

# **International Voluntary Service in SADC**

## **Host organisation perspectives from Mozambique and Tanzania**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AGOA – African Growth and Opportunity Act

CSD – Center for Social Development, Washington University, St. Louis, USA

ICYE – International Cultural Youth Exchange

IVS – International Voluntary Service

M&E – monitoring and evaluation

SADC – Southern African Development Community

SAGE Net – South African German Network Deutschland

SAPs – structural adjustment policies

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS/ GLOSSARY**

**Beneficiaries** – people who benefit directly from the services of a host organisation, which operates in their community or neighbouring community. Beneficiaries are not necessarily passive recipients of services, but often support the service delivery of the host organisation.

**Host community** – the people living in the community where the local host organisation is located. These people may or not be direct beneficiaries of the local host organisation.

**Host organisation** – the local organisation where an international volunteer is placed and where the volunteer serves for the duration of his/her international voluntary service placement. This organisation is also responsible for managing the volunteer during his/her placement.

**Intermediary volunteer placement organisations** – local organisations that coordinate the relationship between a sending organisation in a foreign country and the local host organisation. Its primary role is to identify a volunteer from the sending organisation to place at the local host organisation, and to assist with the management of the volunteer.

**International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE)** has facilitated placements of over 20,000 participants in over 30 countries since 1949. On average, ICYE sends approximately 800 long-term volunteers into the field each year to serve for 35 to 45 weeks. Volunteers typically serve in a support capacity alongside staff and local volunteers providing educational, care, training, administrative and material support services in a variety of community based organizations. Most volunteers come from Europe and Latin America. Volunteers serving with ICYE are typically young, with a current average age of 22 years. Volunteers are mostly female (68%). Volunteers serving in host-countries typically live in urban and semi-rural settings and board together with other volunteers in live-in projects, independent living arrangements or with host families.

**International Voluntary Service (IVS)** – can be defined as “an organised period of engagement and contribution to society, organized by public or private organizations, by volunteers who work across an international border, and who receive little or no monetary compensation” (Sherraden, 2001). This includes unilateral service (volunteers from one country serving in another country), multi-lateral service (volunteers serving in each others' countries), as well as more complex arrangements in which volunteers serve in more than

one country.<sup>1</sup> North-South voluntary service, which involves sending a volunteer from a developed country to a developing country, has been the predominant form of voluntary service in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, South-South volunteering, where a volunteer from a developing country serves in a developing country, and South-North volunteering, where a volunteer from a developing country serves in a developed country, are increasingly becoming prevalent.

**International volunteer** – a person who volunteers in a country other than his/her own. Given the historical dominance of North-South volunteering, international volunteers in SADC countries are often associated with European and North American countries. However, with the rise of South-South volunteering and South-North volunteering, the demographic of international volunteers is changing to include more individuals from developing countries.

**Local volunteer** – individuals that participate voluntarily within their local or neighbouring communities, or in communities in other parts of the country. Their involvement may be ad hoc or regular, formalised (as part of a programme) or informal/non-formal, of varied duration, and may or may not attract support in the form of a stipend.

**Sending organisation** – the organisation that recruits the international volunteer and coordinates his/her placement at a local host organisation. Along with the host organisation, it is also responsible for the overall management of the international volunteer. Sending organisations are often based in developed countries from which the international volunteers originate and have a wide variety of missions, including foci on health, disability, education and more generally on issues such as development, youth development, intercultural learning, charity, to name a few. In the case of the *weltwärts* programme, sending organisations in Germany are the agencies through which the programme operates.

**Volunteer management** – a set of guidelines, systems and practices within organisations, which support the involvement of volunteers in their activities. Volunteer management has various components, which tend to include planning, recruitment, orientation and training, support, and evaluation and recognition.

**weltwärts** is an initiative launched by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, which has sent approximately 10,000 volunteers to developing countries since 2008. In 2010 alone, we sent around 4,288 international volunteers into the

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<sup>1</sup> Sherraden et al, 2006

field. The volunteers are between 18 and 29 years old and serve for between 6 and 24 months, during which time they work in partner organisations undertaking a range of activities intended to support development. The volunteers must be German citizens. The average volunteer is 20 years of age and 60% are female. Volunteers may live in rural or urban settings, with or without host families.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The International Voluntary Service (IVS) study aims to contribute to the knowledge-base on international voluntary service in the SADC region by focusing on host organisations' perceptions of the effects of international volunteers, largely from Europe. Conducted in October 2010 in Tanzania and Mozambique, the research was designed to make comparisons between host organisations and organisations involved in similar work that did not host international volunteers (i.e. comparative organisations). A total of twelve organisations were involved in the study – three host organisations in each country and three comparative organisations in each country (a total of six per country). In both countries all the organisations were involved in the delivery of services to people in poor urban or rural communities.

In addition, a volunteer survey was conducted with volunteers sent worldwide by International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE) and volunteers sent to African countries by the German *weltwärts programme*. The participants were volunteers going into their placements for 2010/11 and volunteers who had already returned from their placements, having served their in 2009/10 or earlier.

The conceptual framework for the study locates international voluntary service within development discourse and explores the relationship between international volunteers and the work of their host organisations in terms of their development objectives within their context of developing countries with quite different histories. It also factors social capital into the international voluntary service experience in order to explore the potential of the international volunteers to produce change in their home countries in respect of altering entrenched perceptions of the power relations between North and South. In this regard the findings suggest that experiences of international voluntary service can legitimately be regarded as setting up international social networks between all the parties, but that the benefits of such social linkages should not be taken for granted. Macro-structural dynamics, contextual realities and problems of access to resources available in these networks can constrain or enable the “use value” of host organisations or communities' international social networks created through experiences of international voluntary service. This conceptualisation also suggests that for international voluntary service to serve as

international social capital for all the parties involved, certain macro-structural, micro-structural and individual adjustments have to be put in place.

The host organisations in this study have been in existence for between 4 and 43 years. Established in the post-independence era, most see themselves as having been formed to address post- and neo-colonial ills and to drive development, particularly in the most impoverished urban and rural areas. Their location and missions thus provide international volunteers with a unique opportunity to experience the challenges of development first-hand through human capital development, micro-finance service provision, agricultural programmes, health services and renewable energy promotion. The study shows that international volunteers who genuinely engage with their host organisations in service of their strategic development are also most likely to form a clearer understanding of the development challenges they encounter.

Specifically, the study examines the role of international voluntary service in development and raises three issues that are relatively new in the field:

1. The role of host organisations and host communities in developing the international volunteers;
2. The importance of organisational development in the civil society organisations in which international volunteers are placed; and
3. The role of international volunteers in promoting local/community-based volunteering in the communities and countries where they serve.

The key findings of the study follow below.

## **1 IVS does not happen in a vacuum**

The first key finding of the study is that **international voluntary service is not an isolated activity, but rather a process embedded within the history of relations between the Western world and the African continent.** The study reveals evidence of stereotyped perceptions held between the actors involved in IVS programmes, particularly in the rural areas in which the research was conducted. This explains why international volunteering reflects dynamics of power relations, dependence and alleged exploitation, deception, or strategic behaviour. It also helps explain why international volunteers are not always seen as

benevolent actors, but are sometimes viewed as instruments of Western imperialism or agents of neo-colonialism.

In these interactions between the wealthy Western world and the “developing” African continent, international volunteers are often uncritically represented as members of a superior race and a wealthy society. As such, they are viewed as bringing additional resources, credibility and marketability to host organisations, regardless of the actual value of the hosted volunteers. Though host organisations are sometimes aware of the limits of these widespread beliefs, they nevertheless make use of them in order to market or sell their services or products, thus reinforcing and perpetuating these negative racial biases. Conversely, stereotyped perceptions produce myths such as Africans being regarded as poor, incapacitated, weak, lazy, unresourceful and dependent. It seems that international volunteers do not always link prevailing conditions of material deprivation in host communities with historical and current injustices of the global trade and aid regime. In this regard, extreme representations of international volunteers as saviours and exaggerated depictions of host communities as “hearts of darkness” still persist.

Nevertheless, many host organisations and members of host communities have seen in the presence of international volunteers an opportunity for mutual development learning and equitable cooperation. Some host organisations and members of their communities see international volunteers as: (1) being proactive even within a context of scarce resources; (2) able to help host communities confront negative cultural practices such as fear of witchcraft (which leads to a lack of investment in good houses and property); (3) contributing to the strategic development of their host organisations; and (4) advocating for the interests of developing countries in their home country. In this regard it becomes clear that IVS provides a context in which historical features of Africa-Europe relationships can be challenged. We use the notion of bridging social capital developed by Putnam as a concept that might explain the potential that IVS has at the micro level to challenge macro-level perceptions of relationships between Africa and Europe.

## **2 Partner relations**

A second key finding that emerged from the study is that **the supply-driven nature of international voluntary service skews the relationship between sending and host organisations and typically results in host organisations not receiving the skills they need**

**for their own advancement.** This is particularly evident in the case of programmes that send young Europeans straight from school into a voluntary service experience. In both Mozambique and Tanzania, local intermediary organisations are active in interfacing between some host and sending organisations, but even in these cases host organisations often do not receive international volunteers with the skill sets they would prefer. In a supply-driven context host organisations are less able to seek out their preferred sending partners, which puts them at a disadvantage in sourcing the international volunteers with the skills appropriate for their organisations' development. Local Mozambique host organisations in the sample appeared to be more proactive than those from Tanzania in expressing their needs, but in both countries it is clear that the relationship between supply and demand is skewed.

Challenges emerge of poor communication, including international volunteers circumventing communications protocols agreed between the partners, thus further contributing to weakening the role of host organisations within the partnership. Host organisations are also not adequately prepared for the volunteers: since they do not have much influence on the profile of volunteers that they receive, it is difficult for host organisations to plan in advance how to best involve volunteers in their activities. Conversely, the volunteers are not always adequately prepared for their placements. Furthermore, although international volunteers may socialise well with members of the host community, it appears that relations with staff in the host organisations are much more distant, sometimes even cool. Reasons for limited social interactions between volunteers and staff are complex, but include the generational gap between staff and volunteers, the allocation of volunteers to a single department, the location of the volunteers' office away from other staff, and a tendency of top leadership to monopolise control of volunteers. In addition, some host organisations and beneficiaries complained about international volunteers making promises they were unable to keep, and volunteers disregarding important disciplinary and safety measures. The fact that most host organisations have only indirect relationships with the sending organisations is thus symptomatic of the uneven power relationships between host and sending organisations and can work to the detriment of the international volunteer experience for all parties.

How to empower host organisations to equalise their relationship with the sending organisations and to leverage international volunteering more strategically for their own needs then becomes a critical question. In this regard an important leverage point for

empowering host organisations emerges in respect of a focus on *organisational development*. This positions international voluntary service as a factor in strengthening grassroots organisations in SADC countries as civil society players in their own right. The benefits of international volunteering to the host organisation is likely to be a function of the host's ability to interface effectively with the sending organization and to channel the international volunteer's energy, commitment, innovative ideas and knowledge towards the host organisation's strategic development. However, the study demonstrates that for the reasons outlined in the first finding above, such readiness cannot be assumed. It is most likely to be found in relationships that are structured around the equitable interface between the host and sending partners, with their joint involvement in programme design and implementation.

### **3 Managing expectations**

**Both host and comparison organisations demonstrated a keen interest in hosting international volunteers, undoubtedly linked to their acute need to access financial and human resources.** Comparison organisations assumed that the volunteers would be skilled, once again guided by the misperception that all Europeans are skilled and have the ability to access financial resources. Host organisations mostly requested skilled volunteers, but often did not receive them. They have also become keenly aware that international volunteers are often not able to help them access financial resources. The online survey of young international volunteers from Europe supports this finding since only a few respondents reported sourcing funds for host organisations or host community members. Host organisations are thus starting to differentiate between international volunteers of different levels of competence, which may ultimately assist in countering some of the stereotypes mentioned earlier.

Furthermore, host organisations demonstrated insight into the varied motivations of the international volunteers. While all respondents recognise that international volunteers are often motivated by a genuine commitment to help others and promote change, they also report that some international volunteers demonstrate a greater interest in tourism and social activities, and lack commitment. Host organisations in both countries report that volunteers tend to be focused on their own ideas about the need to produce change within the organisations in which they are placed and are less concerned with understanding the

context in which such changes need to be sustained. Transparency and communication between hosts and volunteers were identified as the key to building trust and cooperation.

Host organisations are not meaningfully engaged in the selection and recruitment of international volunteers and thus lack the opportunity to exert any significant influence over this phase of the volunteer management. Host organisations were unequivocal in their call for greater engagement in this aspect of the process, which carries through to the orientation of international volunteers. Host organisations shared a number of criticisms about the pre-departure orientation for international volunteers, particularly in relation to language preparation and briefing volunteers on the host organisation and the cultural/country context, much of which seems to be Eurocentric in nature. Host organisations also demonstrated some inadequacies in their volunteer orientation and supervision, especially with respect to promoting good staff/volunteer relations and to ensuring that international volunteers respect the rules and procedures of the organisation.

All of the host organisations recognise that there is a need to improve their volunteer management practices so that they can enhance the benefit of the volunteering experience for the volunteer and their organisations. However, only through improved communication and collaboration can the host organisations enhance their volunteer management capacity and improve their preparation to host international volunteers meaningfully.

#### **4 The effects of IVS**

The IVS study has **generated significant information about the effects of international volunteering on host organisations, local communities, and the volunteers from the perspective of the host organisations and host communities.** Host organisations overwhelmingly reported benefits from hosting international volunteers. In this sample there were examples of some international volunteers who helped mobilise resources for the organisations, while others provided much needed assistance in the areas of monitoring and evaluation, technology and system development, and others helped inspire new projects, perspectives and collaborations at the organisations. These contributions in turn helped to improve the services of the host organisations.

##### *4.1 Strategic use of international volunteers*

***Across the study, host and comparison organisations agreed that the strategic use of international volunteers would be most beneficial for their development.*** The importance

of strategic considerations are evident from the examples of host organisations that have improved their systems and from those comparison organisations that have stopped recruiting international volunteers until such time as they are clear on the role they should play. The analysis suggests that three factors govern the extent to which host organisations optimise the strategic benefit they receive from the international volunteers: **First**, benefit derives from careful planning of how and where the volunteers will be used in the organisation and the need for affected staff to be involved in this process from the start. **Second**, organisations need to specify clearly the skills, attributes and attitudes they are seeking from the international volunteers, and this match needs to be achieved through a more demand-driven approach to international voluntary service. **Third**, strategic benefit is directly related to the extent to which international volunteers are managed and guided during their stay in the organisation.

#### 4.2 Programme delivery

***With regard to programme delivery, the effect in both countries was mainly evident on programme quality although some examples were reported of international volunteers helping to extend the reach of programmes.*** Host organisations spoke positively about the establishment of systems that strengthen organisational effectiveness through increased staff accountability, monitoring and evaluation and continuous improvement. For these benefits to be realised, however, the evidence suggests that staff must be involved in planning for the volunteer placement as an integral part of organisational functioning; productive working relationships between international volunteers and permanent staff are necessary; international volunteers should have a learning orientation towards the host organisation and respecting staff rather than seeing themselves as being ‘better than’ or ‘above’ staff; clear deliverables must be set for the international volunteers against which their contributions can be assessed and measured; and organisations need to ensure that staff are in a position to run and sustain any improvements that international volunteers might have made in the organisation.

#### 4.3 Innovation

***While some respondents felt that professional experience was the main factor in enabling international volunteers to help organisations achieve innovation in their practice, the data suggests two additional key ingredients for change: genuine interest on the part of the volunteer in the future of the organisation and the level of commitment that the***

***volunteer demonstrates in his/her engagement with the organisation.*** For innovation to be sustained, it is clear that close and mutually beneficial engagement between the international volunteers and the staff is required to put in place the support for the innovation.

#### *4.4 Costs*

The respondents in both host and comparison organisations start from the premise that international volunteers represent a ‘free pair of hands’ and that free labour is unlikely to make financial demands on organisations. However, the evidence is clear that the training and management of volunteers requires time and resources from the host organisation, particularly in the case of international volunteers who come straight from school with little experience, and this translates into costs. Host organisations did acknowledge that sending organisations and some international volunteers also incur costs in the process.

#### *4.5 Effects on local volunteering*

A key area of interest in this research is how the presence of international volunteers impacts on the relationship between host organisations, their communities and local volunteers. This is one of the questions that some SADC governments are also starting to ask, particularly in the face of high unemployment rates for local young people.

Local volunteers are present and active in all but one of the 12 organisations surveyed. However, the organisations view the local volunteers differently from the international volunteers. That relationship is shaped by the ways in which volunteering is broadly understood in the host countries. In 2010 Mozambique passed legislation that recognises the value of volunteering in the socio-economic development of that country and sets up an agency that will oversee the interests of volunteers, both foreign and domestic. In Tanzania the government released a draft national volunteer policy in 2007, which is being reviewed by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Development. However, neither of these policy frameworks are yet impacting on the perceptions of ordinary people, with the result that local volunteering remains relatively unorganised and unsupported.

Three categories of local volunteers emerge from the study:

1. Local volunteers who founded organisations/institutions and run them on a voluntary basis (founder of a kindergarten; sisters from a religious order). We refer to these as 'founders';
2. Local volunteers who have a stake in the organisation or institution (such as the parents of children at a school or the leaders of membership groups in a micro-finance organisation). We refer to these as 'stakeholders';
3. Local volunteers who serve in the organisation for limited periods of time (1-3 months). We refer to these as 'short-term volunteers'.

The first two categories were more prevalent among the Tanzania organisations than in Mozambique. In Mozambique the local volunteers were mostly in the last category.

