements (Phase 4), there is wide variance between the cost per volunteer (PV), with agencies ranging from £1,856 PV to £5,820 PV. While accepting that different agency models have different approaches and benefits, it is still far from clear whether these additional placement costs (differing by nearly £4,000 per volunteer between agencies) can be justified because they provide sufficient added-value.

In terms of **economy**, the evidence is not conclusive but suggests that cost savings could potentially be made through better procurement practices of flights, accommodation, etc. In particular: (a) for flights, 27% of volunteer flights are over the budgeted amount of £950 per flight (at least one agency is addressing economies of scale in their flight costs); (b) there is a wide variance in accommodation and subsistence costs, not all of which are due to differences in placement locations.

In summary, the evidence so far on effectiveness, efficiency and economy suggests the need for a more consistent approach by agencies – which for some stages (such as recruitment) may require a centralised approach. While undoubtedly each agency stands to gain more from its own individual approach (including the importance of its own identity), it is essential that the best use of resources is considered by all. To achieve this, it will be necessary to monitor VFM indicators more carefully, so that VFM progress can be better benchmarked and decisions can be taken about delivering better value against the resource inputs.

9. Recommendations for the Pilot and Implications for the ICS roll-out

9.1. Partnership and coordination

RECOMMENDATIONS
Co-ordination between DFID and the NCS team at Cabinet Office should continue and be strengthened. On-going efforts at joint working are welcomed and have considerable

potential to go further. A case in point is the online tool being developed by NCS to ensure volunteers are able to connect and maintain contact – enabling ICS volunteers to access this tool could add considerable value to the UK engagement of ICS volunteers and improve efficiency of the Consortium.

There is potential for the NCS to build on the personal development and leadership outcomes of ICS. DFID and ICS programme managers should explore ways of linking ICS volunteers, through NCS, to build their participation and leadership within on-going UK community development work and global citizenship initiatives.

9.2. Programme design/ monitoring

RECOMMENDATIONS

ICS programme outcomes (the personal, social and leadership development of young people, development impacts within the community they are placed in, and their on-going engagement as active "global citizens" in the UK) **should be weighted**. **Outputs and purpose level indicators need to reflect the volunteer journey**.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ROLL OUT

Lessons from the Pilot should continue to inform the roll-out of ICS. As a process based programme, DFID should recognise the time required for impacts to emerge. Most learning from the pilot programme will be evident after the roll-out programme has started so strong systems are needed to ensure that important lessons can be incorporated into the wider programme in 2012 and that realistic timeframes are used for impact evaluation in the roll out of ICS.

The design of the roll-out programme should justify the cost-efficiency and the cost-effectiveness of any agency versus consortium approach at each stage of the volunteer journey.

A VFM monitoring framework should be included within tenders for the roll-out programme, ensuring standardised reporting and a comprehensive financial infrastructure is in place.

A roll-out programme should ensure full cost recovery unless subsidisation has been agreed and clearly costed.

9.3. Phases 1&2: Recruitment and selection

RECOMMENDATION

The reasons for limited applications by higher income groups should be explored. Once this is more clearly understood, the options for ensuring income is generated and equity is maintained should be reviewed. At present universal fund raising appears to be a preferable alternative, albeit graded or supported by scholarships.

Systems should be amended to address excess demand for places, transfer of places between agencies and shortfalls in numbers by some agencies.

The efficiency of the website arrangements should be critically examined. Lessons should be used to inform planning of the roll-out programme.

Further VFM analysis is required to assess each agency's approach to subsidisation (staffing, etc.) of Phases 1 & 2 so that the analysis of recruitment and selection can be produced on a more comparable basis.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ROLL OUT

In itself, income is an important criteria within the diversity objectives for recruitment and should be part of an integrated approach to diversity objectives and quality assurance measures designed to ensure that the highest calibre young volunteers are selected.

The age range for recruitment should be increased to 25 years and include Team Leaders within this age range.

The recruitment strategy should address "raising the bar" to select the stronger applicants among different target groups; this should also consider cost efficient ways of dealing with higher demand for places and identify ways of linking different volunteers to placement opportunities where their skill sets can be used.

9.4.   Phase 3: Pre-departure training

RECOMMENDATION

Linkages between the pre-departure training and the placements: The Consortium should consider how to make the overall package of 3 days more in-depth and address the training needs of Team Leaders more specifically.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ROLL OUT

Economies of scale that increased numbers create should be considered when designing pre-departure training.

9.5.   Phase 4: Placements

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthening placement implementation:

a. On-going support and training Team Leaders should be enhanced. Team leaders would benefit from differentiated training which focuses on their Team Leader role (pre-departure and potentially during their placement).

b. Agencies should explore the opportunities to build additional learning into their guided learning packages, in collaboration with in-country partners.

c. Where repeat cohorts of volunteers were being hosted by the same organisation continuity planning (e.g. handover notes) and long term planning of involvement with the ICS programme are useful in terms of enhancing and embedding impact.

d. Where home stays are not possible, it may be valuable for the Pilot to explore other options.[36]

Greater use of a range of media creatively to capture volunteer stories: The creativity of young volunteers remains a relatively untapped resource. There is potential to capitalise on this in guided learning, communications in-country and UK engagement by encouraging the volunteers to be creative in their personal reflection and using this for communication (learning diaries could be encouraged through use of art work, photography, dance and drama, audio, video, songs, poetry).

Understanding how placements contribute to programme objectives Consider development of a typology for placements and volunteer groups in order to allow more systematic analysis of key factors leading to change and the value for money these offer.

Monitoring and evaluation frameworks should continue to be strengthened to gather evidence on development impact. Further work is needed in this pioneering aspect of the

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[36] These could include volunteers spending a week end with families as part of their orientation (used by Progressio) or as in the case of Platform2 volunteers (who stayed in hostels in Ghana), a matching of each volunteer to a family with whom they were expected to spend one day each week worked very successfully.

programme to locate placement impacts within wider programmatic changes in-country and over a longer time frame than three months. A learning review of this aspect would be of wider interest and might merit DFID hosting an open workshop in 2012 facilitated by the PCB working group.