Two constraints were identified to local volunteering: *poverty*, which weakens people's ability to volunteer for any length of time because they need to find paid work, and *the absence of institutions or arrangements that facilitate volunteering*. Nevertheless, despite local volunteers serving for short periods of time (reportedly between one and three months), host and comparison organisations in both countries were unequivocal in their view that they would not be able to function without the use of local volunteers: they depend on local volunteers for the reach, success and sustainability of their operations.

*In comparing international and local volunteers, host organisations surveyed generally say they value international volunteers because they are fully funded, they have good education backgrounds and they may help the organisation gain access to new sources of funds.* The advantages of the local volunteers is that they are fluent in local languages, understand the local culture and are able to their skills as appropriate. For these reasons it is possible to regard the two sets of human resources as being complementary in nature. Both are significant and both are valued by the organisations surveyed.

This study did not survey the volunteers active in the sample organisations (neither local nor international volunteers) and we thus cannot comment on the relationship between them in the host organisations. However, some evidence suggests that no special efforts were made in these organisations to pair local and international volunteers. The question that arises for future research is how the presence of international and local volunteers in an organisation can be structured to impact on the quality of the services offered by the organisation and

how this might affect the nature of the volunteering experience for both local and international volunteers.

#### 4.6 Resource mobilisation

**Resource mobilisation is a critical expectation held by the organisations of the international volunteers.** Respondents attached value to the volunteers' strong education backgrounds, their ICT skills and their ability to learn quickly. However, it is mainly financial support that most organisations hope the international volunteers will produce. Across the two countries a range of examples emerged of how international volunteers had mobilised in-kind donations for the host organisations from sources outside the country, with three examples of volunteers embarking on successful fundraising projects. In some cases, however, the host organisations were disappointed because young volunteers just out of school had limited networks and no fundraising skills.

These expectations include the assumption that international volunteers can intercede with funders on behalf of African organisations whom funders are unlikely to trust. Once again, this demonstrates the perception that international volunteers represent wealthy and powerful countries and are more likely to be able to influence funders in those countries than the African organisations could do in their own right. However, some respondents in Tanzania are concerned about the motivation for international donations and how sustained they may be, while others in that country raised strong objections to the 'dependency syndrome' that emerges when international volunteers are seen purely as conduits for financial support rather than significant partners in development. The response of one group of beneficiaries is worth quoting here:

*"[international volunteers] can come in and support in these [local] initiatives instead of them being the sole driving force or for us to expect them to just raise funds and get resources for us. When we overcome that, then volunteerism is going to be beneficial and established on principles of mutual benefit, sustainable development and respect, and it can be a positive contribution."*

It is interesting to note that in the volunteer survey, the majority of returned volunteers from both the ICYE and *weltwärts* programmes believed that their contribution was more significant in terms of skills transfer than by providing resources directly to their host organisations. This supports the findings above that international volunteers are not

naturally or easily able to mobilise resources for host organisations. Organisations that have high expectations in this regard are likely to be disappointed.

#### 4.7 Sustainability

The question of how international voluntary service impacts on the sustainability of host organisations can be viewed from the perspective of whether international volunteers help host organisations meet current needs without compromising their ability to meet their needs in future. The other perspective is to look at the impact of the experience on the international volunteer.

***The lifespan of the organisations in the sample shows that, despite in some cases being survivalist in nature, they have tenaciously found various means of running their operations and delivering services needed by their communities.*** The use of local volunteers is one such strategy while another is to establish linkages with organisations locally and abroad to source a variety of resources, including funds and human capital. International volunteers fall into this latter category. The key factors in sustaining change in host organisations revolve around whether international volunteers have the appropriate skills or the willingness and commitment to work cooperatively with local staff, and whether staff were closely involved in the development of new approaches or systems. Furthermore, organisational resilience is critical to sustaining any funding relationships established by international volunteers.

The volunteer survey found that across the two organisations (ICYE and *weltwärts*) returned volunteers were more likely than outgoing volunteers to report higher international social capital, open-mindedness, intercultural relations, civic activism and community engagement. This is positive since it is on their return to their home countries that these volunteers have the opportunity to make significant impacts on their families, peers and wider communities in respect of sharing insights and new knowledge gained during the volunteer experience abroad. Their ability to position their host organisations as significant players in development could ultimately influence the 'superior/inferior' perspective of their countrymen and women in respect of relations between Africa and Europe.

## 5 Perceptions of influence on international volunteers

**There is evidence that host organisations and communities exercise huge influence on international volunteers.** The fact that most of them embark on a volunteer experience at

the pre-tertiary education stage makes it more likely that they will learn a great deal from the host organisation and community. Given that many of the international volunteers located at the host organisations in this study come to do volunteering without professional skills, they acquire important technical and soft skills under the guidance of host organisation staff. The acquired skills also facilitate their career choice since prior ideas and career preferences can be reinforced or challenged. Thanks to the volunteering experience, they learn a new foreign language and culture which has a positive impact on their future employability and social profile.

However, the cultural learning process is bi-directional as the host organisation and members of the host community also learn or adapt to certain cultural elements of international volunteers. There is evidence of certain cultural practices in the host organisation being challenged and sometimes forced to change as a result of the involvement of international volunteers in the organisation. Time management is another area where international volunteers' culture of punctuality and time precision has led to change of practices in host organisations. Intercultural exchange also takes place through the mutual teaching of languages and several accounts emerged of romantic relationships and even marriages between international volunteers and members of the host community. A particular challenge, however, relates to engaging the international volunteers in terms that help them transcend romanticised notions of traditional African culture and instead to help them gain an appreciation of the richness and complexity of 21<sup>st</sup> century African life.

## **Conclusion**

**The central finding of this study is that IVS occurs in the context of both the history of colonialism and the neo-colonial experience, as well as within the wider contemporary context of geopolitical power imbalances between North and South.** This points to the risk that the IVS experience may be perceived in host countries as perpetuating such power imbalances unless cogent steps are taken to re-craft working relationships between host and sending organizations.

**The study also yields important findings about the potential of IVS to contribute to development. One of the most significant issues here relates to the relationship between IVS and the organisational development of the hosts in which they serve.** The strengthening of a multiplicity of civil society organizations (community-based, non-

governmental and private sector) is important not only to deliver much-needed services for poverty alleviation, but as a critical factor in creating a flourish environment for public participation. By recognising the centrality of host organisations as catalysts for development, IVS can be repositioned more clearly in support of organisational development, rather than as a largely interpersonal 'helping hand' experience. Ideally host organisations need to become more forthcoming in expressing their needs for the strategic human resources they require to strengthen their operations, and participate actively in the processes that precede the arrival of international volunteers.

Related to this is the potential of IVS to raise the profile of local volunteering as a critical aspect of public participation for development and democracy. **The study points unequivocally to the central role that local volunteers play in sustaining grassroots organisations.** In view of concerns about the supply-driven nature of international voluntary service in SADC countries, it becomes important to structure relationships between international and local volunteers in ways that provide room for reciprocal learning, and increase the authenticity of the volunteer experience.

By looking at the relationship between all the parties involved in the international voluntary service experience, the study has tried to throw light on the potential of IVS to generate real opportunities for redressing power imbalances between North and South and for fostering deep intercultural, inter-political and inter-economic learning among all the parties involved. Ultimately, however, the effectiveness of international volunteers working towards change in their home countries through development education or advocacy for the transformation of international trade and aid relations will be the litmus test of their impact on the development of the host organisations and communities in which they have served.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This International Voluntary Service (IVS) study grows out of VOSESA's commitment to building the knowledge base on volunteering and civic service in southern Africa. Since its inception in 2003, VOSESA has mainly focused on researching the nature and scope of local forms of volunteering in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). A highlight of this work is VOSESA's 2005-2006 cross-national study on volunteering and civic service in five SADC countries: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana and Zambia.

However, in 2008 VOSESA became interested in international volunteering and its relationship to development and local volunteering in the region. Despite the prevalence of international volunteering in the region, VOSESA was unable to locate any comprehensive information on its nature or scale within SADC or Africa more generally. To address this information gap, VOSESA corresponded with a number of volunteer sending organisations in Europe and North America and started to piece together a picture of international volunteering in the region.

The initial mapping showed that a significant number of international volunteers are sent to SADC countries each year and that IVS is a supply-driven phenomenon. Governments and the non-profit sector in northern countries have established a plethora of international volunteer programmes in response to a demand from their citizens, and particularly youth, to travel to and engage with developing countries. Many governments view international volunteering as being complementary to their aid programmes (development cooperation), but increasingly also see it as promoting greater civic engagement and development education in their own countries. This dual aim is captured in the publicity material about '*weltwärts*', the programme operated by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development: "The idea behind the volunteer service is the successful formula of 'learning by serving' and its aims are twofold: to achieve added developmental value for the partner projects in terms of help towards self-help, and to spark new interest in development issues in Germany."

Established in 2008, *weltwärts* set itself ambitious targets from the outset. VOSESA's mapping process established that in 2010 alone, *weltwärts* sent 4 288 volunteers into the field worldwide and that those serving in SADC countries far outnumbered international volunteers sent by other large sending organisations.

Given development patterns in the SADC region, the trends in international volunteering prompted a number of questions such as: What is driving the prevalence of international volunteers in SADC countries? How does international volunteering impact on local volunteering and local employment? How does international volunteering relate to development, aid and trade?

VOSESA continued its efforts to scan international volunteering trends in the SADC region, but also identified another research gap: most of the available research focuses on the impact of the volunteering experience on the international volunteer – the extent to which volunteering promotes civic engagement, work readiness, etc. – and not on the host community. A study conducted by the Center for Social Development at Washington University, St Louis (McBride, Benitez and Sherraden, 2007) showed that there are few rigorous studies of international service and that most of these are of programmes sponsored by organisations in the United States. Moore McBride *et al* (2003) also recommended that future research should assess the positive and negative effects of international service on the people, nations and cultures served. Sherraden *et al* (2008) note that impact studies are integral to the advancement of IVS policy and practice.

The studies available on the impact of international volunteering on host communities indicate that international voluntary service has the potential for positive impacts on volunteers, beneficiaries and host communities as well as sending and hosting organisations.

However, research conducted by Comhlámh (2006) notes the complexity associated with international volunteering from the perspective of host organisations. The research was conducted in Tanzania and India and highlights that “to date there has been a dearth of information about the perspectives of host communities that are involved with international volunteers, despite the fact that volunteer placements are set up with the main aim of working to further the development of the host communities.” (2006: 2) This qualitative study was able to identify challenges such as the fact that many international volunteers are involved more for the experience of tourism than for a real opportunity to contribute to development, the challenge of language barriers, and inadequate matches between the skills of the volunteer and the needs of the organisation.

Since then a number of other studies have been conducted, taking account of the host organisation perspective on the international volunteer experience (Lough et al, 2010; Irie

et al, 2010; Schwinge as well as Freise et al, both 2011 forthcoming). These reiterate the value of well-matched placements, but confirm the complexity of striking partnerships between host and sending organisations, as well as the risks to host organisations that are not adequately prepared to manage the international volunteers.

VOSESA's aim was to contribute to this growing body of knowledge from the vantage point of southern Africa. Following the receipt of a grant from Trust Africa, it designed a qualitative study (using a comparative case study design) that was conducted in Tanzania and Mozambique in September and October 2010. These two countries were selected because they receive the largest number of *weltwärts* volunteers in the SADC region after South Africa and also receive international volunteers from the International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE) programme (as well as volunteers sent by other international sending agencies). In addition, VOSESA conducted a survey of *weltwärts* and ICYE volunteers going out to placements in 2010 as well as volunteers from both organisations who had returned to their home countries.

The study set out to generate information about the effects of international volunteering on host organisations, local communities, sending organisations and volunteers; increase understanding of the role of international volunteering in development; and identify critical success factors for IVS to help organisations refine their programmes and inform host country IVS policies.

This report provides a conceptual framework for the study and describes its methodology. Using the findings, it then outlines the context of IVS from the southern African perspective and documents the following results: the forms of engagement between the host organisations, their communities and international volunteers; the preparedness of the host organisations to receive international volunteers; the effects of the international volunteering experience on the host organisations and their communities; and the host organisations' perceptions of their influence on the international volunteers. The discussion outlines four key findings and makes a number of observations about the IVS experience in the two countries.

We trust that this IVS study will enhance awareness and understanding of international voluntary service in the SADC region at a number of levels: among policy-makers in the region's 15 national states about the role of volunteering in general, and international and

local volunteering in particular; among host organisations that play a pivotal role in poverty alleviation, particularly in rural communities, and use volunteers in that process; among academics and students; and among voluntary service practitioners in SADC countries as well as in the sending organisations abroad.

VOSESA is planning to share its findings from the research through a publication on international voluntary service, which will be published online by SAGE Net later this year; a SADC Regional Conference on Volunteering and Civic Service planned for October 2011 in Johannesburg, South Africa; and an International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR) Conference taking place this year in South Africa.

In this way we aim to contribute to the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Year of the Volunteer in 2011.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As has been mentioned in the introduction, the rationale for this study arose from a concern that the voices of host organisations and communities involved in the international voluntary service (IVS) relationship are not well documented in the literature. This comes as a result of the fact that much of the work that has been written on international volunteering originates from monitoring and evaluation reports from sending organisations as well as associations and networks in northern countries with an interest in international volunteering. By and large they concentrate on the effects of the international volunteering experience for the volunteers themselves and most of the work originates from the United States or Europe.

This means that there are a number of problems with the current status quo in the field of research on international volunteering. Firstly, given that much of the work focuses on the effects on the volunteers, relatively little is understood about what effect IVS has on host organisations and host communities. Notwithstanding early work by Comlámh in India and Tanzania (Comlámh 2006) and SAGE Net's work on German volunteers in South Africa (SAGE Net 2011 forthcoming), as well as the work of Washington University's Center for Social Development on the capacity-building contributions of international volunteers in Lima, Peru (Lough et al, 2010) and work by Irie et al (2010) as well as Schwinge (2011 forthcoming) and Freise et al (2011 forthcoming), little other work has interrogated the perspectives of host organisations and communities in a rigorous way. This missing voice is one that must be placed on the agenda.

Secondly, researchers from developing contexts view issues involved with international volunteering through a lens that has thus far not found its way into the debates on IVS. In particular, the more or less shared experience of colonialism and neo-colonial relationships of aid and trade that are dominated by the North shape how international volunteers (particularly those from the North) are viewed and engaged. To date these experiences have not been the subject of much reflection, but may shed a great deal of light on how to maximise the benefits said to flow from international volunteering, such as intercultural learning.

Finally and related to the above, although international volunteering is not an isolated phenomenon, much of the work on IVS has been treated as if it occurs in a vacuum. The

personal stories of volunteers and community members remain that – personal or interpersonal. Macro-level debates about development, aid, trade and international cooperation have not been explicitly linked to the micro-level interactions that international volunteers, host organisations and host communities experience. This puts the international volunteering agenda at risk of being unintentionally shaped by dominant discourses about international cooperation that are currently skewed in favour of the North with the voice of the South being somewhat absent. It is thus important to reflect on IVS in light of these debates in order to understand better the motivations underlying the funding of international volunteering programmes. More importantly perhaps, it is pertinent to ask what international volunteering has to do with the developing nations that host international volunteers. More particularly what role does international volunteering play in development?

It is in light of the above gaps in the literature and the questions that this raises that this study seeks to understand the experiences of host organisations and communities in light of what development discourses they demonstrate as being at work. This chapter thus outlines how development thinking has shifted over the past fifty to sixty years and sets the scene for the data to be interpreted.

## **2.1. What is development?**

In this report we make the argument that in order to understand the experiences of host organisations and communities with regard to IVS there is a need to understand the relationship between northern countries with Africa in a broad sense. What emerges quite clearly in the data (as will be shown) is that the perceptions of host organisations are embedded in the historical relationships between the North and Africa, first through colonialism and later through development aid and trade relationships. In order to understand this history, it is important to trace the evolution of concepts of development and what these have meant for interventions in Africa.

Ellis (2011) makes the argument that Africa's relationship with the rest of the world began in earnest in the colonial period. Although there was contact between Africa and the rest of the world before that (most notably in the eras of European exploration and later slavery), in the consciousness of the world, and particularly of Western Europe (at that time the superpowers of global politics) Africa really only appeared on the political map as European

countries began the process of colonisation. Although Africa has a long(er) history (than most) of migration, of human development, of the development of nations and hierarchies, in the minds of the rest of the world this continent was in need of development, an idea used in part to justify the colonial period. Certainly, colonialism introduced Africa to many of the markers of what today is understood as ‘development’ – a written set of political and legal rules or laws, bureaucracy, infrastructure such as railway lines and roads, Western style education and of course, industry. Such investments were mixed across the continent, with a greater degree of investment in settler colonies (such as South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya) and much less investment in colonies where the main intention was simply to extract raw materials (such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Cote d’Ivoire). The economic investments of colonial powers in Africa were halted with the outbreak of World War II, followed by the subsequent dismantling of the political power held by European countries, along with the dismantling of their empires.

These developments gave rise to institutions and social processes that have affected how development is understood. Development as a discourse has its origins in the West and thus from the start, the model or goal for development was the image of the West –**economic** growth, rapid industrialisation and technological innovation. This had profound implications for the development discourse. It resulted in the imposition and prevalence of the western discourse on development, overriding indigenous notions of development.

Post-World War II, in the era of the Cold War, two completing discourses of development began to emerge as a response to the perceived gap that was left behind once the colonies started to be dismantled and African countries began to enter an era of independence – the modernisation thesis and the dependency thesis. Although each theory constructs its own the route to development, the theoretical underpinnings of the two positions are virtually the same. “In other words, although the discourse has gone through a series of structural changes, the architecture of the discursive formation laid down in the period 1945-1955 has remained unchanged allowing the discourse to adapt to new conditions. The result has been the succession of development strategies and sub-strategies up to the present, always within the confines of the same discursive space” (Escobar, 1997: 89).