9.6. Value for Money implications

RECOMMENDATIONS

Greater efforts need to be made towards a more efficient approach by learning and implementing lessons from each agency.

Systematic measures of effectiveness should be undertaken, including around volunteer feedback from the KAP surveys, detailed feedback from the training, feedback from in-country partners, and around measuring the cost per audience targeted through UK re-engagement events.

Key indicators on cost-effectiveness should be created based on effectiveness data so that value-added (relative to cost) can be compared across the ICS.

A detailed analysis of the value-added of spending to recruit particular groups, and of six agencies each conducting their own approaches should be undertaken, using disaggregated information on the relative value and costs (e.g. per advert) of different recruitment strategies (for different regions, income bands).

More detailed data and analysis of cost per volunteer for placements should be developed, taking agency specific subsidisation into account. This will enable a fairer (and more comparable) analysis of which placements are unreasonably high.

IMPLICATIONS

A VFM framework should be included at the design stage of the roll-out, together with detailed proposals for data management and web site analysis.

A matrix of suggested VFM indicators to be monitored is included as an annex to this report (Annex 6).

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Comparison of ICS with other volunteering schemes:

Country/ programme	Target group of YP	Pre-departure inputs	Means testing	Impacts	Post-placement engagement
ICS	Aspirational targets for gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, income	Compulsory 3 days training: 2 days centralised, one day agency specific	Yes, free placements for < £25k	Development impact in host and UK communities	Encouraged to engage in global citizenship actions on return
German Weltwärts programme	Stated objectives to target ethnic and income diversity although no quotas	25 days of compulsory seminars + language courses tailored to placement	None, and no compulsory fundraising	Increased development awareness and personal development	Compulsory reflective seminar and re-engagement through development education work
French Service Civique	Targeted information drives to disadvantaged backgrounds but no quotas	Compulsory training of 3 days although no fixed training and learning framework	Yes, bursary scheme in place; no compulsory fundraising	Civic engagement and employability	No obligation to participate
Italian Servizio Civile Nationale	Inclusion of disadvantaged groups not priority	One week's training in Italy	None, and no compulsory fundraising	Increased development awareness and education	Biannual events to support civic engagement
US Peace Corps	Seeks to target volunteers from diversity of backgrounds	3 months of training	None	Increased development awareness	Employment and further education/ training opportunities and support
Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development	No diversity targets; aimed at skilled 18-30 year olds	5-day training including tools for capacity building, sustainable development and cross cultural communication	None – fully funded by AusAID	Impact on poverty reduction, sustainable development and MDGs; development awareness and education	Weekend debriefing and re-engagement event
Raleigh	Recruit across diversity of socio-economic backgrounds	Assessment weekend and development weekend; also separate leadership training weekend	None; volunteer fundraises one third of cost	Impact at community, personal and employability levels	Post-placement weekend; employability workshop

Sources: Birdwell (2011), 63-82; individual websites of national schemes; Raleigh (2009).

Annex 2: International Citizen Service – Log Frame

Milestone dates
Milestone 1 – by end Month 6 – end August 2011
Milestone 2 – by end Month 12 – end February 2012
Milestone 3 – by end Month 18 – end August 2012

PROJECT TITLE	International Citizen Service Pilot					
GOAL	**Indicator**	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	
Groups of British people, representative of the UK population contribute to global poverty reduction as active global citizens	This project phase will not measure indicators at goal level					
		Source				
PURPOSE	**Indicator P1**	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	**Assumptions**
1,250 British citizens contribute to development through international volunteering and knowledge is generated to inform future youth volunteering programmes[37]	Number of young and older volunteers disaggregated by sex, (M/F) SEG (Higher/Middle and Lower income), and region (UK regions) participate in international volunteer journey	n/a	185 volunteers ready to go overseas	1065 volunteers ready to go overseas	1250 volunteers returned to UK & completed local actions	Launch date does not move even if NCS launch moves (currently March 1) ICS generates positive media coverage and sufficient applications Agencies able to recruit staff in time for tranche of recruitment to go as planned Sound initial programme development will result in good levels of partner satisfaction In-country supervision and management will result in high completion rate of M&E tool
		Source				
		Debrief reports from each organisation where volunteers were placed Reports submitted by volunteers themselves upon return from placement				
	Indicator P2	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	
	Percentage of partner organisations hosting volunteers reporting volunteer placement was either useful or very useful on a five-point scale.	n/a	n/a	90% of hosts with completed volunteer placements report positively	90% of hosts with completed volunteer placements report positively	
		Source				
		Assessment reports from each organisation where volunteers were placed				
	Indicator P3	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	

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[37] Volunteering refers to the entire 'Volunteer Journey', which includes recruitment, induction, training, placement, and engagement in awareness-raising activities upon return to the UK.

	Criteria for effective international youth volunteering programmes generated	Agreed ICS quality standards	Terms of Reference for early evaluation complete	Mid term evaluation finalised & circulated	Final report gives criteria for each stage of volunteer journey with substantiating evidence	Enough placements generated to inform early evaluation report
		Source				
		Final Project Report & early evaluation of ICS pilot				

OUTPUT 1	**Indicator 1.1**	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	**Assumptions**
Increased demand for youth and older person development volunteering from all sections of the UK society.	Number of applications disaggregated by SEG, sex, UK region and disability	Diversity targets set across ICS consortium	Initial tracking report submitted to SC & any corrective actions taken	All targets on track to be met	Final report includes substantive information on diversity	Recruitment strategy enables effective targeting of diversity segments
		Source				Support needs for harder to reach groups can be met within the timeframe of the pilot
		Log of channels used for disseminating information				
	Indicator 1.2	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12**	**Target (Month 18)**	
	Number of recruitments disaggregated by SEG, sex, UK region and disability	0	185	1250	1250[38]	
		Source				
		Recruitment records, disaggregated as required				

OUTPUT 2	**Indicator 2.1**	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	**Assumptions**
1250 UK citizens, from groups representative of the UK public successfully complete International Volunteer Placements	The percentage of volunteers that complete full duration of placement	n/a	n/a	90% of sent volunteers complete full placements	90% of sent volunteers complete full placement	Recruitment strategy allows for 10% assumed drop-out rate
		Source				
		PCB tracker reports				

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[38] Data to be collected regarding proxy indicators of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, education/training level & status, sexual orientation and geographical origin in the UK, to facilitate analysis of diversity.