### 2.1.1. *Modernisation theory*

The early roots of modernisation theory can be seen in the works of two of the fathers of sociology – Durkheim and Weber. Both theorists saw a clear distinction between traditional and modern forms of society. For Durkheim, society could either be classified as organised by mechanical solidarity (traditional) or organic solidarity (more modern) while for Weber, there was a clear distinction between the “‘traditional’, ‘leisurely’ pre-capitalist culture to the diligent hard-working ethos of ‘modern’ capitalism” (Webster, 1990:46). From both perspectives, modern society is conceived of as better than traditional society. This is perhaps because both Weber and Durkheim were writing in the period of modernity when the aspects of science, rationality and individualism were (and still are) upheld as the virtues to follow. Thus the modern society that is based on scientific laws and rational organisation that encourages individual expression is seen as better than the traditional society, which is usually characterised by such terms as lazy, backward, shackled by tradition, superstitious or primitive. This then forms the basis for modernisation theory.

Like these theorists, modernisation theorists also draw the distinction between traditional and modern society. Traditional societies were defined as those societies that had a “restricted capacity to solve social problems and to control the physical environment” (Coetzee et al., 2001: 28). Within a traditional society, the kinship system is at work and provides the basis for social relations. A person’s position within the kinship system is ascribed at birth (Webster, 1990). It is not achieved and therefore it is said that there is no impetus to work towards a goal. Traditional societies are superstitious and governed primarily by emotion.

Traditional society is contrasted to the modern society, which is seen as a society with the capacity to control the physical environment for its benefit and able to reproduce itself effectively due to its capacity to handle internal and external pressures (Coetzee et al., 2001). It is based on rationality and science rather than emotion or superstition. Modern societies are based on systems of meritocracy and therefore individuals are driven to achieve goals and progress forwards. The society has high rates of innovation and this contributes to its entrepreneurial nature. It is characterised by scientific and technological feats, mass consumption and capital accumulation.

The route to development, therefore, is for traditional societies to shake off the shackles of tradition and follow the path of the modern societies. The modern society is unquestioningly set up as the goal for development. And the path that these societies followed is seen as the trajectory for development. Development is thus conceived of in a linear fashion, with certain steps leading closer and closer to development in the form of the modern society.

In summary then, for modernisation theorists development is conceived of as a linear project that will take a traditional society (undesirable) to a state of modernity (desirable). The modern society as set out above is seen as the goal. The presumption is that all societies can look and work in the same way and that one theory of development will thus solve the problem of underdevelopment.

### *2.1.2. Dependency theory*

The main criticism of modernisation theory came from the dependency theorists who pointed out that development was conceived of as occurring endogenously with no external influence except to present the goal of what development looks like. The dependency theorists pointed out, quite rightly, that nations were inextricably interlinked, a fact that could not be ignored. The global relations between nations had an effect on the development of some nations and the underdevelopment of others. These relationships have their roots in the colonial project. Not only do modernisation theorists fail to consider the role of colonialism in creating a completely different history for underdeveloped countries in comparison with developed countries, but the exploitative role of colonialism is also ignored. As Gunder Frank states, “our ignorance of the underdeveloped countries’ history leads us to assume that their past and indeed their present resembles earlier stages of the history of the now developed countries” (1966: 17). Thus, dependency theorists look at the role of colonialism and later terms of trade between different nations to establish how underdevelopment came about. For these theorists there are two categories of countries – the core countries and the peripheral or satellite countries (Frank, 1966). The core countries are the richer, more developed and technologically advanced countries, while the peripheral or satellite countries refer to those countries that are underdeveloped. The terms core and periphery point to the relationship that has been established between core and peripheral countries over history. The dependency relationship systematically weakens the previously colonised states, whilst strengthening the more powerful and richer nations.

According to dependency theorists, production in the colonised nations, especially the peasant-based colonial states, was based largely on agriculture, largely due to colonialism. Furthermore, it was focused on cash-crop agriculture. The process of raw material extraction had impacts for agriculture in Africa today in that many African countries still depend on cash cropping and luxury items, which make them susceptible to market volatility. The relationship of dependency thus points to the dependency of the core countries. As Leys states, “The development of the latter (developed market economies) involved a closely associated course of development for the former (less-developed countries), a process of subordinate development or underdevelopment” (1996: 99).

While the dependency theorists captured an important aspect of underdevelopment that the modernisation theorists had ignored, they did not fundamentally challenge the theoretical underpinnings of the modernisation thesis. For dependency theorists, there still exists a distinction between two types of societies. Whether these societies are conceived of as traditional and modern in the modernisation framework, or core and periphery in the dependency framework is irrelevant. The fact is that the dependency theorists still create mutually exclusive categories of societies. Furthermore, the development goal is still seen as the rich, developed nation, characterised by technological advancement and capital accumulation, i.e. development is seen as economic growth. Furthermore, development is conceived of as occurring in a linear fashion. That is, a country can move from the position of peripheral to semi-peripheral and core in its own right. The only idea that actually changes in the dependency theory is how that development takes place. Rather than occurring endogenously as the modernisation theorists suggest, it occurs due to a weakening of the ties with the metropolis (Frank, 1966) thus breaking the dependency.

### *2.1.3. Neoliberal economic growth and development*

As the Cold War drew to an end and the question of Africa’s development was again placed on the agenda, a new thesis of development emerged. The collapse of the Soviet Union meant that capitalism emerged as the victor from the Cold War era, leading to a renewed belief in the free market economy. Following this, and due to the USA’s dominance in the post-Cold War world order, global institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank were positioned to push forward a capitalist agenda almost the world over (with less impact in South America and China). This meant that there was a renewed interest in modernisation thinking, which extended the ideas of modernisation by

focusing increasingly on the economic sector and rolling back the role of the state in development.

In response to the failure of third-world nations to develop as expected, development strategies were re-examined. Post-WWII saw new faith being manifested in Keynesian economics. These strategies involved state commitment to economic growth by making investments in worker education, health, social benefits and subsidies in order to aid the economy through periods of economic depression or recession. The role of the state in the third world was also a concern for development theorists who had been speculating how the state was to be involved in development. Various hypotheses were developed. The success of South Korea's economic development suggested that a strong state was necessary for development. However, in many African countries the state had failed to lead to development, not least in part due to the corruption of the state officials involved in what came to be termed the "predatory state" (Evans, 1989: 569). The result was that development became associated with the state's involvement in the running of the economy. Thus, when it came to nations asking for aid from the World Bank or International Monetary Fund, strict agreements were put in place in the form of Structural Adjustment Programmes. In return for the funding, nations were expected to comply with strict neo-liberal policies. Neo-liberalism is the ultimate example of the "veritable faith in man's secular salvation through a self-regulating market" (Polanyi, 1957: 135). In terms of development the free-market development theorists believe that with a strong bourgeoisie accumulating capital and reinvesting it in the economy, and with little state intervention affecting the rules of free competition thus encouraging foreign direct investment, the market will effectively distribute resources to all members of society. Following this belief that the market would solve all social ills, development was reframed in the form of the imposition of neo-liberal policies and specifically through structural adjustment policies (SAPs).

The specifics of SAPs varied from country to country, but the underlying principles were all the same. Neo-liberal policies required that the state withdraw almost completely from market affairs. Thus nationalised corporations and conglomerates had to be re-privatised, and traditionally state-owned assets were to be subjected to the laws of the free market in order to curb the operation of inefficient organisations (UNRISD, 2003). Similarly, state control of services was gradually to be given over to the market. The state was to aid only the poorest of the poor. All other members of society were required to operate according to

the laws of the market, which meant paying for health, education and other basic services even though the majority could not afford to do so. The markets of the underdeveloped nations were required to reorient themselves to export production as opposed to producing for the domestic consumer. Subsidies and tariffs had to be removed so as to create an investment friendly market. For the same purpose, labour market flexibility was encouraged. The overall policy was one of recommodification – everything was up for sale and those that competed most effectively for the market space won. The ideology behind this model of development is perhaps best represented in Sklar’s words, “The spirit of capitalism has now emerged from a long shadow of ideological distrust, attributable mainly to its historical association with colonial rule. Its growth will surely invigorate the African bourgeoisie and shape its nature as African societies begin to free themselves from oppressive statism” (in Graf, 1995: 86).

Of course, the experience of many African countries with SAPs was at best disastrous and at worst catastrophic. SAPs led many African countries into further debt and some struggled to feed their populations as a result of the focus on export-led growth. Ultimately many African countries were left disillusioned and bitter, with heightened levels of mistrust of the powers of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, dominated by the West.

## **2.2. Changes in development thinking**

Criticisms of the dominant development discourse have led to new ways of approaching the concept of development. Most popular perhaps are ‘asset-based development’ and ‘participatory development’, both originating from the criticism that in much of development programming, the voices and ideas of those to be developed were not heard. Thinkers like Sen (1999) and Nussbaum (2000) note that thus far development theories have not really considered the fact that the ‘underdeveloped’ have their own beliefs, ideas and values around how to live their lives. They are not simply passive recipients of development aid and ideas, but are active agents. They make decisions, pursue opportunities and live according to their own principles and guidelines. The ‘underdeveloped’ need to be given more credit for the assets that they have and use, and more time needs to be spent on understanding the motivations and value systems behind their actions. This has led to greater popularity of assets-based thinking.

For Sen, “development can be seen ... as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” (1999: 3). Thus, rather than seeing development as a measure of GNP, Sen advocates a much broader view of development. This view insists upon creating the circumstances under which people can be free agents in their own lives. Freedom thus is a means to development. However, Sen is insistent that freedom is also an end in itself. Thus freedom becomes a “constitutive part of development” (1999: 4). Freedom in this context is understood as being a state in which people are able to fully realise their capabilities. This is opposed to a state of “unfreedom”, which can include situations of political tyranny, famine, hunger, malnutrition, inadequate access to education and health, and premature mortality, amongst others. These unfree conditions are common in that they limit the ability of individuals to pursue their capabilities. Thus the premise for development is that freedoms are important in and of themselves, due to the fact that every human being is deserving of them. In addition, however, freedoms are essential in so far as when they are present, individuals are able to use their agency and pursue their capabilities, thus fostering development. Freedom is thus a means to development and a developmental end.

The key issue here is that Sen moves from thinking of the ‘underdeveloped’ as passive recipients of development, to a place where we think of the ‘underdeveloped’ not as the ‘underdeveloped’ but as human beings deserving of the freedoms enjoyed by so many, and as able, active agents in their own future. This is a key starting point for the way that this research was conducted. For example, healthcare providers are seen as able and active agents in their own health and that of their communities, and need to be understood as such.

Sen also recognizes the importance of values as he states in the following extract from *Development as Freedom* (1999:9),

*Such an approach allows us to acknowledge the role of social values and prevailing mores, which can influence the freedoms that people enjoy and have reason to treasure. Shared norms can influence social features such as gender equity, the nature of child care, family size and fertility patterns, the treatment of the environment and many other arrangements and outcomes. Prevailing values and social mores also affect the presence or absence of corruption, and the role of trust in economic or social or political relationships. The exercise of freedom is mediated by values, but the values in turn are influenced by public discussions*

*and social interactions, which are themselves influenced by participatory freedoms. Each of these connections deserves careful scrutiny.*

It is clear therefore that from the perspectives of both Sen and Nussbaum it is essential to recognise the ability of people to be agents; that is to make their own decisions and to pursue their own life chances.

Participatory development practices take us in this direction and are far more popular in development practice today. As Martinussen notes (2004: 41)

*In the more sophisticated development concepts the emphasis was shifted away from the simple copying of the industrial countries and from the one-sided focus on economics factors as the determining ones in societal transformation. Instead numerous definitions of development appeared with a focus on the capacity to make and implement decisions. The attention given to building autonomous capacity can be viewed as an attempt to reduce the ethnocentrism that so strongly characterised most of the earlier definitions.*

In participatory development the involvement of communities in development is seen both as a goal for other development objectives (defined by the community and not by external agents) as well as an end in itself. Participation is seen as a mechanism for both the empowerment or conscientisation of communities that will enable them to understand and change their social reality (Gran, 1983), as well as the capacity building necessary for sustainable development.

### **2.3. Current relationships of aid and trade**

African countries today are fundamentally linked politically and economically to countries across the world – most firmly to America and the former colonial powers, but increasingly to Latin America, China and other countries in the East. Economic growth in African countries has shown steady improvement over the past decades, recording an average of 5% up to the global recession in 2008 (Moyo 2011) while some African states have made significant gains towards political stability, multi-party politics and democratic governance. Internationally African states have gained greater presence in influencing the political agenda (with seats on the UN Security Council for instance).

However, African states' economic relationship with the rest of the world is still one predominantly of dependence. This derives in part from the vast amounts of aid that are

pumped into various African countries, but is also a function of the protectionism manifested in the EU and US states, which subsidise their agricultural sectors, thereby preventing farmers from developing countries from selling their goods at a fair market value. Protectionism in the North impoverishes developing countries, makes them more dependent on Western aid and ultimately fuels a vicious cycle of dependence.

In the context of these structurally skewed relationships, special arrangements have been enacted to increase trade between poor countries and northern markets. These include AGOA<sup>2</sup> in the United States and the EU's EBA (everything but arms) policies that are designed to provide poorer countries with preferential access to the large markets through duty-free and quota-free arrangements. While these do provide some access, it has been argued that in many of the least developed countries (African countries included) "the main beneficiaries tend to be the entrepreneurs of state-owned enterprises".<sup>3</sup> Another weakness of such preferential trade arrangements is that many of the least developed countries lack the technology and other productive capacity to manufacture goods for export. This keeps them locked into exporting mainly commodities rather than value-added products.

#### **2.4. Where has this left us?**

While there have been major advancements in how development is conceptualised as well as in the way trade relations are shaped, and although development projects and aid from richer nations are generally intended to result in Africans having better healthcare and education, the discourse of development still plays a role in how Africa is viewed in the global context, as well as how Africa views the world.

Ellis (2011) argues that although thinking about development has shifted, very often the remnants of the early modernisation discourse continues to inform our thinking about development. Africa countries are often viewed in patronising terms or with exasperation. Phrases such as the "dark continent" are not popular or politically correct, but still find their way into the consciousness of development practitioners, international funders, politicians and potential investors.

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<sup>2</sup> See [www.agoa.gov](http://www.agoa.gov)

<sup>3</sup> Rehman Sobhan, chairperson of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, at a meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva in 2010. Retrieved on 28 April 2011 at <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=52166>

In turn, Africans have also internalised a range of attitudes towards this development discourse. Ellis argues that there is exasperation amongst Africans (particularly African governments) at the constant pressure from international players to conform to Western notions of development, democracy and good governance<sup>4</sup>. Nevertheless these Western notions of development continue to inform our consciousness as we view the West as best, as we aspire to consumer lifestyles, and as many continue to view white skin as being superior.

As we will show in this report, these attitudes and perceptions, so profoundly shaped by macro-level historical, political and economic processes, play out even at the micro-level, in interpersonal relationships that are overlaid by race, by history and by power. At the same time these relationships also provide the opportunity to change such strongly held attitudes and stereotypes as social capital theorists suggest.

## **2.5. The potential of social capital**

If micro-level IVS relationships reflect and are informed by many of the macro-level issues as we argue in this report, they also provide a space where meaningful change could potentially take place, precisely because they offer an arena in which social capital can be built.

Putnam (2000), widely regarded as one of the fathers of the concept social capital, notes that there are three aspects of social capital: networks, norms and trust. While some have challenged the notion that norms can be seen as an aspect of social capital (see Schuller, Baron & Field 2000; Lin, 2001), networks and trust continue to be commonly considered as the two key aspects of social capital. In relation to networks, bridging social capital is relevant while bonding social capital arises in relation to trust. Putnam (2000) notes that social capital is developed through social networks that have value because of the information they transmit and the culture of reciprocity they sustain.

*Bonding capital describes social networks that link like people to like people – people of the same nationality, race, ethnicity. Bridging capital links people to people unlike themselves.*

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<sup>4</sup> He argues that this might explain the way in which the rapid spread of investment in Africa by China, which rarely comes with any political strings attached, has been welcomed by African governments. However, some African countries have also had the experience of Chinese investments in infrastructure development, for example, which are often accompanied by special arrangements by means of which Chinese workers are imported to undertake construction, with the result that the investment does not necessarily promote local job creation in the African country.

*Both can have positive and negative effects. Bonding social capital is not necessarily better than bridging social capital, but it is easier to build because birds of a feather flock together. Bridging social capital is much harder to achieve (Putnam, 2004: 18).*

Taking this point, it is clear that IVS offers a potential space in which change could occur, both within the volunteer, as well as within the host organisation and host community. IVS places stakeholders in a situation they would otherwise not encounter and offers the potential for bridging social capital to develop (between members of different groups) as well as for bonding social capital to be developed (in cases where volunteers become integrated into communities and organisations, and relationships of trust develop). However, this must be seen simply as a *potential* space and the extent to which social capital can actually develop and challenge commonly held perceptions underlying notions of difference and development rely on well managed, strategically thought through volunteer placements as will be discussed in Chapter 6.

In addition, it must be noted that social capital is not necessarily always a social good. The theorisation of social capital and its link with the concept of capital has led to the common use of the term in policy and the popular press with an implicit understanding that social capital is always good or at the very least, benign (Paldam, 2000). The World Bank, for instance, has adopted the term and sees social capital as an exciting new instrument for all kinds of development challenges (Fine, 2001; Bhattacharyya *et al.*, 2004). Such an analysis or presentation of social capital, however, does not allow much space for the notion that social relations may operate to the detriment of individuals and groups – ideas that have subsequently been explored in public health literature (see for instance Jackson *et al.*, 2001; Gregson *et al.*, 2004; Rhodes *et al.*, 2005; Borsari *et al.*, 2007; German *et al.*, 2008; Rice *et al.*, 2008) and literature related to the rebuilding of post-Communist Eastern Europe (see Paldam & Svendsen, 2000).