	Indicator 2.2	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	
	Percentage of volunteers reporting high satisfaction with placement	0	N/a	90% of volunteers report satisfaction	90% of volunteers report satisfaction	High completion rate of surveys Sound ICS management leads to good satisfaction levels
	Source					
	End of placement volunteer survey					
	Indicator 2.3	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	
	Percentage of organisations in the target countries supported by UK citizens that report positive benefits from the volunteer placement to the community	0	n/a	90% of host organisations report positive outcomes for the community	90% of host organisations report positive outcomes for the community	Sound initial programme development will result in good levels of community satisfaction In-country supervision and management will result in high completion rate of M&E too
	Source					
	Assessment reports from each organisation where volunteers were placed					
OUTPUT 3	**Indicator 3.1**	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	**Assumptions**
Returned UK volunteers engage in global citizenship actions in the UK	Number of volunteers reporting deeper understanding of development issues	0	0	150	1000	Global citizenship action component of the programmes are managed effectively by agencies – programme certification not received without demonstration of actions Volunteers know when they apply that global citizenship actions will be expected as a part of the programme Certification process will encourage action
		Source				
		Pre- & post-placement development knowledge self assessment ICS tracking on action completion				
	Indicator 3.2	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	
	Number of awareness-raising actions conducted by returned volunteers on global development and citizenship issues	0	N/a	937 global awareness raising actions complete	1250 global awareness raising actions complete	
		Source				
		Reports of awareness events conducted by returned volunteers				
	Indicator 3.3					
	Number of UK citizens reached through awareness-raising actions	0	N/a	50% of target reach (tbd) evidenced	100% of target reach (tbd) evidenced	An accurate measurement system for

		Reports of awareness events conducted by returned volunteers				reaching UK citizens can be created
OUTPUT 4	**Indicator 4.1**	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	**Assumptions**
Generation of knowledge on good practice to inform future UK volunteering programmes	Knowledge generated on the effectiveness of different models concerning each element of the volunteer journey	M&E framework finalised	M&E tools rolled out to all relevant parties	Early evaluation finalised & circulated	Final report gives evidence of learning for each stage of volunteer journey & used to inform rollout of pilot	Enough placements generated to inform early evaluation report
		Source				
		Final project report Early evaluation of ICS pilot				
	Indicator 4.2	**Baseline (Month 1)**	**Milestone 1 (Month 6)**	**Milestone 2 (Month 12)**	**Target (Month 18)**	Different journey models can be sufficiently tested within the timeframe of the pilot
		M&E framework finalised for journey components	First phase evaluation completed & any improvement actions taken	Early evaluation finalised & circulated	Final report gives value for money recommendations from each stage of volunteer journey & used to inform rollout of pilot	
	Value for money analysis of ICS journey including variables of placement type, volunteer background and consortium member completed	**Source**				
		Final project report Early evaluation of ICS pilot				

Annex 3: The International Citizenship Scheme Means Test

Lavinia Mitton, University of Kent September 2011

Background

At present the contribution that volunteers on the ICS have to make towards their participation varies according to the gross income of the household on which they depend. Those volunteers whose parents'/carers' households have less than £25,000 coming in do not have to pay any contribution. Those with an income of £25,000-£40,000 must pay a £1,000 contribution. Volunteers who depend on households with an income of more than £40,000 have to pay a £2,000 contribution. The upper income bracket roughly corresponds with the higher income tax band.

As well as aiming to partly finance the ICS, a means test was put in place to a certain extent to deal with the possible negative perception that the ICS is financing overseas trips at the taxpayer's expense for young people from affluent backgrounds (even though such a view overlooks the fact that all volunteers are giving time, work and effort). However such a view fails to recognise that even young people from privileged backgrounds can make a positive contribution to communities overseas and in the UK. It is felt that the current means test neither ensures that a diversity of volunteers from different income backgrounds participate in the ICS nor raises the level of financial contributions that was originally expected because fewer volunteers are assessed as having to make a contribution than was anticipated or drop out because of the cost.

The distribution of volunteers by household income is:

80.53% <£25k

11.27% £25k - £40k

8.21% >£40k

As can be seen, at the moment the ICS is mainly appealing to young people from lower income households, perhaps 'who wouldn't normally volunteer'. This has even been the case for organisations that carried out recruitment activities aimed at 18-22 year olds in general rather than lower income groups specifically (e.g. through student unions or churches). It is suspected that those who would be assessed as having to make a contribution are being put off from applying. However, diversity to reflect broader society is seen as important by some of the organisations involved in the ICS because they feel that it contributes to the personal development of all the volunteers. For others, the criterion of success is that the right people able to make a difference overseas and in the UK are recruited irrespective of their income background. There is a risk of ICS becoming seen as 'the government scheme for poorer young people'.

This research involved a focus group and interviews with experts from several different organisations that arrange overseas volunteering who have experience of the ICS means test or other ways that young people can raise money for overseas volunteering.

Advantages of the present means test

The current means test makes it clear that the ICS is for people from lower income backgrounds too and it is easy to understand. In addition, the random spot-check on household income has not revealed problematic dishonesty and volunteers and their parents/carers have cooperated in supplying documentary evidence of their income. So far experience shows that the spot-checking system is adequate (assuming that the correct eligibility criteria were originally applied) although relatively small numbers of applicants have been checked. However, there may be an issue with volunteers declaring that they are

independent when they do receive a degree of financial support from their parents/carers (see below).

Problems with the present means test

The means test is felt to be by many organisations perverse, counter-productive, divisive, and to send mixed messages. At the moment the means test appears to be putting off volunteers from better-off backgrounds, perhaps because they can afford to have an international volunteering experience with other providers (although there is no evidence for this). This is acting against the aim of achieving a diversity of volunteers.