### *2.5.1 A social structural conceptualisation of social capital*

A group of scholars in the social capital debate have developed a social structural conceptualisation of social capital which enriches Putnam's mostly socio-psychological and broad scale approach. Bourdieu and Coleman's formulation of social capital is seen by Edwards and Foley as more promising.

For the French sociologist Bourdieu, social capital is “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group- which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a ‘credential’, which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word” (Bourdieu,1986:248-249). Bourdieu’s sociology rests on the view that “differential access to capital, not individual utility maximizing behavior, shapes both economic and social worlds” (Edwards and Foley,1999:143). What produces and reproduces access to social capital is not self-regulating markets, but networks of connections operating as the “product of an endless effort at institution” (Edwards and Foley, 1999:143). Bourdieu’s indications on how to measure and weigh social capital “has a clarity and coherence not found in Coleman and Putnam” (Edwards and Foley, 1999:143). For him, social capital has to be captured as “the volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent... depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected” (Bourdieu, 1986:249).

Coleman’s definition of social capital also insists on relational and social structural elements. He defines social capital as “a variety of entities having two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspect of a social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure...Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of relations between persons and among persons. It is lodged neither in individuals, nor in physical implements of production” (Coleman 1990:302).

Coleman tends to describe components of social capital as “elements in the rational calculations of self-interested agents, and not, as in Bourdieu, constitutive of individual identities and strategies” (Edwards and Foley, 1999:144). Nevertheless, like Bourdieu, Coleman has highlighted the way in which “concrete social relationships can give individuals access to crucial resources not otherwise available despite ample endowments of human or financial capital” (Edwards and Foley, 1999:144). While insisting that subjective attributes as trust, expectations and norms are endogenous to specific social relations, he shows awareness of the fact that “ a given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions may be useless or even harmful for others” (Coleman, 1990:144). The emphasis on the specificity of contexts in

which social capital is produced distinguishes his approach from Putnam's. His account on trust has nothing to do with "generalized trust" dealt with by the political science literature. For him, trust is "a feature of the specific context in which specified individuals or classes of individuals can be trusted" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:144).

Edwards and Foley, together with network analysts, sociologists and applied social scientists, proclaim their preference for the social structural approach initiated by Bourdieu. Against Putnam's "context-free" account on social capital, they place emphasis on social capital "context-dependence". "Generalized trust", "average associational membership" and other statistical measures of social capital components seem too abstract to provide an understanding of how specific social relations facilitate individual and collective actions. Focusing on "trust", Edwards and Foley convincingly demonstrate that "high levels of 'generalized social trust,' in the absence of information about who has access to such trust under what conditions, can tell us little about a polity or a community. Context counts ... and counts crucially" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:151). Any credible conception of social capital has to recognize "the dependence of its 'use value' and liquidity on the specific social contexts in which it is found" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:146). That is why "neither resources in general, attitudes and norms such as trust and reciprocity, nor social infrastructures such as networks and associations can be understood as social capital by themselves" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:146). The distinction between social resources and social networks is absolutely crucial.

Access to social resources is neither brokered equitably nor distributed evenly. The context-dependent conception of social capital holds that "the access required to convert social resources (the 'raw materials' of social capital) into social capital has two distinct, but necessary, components – the perception that a specific resource exists and some form of social relationship that brokers individual or group access to those particular social resources" (Edwards and Foley, 1999: 146). Social infrastructures that broker such access may be dyads, informal networks, voluntary associations, religious institutions, communities, cities, national or transnational movements. Social capital liquidity and "use value" thus strongly depends on specific social contexts, which also shape "the means by which access to specific social resources is distributed and managed" (Edwards and Foley, 1999:146).

### 2.5.2 *Social networks and resources*

Social structuralists push for an understanding of social capital as comprising both social networks and resources. None of these by itself deserves to be called “social capital”. It is essential to note that not all networks are of equal importance in brokering access to resources, and not all networks have resources. Individuals also do not perceive the availability of resources in the same way. Such uneven distribution of resources and variety of networks is only accounted for by a context-dependent conception of social capital. To measure an individual’s social capital, one has to look not only at resources available through his or her social networks, but also at the features of such networks and one’s social position in the network. The more ties, the more diverse ties an individual has, the more likely the person is to get access to resources of various kinds. As resources are accessed one tie at a time, one tie can just be sufficient to gain access to a crucial resource. That is why “neither networks (as micro-structures), nor network attributes of network members alone equal social capital ... Social capital is best conceived as access (networks) plus resources” (Edwards and Foley, 1999:166). The “use value” of an individual’s network position or ties depends on the structure of the network, the individual’s position within it, and the social location of the entire network within the broader socio-economic context which “shapes the ways that specific networks can and cannot link their members to resources” (Edwards and Foley, 1999:165).

Macro structures have considerably influence in shaping access to resources at micro levels. Edwards and Foley have observed that “an individual may have extensive access to resources in a specific network, but the network as a whole be embedded in a declining sector or an oppressed constituency” (Edwards and Foley, 1999: 166). Such marginalised networks may need linkages or social bridges in order to gain access to a greater array of resources.

In the light of the above conceptualisation of social capital, experiences of international voluntary service can legitimately be regarded as setting up international social networks between all the parties. However, the benefits of these social linkages should not be taken for granted. Macro-structural dynamics, contextual realities and problems of access to resources available in these networks can constrain or enable the “use value” of host organisations or communities’ international social networks created through experiences of

international volunteer service. This conceptualisation also suggests that for international voluntary service to serve as international social capital for all the parties involved, certain macro-structural, micro-structural and individual adjustments have to be put in place.

The potential benefits of social capital can most certainly be undermined by relationships of power and inequality as is often the case in the histories of the countries involved. As Bhattacharyya *et al.* (2004) have pointed out there is a “relative absence of ... relationships of power” in the predominant literature on social capital. Lin (2001) notes that any aspect of social capital must deal with power. For her, social capital is similar to economic capital in that it always involves power; power must thus be a central point of analysis in social capital research.

We therefore need to examine carefully what conditions exist in the volunteer-host organisation relationship, where power lies, how this plays out and how well placements are structured and managed. This is likely to throw light on the potential of IVS to generate real opportunities for redressing power imbalances between North and South and for fostering deep intercultural, inter-political and inter-economic learning among all the parties involved.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

One of the key aims of this study was to understand the role that international voluntary service plays in the lives of volunteers and in the workings of host organisations and communities. In the IVS relationship there are three key players involved in the actual volunteering experience – the sending organisation, the host organisation and its community, and the volunteer. Of course, there are a range of other players at the periphery of this relationship that play an equally important role, not least of all policy makers and funders. This study focuses on two of the three central players – the volunteers and the host organisations and communities. Future research should also look at the role played by sending organisations as well as the peripheral actors.

At this point we should mention that while the volunteer survey sought to understand the impact of the IVS experience on the volunteers, the case studies of the host organisations cannot establish impact. Rather we sought to explore how host organisations and communities respond to international volunteers, to understand their experiences and to analyse their perceptions of the effects of international volunteers. It is also important to note that whilst all of the organisations that were involved in the study used young volunteers, many also had experience with skilled volunteers and the findings reflect these experiences.

This chapter deals with the methodology followed to determine the impact on each of these players.

#### **3.1. Understanding the effects on host organisations and communities**

##### *3.1.1. Research design*

In order to understand the effects of IVS on the host communities and organisations, and to be able to describe these effects, this component of the research involved a comparative case study design.

The comparative case study design enabled us to make comparisons between host organisations and organisations involved in similar work that did not host international volunteers. Differences described by the organisations could then in part be explained by the presence or absence of international volunteers. The comparative element thus helped us to determine the effects of international volunteers on host organisations and

communities. Using a case study design as opposed to a survey enabled us to investigate what experiences the host organisations and communities had had with international volunteers in order to draw out some conclusions about the effects of IVS as well as examples of good practice.

We also decided that this study should be carried out in two countries in order to demonstrate that the findings were not exclusive to a particular country. The intention of conducting the study in two countries was to make cross country comparisons and to determine to what extent the findings held true within each country.

### 3.1.2. *Country selection*

In case study design we normally choose cases that are either typical of a phenomenon or are atypical depending on what the researcher is trying to achieve (de Vaus, 2001). At the country level, we were aiming to describe particular features of IVS. We were thus trying to establish what effects IVS *typically* has. As such the country cases were selected to be typical of IVS in the region.

As has been mentioned, IVS is a growing industry in Africa with greater numbers of both young and professional volunteers choosing to volunteer in Africa. Some of the countries that receive the largest numbers of volunteers include South Africa, Ghana, Namibia, Tanzania and Mozambique. Given VOSESA's interest in Southern Africa we decided to focus in on the countries in the SADC region with the highest numbers of international volunteers. Given that the largest number of international volunteers coming to the SADC region in 2009 was from the German *weltwärts* programme, VOSESA decided to focus on countries where these volunteers would be in the majority. In addition, VOSESA made contact with International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE), which indicated its interest in participating in the study, given that some of its volunteers had also served in the SADC region.

Besides the logics of case study selection, logistical and financial constraints also shaped the final selection of the countries. VOSESA has been working with SAGE Net – an organisation that was also conducting research into IVS in South Africa. In order not to duplicate efforts and rather to maximise the number of cases, we chose to focus on Tanzania and Mozambique. Another reason these countries were suitable is because in each of the countries we were able to locate host organisations thanks to the networks of both SAGE Net and ICYE, each of which referred us to sending and host organisations operating in these

countries. In this way, it became possible for us identify host organisations to participate in the study.

### 3.1.3. *Organisation selection*

At the organisational level, the intention was both to describe the typical effects of IVS in host communities as well as to be able to test whether these effects were attributable to the presence of international volunteers. As a result, the organisational cases had to be both typical and atypical. Atypical cases compared with typical cases allow us to be able to attribute effects in case study design.

In each country we selected three typical cases or organisations and three atypical cases. The selection of the typical organisations was based on assessment of the types of fields that ICYE and *weltwärts* volunteers were predominantly involved in. Organisations selected therefore had to be working either in education of young children; disability; environmental issues; or HIV/AIDS. The typical cases were organisations working in one of these fields who were hosting or had hosted international volunteers within the last year. The atypical cases were organisations working in the same field as the typical cases, but who had not hosted international volunteers. In this way were able to retain many of the characteristics across the typical and atypical cases, allowing us to control for the one major difference – the hosting of international volunteers. There were two exceptions, however: in Mozambique it transpired that two of the atypical cases were organisations that had hosted international volunteers in the past, but had halted this practice by the time of the study.

### 3.1.4. *Methods*

In each of the cases a number of methods were employed in order to get a full picture of volunteering and international volunteering. In order to get as wide a perspective as possible, different players had to be interviewed. Unfortunately financial constraints limited the amount of time we were able to spend at each organisation, thus limiting our ability to do extensive observation. Nevertheless, data was collected from staff members as well as beneficiaries in the community. While we had hoped to interview volunteers as well, the timing of the research did not allow for this as volunteers had already departed for home after their year of service and new volunteers had just arrived. (In Mozambique one volunteer was interviewed who had returned to Germany, but then came back to Mozambique some time later.) The key methods used were interviews and focus groups.

In each of the organisations one or two staff members were targeted for interviews. These staff members were those directly involved with or who had good knowledge of the programmes in the community – usually the programme manager or the director of the organisation. In the host organisations the staff member selected also had to have direct involvement with the international volunteers.

The focus groups were conducted with beneficiaries of the programmes that the organisation ran. The staff members were asked to recruit participants for the focus groups and to ensure that there was an equal spread of male and female participants.

Ultimately 12 organisations were surveyed (6 in each country) through 18 in-depth interviews conducted with organisation directors and/or volunteer coordinators – nine in each country - and 12 focus groups were conducted with 120 community beneficiaries associated with the selected organisations.

All of the interviews and focus groups were conducted in the language the participants were most comfortable with and the researchers ensured that the interview and focus group reports were provided in English.

#### *3.1.5. A note on researchers*

It was felt that in-country researchers should be selected to carry out the research. The main reason for this was to ensure that interviews and focus groups could be carried out in the vernacular language. In addition, in-country researchers are also often better able to navigate social expectations and norms and to share insights about how these underlying beliefs and values shape perspectives on the issues under investigation. In-country researchers also provide a familiar face, enabling respondents often to feel more comfortable and to open up. We found that the involvement of in-country researchers in this study was a definite advantage.

## **3.2. Understanding the impact on volunteers**

### *3.2.1. Research design*

In order to assess whether or not the volunteer experience had had any impact on the volunteers we conducted a quasi-experimental survey. Ideally we would have like to also include a pre-service and post-service element to the survey, but the logistics of when volunteers were leaving and returning meant that this was not possible in the timeframe

available for the study. In order to address this problem, the results from the outgoing volunteers were compared with those from the returned volunteers as a pseudo-longitudinal proxy.

### 3.2.2. *Methods*

An adapted version of the Center for Social Development's International Volunteer Impacts Survey (IVIS)<sup>5</sup> was administered to outgoing and returning ICYE and *weltwärts* volunteers. This survey was implemented using a cross-sectional design to assess volunteers' perceptions on key outcomes.

The adapted version of the International Volunteering Impacts Survey (IVIS) measures key outcomes of service from the perspective of volunteers. It is designed to measure outcomes before and after international service. During the adaptation process, the volunteer-sending programmes involved in this study commented on the questionnaires and helped adapt the questions slightly to meet the context of European volunteers. The survey was administered electronically to outgoing volunteers (2010-2011) as well as returned volunteers (2005-2009) across the two programmes.

The sample for ICYE included outgoing volunteers prepared to serve during 2010-2011, and alumnae that served from 2005-2009. All ICYE volunteers completed the survey in English. These surveys were administered to ICYE volunteers serving in developing countries across multiple continents. Given the passage of time since 2005, many of the ICYE alumnae email addresses were no longer relevant. Consequently, approximately 380 emails bounced back when sending the email invitation to ICYE volunteers to participate in the survey. In the end, VOSESA compiled functioning emails for just over 1,250 ICYE volunteers. VOSESA administered the survey to all ICYE volunteers directly. An estimated 18 per cent of ICYE volunteers completed the survey, resulting in a 14 per cent response rate for returned volunteers, and 31 per cent for outgoing volunteers.

VOSESA surveyed a sample of outgoing 2010-2011 *weltwärts* volunteers and returned volunteers that served during 2008-2009. *weltwärts* surveys were administered to a sample of volunteers serving in African countries only. *weltwärts* volunteers had the option of

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<sup>5</sup> Lough, B. J., McBride, A. M. & Sherraden, M. S. Measuring volunteer outcomes: Development of the International Volunteer Impacts Survey. (Center for Social Development, Washington University, St Louis, MO, 2009).

completing the survey in English or a translated survey in German. The majority of *weltwärts* volunteers chose to complete the surveys in German. A total of 17 German sending organisations agreed to participate in the study. VOSESA administered the survey to volunteers with seven of these programmes directly, and the remaining ten organisations agreed to send an email invitation from VOSESA inviting their volunteers to participate in the study. It is unknown how many of these ten organisations actually sent the survey to volunteers, or if they followed-up to encourage response. Consequently, it is not possible to determine the exact response rate for *weltwärts* volunteers. However, 13 of these organisations confirmed that they sent the survey to 478 volunteers, indicating a response rate of less than 23 per cent.

In total, around 1 750 volunteers received the survey. Of these, 455 responded resulting in a total response rate of around 26 per cent. As a conservative measure, this response rate also includes emails that bounced back or never reached potential participants. Of those responding to the survey, 71 per cent fully completed the survey. See Table 1 for details about the sample response rate.

<b>Respondent Group</b>	<b>Administered Survey</b>	<b>Respondent to Survey</b>	<b>Completed Survey</b>
<i>weltwärts</i> Outgoing Volunteers	~200	55	40
<i>weltwärts</i> Returnees/Alumnae	~350	100	69
ICYE Volunteer Survey- Outgoing	255	97	79
ICYE Volunteer Survey- Returnees/Alumnae	970	203	136
<b>Total All</b>	<b>1750</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>324</b>

**Table 1: Approximate response rates by volunteer group**

Despite the low response rate, gender and age demographics between the respondent samples and the volunteer populations are relatively comparable for both programmes (see Table 2). Reliable demographics are only available for volunteer age and gender. Respondents from both programmes are slightly older (by about one year) than volunteers in the population. Likewise average gender differences vary by about one per cent. Similarity between the samples and volunteer populations indicate that non-response bias may not be a significant concern.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Respondent mean</b>	<b>Population mean</b>
<i>weltwärts</i> Outgoing Volunteers	21 years	20 years
ICYE Outgoing Volunteers	23 years	22 years
<b>Gender (per cent female)</b>	<b>Respondent per cent</b>	<b>Population per cent</b>

weltwärts Outgoing Volunteers	59%	60%
ICYE Outgoing Volunteers	61%	60%

**Table 2: Age and gender differences between the respondents and the volunteer population**

Because of the inclusion of multiple facilitating programmes (particularly for *weltwärts*), it was not possible to know the demographic makeup of the total sample that received the survey. However, demographics for survey respondents are listed in Table 3. Although some of the statistics in this table appear to indicate possible systematic differences between prospective and returned-respondents, a logistic regression indicated no statistically significant differences between groups, excluding age. In cases where percentages appear to be higher, this could reflect natural changes over time (i.e. slightly more returned volunteers are married, have received a Bachelor's degree or higher, and earn a higher individual income). Naturally, returned volunteers are also slightly older. Based on these findings, comparing survey responses from prospective and returned volunteers as a pseudo-longitudinal proxy may be justified.