At present the language of 'contributions' makes it unclear whether the £1,000 or £2,000 is a fee or an amount that should be raised by fundraising since those who do not have to pay a contribution are also encouraged to fundraise. In reality, not many volunteers who have had to pay a contribution have done this solely through fundraising, although this might be because of the tight deadlines between selection and departure.

In the cases where a young person's parent pays the contribution, they may have expectations of the 'service' they feel they are paying for which can lead to a negative attitude to the project they are involved in. Fundraising helps to manage expectations. At the same time, among those who do not have to pay a contribution there can be less commitment to the project and a devaluing of the experience. At least one organisation contacted in the course of this research finds that volunteers who receive bursaries are more likely to not show up or buy into the rules of the project.

The income bands are perceived to be unfair and arbitrary and the means test crude. It might also be argued that it is inconsistent to bring in parents' income when the ICS is about young people doing things for themselves. Parents/carers from the 'squeezed middle', whose income is at the lower end of the £25,000-£40,000 bracket, find it most difficult to help their children raise the contribution (the take-home pay of someone earning £25,000 is typically £370 pw, and of someone earning £40,000 is £570 pw). This is especially the case if they are supporting a partner or other children or live in an area where housing costs are high, because the means test does not take this necessary expenditure into account. In addition, in any means testing scheme there will be dissatisfaction from participants whose income falls just above the borderline for eligibility.

Furthermore, the £25,000-£40,000 bracket is enormous. For example it fails to distinguish care leavers from recent graduates or postgraduate students who are all unlikely to have to make a contribution even though their previous experiences and the opportunities open to them are likely to be very different. There are also problems with basing the means test on household income in the last tax year using the P60 as evidence if the household's circumstances have changed.

In the current means test there are problems with assessing students' incomes and the messages about whether they are considered as dependent on their parent's/carer's household are perceived as blurred. Even an apparently straightforward means test such as the current one is not black and white in practice as students in full time education may also be working, depend mostly on grants and loans, or receive irregular help from their families. The spot checks are unlikely to identify volunteers who declare they are financially independent but yet are being financially supported to some degree by their parents/carers. More guidelines are needed from DFID as to which students should be considered financially independent of their parents.

Another problem for volunteers who have departed so far has been the tight deadline for raising their contribution, especially for students who needed to concentrate on their exams. At least 3 months is needed to raise the sort of sums that young people from better-off households currently have to

contribute. On the other hand, volunteers lose interest and some drop out if the gap between selection and departure is too long.

Option 1

The circumstances of volunteers could be investigated more thoroughly. For example, volunteers could be selected for bursaries according to whether they have had the opportunity to travel abroad before, what they hope to get out of the experience and their educational background, as well as their family situation, where they live, and pressures that might affect their ability to fundraise. However, potential volunteers may be discouraged from applying because the message about who is eligible for a bursary is not easy to understand when they are awarded on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, the experience of organisations that award selective bursaries following an interview is that the interview lasts an hour and not all organisations have the resources to conduct in-depth interviews.

Option 2

Another option is to adjust the income bands or lower the contribution amounts. For example the £1,000 contribution could be lowered to £500, and the £2,000 contribution lowered to £1,000. This would make the ICS more attractive to volunteers from middle income households. If there must be a means test, it should take family size into account. Higher income brackets for households supporting two or more children in full time education would be a possible model that does not introduce too much extra complexity. Adding an extra income bracket in recognition that the £25,000-£40,000 bracket is enormous is another option. To overcome the potential difficulty in sending clear messages about who has to contribute under such a system there could there be an interactive ready reckoner on the website where an individual can input their income and find out whether or not they have to make a contribution. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) may have survey data (e.g. from the Living Costs and Food Survey) on people who are making contributions to students outside the household. If so, this could be used to ascertain the distribution of the incomes these households and what their other outgoings are.

Option 3

Quotas (formal or informal) could be introduced for the numbers to be accepted in each income band. However, such a system would introduce constraints on the aim of selecting those young people most suited to a project.

Option 4

Another alternative is to set all volunteers a modest fundraising target whatever their parent's/carer's household's income. Several organisations felt that fundraising by all young people is a viable alternative to the means test. The experience of volunteering organisations is that a target of fundraising £600-£850 for a specific project is achievable for the majority of volunteers as long as they are given sufficient time and support. Support could include volunteers being provided with a pack of ideas or being put in contact with peers who have fundraised successfully. Extra time should be given to people struggling to fundraise. It would be a great help to the fundraising process if volunteers know which project they are going to before they start to fundraise as it is easier to get donations from the public for specific projects rather than vaguely for 'doing good'. However, organisations need resources to be able to support fundraising.

All of the organisations contacted in the course of this research were of the opinion that fundraising is a vital experience and should be an integral part of preparations for departure and of engagement with the project. It leads to skills and ensures that volunteers are doing something for themselves and is a leveller among income groups. It will help forge links with community organisations in the UK. The experience of the organisations contacted for this research is that young people respond positively to the need to

fundraise. Another advantage of setting the same fundraising target for all volunteers is that this is a message which is easy to understand. In some cases it may be feasible to organise the fundraising into a team activity.

It is possible that volunteers' parents may provide all of the money, meaning that the young person does not have to fundraise. Some volunteers have drawn on their savings but it is not known how many volunteers have taken out a loan to finance their contribution. These volunteers will miss out on the valuable experience of fundraising, so it will be important ask volunteers to provide some evidence that they have made an effort to fundraise under this option.

Having a household income of less than £25,000 does not equate to being hard to engage. The hardest to engage are young people with additional disadvantages. To overcome this bursaries could be awarded to those young people who are most marginalised, or they could be given a lower fundraising target (perhaps £300). Volunteers who might fall into this category are ex-offenders, care leavers, young people not in employment, education or training, and those from households receiving Income Support or JobSeekers Allowance. Organisations contacted did not favour blanket exemptions for certain volunteers (e.g. young carers), but thought exemptions should be arranged on a case-by-case basis. Partnership working with 'bridging organisations' (e.g. probation services, Connexions, youth clubs, Prince's Trust) is essential to identifying volunteers with disadvantaged backgrounds, who may be lacking in confidence. However, it is important that the ICS is not publically perceived as a 'reward' for offending behaviour or receiving benefits.