Demographic Category	Prospective Volunteers (n = 104)		Returned Volunteers (n = 142)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Gender				
Female	69	60%	135	67%
Male	47	40%	68	33%
Marital status				
Married	2	2%	21	10%
Not married	111	98%	182	90%
Education				
Less than Bachelor's degree	74	64%	114	57%
Bachelor's degree or higher	41	36%	87	43%
Individual income				
Less than €20,000	55	90%	126	87%
€20,000 or more	6	10%	19	13%
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>sd</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>sd</b>
Age	22.7	3.85	25.6	4.43

**Table 3: Respondent characteristics by volunteer group**

### 3.2.3. Analytic Methods

Analysis methods aim to identify differences in key outcomes between prospective and returned volunteers, as well as correlations between outcomes, and differences between programmes. Significance tests used composite measures of key outcome areas. Each major outcome area reported on in this study is composed of multiple survey items from the adapted IVIS. Although slight variations have been made to some indicators, each of these

composite variables was re-tested for reliability. Table 9 in the Appendix displays indicators that compose each of these variables, along with their associated internal reliability coefficients.

Independent t-tests are used to determine significant differences in outcomes between prospective and returned volunteers. Propensity score matching was not possible given the relatively small n-size of responses. Pearson's correlations are used to examine correlations between concepts. In order to understand differences between volunteer-sending programmes, a logistic regression is employed using volunteer programme as the dependent variables (ICYE = 0, *weltwärts* = 1), along with nine composite outcomes as independent variables. In addition to controlling for outcome variables, the logistic regression controls for the category of volunteer (outgoing = 0, returned = 1).

### **3.3. Ethical considerations**

All participants (both in the volunteer survey and in the qualitative case studies) were provided with an information sheet regarding the study (see Appendices 3 and 4). In this sheet it was noted that no adverse effects of participating in the study were foreseen. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed. As such, volunteers participated in the survey anonymously and all possible identifying variables were removed from the survey dataset before analysis.

Although names of organisations were used in the analysis of the qualitative data this analysis remains with the research team only. Names have thus been removed from the report and any subsequent publications.

VOSESA is committed to sharing the results of this study with the host organisations and other stakeholders in order to ensure that the IVS experience can be enhanced for the benefit of all participating parties.

### **3.4. A note on partnerships**

At this point we must acknowledge the partnerships that enabled us to conduct this research. It might seem strange to discuss partnerships in a methodology chapter, but these partnerships were integral in helping us to both select and access the cases. While this also introduced some limitations (discussed later in this chapter), without these partnerships it is unlikely this research could have been conducted.

The first partner was the Center for Social Development (CSD) at Washington University who generously shared its research design for a similar study conducted in Latin America in 2009 and guided its adaptation for the VOSESA study in Tanzania and Mozambique. CSD also assisted VOSESA with the analysis of the data collected from the volunteer survey as an in-kind contribution to this study.

A second partner was International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE), an international organisation that sends young volunteers all over the world in North – South as well as South – North exchanges. ICYE was instrumental in providing VOSESA with an excellent sample for the volunteer survey and generously translated the questionnaire into German at no cost to VOSESA.

The third partner with which we worked was the South Africa German Network (SAGE Net) – a network organisation bringing together German sending and South African host organisations in the field of IVS. SAGE Net includes volunteers from the German *weltwärts* programme in its activities. *weltwärts* is a major programme run by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) that is operationalised through hundreds of sending organisations in Germany, which send thousands of young people to volunteer in different parts of the world, including Africa. VOSESA was able to include aspects of the SAGE Net approach in its research instruments.

Both of these programmes work predominantly with young unskilled<sup>6</sup> volunteers and in Africa the fields that the majority of volunteers are involved in are education (particularly of young children), the disability sector, HIV/AIDS and the environment.

### **3.5. Limitations**

In case study design, multiple cases make for a more water tight theory. According to de Vaus, “using the logic of replication a single case represents only one replication and does not necessarily provide a tough test of theory” (2001: 226). A number of cases will allow us to more confidently test theory and describe the conditions under which the theory does or doesn’t work. Multiple cases, according to de Vaus, are also essential to make inductive claims. While our intention was to conduct four to six typical and atypical case sets, financial

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<sup>6</sup> Note, here unskilled refers to young matriculants who have no professional training, although they may have other skills such as computer literacy, first aid and other ad hoc skills learnt during their schooling.

limitations meant that we could only conduct three sets in each country, totalling six sets of case comparisons across the two countries. This means the confidence with which we can make claims, particularly claims of attribution is limited. Findings should therefore be read as indicative of possible trends but further research is necessary to confirm the applicability of the findings.

Another limitation is the amount of time we had in the field. In case studies ideally the researcher should spend as much time in the field as possible, also allowing him/her to gather data through observation and follow-up interviews. In this study, however, financial constraints only allowed a day to a day and a half with each organisation.

The timing of the research also meant that we could only collect data from staff members and beneficiaries. We were not able to hear the perspective of the volunteers. While the volunteer survey to some extent covers this voice, the limitation lies in not being able to add their voice to the case study in each organisation to build a fuller picture of each case.

## **4. THE CONTEXT OF IVS**

An analysis of the way in which host organisations speak about international volunteers, expectations of international volunteers and themselves in relation to the volunteers, it emerges that the relationship between host organisations or communities and international volunteers is very much shaped by the historical relationships of colonialism and neo-colonialism, experiences of development efforts and the broader context of aid and trade. This chapter argues that the phenomenon of international volunteering does not take place in a vacuum. First, it is shown that from the perspective of host organisations, the encounter with international volunteers is loaded with past and contemporary experiences of colonial and post-colonial relationships between the Western world and the African continent. Second, as a result of historical imbalances between these two worlds, international voluntary service emerges as a supply driven process over which host organisations exercise little agency. Third, past relations of aid and trade frame international voluntary service within the development discourse and practices.

### **4.1 International voluntary service: a mirror of colonial and post-colonial relationships**

Partnerships between host and sending organisations as well as the profile of international volunteers hosted in Tanzania and Mozambique highlight the importance of colonial and post-colonial relationships between the host and sending countries. In Tanzania, most volunteers came from Germany, a former colonial master. Links between host organisations and sending organisations as well as the flow of aid fall within the broad context of long established cooperation between Tanzania and Germany.

These relationships between African countries and their former colonial masters have been characterised by economic and political dependence of the former vis-à-vis the latter within a broader global context of imbalances, power relations and exploitation. In a manner consistent with these structural issues, host organisations and members of the host community represent international volunteers as beings of a superior race, of higher economic status and special skills. The volunteers' encounter with the host organisation and community is inevitably racialised. They are approached as members of the "white race", in popular jargon "*muzungu*", and thus attributed qualities and resources consistent with popular African representations of Europe. These clichés are themselves rooted in the

history of colonial and post-colonial interactions between Africa and the Western world. In a focus group discussion held in Tanzania, it was stated that:

*“White people are very wealthy people; they are filthy rich and have no money problems. They are very developed and their living conditions very far removed from the way we live in poor countries. They are very powerful as nations. They are very intelligent people and capable of anything.”*

Similar representations transpired in a different focus discussion in Mozambique:

*“We all know that what we have here was left by the colonisers. This means that what we know and even what you know is because the “whites” taught us. So, people from other regions [meaning Europe and the Americas] are very clever and open minded. They are not jealous, just thinking in witchcraft, etc; they are very kind.”*

Likewise, members another focus group in Mozambique stated that *“community members consider white volunteers as rich people and as people who have knowledge of everything and as people who do not fail”*. Though there are indications that certain host organisations and members of host communities do not adopt such simplistic representations of the white race, the dominant view tends to associate the white race with financial security, material resources and special skills.

Even as they impart skills to international volunteers who actually learn from host organisations (see Chapter 8), the latter stick to the idea that whites have superior skills. This paradox highlights the mythical dimension of such elevated representations of white international volunteers. These unquestioned myths are inherited and reinforced through global structural injustices and macro-economic imbalances in trade and political relations between countries of Africa and the Western world. The fact that host organisations still subscribe to these representations only show how entrenched and internalised these incomplete and distorted views of the West and of the white race are.

Unfortunately, these perceptions shape interactions between international volunteers and members of the host organisation or community. As members of the wealthy Western world, international volunteers are seen as coming with financial and material resources. The host organisations and community look at them as a key element in their strategies to

mobilise resources. These attitudes are definitely consistent with the broader relationships of aid and trade between the Western world and Africa.

The data abound with reports of host organisations or members of the host community approaching international volunteers to ask for money or other forms of material support. A staff in a Tanzania host organisation stated that *“some of the staff members have been asking for money and other kinds of help or support from volunteers, thinking that because the volunteers are from Europe, they are rich and must have money. This dents the relationship with them somehow, because the volunteers tend to be aloof or to develop a personality that shuts out most people to prevent the likelihood of people asking for help or loans, and such things.”* Similar attitudes have been reported in Mozambique.

Besides, in a manner consistent with these underlying unquestioned beliefs in white intellectual and material superiority, the mere presence of white international volunteers in some of the host organisations generate in the organisation and in the community at large perceptions of added economic resource, credibility and efficacy. As a result, certain host organisation managers are suspected of keeping to themselves monetary or material advantages received from the hosting of international volunteers. This is evident from the statement of a host organisation in Tanzania :

*“Lack of transparency regarding international volunteers also sends signals that there is something going on that people are not supposed to know about, something to do with finance or resources. Therefore staffs complain and feel sidelined. This demoralises their association with the volunteers because they resort to ignoring them with a subtle or underlying impression that whoever is benefiting should work with them.”*

The presence of white international volunteers is associated with flow of resources to the organisation. It has potential to create a climate of suspicion as other staff members believe that the management has appropriated these presumed resources for itself.

It is ironic that host organisations do not openly challenge widespread uncritical beliefs in white racial intellectual and technical superiority, but rather reinforce them in seeking to draw maximum benefit from such a sorry state of affairs. A staff member in a Tanzania host organisation highlighted as a key benefit of having international volunteers the fact that

*“The organisation’s status has increased because the general population tend to believe that where white people are involved, the organisation must be of international standard, solid and very reliable. When you promise clients that they can get solar energy facilities for instance, they easily trust you because there are white people in the organisation and therefore the organisation is trustworthy.”*

Another host organisation in Tanzania displayed similar instrumentalisation of racial bias for its benefit:

*“International volunteers also have a potential to make a difference when they go in the villages and talk to people through presentations or outreach programmes. Most people in Tanzania have a tendency to listen a person from abroad than a local person even though both of you might carry the same message. So, when international volunteers say something, there is a great[er] possibility of people believing and acting on it than local people. That way they can influence behaviour. For instance they can change people’s perceptions regarding taking loans especially because they can relate with that very well since most people in developed countries have loans.”*

A third host organisation also insisted that the presence of white teachers branded the school very positively and attracted new enrolments as it clearly transpires in this statement from a focus group discussion in Tanzania:

*“For community members also presence of volunteers adds value to the school. People tend to think that if the school has white teachers, then it is a school of very high standard. It therefore motivates parents to bring their children and to have faith in the school. Parents also boast that their children have a white teacher. As such you find other parents are inspired to bring their children or transfer them from public schools to this school. This brands the school very positively to the community members.”*

In Mozambique, similar dynamics are observed as can be inferred from this declaration from a host organisation:

*“If international volunteers were fewer, it would have a significant impact as it would shadow/compromise the visibility of the projects being carried out. The presence of international volunteers is crucial to get the visibility of the initiatives already in place and open doors for more help/assistance.”*

These statements clearly show how uncritical host organisations are of their instrumental use of racial clichés. While many of them opposed historical processes of racism embedded in colonialism and neo-colonialism and advocated for equal and more respectful relationships with the Western world, they unconsciously reinforced these racial prejudices.

#### **4.2 International volunteers: benevolent actors or agents of neocolonialism?**

Given the underlying historical power relationships between the Western world and the African continent, international volunteers are not always seen as benevolent actors, but sometimes as instruments of Western imperialism or agents of neo-colonialism. Certain members of host organisations or host communities believe that international volunteers come with a hidden agenda. A respondent in a Tanzanian host organisation remarked:

*“Another challenge is the feeling you get, and the feeling that is persistently among most of the staff that volunteers come to help but they have other interests, albeit ulterior motives to their coming.”*

In a focus group discussion held in a different organisation, it was also stated that:

*“Wazungu, when they come, they have no interest with Africans; they do not even talk much with them; very few are friendly, most are arrogant and have their specific interests; that is why they come.”*

These suspicions around the true motives of international volunteers may reflect insufficient grasp by the host community of the inherent value of volunteerism in general and international volunteering in particular. It may also point to lack of effective communication and transparency between key stakeholders in the international volunteering enterprise. Lack of trust generates a host of speculations about the true motives of international volunteers. Unfortunately, some of these speculations are consistent with exploitative and hegemonic relationships that the Western world has established with the African continent.

Economic exploitation features as one of the alleged hidden motives behind international volunteering. Here is how a focus group discussion in Tanzania presented the matter:

*“The biggest interest of ‘wazungu’ coming to Africa is to build a relationship, friendship between rich nations and poor nations. The ulterior interest is to access natural resources of*

*poor countries. When they are friends, they can easily do their research, convince on contracts, and pretend to help while they take resources with the other hand.”*

Elaborating on the economic interests that may characterise international volunteering, participants in a Tanzania focus group discussion added: *“they might build a school but in actual sense they take resources from the site. White people were helping to drill bore holes for water, while they were actually conducting test research on resources they had been following up and have located in the area.”* Some of these perceptions may be exaggerated and unsubstantiated. However, they reflect past and existing patterns of extractive and exploitative relationships between the Western world and the African continent.

Intelligence gathering is the other hidden motive attributed to international volunteers' presence in Africa. They are thought to spy for their governments or for the Western donor agencies who want to know how their money is being spent. Their several contacts, including among high level state officials, their curiosity and the voluminous notes taken in a language unintelligible to the host community, all these factors reinforce suspicions of spying activities being undertaken in conjunction with volunteering. A staff in a Tanzania host organisation expressed this suspicion in no ambiguous terms:

*“When international volunteers come, they usually have information, contacts and interests that are sometimes peculiar. For instance the volunteers can have very easy contact and access to the district commissioner or the Member of Parliament. One never knows how or when they met, where did they get their contact details. One also wonders how these officials oblige these volunteers contrary to how they would oblige most people in the country, even the elites for that matter. And the degree of documentation they do! They often write in German. So we will never be able to read what they constantly write, but it is awful a lot that you wonder what are they writing, where they are sending the things they write to and for what purpose. Concisely put, there are clues here and there, which make people feel that the volunteers do not come exclusively for the purpose of volunteering but that they have far deeper interests, perhaps interests surpassing volunteering itself.”*

In line with the above statement, a Mozambican host organisation singled out a category of university graduates *“who come for volunteering but also for conducting research and seek information that somehow can influence political/policy decisions in their countries of origin. These ones are instructed to come and find out how the funds made available from the*

*governments of the countries of origin are being spent in Mozambique. This category of volunteers is more associated with spying agencies.”* One may ask whether these perceptions have a solid empirical basis.

The aim of this research was not really to gather evidence on all these negative perceptions. However, the most important question should not be whether these perceptions are true or false. Perceptions are constitutive of the social reality. In the context of international volunteering, they unfortunately connect to existing economic and political relationships between the North and the South. Hence, the most productive approach is to take cognisance of these dynamics as well as to critically discuss ways of addressing them.

### **4.3 International voluntary service: a supply driven process**

A further reflection of the legacy of historical imbalances between the Western world and the African continent is given by the fact that the flow of international volunteers appears to be supply-driven rather than by the demands of host organisations or communities.

Several well structured organisations, mostly in the Western world, specialise in sending international volunteers around the world. The WorldWide Volunteering website, a United Nations Volunteers clearinghouse for information on volunteering and service, lists over 2 000 volunteer-involving organisations that deploy volunteers internationally. Though this list is by no means exhaustive, the fact that many of these programmes are sending international volunteers to African countries suggests that a significant number of volunteers are being sent to Africa by various organisations – religious groups, governments, non-profit organisations, charities and, to a lesser extent, companies. The German *weltwärts* international youth volunteer programme alone sent approximately 6,000 volunteers to developing countries in 2009, of whom over 400 were deployed to southern Africa. And in 2008, the United States Peace Corps reported sending an average of 593 volunteers each year to approximately nine SADC countries.

A survey of volunteer sending organisations conducted by VOSESA in 2010 (unpublished) also revealed the scope of international volunteering in the SADC region. A total of 61 volunteer sending organisations responded (a 30% response rate) from the following countries: Germany (27), United Kingdom (9), France, (5), Switzerland (4), Canada (3) Ireland (2), United States (2), Norway (2), South Africa (2), South Korea (1), Finland (1) Hungary (1), Ghana (1) and New Zealand (1). Of the organisations that took part in the study 89.1% send

volunteers to Africa. The study established that these organisations sent 2 704 volunteers to SADC countries in 2009 and 2 762 volunteers in 2010. While 31% of respondents reported an increase in the number of volunteers sent to SADC countries over the last five years, the reported numbers only indicate a slight increase and thus this issue requires further investigation. The Democratic Republic of Congo<sup>7</sup>, Tanzania, South Africa and Zambia receive the highest number of international volunteers who mostly originate from Western Europe. Angola, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Lesotho receive the smallest number of international volunteers.