Bursaries or grants might also be offered to people from lower income backgrounds if they are able to explain why fundraising was not achievable for them or for up-front costs that not all young people can carry e.g. footwear, visas, travel costs. The name of such bursaries will change attitudes towards them, and it has been suggested that the language of 'scholarships' be used.

Implications

In conclusion, there is much to recommend a scheme in which all volunteers have a target of between £600 and £850 that they have to raise by fundraising activity and in which they are provided with enough time and support to achieve this. Even with a modest target of £600 more contributions will be raised than under the current system.

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Paul Rompani – Lattitude

Ruth Talbot – VSO (PCB)

Annex 4: Selected Volunteers Break Down[39]: March – August 2011

Breakdown of statistics for selected volunteers

Gender	No. of UKVs	% of UKVs	Aspirational target
Male	276	33.25%	49%
Female	554	66.75%	51%
Total	830		

Ethnicity	No. of UKVs	% of UKVs	Aspirational targets
Asian	98	11%	5%
Chinese	5	0.60%	2%
White	567	68.31%	89%
Black	92	11.08%	3%
Mixed	40	4.82%	1%
Other	28	3.37%	
Total	803		

Religion	No. of UKVs	% of UKVs	Aspirational targets[40]
Christian	288	34.70%	71.8%
Hindu	23	2.77%	1%
Muslim	79	9.52%	2.8%
Jewish	5	0.60%	0.5%
Sikh	5	0.06%	0.6%
Buddhist	3	0.36%	0.3%
Other	406	48.92%	15.1%
None	21	2.53%	7.8%
Total	830		0.6%

Disability	No. of UKVs	% of UKVs	Aspirational targets
Yes	10	1.20%	5%
No	820	98.8%	95%
Total	830		

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[39] Taken from Consortium first Project Progress Report to DFID: Quarter to End August 2011

[40] The aspirational targets are taken from the 2001 census. It should be noted that we expect a significant divergence between actual figures and these because of the significant change in religious attitudes and backgrounds of the 18-22 population in the UK. Specifically the Muslim population is significant larger, Christian population significantly smaller, and the 'no' religion group significantly larger.

Annex 5: Placement Models used by different agencies

	Target number	Group size (UKVs)	NVs	Home stay	Group Supervision	Notable aspects
VSO Youth Action **VSO Global Exchange**	190 Y2 Youth 140 Y2 Partner 90	10 (work in pairs 1 UKV:1 NV)	Yes (10 in group)	Yes (1 UK volunteer placed with 1 NV)	Supervisor (paid, UK and National) Country Office	1 week orientation in country ½ day weekly learning sessions (Global Citizenship Days) and monthly Community Action Days. Volunteers lead mid-phase review. GX has a reciprocal visit to the UK. Each leg is 3 months.
Restless Development	114 Y2Y 126 Y2Partner incl 40 older leaders	4-8	Yes often 2UKV:1NV[41]	Mainly home stay	Team leader (23 years and older) 1:6 volunteers Country Office	1 week orientation on arrival. Volunteers trained in basic organisational development skills to transfer to grass roots CSOs
International Service	24Y2Y 176 Y2Partner Incl 30 older leaders	4-6	No	Varies	Team leader (23 years and older) Country Office	1 week in country orientation. Language training as needed. UKVs negotiate project and undertake baseline, monitoring and evaluation
Skillshare International	250 (older 70 leaders)	2-4 including leader	No	Varies	Team leader (23 years and older, stay for 6 months); Skilled Specialist; Project Managers (stay for 12 months)	Groups in country for 12 weeks. 1 week orientation in country, includes language training as required. Placements often focus on peer education through sport, dance and other youth activities.
Progressio	120 (including 30 older team leaders/ skilled specialists)	4	No	No (encouraging links to families)	Team leader (23 years and older) and Skill specialist Country Office	Explicit faith focus from initial advertising onwards. 10 day orientation on arrival includes language training. ½ day weekly learning sessions. Team roles are identified e.g. media, community and faith engagement.
THET	20	3-7 including leader	No	No	Team leaders (23 years and older) Skilled specialists	Volunteers selected from King's Health Partners student/graduate pool, specialised health placements.

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[41] UKV:NV in the placement visited in Uganda was 1:1

Annex 6: VFM indicators for each phase of the volunteer journey

We present below a sample of suggested indicators for each phase of the volunteer journey to measure economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Italic text denotes those that have been collected for this mid-term review; those in bold denote key indicators which should be monitored in future to enable the evaluation team to conduct a full VFM assessment as part of the final evaluation.

	Phase 1: Recruitment	Phase 2: Assessment & Selection	Phase 3: Training & Pre-departure	Phase 4: Volunteer Placements	Phase 5: Placement Debriefing	Phase 6: Local Action in UK
Effectiveness	VFM (effectiveness): • *Volunteer satisfaction rating for selection process from KAP survey* • Market survey demonstrating increased awareness & credibility of ICS, and effectiveness of different marketing media • **Value-added of spending more to recruit harder-to-reach groups** • Informal feedback from volunteers	VFM (effectiveness): • *Volunteer satisfaction rating for selection process from KAP survey* • Cost per highly satisfied volunteer	VFM (effectiveness): • *Volunteer satisfaction rating from KAP survey* • **Volunteer feedback from training evaluation forms**	VFM (effectiveness): • *Volunteer satisfaction rating for placement from KAP survey* **(although needs to be disaggregated by placement type, i.e. existing/new, challenging)** • **In-country partner satisfaction rating, disaggregated by placement type** • Cost per highly satisfied volunteer • Cost per highly satisfied partner	VFM (effectiveness): • Volunteer satisfaction rating from KAP survey	**LF Outcome:** 1,250 British citizens contribute to development through international volunteering and knowledge is generated to inform future youth volunteering programmes VFM (effectiveness): • **Cost per volunteer reporting a deeper understanding of development**
Efficiency	**L F Output:** Increased demand for youth and older person development volunteering from all sections of the UK society. VFM (efficiency): • *Cost per volunteer recruited*	VFM (efficiency): • *Cost per volunteer assessed*	VFM (efficiency): • *Cost per volunteer trained*	**LF Output:** 1250 UK citizens, from groups representative of the UK public successfully complete International Volunteer Placements VFM (efficiency): • *Cost per volunteer for overseas placement* • **Placement cost by agency**	VFM (efficiency): • **Cost per volunteer de-briefed**	**LF Output:** Returned UK volunteers engage in global citizenship actions in the UK VFM (efficiency): • **Cost per awareness-raising event (staff cost, room hire, etc)** • **Cost per volunteer (for UK re-engagement support)**

	Phase 1: Recruitment	Phase 2: Assessment & Selection	Phase 3: Training & Pre-departure	Phase 4: Volunteer Placements	Phase 5: Placement Debriefing	Phase 6: Local Action in UK
				disaggregated by type of placement		
Economy	**Key activity:** Design and disseminate marketing materials targeting key UK audiences (and other recruitment tool for harder to reach audiences) VFM (economy): • No. of ICS/ agency staff (time, cost) • **Unit cost per advert (local, national)** • **Agency website costs (setup, on-going)** • **Costs for targeting harder-to-reach groups**	**Key activity:** Hold selection days with participation of different groups from across the UK VFM (economy): • No. of ICS/ agency staff (time, cost) • Unit cost for staff/ volunteer travel (by train, car)	**Key activity:** Conduct pre-departure training with volunteers VFM (economy): • No. of ICS/ agency staff (time, cost) • *Unit cost per flight* • *Unit cost per visa (or work permit)* • *Benchmarked costs where applicable*	**Key activity:** Conduct in-country training and supervisory support for volunteers VFM (economy): • No. of ICS/ agency staff (time, cost) • *Unit cost for volunteer accommodation (£ per week)*	**Key activity:** Conduct in-country & UK debrief sessions VFM (economy): • **No. of ICS/ agency staff (time, cost)** • **Unit cost per debriefing location (£ hire per night)**	**Key activity:** Volunteers hold awareness-raising events on global development and citizenship issues VFM (economy): • **No. of ICS/ agency staff (time, cost)** • **Unit cost per awareness-raising location (£ hire per night)**

Annex 7: Report on Summary Initial findings from MTR Field Missions

This report provides some summary feedback from the MTR field missions to Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda conducted by the ITAD evaluation team. These field missions were conducted in August 2011 by two experts – Jill Edbrooke and Matthew Hill - and covered site visits to projects being delivered by four ICS Pilot agencies – VSO, Restless, Skillshare and THET.

The brief summaries of the field missions should be seen as <u>draft</u> at this stage with the MTR report providing more detailed findings and conclusions on the ICS Pilot. These summaries should also be viewed in the context of the short period of time that the Pilot has been running, as this has undermined some aspects of the projects being delivered by all four agencies and due to these time constraints the evaluation team may not have been able to see the models functioning at their best.

1. VSO Kenya Field Visit for MTR of ICS

This report is intended to provide an overview of the field mission to the YA placements underway in Kwale and Kaloleni, part of the VSO ICS programme in Kenya (week 5 of 12 at the time of the visit). The field mission was conducted between 9 to 15 August 2011.

Key strengths and challenges of the programme

The key strengths of the programme are

- The 1:1 counterpart system that enables UK young volunteers to experience a very real and in-depth intercultural exchange with peers and through home stays.
- The strong framework for supported learning which guides all the volunteers during their placements and leads from global development issues to consideration of these issues in the context of the communities they are living and working in.

Key challenges of the programme are

- Making coherent links across the programme objectives (VSO UK and the ICS programme; VSO Jitolee and MAYAS in their NV programme) and relating these to measurable development impacts.
- Identifying ten placements in which the objectives offer volunteers the challenge of achieving development that the host organisation seeks, and through which they can add value in a way which other volunteers would not.

Summary of key recommendations

1. Consider sending National Volunteers to a "new" community as well as the UK volunteers, thus giving them the opportunity to reflect on their own understanding of community development within a different setting.

While acknowledging the speed with which these placements had to be set up:

2. For future placements, ensure that the different pre-departure and in-country training sessions and the GDC sessions all clearly show how the volunteer learning journey moves from the general and global to the specific and local, avoiding needless repetition.
3. Further development of placements opportunities is needed to ensure that placement hosts can offer a supportive and structured placement that leads from the initial induction phase to clear and agreed development tasks/ objectives that the volunteers can monitor and then evaluate which don't just demonstrate their own improved skills/ understanding but also contribute towards sustainable change in the host organisation/ for the beneficiaries.
4. In a future ICS programme, consider setting up a rolling programme of volunteer placements which allow host organisations to develop more challenging volunteer opportunities through a programme of work that extends for an agreed period e.g. 1 year.
5. The Global Citizen Sessions and Community Action Days add value to the placements by giving volunteers the opportunity to reflect on the issues they are confronting and engaging more directly with the wider community. These have been evolving during the placements and should continue to be strengthened by the flexible responses of PS and Programme Managers.

Where placements are not able to offer much variety the option of additional "mini-placements" or community linked activities can be useful. Greater use could be made of the learning journals by encouraging volunteers to develop them in creative ways.

6. In any future ICS programme consider ways of reducing the transaction costs of programme management and financial management.

2. THET Tanzania Field Visit for MTR of ICS

Project visit summary: overview

Overall the project is working well. The volunteers have settled in to their projects and have generally been welcomed by students, staff and wider community stakeholders. All stakeholders felt the ICS volunteers are making a tangible contribution to the activities and development of the COTC.

Particular successes of the project are the following:

- The ability of the volunteers to fit into the Medical Training College (COTC);

- help consolidate the link between London and Mtwara; and

- deliver project outcomes through introducing students to Medicine Africa (an online educational tool), increasing internet access on campus and collecting baseline data on local sexual health NGOs.