The terms of the partnership are mainly defined by sending organisations with host organisations having little or no input in the process. Sending organisations have a clear agenda about what they want to achieve through sending volunteers in developing countries. Undoubtedly, International volunteer service programmes seek to promote certain political, social, cultural and religious objectives: many programmes are in fact an extension of a country's international aid to developing countries and, according to the responses provided, are seen as a cost-effective way of meeting development imperatives (International Service, Progressio, Skillshare, SPW and VSO). While international trade relations and international aid priorities do help to explain the trends in international volunteering, the motivations for IVS programmes are typically much more complex than simply combating poverty and underdevelopment. Other interests seem to feature in the creation, implementation and expansion of IVS programmes. They include addressing youth marginalisation and youth unemployment; fostering inter-cultural understanding, social cohesion and peace; engendering global and local citizenship; advancing international and personal competitiveness; volunteerism and promoting religion.

VOSESA's 2010 unpublished survey revealed that the five most common activities in which international volunteers engage in the SADC region are education (64%), human and social services (56%), health services (39%), community development (34%) and disability (28%). Other common areas of engagement are environmental protection, gender and women's rights, peace and human rights and economic development. A 2010 report by International Service, Progressio, Skillshare, SPW and VSO also cites climate change as a critical and growing area for volunteer involvement. In relation to the volunteers themselves, most

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<sup>7</sup> The DRC received 800 international volunteers in 2009, which can be almost exclusively attributed to the United Nations Volunteers programme.

organisations were interested in promoting cultural understanding among their volunteer (80%) and increasing a server's social skill (53%). Organisations reported much less interest in promoting skill acquisition among volunteers, increasing their employability or expanding volunteers' career options.

In contrast to sending organisations' strategic intentions in sending volunteers abroad, most host organisations just accept incoming volunteers whether or not they fit into their strategic plans. A Tanzania focus group discussion raised host organisations' lack of strategic management of volunteers as an issue that requires urgent attention:

*"The volunteer programme is a very good idea, and it appears to be using so much resources, it also has great potential in Africa, but it needs to be re-thought, and the first important question which the centre and perhaps other host organisations have not clearly worked out, is exactly what do I need to achieve through volunteers. Answering such a question is important to design programmes that will be measurable in terms of their objectives, deliverables and achievements. At the moment, that is the gap that exists".*

The mismatch between host organisations needs and sending organisations' supply also transpires in this statement from a Tanzanian staff member:

*"While we acknowledge that it is not easy to get professionally skilled volunteers, we feel that when sending organisations are more informed about host organisations' activities and the kind of volunteers they will most benefit from, it will be easier to prepare even those who are just out of school to be more effective."*

Contrary to most host organisations in Tanzania which demonstrate a less proactive orientation in their relationships with international volunteers, certain host organisations in Mozambique expressed ownership of the process as transpires in this statement from a staff member:

*"We have no restrictions, but we have preferences and always when other organisations ask us to host their volunteers, we express/put forward our needs and preferences. This helps us and the volunteers themselves. Because if they come and do not fit in our scheme, they will end up frustrated/disappointed and we do not want it. We had that experience in the past with a French volunteer e Zambézia province".*

For such a sense of agency to develop, a respondent is of the view that *“it is important for host organisations to be involved in the preparation of the volunteers, and for sending organisations and host organisations to communicate about what kind of volunteers will be most useful to the host organisations”*. Of course, taking ownership of the international volunteers serving in their organisations will require not only participation in the selection and orientation of incoming volunteers, but most importantly connecting volunteers’ involvement with the organisation’s strategic plan. This is further explored in Chapters 6 and 7.

#### **4.4 International volunteering and development efforts**

Finally, as a result of the broad structural and historical relationships between the West and the African continent, international voluntary service is often framed within the development discourse. As a matter of fact, all the host organisations that participated in this research are involved in sectors that promote development or poverty alleviation. A cursory description of these host organisations, their development activities and organisational capacity is provided below in order to frame the local and organisational context in which international volunteers operated. To adhere to the undertaking that the confidentiality of the respondents would be respected, the names of the organizations have been withheld in this analysis. Instead, the organizations are referred to by numbers, having been randomly numbered 1 – 6 in each country.

Host organisations in Tanzania and Mozambique are not infant organisations; rather, they are established entities that deserve to be referenced as leaders in their respective fields of service. In Tanzania five of the six organisations considered for the study are more than ten years old, except for Organisation T5, which was established in 2006. The rest of the organisations, especially the ones in vocational training, have been in existence for a long time. Organisation T4 and organisation T1 are 43 and 20 years old respectively. In Mozambique, all six organisations have passed the eight year mark with organisation M6 and organisation M5 having been in existence for more than 17 and 26 years respectively.

Established in the post-independence era, most of the host organisations see themselves as having been formed to address post- and neo-colonial ills and to drive development, particularly in the most impoverished rural areas. The organisations in Tanzania were formed after 1961 whilst in Mozambique the organisations were all established after 1975.

In Tanzania it is believed that close to 72 per cent of the population lives in rural areas where they are dependent on peasant farming. In Mozambique the effects of colonial rule and the protracted civil war that characterised the country since its independence in 1975 until 1992, manifests through underdevelopment and the country's over-reliance on donor aid.

In Tanzania four organisations, namely T6, T3, T4 and T1, promote human capital development. The other two organisations, T5 and T2, provide financial support for development. They were established to promote entrepreneurship particularly amongst people considered credit unworthy by conventional financial services providers. These microfinance institutions have made it possible for rural people in Tanzania to access capital, thereby trying to solve spatial development challenges inherited from the colonial system.

The six organisations in Mozambique have also been oriented towards the promotion of development. Organisation M6 was established to engage the services of both local and international volunteers in promoting development in Mozambique. Organisation M5 finances development through its microfinance activities and also promotes integrated socio-economic development in rural communities by boosting the productivity of the agriculture sector. Organisation M3 is directly oriented towards the promotion of development through its poverty alleviation focus whilst organisation M2 does that through its food security programmes. Two other organisations, M1 and M4 were established to address issues of participatory governance and social solidarity through improving the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS and fighting stigma and discrimination associated with the disease.

All these organisations were established as welfare enhancement mechanisms that protect the vulnerable members of the society. Vulnerable groups like the youth, women, people living with HIV/AIDS and the poor receive immeasurable support from the organisations. The two vocational training centres and two schools in the Tanzania sample were established to address challenges that were common with the youth including unemployment, poverty and other social ills. In Mozambique, organisations such as M5, M6 and M3 also focus on youth development through engagement in intercultural activities. Organisation T1 in Tanzania and organisation M5 in Mozambique also seek to overcome the vulnerability of young women living in poverty. Some of the organisations have an interest in the protection and welfare enhancement of orphans (such as organisations T3 in Tanzania and M1 in Mozambique). In

each country, two of the organisations operate through member networks, giving them considerable reach. All the organisations in Mozambique are involved in various ways in HIV/AIDS programmes. All 12 organisations in the sample, both host and comparison organisations, thus make a direct or indirect contribution towards improving the lives of the poor.

Against this backdrop, one understands why host organisations and members of their host community often expect to relate to international volunteers in terms of what the volunteers can offer development. Conversely, certain international volunteers see themselves as coming to help the host community develop. Many participants stated that white international volunteers saw them as poor and in need of assistance. African underdevelopment was sometimes attributed to a lack of local creativity and poor management. In the words of one focus group participant in Tanzania:

*“International volunteers think there is so much potential, so many natural resources, but we are incapable of using them – that we do not have ability to use the resources adequately and realise their potential. For instance there are many variations and reserves of minerals, but the country and its people are poor”.*

It seems that international volunteers do not always link prevailing conditions of material deprivation in host communities with historical and current injustices of the global trade and aid regime.

While certain members of the host community disapprove of being perceived as mainly poor and beggars, other members utilise these negative perceptions and relate to white international volunteers as *“access to easy money, financial support for this or that, gifts, or even [a] ticket to developed countries where they believe life is easier and better”*. This was confirmed in a Tanzania focus group discussion where a participant declared that *“there was also a perception that when you tell a white person your problem, they are able to solve it instantly”*. These attitudes reinforce a dependence mentality and show a lack of creativity.

However, alongside extreme representations of the international volunteer as the solution to the underdevelopment problems of host communities as well as exaggerated depictions of host communities as *“hearts of darkness”*, there exist balanced conceptions of host

communities' development and reasonable formulations of the contribution international volunteering can make to their development.

#### **4.5 International volunteers' contribution to development in host communities**

Though host organisations did not provide elaborate definitions of what they meant by development, it could be inferred that they understood development as a process of continuous and sustainable improvement of their living conditions. It was viewed as a process that brings about qualitative change to key socio-economic sectors including food security, education, health, housing, infrastructure, energy, etc. Against this backdrop, some host organisations and members of their communities see international volunteers as being able to make a unique contribution.

International volunteers can help host communities get rid of negative cultural practices that *"reduce productivity, encourage laziness and constrain development..."* These negative traditions include witchcraft, fear of witchcraft leading to lack of investment in good houses and property, and similar negative traditional practices as a staff member in a Tanzanian host organisation explained :

*"There are customs and traditions that constrained development in the area. And if international volunteers are interested, there is a role they could play and make a difference. These customs include: abstinence to build good modern houses by locals due to fear of witchcraft. Even the current members of parliament of the constituency do not have a very good house probably because of the same apprehension. As a result, most good houses and property investments are done by people from other areas. Another custom is the obligation to inherit the property and dwelling of a person by close next of kin when the head of a household dies. The appointed person has to leave his life, his career and everything he was doing and return to the village and take up that inheritance. There are fears that one who refuse to return to the village will not live for long, will die. Again there is a growing tendency for people to spend ridiculously on alcohol and women. With risks of HIV/AIDS that is a big development threat. It is also common for very young girls to prostitute themselves these days, and this is also a development challenge and something that has a potential of ruining the lives of these girls. There are also traditional practices of people playing traditional dances, partying and drinking alcohol more than usual. These behaviours reduce productivity, encourage laziness and constrain development."*

Given these intractable development challenges, international volunteers can, in the words of one Tanzanian host organisation, *“demonstrate how they have achieved development without such practices through outreach programmes”*. Their voice could carry higher credibility because *“as foreigners and white, people are likely to hear and trust their word compared to local activists”*.

Host organisations also believe that the contribution of international volunteers to their development can be carried out in the form of advocacy in their home country. A staff member at a Mozambican host organisation stated: *“when they return to their home country, their report is not biased by political interests. They give the real picture of the needs, weaknesses, and strengths of the developing countries. At the end of the day, their reports influence somehow assistance particularly technical assistance”*. This expectation is legitimate as VOSESA’s survey of returnee volunteers has revealed. Findings indicate that international service affects returned volunteers’ community engagement and civic activism in their home countries. Upon returning home, volunteers seem to become more interested in joining local groups, projects, or clubs. They seem to have a greater interest in volunteering locally as they find time to make positive differences in their home communities. The survey report signals that *“increased civic activism is an important finding considering that some development theorists assert that true social change can only be realised as people living in countries of higher power and influence become engaged in their own home countries to change the laws and policies that negatively impact developing countries. It is encouraging that returned volunteers are more likely to report helping to raise awareness of global issues, of attending political gatherings, and of writing media and organisations to voice their views on globally important issues.”* (Appendix 2)

In addition to providing a conduit to resources, international volunteers are seen as bringing different strategy to problems of development: *“it is clear that international volunteers bring different approaches or strategies of dealing with certain issues”*, said a staff member at a Mozambican host organisation. A different host organisation in Mozambique echoed this expectation:

*“Interacting with international volunteers would be great, if one considers that it would be an opportunity of interacting with people from abroad with different thinking and probably it would give/bring new ideas and new teaching on various issues. Considering that these*

*volunteers coming from developed countries, it would be fine to exchange ideas on how they do things so that we also can improve our things here.”*

Such exchanges can help raise awareness about untapped local opportunities for development as emerges from this statement from a Tanzanian host organisation:

*“International volunteers believe that the key to development is to start with what you have and not to wait for something you do not have and have no certainty of getting. This would also be an area they can support communities in, by demonstrating through training and outreach programmes what opportunities are discernible or available in the vicinity of the locality or within the locality and how people can tap into these opportunities.”*

This contribution is likely to be particularly strong if international volunteers are skilled, since this will make possible the transfer of critical skills, which are needed to sustain development. The quest and motivation for professionally skilled volunteers is clear in this extract from a technology oriented host organisation in Tanzania:

*“Another option should be volunteers to come with some skills, either in wind mill or solar, so that they can share the knowledge and skills. That way the local technicians will also know the level developed countries have achieved in those technologies and the skills they have. This will help in improving local skills. When they come with skills, it will increase the confidence of local technicians in their skills, because they will know they are at par with developed nations or that they have learnt from the developed nations.”*

Thus, certain host organisations have approached the development opportunity brought about by the presence of international volunteers as an occasion for mutual learning and equitable cooperation. Such positive outlook came particularly from host organisations in Mozambique. For a staff member in a Mozambique host organisation, international volunteering is *“an opportunity for Mozambicans either local volunteers or community members to have contact with people from different regions, exploring together new approaches, strategies of dealing with problems and challenges in our day-to-day work”*. The advantage of having international volunteers is that *“we share different experiences on various issues and we learn from others how to deal with issues. On the other hand, we have the opportunity of getting in touch with the reality in their countries sometimes. Three of us had the opportunity of going to Canada for two months, it was good”*. A different

organisation echoed this line of thinking expressing willingness to host international volunteers, as this would allow them to have other experiences of the world, learning for instance how others around the world have achieved food security.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

In sum, it is important to note that international voluntary service is not an isolated activity, but rather a process imbedded within the history of relations between the Western world and the African continent. This explains why international volunteering reflects dynamics of power relations, dependence and alleged exploitation, deception, or strategic behaviour. It also clarifies the prevalence of the development discourse in these encounters between volunteers and host organisations and communities. In these interactions between the wealthy Western world and the “developing” African continent, international volunteers are uncritically represented as members of a superior race and a wealthy society. As such, they are viewed as bringing additional resources, credibility and marketability to host organisations regardless of the actual value of the hosted volunteers. Though host organisations are sometimes aware of the limits of these widespread beliefs, they nevertheless make use of them in order to sell their products, thus reinforcing and perpetuating these negative racial biases. A close examination of the structure and operations of the partnerships between mostly western volunteer sending organisations and African host organisations has shown that international voluntary service is very much a supply-driven process. It has also emerged that the phenomenon of international voluntary service falls within the development discourse and practices. In this regard, though extreme representations of international volunteers as saviours and exaggerated depictions of host communities as “hearts of darkness” still persist, many host organisations and members of host communities have seen in the presence of international volunteers an opportunity for mutual development learning and equitable cooperation.

## 5. FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT

It is of great interest to examine the quality of engagement that takes place between international volunteers and the host communities involved in this study. The long term sustainability and productivity of international volunteerism will partly depend on the capacity of all stakeholders to draw useful lessons from such examination.

### 5.1 Relationships with sending organisations

Most of the host organisations in the Tanzania sample do not have a direct relationship with the sending organisation. They receive volunteers through an intermediary organisation which has a direct partnership with the sending organisation. In Mozambique one host organisation also functions as an intermediary by maintaining direct links with sending organisations such as ICYE , Canada World Youth and VSO, and then placing international volunteers in local organisations. The structure of these relationships between host organisations and sending organisations determine whether or not the host organisation has significant leverage to promote its interests through the partnership. In general, having such direct access to the sending organisation is perceived as beneficial and empowering, as a staff member of the Mozambique host organisation stated:

*“My organisation has strong relationships with sending organisations, which are part of the network. Within our network we enjoy good relationships and our director, for instance, is member of the ICYE board. So this allows us to have the visibility we need. Also taking into account that we are the first organisation with this type of volunteer programme in the country, it makes us be the reference.”*

Tanzanian host organisations with no direct link to sending organisations do not complain about this relational arrangement. They take their indirect relation to sending organisations as a given fact. *“TASEA, an intermediary organisation, has a relationship with the sending organisation; therefore it is proper that the arrangement be that way. If there are challenges, then I am not aware of them”*, a Tanzanian host organisation staff said. The multilayered relational structure may not of itself be the cause of any challenge. However, it generates certain problems, which have the potential to impact badly on the quality of engagement between various actors, as is shown below.

## 5.2 Communication failures

It is sometimes the case that international volunteers report directly to the sending organisation without informing the host or intermediary organisation. Such behaviour, according to host organisations, creates unnecessary friction between the parties as can be read in this statement from Tanzania :

*“The volunteers have a tendency to sometimes communicate directly with coordinators or individuals in the sending organisation and therefore bypassing the established line of communication. This tendency has potential for straining relationships between various stakeholders and it has posed a conflict once”.*

The complaint was echoed in a different Tanzanian host organisation:

*“The experience is that often volunteers bypass or disregard the communication and information system in place and communicate directly with the coordinator in sending organisation. This sometimes puts the coordinator in an awkward position because he is sometimes asked about something he is not aware of or rather he gets information he should have received from here, instead he receives it from abroad. Such situations create panic because people abroad are not on the ground and everything that goes to them becomes an alert of a problem because they are not in a position to make a fair assessment of the issue. Such occurrences also undermine good relationships with the host organisation because it nurtures the feeling of distrust and deprives them the opportunity to act responsibly on such issues.”*

In certain circumstances, outgoing volunteers do not submit a report to host organisations, which leaves the latter *“in the dark regarding what the volunteer has learnt, her experience in the organisation and any feedback the volunteer might have regarding her stay”* (Tanzania host organisation). This lack of shared and transparent feedback undermines progress in host organisations as is evident in this statement from another Tanzania host organisation:

*“This situation deprives the host organisation [of the] opportunity to respond to any important issues the volunteer might have brought up, but also it means that the host organisation will not work on improving the situation and experience of the volunteer because it does not know the volunteers’ recommendations or perception of her various experiences.”*

Similar concerns have been raised in Mozambique where such communication failures resulted in more dramatic outcomes. A host organisation saw its funding being cut as a result of a negative report by a dissatisfied volunteer which turned out not to be true. The host organisation complained that it was not heard before the sending organisation decided to withdraw support. Interview data clearly point to incidents of breach of communication and reporting protocols and unilateral punitive reactions on the part of some sending organisations. These problems bring to the fore the unbalanced character and power relations that shape the interactions between host organisations, sending organisations and intermediary agencies.