However, a number of important learning points emerged for the future development of the programme including the following:

- The lack of clarity, detailed planning and information on the aims, activities and outcomes of the volunteers' placement was seen as the biggest factor hindering greater impact and sustainability for the project by a number of stakeholders.

- Many of the other issues such as increased training and advanced project planning could be solved with a longer lead-in time.

- One wider issue (which has also been seen across other ICS agencies) is that the primary needs of the organisation are for resources (e.g. internet and academic staff) and potentially higher skilled volunteers (e.g. doctors or IT specialists).

This delivery model appears to be very cost-effective compared to other ICS delivery models, however, detailed financial information has not yet been explored. Due to the specific nature of the project (an existing educational link), the nature of the volunteers (high achieving students) and the nature of the host organisation (a well developed institution) the model may have limited scalability for the ICS programme as a whole.

Project background

Five ICS volunteers (with one team leader) are placed for 3 months in a Medical Training College (COTC) in Mtwara, Southern Tanzania in order to carry out specific projects such as the introduction of Medicine Africa (an online educational tool) to students (NB: one volunteer has left early due to commitments in the UK). The COTC has 400-600 students with few academic and support staff.

Summary of key recommendations *(NB: many of these recommendations are a direct result of the short start-up time for the pilot project).*

a. More detailed pre-departure training and orientation. In particular, volunteers would have benefited from more project specific training e.g. how to conduct mapping research;

b. Although the remote support provided through PaLM and THET was seen as good by the volunteers it was felt that an in-country project partner would have helped to facilitate their placement. In particular it was thought that an official introduction and explanation to all staff

and students would have greatly increased interest, participation and commitment to the activities of the volunteers. An in-country partner was seen as critical in negotiating this introduction. It was acknowledged that it is not possible for the partner to be in-country throughout the placement but it was suggested that this could be done for the first few weeks of the placement (at least two weeks);

c. It is important that future volunteers also live on campus, however, either cooking facilities should be provided or access to student catering should be granted;

d. Students and the wider staff group should be involved in project design. This is especially important where projects relate specifically to certain staff roles e.g. the IT department;

e. UK volunteers being hosted by the COTC is only one aspect of the London-Mtwara link. Opportunities for COTC staff and students to access placements in London should also be explored;

f. The primary needs of the organisation are for resources such as internet access and academic staff. Although the ICS volunteers are making a tangible impact on the COTC it was felt that volunteers with higher skills e.g. IT specialists or doctors would have a greater impact.

3. Skillshare Tanzania Field Visit for MTR of ICS

Project visit summary: overview
Stakeholders agree that the overarching principles being applied to the placements are sound including project design led by the needs of host organisations, clarity of roles for the volunteers and a commitment to the support and safety of the volunteers. Where these principles have been applied the placements are offering some tangible contribution to the host organisation and considerable benefits to the ICS volunteers. However, the application of these principles varies across the three sites and stakeholders made a series of recommendations to improve the success and impact of the placements in the future. It is important to assess these recommendations in light of the extremely short lead-in times for the ICS pilot, which undoubtedly undermined some aspects of the first wave of volunteer placements.

Project background
Skillshare Tanzania places groups of volunteers in three organisations across Tanzania. The groups are placed in the Tanzanian House of Talent (THT – a performing arts centre for street children – four volunteers); Tanzania Environmental Development and Animal Power Society (TAN EDAPS – three volunteers) and The Ujamaa Community Resource Trust (UCRT – four volunteers). Brief summaries of the three projects are outlined below:

- THT

The volunteers have settled in well and are welcomed by staff and students. Initially there was a lack of clarity around exactly what the volunteers could offer the organisation as the level of skills in the performing arts is already so high. However, volunteers have shown commitment and initiative to develop their roles especially around English lessons and the introduction of new forms of performing arts e.g. tap dance.

Key site specific recommendations:
1. Identify clear gaps amongst the staff within THT and recruit volunteers directly to fill these gaps. Indeed there was an appetite amongst THT staff and volunteers to be more directly involved in volunteer recruitment;
2. Develop opportunities for THT students and teachers to visit the UK where they could both teach and learn new skills. These acquired skills could then be disseminated within THT more sustainably than through a 3 month volunteer placement;
3. The cost of volunteer accommodation is very high and should be addressed.

TAN EDAPS

The TAN EDAPS placement was the least successful with a number of issues emerging from both the host organisation and the ICS volunteers. In particular, the expectations of both sides were not being met. The host organisation was expecting volunteers with greater skills and capabilities and the volunteers were expecting clearer roles and had underestimated the amount of adjustment necessary to volunteer successfully in a northern Tanzanian village community (e.g. around dress, food and behaviour).

Key site specific recommendations:
1. Significantly greater sensitisation needs to be carried out for both the host organisations and the volunteers so that expectations can be met;
2. Resources are by far the biggest need of the organisation. The impact of the volunteer placements has to be assessed in relation to this.

UCRT

The volunteers have been welcomed into both the host organisation and the wider community and are making a positive contribution. Volunteers have been proactive in driving their particular activities within the organisation and the organisation has been keen to facilitate their involvement so despite an initial lack of clarity around the volunteers' roles they are now delivering training directly to women's groups.

Key site specific recommendations:
1. Resources are by far the biggest need of the organisation (indeed all of the full time 'staff' are in fact volunteers). Without these resources the impact of the organisation on wider community beneficiaries will be limited and the impact of the volunteer placements has to be assessed in relation to this.

Summary of additional key recommendations across sites
2. Both pre-departure and in-country training should be more focused on placement activities;
3. Organisational needs should first be identified, volunteer roles should then be designed and finally volunteers should be recruited;
4. The support structure for volunteers varies across the three projects and includes – in-country staff, a country office volunteer, a long-term Skillshare volunteer and team leaders. This structure is inconsistent and resource intensive and should be reviewed.

4. Restless Uganda Field Visit for MTR of ICS

Project visit summary: overview

Overall stakeholders felt that the model of young volunteers capacity building within Civil Society organisations (CSOs) has the potential to have greater impact on host organisations than volunteer roles that merely carry out the activities of the organisation (e.g. teaching in a school) as the impacts could be deeper and more sustainable. However, in order for these impacts to be achieved a number of placement criteria need to be met. Where these criteria were met evidence of impact (both on the organisation and the volunteer) was collected, however, there were a number of placements that did not meet this criteria and therefore these impacts were undermined. The most significant factor undermining the impact of the placements was the selection of appropriate CSO hosts. It is important to note that the selection of host organisations was extremely rushed due to the severely short timescales involved in the ICS programme pilot.

Project background

Twenty-five UK volunteers are paired with 25 national volunteers and placed within 25 host CSOs in order to build their capacity especially around organisational management and monitoring and evaluation. The placements involve three weeks of in-country training for the volunteers, who are then placed in both town and village settings.

Key strengths of the programme

1. The 1:1 counterpart system that enables UK young volunteers to experience a very real and in-depth intercultural exchange with peers;

2. The support and supervision (both structured and ad hoc) offered to volunteers and organisations is substantial and is seen as a key strength by all stakeholders;

3. Involvement clearly has considerable positive impacts on volunteers (both national and international). This is due to the high level of training, the substantial support and supervision and the placements being directly in poor communities.

Key challenges of the programme

In order for the programme to be successful a number of placement criteria need to be met around the three key ingredients of the placements: the volunteers, the CSOs and the role of Restless Development:

The volunteers:
1. The expectations of the volunteers need to be managed and the challenges of this type of placement need to be clearly communicated both in terms of the placement activity within organisations (e.g. the lack of formal working structures) and the living conditions within communities (e.g. latrine toilets and an unbalanced diet);
2. Capacity building within organisations requires particular levels of skills of the volunteers particularly in communication, critical thinking, project planning and perhaps some experience of a structured work environment. The ability of volunteers to settle in to challenging village community settings is also a challenge. As such it may be that this type of programme is not appropriate for all 18-22 year olds.

The CSO:
3. The CSOs need to be more carefully selected to ensure that they meet a range of both 'hard' and 'soft' criteria. The 'hard' criteria include a minimum number of staff (or volunteers) and a minimum level of functioning activity for the volunteers to work with. The 'soft' criteria include a clear commitment from the organisation to utilise the volunteers for capacity building and some understanding of volunteer management.

Restless Development:
4. Perceptions of the training varied dramatically between generally positive reflections from national volunteers and generally negative reflections from international volunteers. The negative reflections of international volunteers included that the content was not relevant to their role within the CSOs, that the learning needed to be more practically applicable within organisations and that the scope of the training could be narrowed (e.g. to specific areas of capacity building);
5. Due to the high level of demand upon ICS staff the role of the Team Leaders could be bolstered;
6. The disparity in quality of accommodation, local food prices and the proximity to other ICS volunteers caused tensions and some resentment amongst the international volunteers. Restless could explore the idea of grouping pairs of volunteers in shared accommodation in some cases and possibly providing a travel allowance to those who require transport from their home to the placement;

7. Many stakeholders also felt that Restless should increase the level of resources offered to facilitate the activities of volunteers;

8. Many stakeholders felt that the length of placement should be increased.

Annex 8: UK Interviews with ICS Stakeholders and references consulted

Agency Interviews (all conducted during August)

Agency	Name
International Service	Martin Keat
	Catherine Brown
	Catherine Lajoinie
Progressio	Christine Allen
	Heather Drury
Restless Development	Danielle Powell
	Xenia Davis
	Elsie Till
Skillshare International	Bicki Isharaza
THET	Oliver Johnson
	Lucy Andrews
	Paula Baraitser
VSO	Phil Hudson
	Brian Rockcliffe
	Jill Healey
	Laura Smith
	Matt Reynolds
	Ruth Talbot
	Michael Hill
	Sarah Hitchcock

24/08/11, London: Samantha Jones (external assessor) and Elsie Till (Restless Development)

08/08/11, London: Elaine Stevenson, Biki Isharaza, Musi Katerere (Skillshare)

26/8/2011 London: Juliette Liebi (PCB VSO)

01/10/2011 Telephone: Madelaine Smith DFID Strategic Communications Advisor

Annex 9: Subsidisation across the Consortium up to August 2011

Areas of Subsidisation
International Service
• Each country (5) has a Project Manager, currently paid for with other funding or unrestricted funds
• Country office costs – allocated £10k per country, Palestine costs £20k to run, the remainder funded elsewhere
• Contribution of UK Management time and steering committee related costs
• UK office or overhead costs
Progressio
• In-country staff – ICS fund 1.5 staff per country, 0.5 staff funded by unrestricted funds
• In-country overheads – all in country office costs funded by unrestricted funding besides related to direct activity
• UK staff – ICS fund 2.5 staff, 1.5 direct staff funded by unrestricted funds or volunteers
• UK overheads – CEO and Programme management time, including monthly steering committee meetings and prep , only 2% of office costs covered by ICS the rest covered by unrestricted funds
• UK Action staff – performed by volunteers and staff funded by unrestricted
Restless
• UK staff time from the UK Director, SMT and UK finance staff time
• General overheads currently funded by agency
• Increase in staff on ICS purchasing assets, such as desks and computers
Skillshare
• Skillshare has been unable to meet all costs of implementation within the direct costs and administration budgets
• A greater proportion of staff time in administrative functions has been spent on the project than originally budgeted - up to 70-80% rather than 50% and lower
• Printing, phone and other resources incurred by ICS are not covered by the budget allocated
THET
• UK staff: 50% of 1 staff member
• Staff resources and running costs higher than anticipated (includes Programme Director, CEO and finance team time) e.g. CEO and programme management staff monthly attendance at steering committee meetings and preparation is subsidised
• THET is currently subsidising all UK overheads subsidised by unrestricted funds
VSO
• Assessment team contribution
• All office costs and overheads in country offices
• All UK office costs
• Budgeted 40% of Programme Manager, but need one dedicated ICS manager in country
• Global Exchange team salaries (4) that working mainly on ICS aspect of programme (there are reciprocal exchanges, with the UK exchange element funded by another donor)

Annex 10: References consulted

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