### **5.3 Impact on preparedness of host organisations for international volunteers**

The indirect relationship between some of the host organisations and sending organisations seems to affect the preparedness of the former to host volunteers. Since they do not have much influence on the profile of volunteers that are sent to their organisations, it is difficult for host organisations to plan in advance how to best involve volunteers in their activities. Given the fact that they do not interact with the sending organisations, the latter are unable to directly brief them on their expectations, on volunteers' expectations and on how host organisations can best structure the volunteering experience. Preparation not only of host organisation managers, but also staff members in the organisation is crucial to a successful volunteering experience. The need for both host organisation preparation and an inclusive approach was highlighted by a Tanzanian host organisation in these terms:

*“There is one problem that is not adequately addressed: the preparation of [the] host organisation to receive and host volunteers. It happens that the head of the organisation can be briefed in a way about the programme or about the management of the volunteer, but organisations are not prepared to host volunteers. The volunteer is expected to be a team member in the organisation, but other team members are not oriented about many important issues regarding the programme or having a volunteer with them. They do not know what is expected of them, how should they entertain or support the volunteer, what is expected of him or her etc. Accordingly it happens that the volunteer becomes the project of the head of the organisation with very little linkage with the organisation and the rest of the team. This undermines the whole prerogative of having volunteers in the organisation. It is important to design an appropriate programme to prepare organisation and the rest of the staff for the hosting of the volunteer”.*

It also emerges that international volunteers are not sufficiently prepared for *“the specific organisations they are going to work with”*. So, inadequate preparation affects both sides. This double deficiency prevents the volunteering experience from delivering optimal results, as one Tanzania host organisation staff member put it:

*“Though the preparation international volunteers get is crucial, it is not sufficient because it does not particularly prepare volunteers adequately for the specific organisations they are going to work with. This has implications, because the potential of the contribution of someone staying for one year in the organisation is bigger than the actual contribution they make. This is so because neither host organisation nor the volunteer are prepared sufficiently for their collaboration.”*

#### **5.4 Relations with staff and the community**

Other than the above-mentioned structural problems, the data suggest that international volunteers enjoyed positive relations with their host organisations and communities. They integrated well in the life of the community and made friends with whom they were hanging out during their stay in the host community. *“Their affinity with communities is good and they show a willingness to make a significant change in the lives of the target population”*, said a staff member in a Mozambican host organisation. A school administrator in Tanzania declared that *“there was a very healthy relationship with students, fellow teachers, casual workers, and support staff like watchmen and the community at large”*. So unrestricted is international volunteers’ openness that *“they often make friends with guys who just hang out in the streets”*, even if such lack of restraint can land them in dangerous company. One volunteer was remembered as being outstandingly virtuous and inspiring, as was vividly described, as this account from one interviewee demonstrates:

*“She portrayed humbleness and simplicity of life. The fact that she was down to earth, embracing the context without prejudice or indignation was recognised and it paved the way for people to receive and integrate her as part of the community and the school. She showed eagerness to learn, to participate in most of the activities with enthusiasm and to ask when she was unsure. This made it possible for her to interact with people in all levels, and it did show that she was genuinely interested in what was going on in the school and in the community, and that she was happy to be there. The value of children she brought with her which to a great extent is foreign to the local community, brought her closer to the children*

*and was very effective with them. The small gestures she had with them, particularly the attention she paid them, and small gifts such as sweets she sometimes brought in class, was very rare experience with children and made her a favourite teacher.”*

In a different host organisation, volunteers befriended a student whose education they were able to boost significantly as it appears in this testimony:

*“A student was studying in the centre and his education level was just standard seven by then. He became friends with volunteers, and they talked a lot about his life. He was already married and had a family by then. He has not had opportunity to study before and he wanted to go on and study. When the volunteers returned to Germany, they were communicating with him and they decided to support him in education. He went through evening programmes and finished ordinary level through their support, and is now in Form six, [and] they are still supporting him. They told him, they will support his education until he was satisfied that he has studied enough, and wanted to do other things.”*

Without doubt, international volunteers establish friendly relationships with colleagues and members of the host community.

However, respondents reported less active and bonding ties between international volunteers and staff in the various host organisations. Mentions of distant relationships are particularly prevalent in Tanzanian organisations. Against the expectations of host organisation staff’s that there would be more familiar social interactions between them and the international volunteers, the latter tended to limit their encounters with staff to the professional level. Because of the lack of a social dimension, certain respondents were of the view that the relationship between international volunteers and other local staff was not pleasant, friendly or collegial, but distant. In the same vein, a member of a Tanzanian host organisation remarked that:

*“Most international volunteers do not bond well with colleagues in the host organisation. After working for sometime in the host organisation, they develop some kind of familiarity with colleagues, but usually not enough to have them as friends whom they can do things together after work or on weekends. Very few volunteers manage to do that and with very few, one or two colleagues. It can just be one dinner or two at a colleague’s home for the entire period of stay of the volunteer”.*

At another host organisation from Tanzania, the relationship between the international volunteers and staff was said to be *“not good, not bad, just fair”* as a result of above-mentioned lack of socialising.

This report of a cold relationship between volunteers and staff in host organisations contrasts with evidence of vibrant bonding ties and socialising activities between international volunteers and other members of the host community, especially the youth. Highlighting this stark contrast in volunteers’ social life patterns, a staff member in one of the Tanzanian host organisations noted that *“volunteers tend to make friends with guys in the streets than people in the organisations or people who are decent, trustworthy or reliable. They often make friends with guys who just hangs out in the streets, in pubs, people you really don’t want to see any self respecting person associating with to such a close manner”*.

Reasons for limited social interactions between volunteers and staff of host organisations are complex. However, respondents mentioned a few, including the generational gap between staff and volunteers, the allocation of volunteers to a single department, the location of the volunteers’ office away from other staff, and a tendency of top leadership to monopolise control of volunteers. *“Social interaction between volunteers and staff is not very much on bonding and doing things together like going places or planning things because the volunteers are very young to them”*, remarked a respondent in a Tanzanian host organisation. At another host organisation, the limited interaction was likewise explained in terms of the age gap: *“the volunteers are very young and most of the staff are mid-aged and some even old”*.

However, some host organisations also mentioned certain organisational problems. In one case, the volunteers were insulated from other staff as one interviewee explained:

*“The management has allocated a unique office space for volunteers, close to the manager’s office and they are not with the rest of the staff. This place is regarded as international volunteers’ office. They are separated from the rest of the staff and sitting by themselves. This arrangement is unhealthy for integration with the rest of staff. It differentiates them altogether.”*

In another case, volunteers are only allocated to one of the many departments that the organisation runs: *“the centre has many departments and they are only working in one department, so it is likely that they are more used to teachers and technicians in the renewable energy department, and not so much with others”*. Clearly, some of the organisational inadequacies can be corrected in a bid to provide a more conducive environment for increased and deeper interactions between volunteers and other staff members.

## **5.5 Complaints and clashes**

Some evidence emerged that the international volunteers’ relationship with the host organisation and community at large had also been fraught with unhappiness, tensions and even clashes. Host organisations and beneficiaries complained about a number of objectionable behaviours on the part of international volunteers.

For example, one Tanzania host organisation slammed a tendency of international volunteers to promise assistance, which they often do not deliver on. In the words of one of the staff members, *“international volunteers do promise things and they do not keep their promises: they promised to help bring solar equipments and to connect these facilities, but since the demonstration and that promise, they have never been heard again or seen. They raised people’s hope for nothing; they should have not promised if they did not intend to fulfil their promise”*. The same complaint was formulated by a different host organisation:

*“Some people feel dealing with international volunteers is a waste of time and it is demoralizing because of the way they come, promise things and then they disappear without fulfilling their promise or leaving any instruction behind when they leave. When one follows up you’re just told they have left and did not leave any message regarding what you’re following up on”*.

Volunteers’ tendency to promise assistance may result from a pressure from members of the community or staff in the organisation who perceive volunteers as being capable of solving their material and financial problems. These attitudes fall within the broad scheme of historical dependency relations between the African continent and the Western world.

In addition to complaints about unfulfilled promises, host organisations also criticised the volunteers' dress code, especially for female volunteers who were said to wear outfits seen as inappropriate for the workplace. A Tanzania host organisation staff complained:

*"They often do not know or even have office clothes. They would just dress anyhow, regardless of the day. Regardless of the day, it is like there are days when they have to go deep in the rural areas for demonstration presentations, that might need an appropriate dress code, but there are days when one is full day or week in the office, and they would dress [in] summer shorts or skirts, they can have this unkempt and uncaring dress code, which shows the person has no concern or even care [that] this is an office."*

In addition some international volunteers were accused of disregarding important disciplinary and safety measures. One Mozambique host organisation staff member had this to say about what she regarded as objectionable behaviour:

*"Volunteers sometimes become over-confident and you might tell them something for their own good, something that can get them out of harm's way, but because they feel grown up and can make their own decisions, they ignore it. As a consequence one was once raped, some have been mugged and their things stolen. Mugging has happened quite frequently, although they have been warned and informed that they can be lucrative targets. All this happens because of party life, mingling with strangers in the middle of the night, drinking out and the like."*

Equally serious are accusations of indiscipline with damaging consequences for the host organisation:

*"Volunteers have had a serious challenge obeying instructions and rules. For instance, they were told it was not allowed for boys to enter girls' dormitories and it was not allowed for girls to enter boys' dormitories. But you find especially female volunteers going to boys' dormitories at any time they wish with[out] the slightest of concern. While they were allowed to mingle and socialise, it was made specifically clear that visiting dormitories of their opposite sex were off limits, but they do not take heed and it undermines the authority of centre."*

It is difficult to understand why host organisations would tolerate such erosion of their institutional order for the sake of accommodating manifestly unscrupulous volunteers. This

apparent powerlessness only underscores the imbalance and dependency that shape the relationships between most of the host organisations and the sending organisations.

Extreme cases of misconduct of international volunteers have also been reported. Some of these irretrievably damage the relationship between the implicated volunteer and the host community, prompting the host organisation to terminate the contract and organise the repatriation of the volunteer. One Mozambique interviewee mentioned that:

*“Unfortunately in the past the organisation had some bad experience with some international volunteers. Others were not committed with the works that were assigned and some volunteers come with tourism purposes. Others were drunkards and drug addicts and cause disturbances at workplace. However, these are very isolated cases”.*

Similar misconduct was experienced in a different host organisation where *“two international volunteers that were drug addicted assaulted one family member of a beneficiary in Matola. The volunteers were immediately sent back to Brazil”.*

## **5.6 Conclusion**

In summary, international volunteers establish friendly and healthy relationships with colleagues and other members of the host community. Interactions with the staff in the host organisation involve less socialising and informal bonding as a result of various factors including the generational gap, the allocation of volunteers in a single department, the location of volunteers in an office away from other staff, and the top leadership tendency to monopolise control of volunteers. The fact that most host organisations have only indirect relationships with the sending organisations results in poor communication and inadequate preparation. This is symptomatic of the uneven power relationships between host and sending organisations and will work to the detriment of the international volunteer experience for all parties unless it is rectified.

## **6. HOST ORGANISATION PREPAREDNESS TO RECEIVE INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS**

The extent to which an organisation is prepared to host international volunteers is greatly influenced by its practice of volunteer management. Volunteer management can be understood as a set of guidelines, systems, and practices, which support the involvement of volunteers in the activities of organisations. In the international volunteering domain, the task of managing volunteers is shared by host organisations, sending organisations and, in some cases, an intermediary organisation, which coordinates the relationship between a sending organisation and a host organisation. How well these different parties coordinate their respective volunteer management responsibilities and integrate them into their own organisational structures impacts on the quality of the international volunteering experience for all parties: the volunteer, the sending organisation, the host organisation and the host community.

Given its centrality to shaping a positive volunteering experience, the concept of volunteer management will be used in this chapter to help explain whether, and to what extent, host organisations in the study are prepared to receive international volunteers. Phases of volunteer management such as strategic planning, volunteer recruitment and volunteer orientation are particularly relevant to the question of a host organisation's preparedness to receive volunteers. How well these steps are executed affects the degree to which an international volunteer is integrated into an organisation's operations and embraced by its staff. Opportunities to use monitoring and evaluation to reflect on the benefits and potential pitfalls of involving volunteers are also essential to an organisation's ability to improve its volunteer management from year to year. This chapter will thus focus on these elements of the volunteer management cycle when presenting the relevant findings from the study.

### **6.1 Evidence of strategic planning prior to hosting international volunteers**

Ideally, an organisation should undergo an internal strategic reflection about involving volunteers before hosting them at the organisation. Consulting with staff helps an organisation to articulate its motivation for involving volunteers, to define areas where volunteers can be useful, and to promote ownership of the volunteer programme throughout the organisation. This phase is typically referred to as volunteer programme development and is an essential foundation for building a strong programme.

Despite its importance, most of the organisations in the study skipped this step when making the initial decision to involve international volunteers. In fact, the impetus for hosting international volunteers tended to come from an external party rather than an internally driven organisational process. This was the case at a Tanzania institution, which agreed to host international volunteers after being approached by a local representative of a European sending organisation. According to the principal of the institution, *“It seemed opportune...to see what we could gain and learn.....The first motivation was therefore to explore the experience and the potential of having international volunteers in the school.”* Similarly, two of the three Mozambican host organisations decided to engage international volunteers after being contacted by a local organisation that specialises in volunteer placement, serving as an intermediary between volunteer sending organisations primarily in Europe and North America and local organisations in Mozambique.

At two other organisations in Tanzania, the opportunity to host international volunteers grew out of the isolated efforts of a few individuals in the organisation. Given the contradictory reports given by staff at the same organisation on this issue, it is clear that staff at the organisations were not broadly consulted about these efforts or engaged in the process. For example, at one organisation a respondent was under the impression that the idea of hosting international volunteers came from a European volunteer sending organisation that approached the organisation. However, another colleague at the organisation revealed that, in reality, a former European staff member wrote a request for international volunteers into funding proposals and this is how the contact was made initially with the sending organisation. Similarly, at another Mozambique host organisation, one staff at a local branch of the organisation was of the following view:

*“ [ I do ] not see that the headquarters [of the organisation] had any particular reason for hosting international volunteers except that the opportunity for volunteers had presented itself and it has the likelihood of bringing good things at no cost to the organisation.”*

Speaking about the same topic, a staff member higher up in the organisation articulated a clear logic behind agreeing to host international volunteers. This points to the possibility that a strategic discussion about involving international volunteers may have happened at a high-level within the organisation prior to receiving international volunteers.

Interestingly, at the time of the fieldwork, two of the Mozambique comparison organisations had stopped hosting international volunteers and were currently taking stock of the role of international volunteers in their organisations. As one respondent explained,

*“In the past [our organisation] has hosted international volunteers, but over the past two years it is not receiving them as the organisation is making a reflection and planning new programmes and activities that will need the contribution of international volunteers.”*

It is likely that these organisations were undertaking this sort of reflection for the first time, having realised through experience the need to think strategically about involving international volunteers.

Only one of the host organisations in the study (in Mozambique) demonstrates a significant level of strategic reflection about international volunteers, prior to hosting international volunteers. This is because the organisation is focused on promoting volunteering in the country as a means for advancing the youth development in the country, and serves as an intermediary between sending organisations in northern countries and local organisations in Mozambique. According to one staff member, volunteering is central to the organisation’s interest in enabling Mozambican youth *“to have contact with people from different regions, explore ... new approaches, and strategies of dealing with problems and challenges in their day-to-day work.”* The organisation’s commitment to volunteering and its integration into the organisation’s work is enshrined in its aim and objectives, which include:

1. To promote volunteer activities for young people in their spare time and holidays;
2. To promote exchange of youth volunteers in the different regions of Mozambique, of Africa and the rest of the world; and
3. To promote international understanding through voluntary services.

In this way, this particular host organisation stands apart from all the other host organisations involved in the study.

## **6.2 Recruitment and selection: Managing expectations**

While only one host Mozambican organisation engaged in strategic thinking prior to receiving international volunteers, all of the host organisations articulated the type of international volunteer that could benefit their organisation. Many of the organisations clearly described the skills, qualifications, attitude, motivations, and sometimes the age they

would like to have in a volunteer. This is critical information for the recruitment and selection process and for facilitating an appropriate match between the expectations of the host organisation and those of the international volunteer. According to one respondent, *“expectations should be tailored to the actual capacity of the volunteer as well as the actual circumstances of the host organisations.”* The success of this process, however, hinges on whether there are systems in place that facilitate an effective match.

#### *6.2.1 Expectations of international volunteers’ skills level by comparative organisations*

What emerged from the research is that organisations with little or no experience of hosting international volunteers often possess unrealistic expectations concerning the skills and qualifications of international volunteers. This is particularly apparent among four of the six comparative organisations in the study (three Tanzanian and one Mozambican). When asked about the possibility of hosting international volunteers, these organisations were overwhelmingly eager to do so and believed international volunteers were likely to possess technical skills, professional experience, networks, access to resources, and knowledge relevant to the organisation’s core business. There was also an expectation that international volunteers would assist their organisations to garner greater influence, legitimacy and credibility among international donors as well as members of their local community. Respondents from the four comparative organisations said the following:

*“International volunteers are likely to have multiple skills and knowledge that will be useful to the school, the children, and the other teachers ... International volunteers will be trusted by donors and are likely to know sources of funding and other resources and how to access them and that will be an invaluable contribution to the school.”* Tanzania comparative organisation

*“International volunteers would help us to secure money and expertise.”* Mozambique comparative organisation

*“It would be useful for the organisation if the volunteers were professionals [with] any of the skills [we] are teaching (computer, tailoring, weaving, knitting and cookery). This would help impart skills on the available teachers and improve their skills.”* Tanzania comparative organisation

*“Most people in Tanzania have a tendency to listen to a person from abroad more than a local person even though both might carry the same message. So when international volunteers say something, there is a great possibility of people believe and acting on it.”*

Tanzania comparative organisation

*“We need international volunteers for branding of the school and credibility to donors and members of the community.”* Tanzania comparative organisation

The eagerness among these organisations to host international volunteers is undoubtedly linked to their acute need to access financial and human resources. It is also guided by a misperception that all international volunteers are in fact skilled professionals and likely to have the ability to access resources – particularly financial resources. As discussed in Chapter 4, this assumption reflects notions of white people as smart, rich, capable and superior, and has its roots in the racist ideology of colonialism, which elevated Europeans and dehumanised Africans. However, these organisations also have not engaged extensively with international volunteers and do not yet understand the different kinds of international volunteers that volunteer programmes are operating in their countries.

#### *6.2.2 Host organisation expectations of international volunteer skill levels*

Similar to the above-mentioned comparative organisations, host organisations also universally express an interest in hosting international volunteers with professional qualifications relevant to their work. As one respondent summed up: *“Usually [organisations] wish to get someone who can make a difference in the organisation like bring resources, help add knowledge ... enhance available skills, provide technical support, etc.”* After finalising an assessment of volunteer involvement in their organisation, one organisation shared:

*“We realised that it was important to host international volunteers. However certain aspects should be taken into account: namely the specific qualifications/background of the volunteers ... For instance, someone with IT background could not be of much value for us, or someone with a geology background. Now, people with skills in counselling, psychology, nursing, medicine, etc. are much wanted.”*

The interest among host organisations in receiving skilled volunteers is further confirmed by host organisations at a volunteer management workshop in Tanzania, which was attended

and documented by the study's Tanzanian researcher during the course of the study.<sup>8</sup> Participants at the workshop repeatedly indicated that international volunteers should have 'skills relevant to the activities they are expected to do'. Once again international volunteers coming from developed nations were seen as key to the development of these organisations, particularly in terms of their ability to access to resources and influence.

While the host organisations in the study do emphasise their interest in hosting skilled international volunteers and think that international volunteers can help to access resources, these organisations are also keenly aware that international volunteers don't always live up to these expectations. From their experience of hosting international volunteers, they now know that some international volunteers can be anything but seasoned professionals. Instead, most of the international volunteers received thus far by the Tanzania host organisations are young (aged 18-25), with little to no work experience, and with an undergraduate degree or sometimes even just a high school degree. The interviewees made the following comments about the capability of these international volunteers:

*"The [volunteer] programme is sending volunteers who are not capable of making a real difference in the organisation...because of their youth and stage in career development, which is that they are not qualified for professional work yet."* Tanzania host organisation

*"The volunteers are very young: This means you have to deal with teenagers or young people who still need a lot of guidance regarding professional conduct, living with people, what to do or what not to do."* Tanzania host organisation

*"The organisation accepts that we can be a nursery for inexperienced volunteers" where international volunteers are strengthened to carry out relevant activities. "This is time consuming, but valuable work."* Mozambique host organisation

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<sup>8</sup> The workshop was run in October 2010 in Bagamoyo, Pwani Region, Tanzania by QUIFD, a joint project of the Robert Bosch Foundation and the Förderverein für Jugend und Sozialarbeit (Association for Youth and Social Work), which focuses on quality assurance in voluntary service.

As will be discussed in Chapter 7, international volunteers do not always bring financial resources with them, even though this is often the expectation of the host organisation. The online survey with young international volunteers from Europe supports this finding, since only a few respondents reported sourcing funds for host organisations or host community members (See Appendix 2 for the full survey report)

The fact that these international volunteers lack professional skills and don't always link organisations with financial resources does not mean that they are not valued by host organisations. As is discussed in Chapter 7, young and inexperienced volunteers do make important contributions to organisation and a few Mozambican organisations even expressed an interest in hosting young inexperienced international volunteers in particular. However, their value is not attributable to their professional skills and qualifications, but rather to other qualities, such as their education level, familiarity with technology, passion, ability to problem-solve, innovative thinking and commitment rather than to their technical abilities or professional qualification. What is important to note here is that the host organisations gained useful insight into the diverse capabilities of international volunteers, and this can be leveraged in future to inform how organisations plan to recruit, select and utilise international volunteers.

### 6.2.3 *International volunteer motivations*

The perceptions of volunteer motivations also differ somewhat between the comparison organisations and organisations in the study with experience hosting international volunteers. Overwhelmingly, the assumption (sometimes implicit) among comparison organisations is that international volunteers come ready to help and are committed to assisting organisations. As one volunteer coordinator in Tanzania noted, *"Somehow there is an expectation that volunteers will be excited, willing to work and joyful"*. This sentiment was particularly pronounced among staff and beneficiaries in remote/rural areas where the education levels are low and the poverty acute. Some of the comments were as follows:

*"If we had international volunteers, maybe most of the things that happen and also the difficulties [we experience] may have been circumvented."* Mozambique comparison organisation

*"They [Northern people] are the ones 'blessed by God.'" Mozambique comparison organisation*

*“They [white people] are selfless and have no problem helping persons.”* Tanzania comparison organisation

Again, these perceptions can be traced to colonialism and perceptions of African people as dependent and inferior to Europeans and whites in general. However, to a certain extent, these characterisations of international volunteers and white people also stem from a lack of engagement by the host organisations with international volunteer sending organisations and international volunteers in the work environment. It may also be that interviewees were hesitant to speak about negative notions of white volunteers during the interviews since some may have been hoping that participation in the study may help them to access international volunteers (even though the in-country researchers conveyed to participants that this was not possible).

Interestingly, participants with experience of hosting international volunteers are in touch with a broader set of motivations behind international volunteering and candidly spoke about this during the interviews. While all respondents recognise that international volunteers are often motivated by a genuine commitment to help others and promote change, they also report that some international volunteers demonstrate a greater interest in tourism and social activities than in voluntary service.

*“Host organisations ... often when they get volunteers are not aware of the behind-the-scene interest of the volunteer, so they tend to think they just came to work and therefore should work.”* Tanzania host organisation

*“You feel that [their] primary interest sometimes is to go away from home and not to go volunteer. Volunteering becomes an excuse or something like a means to a gateway. Therefore...[they] would just rather have fun and enjoy their time, particularly travelling, camping or doing whatever they like.”* Tanzania host organisation

Echoing this perspective, another host organisation respondent in Tanzania said *“They [international volunteers] have learnt whatever they want to know, they have travelled and relaxed, they have visited tourist attractions and then they leave”*.

Host organisations in both Tanzania and Mozambique also report that volunteers tend to be focused on their own ideas about the need to produce change within the organisations in which they are placed. As one Mozambican staff member put it, international volunteers

arrive and “*want to change things overnight*”. Respondents noted that volunteers do not always work within the parameters of the organisation and often want to initiate projects on their own terms. Participants have this to say about their experience:

*“One of the challenges they have experienced is the tendency for international volunteers to try and behave and superimpose their practices even if they are contrary to the acceptable practice in the host organisations....Volunteers have had a serious challenge obeying instructions and the rules.”* Tanzania host organisation

*“Volunteers need to be taught to be patient and to learn the local environment before executing their plans. You find that they come and they unload a lot of plans about what they want to do, what they expect and what they were told. And it can be overwhelming. I find it necessary to calm them down and establish some order in their activities.”* Tanzania host organisation

In one case in Tanzania, as is noted elsewhere in this report, the example was given of one international volunteer liaising with other individuals and organisations in a neighbouring community to develop a project without the involvement or approval of the host organisation.

One concern that both host and comparison organisations share is that international volunteers come with ulterior motives (see Chapter 4 for an in-depth discussion). Participants in both countries think many international volunteers from Europe and North America are in fact spies. A host organisation in Mozambique emphasised, *“It is important to pay attention with volunteers sometimes, as they can be fulfilling other agendas rather than volunteers, as such, for example, working as undercover agents”*. The strong distrust of international volunteers is well articulated by a teacher at a Tanzania comparison organisation: *“It makes you wonder what exactly do they come to do and what is it that they write about? They may be spies for something or researching things without host or communities knowing that they are being researched.”* While no participants offered any evidence for their suspicions, the wariness of international volunteers points to a latent distrust of Europeans and whites, which again grows out of the colonial and neo-colonial dynamics that persist today between individuals and countries. Undoubtedly these views affect how a host organisation approaches its engagement with the sending organisation and how it prepares to involve and integrate international volunteers into its operations.

Participants at the Tanzanian volunteer management workshop (mentioned in Section 6.2.1) voiced concerns about the motivations international volunteers similar to those expressed by the host organisations in the study. A number of workshop participants shared that some international volunteers lack of commitment. One participant attributed this to international volunteers prioritising their own interests (e.g. tourism, recreation) over those of the host organisation:

*“Some volunteers are not hard working and are mostly interested in things which are extra and not the primary [to] the host organisation and the work they have to do. They treat the work and the organisation as if it’s something they have to accommodate in their very full schedule.”*

Another workshop attendee suggested that the lack of commitment among international volunteers has to do with the short duration of the volunteer placements:

*“Some volunteers lack the initiative to contribute to change and progress in the organisation. They lack initiative to do big things because they are just passing and after a few months or a year they will be gone so they feel it is not something they should put much effort in[to].”*

While different participants shared different explanations for the lack of commitment of international volunteers, they were unanimous in their expectation that international volunteers should be committed to supporting the work of their host organisation.

Given their experience with international volunteers, host organisations and workshop participants alike articulated the type of attitude they are looking for in a volunteer. The following qualities emerged as important for a volunteer to have:

Enthusiasm	Flexibility
Initiative	Humbleness
Kindness	Commitment
Respect	Transparent
Communicative	Teamwork oriented

Interestingly, no one at the volunteer management workshop mentioned their suspicion that international volunteers are sometimes spies for the sending country. That said, both host organisations and workshop participants emphasised the need for volunteers to be more transparent and communicative in their dealings with the host organisations (as seen in the above list and outlined in more detail in Chapter 5). It is possible that the use of in-country researchers in both Tanzania and Mozambique helped to facilitate frank disclosure from respondents in the organisations sampled, which could not be achieved at the volunteer management workshop run by a German organisation.

From the testimonies of the host organisations in the study and volunteer management workshop participants, it is clear that these organisations understand that not all international volunteers are skilled professionals or altruistically motivated. This in turn has influenced how organisations prepare to receive international volunteers and may help them to be more specific and realistic in formulating their expectations when recruiting and selecting international volunteers. The next section looks at this phase of the volunteer management cycle and considers in particular the engagement between host organisations and sending organisation in this regard.

#### *6.2.4 Recruitment of international volunteers*

With respect to recruitment, three organisations mentioned a process for sharing their preferences for international volunteers with a sending organisation or an intermediary placement organisation. One respondent at a Mozambique host organisation put it this way:

*“We have preferences and always when [their local volunteer placement organisation] and other [sending] organisations ask us to host volunteers, we express our needs and preferences. This helps us and the individual volunteers, [because] if they come and do not fit into our scheme, they will end up frustrated and disappointed and we do not want that.” [MHO RENSI DA]*

A comparison organisation in Mozambique with experience of hosting international volunteers reports, *“We develop terms of reference [for volunteers] which outlines the profile of the volunteer needed and the volunteers are recruited accordingly.”* One of the Tanzania organisations reports indicating details of their preferences for volunteers when filling out a questionnaire, which is provided by the sending organisation.

In contrast, another Tanzania host organisation clearly wants to engage more meaningfully in the recruitment process, which is currently handled by the sending organisation. As reported by the in-country researcher,

*“The respondent was of the view that it is important for host organisations to become part of preparation of the volunteers, especially by sending organisation and host organisation communicating and consulting about what kind of volunteer will be most useful to the host organisation, also by host organisation giving pertinent information that will be useful in preparing the volunteer to come and work with the organisation.”*

No specific information was available from the other host organisations about their role in the recruitment process.

#### 6.2.5 Selection of international volunteers

The study also does not reveal much detailed information about the participation of host organisations in the selection of international volunteers. Two Tanzania host organisations mentioned that international volunteers are typically selected based on their interests rather than their skills. One of these organisations indicated that this is mainly because the sending organisation does not have qualified candidates and thus they have to look at interests rather than skills to facilitate a match. For at least one of these organisations, it is clear that the sending organisation is responsible for selecting the volunteers, not the host organisation. At a Mozambique host organisation, which also places volunteers, a respondent indicates the importance of the selection process for identifying suitable volunteers: *“There is a need to clearly scrutinise the candidates in order to avoid cases of those who get involved in volunteering while they come for tourism with lack of commitment for assigned work.”* This means that in the past unsuitable international volunteers have been identified and that improvements need to be made.

The limited communication between the sending organisation and the host organisation is the strongest indicator that emerges from the study of a lack of involvement by host organisations in the recruitment and selection phase. Four respondents (three in Tanzania and one in Mozambique) report that they have no direct communication with the sending organisation, while only two of the four mention engaging with the local placement organisation. Direct communication between the sending organisation and the host organisation is confined to the head office of one of the four organisations, and to a local

volunteer coordinator at another of the organisations. Thus in these cases the people who are supervising the international volunteers typically fall outside of the selection and recruitment process. There is evidence at a Mozambique host organisation of communication with the sending organisation, but mainly around reporting issues. Only one organisation in Mozambique, which places volunteers, indicates a strong relationship with the sending organisation, although as indicated above, there have been problems with the selection and recruitment of international volunteers despite this good relationship. (See Chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of the engagement between host and sending organisations).

Organisations at a volunteer management workshop in Tanzania also highlighted the need for sending organisations to ‘involve more fully host organisations in issues pertaining to the selection of international volunteers’.

Given the lack of communication and collaboration reported during the selection and recruitment phase, it is not surprising that many of the host organisations in the study echo participants at the Tanzanian volunteer management workshop who were dissatisfied with results of the volunteer recruitment and selection. Host organisations most typically complained about a mismatch between the skills and motivations of the international volunteer and the needs and interests of the host organisation. For most organisations this meant that the international volunteers possessed fewer skills than they had requested, and were less motivated to assist the organisations than the organisations had anticipated.

While the dissatisfaction expressed by some host organisations in the study as well as workshop participant points to some inadequacies in the recruitment and selection phases, it is important to note that even organisations steeped with experience in sending volunteers and hosting volunteers do not always get the match right. As one respondent from a host organisation in Mozambique mentions, *“Working with an intermediary that specialises in volunteer placement does not guarantee that a proper match will happen.”* This indicates that there is clearly a need for improvement and further reflection on how the host organisations, sending organisations and local placement organisations can work together better around recruitment and selection. (See Chapter 9 for a discussion of the key findings from this study)

### 6.3 Sending organisations and volunteer pre-departure orientation

All of the host organisations in both countries report that sending organisations do some pre-departure orientation and training with volunteers. That said, overwhelmingly, the host organisations express the view that sending organisations could improve their preparation of international volunteers.

#### 6.3.1 Language preparation and acquisition

The host organisation respondents universally agreed that the language preparation of international volunteers is inadequate. The one international volunteer interviewed for the study also emphasised the need for more language training prior to departure. Most of the international volunteers spent the first 3-6 months of their placements learning the local language. With the volunteers on site, many of the organisations end up assisting the volunteers and exert a fair amount of time and energy facilitating their language acquisition. A host organisation respondent in Tanzania conveys this point:

*“Language is also a big challenge because they do not know Swahili language, and communication everywhere, except perhaps on the school premises, is in Swahili. So you have to take time and teach and explain the language, and its meaning ... so that she can communicate.”*

Without sufficient language proficiency, international volunteers cannot interact meaningfully with local staff or beneficiaries in the host community. This delays the ability of the international volunteer to integrate into his/her new environment and can create situations where the volunteers isolate themselves further by speaking in their mother tongue to other volunteers. Also, this prevents organisations from benefiting from the volunteer for the full duration of his/her placement. An online survey conducted with former international volunteers confirms that the language barrier prevents a volunteer’s ability to engage with locals and also to support the organisation’s work. A few international volunteer respondents even described themselves as *“a burden to the organisation”*, given their lack of language skills.

According to a host organisation respondent in Mozambique, *“The language training should be improved so that it would allow the volunteer to have basic language command and it would [lessen] the time on language training [thereby] allowing the volunteer to focus more on his/her work.”*

### 6.3.2 Volunteer roles and responsibilities

Host organisations also report that volunteers arrive with a limited understanding of the organisation and their role and responsibilities as an international volunteer in it. The following story embodies all that can go wrong when an international volunteer is not briefed on the full extent of his responsibilities and the conditions in which s/he can expect to work.

#### **The agony of a mismatched placement**

Preparation about the actual conditions or circumstances of the host organisation is also important and it is also not adequately done, if at all. There is another experience of a volunteer who wanted to come in the agricultural sector, in particular livestock keeping. He was brought into a real farm a big farm with livestock and all. He was very surprised when he came and did not expect he will be in such a farm at all. There were more than 400 hundred cows and countless goats more than a thousand, and it was overwhelming for him. He was supposed to look [at] how they are fed, which was not much because they are cows, which graze outside anyway. But also to see [to] their treatment, especially spraying them and had to advise what should be done to improve the farm and its production so as to increase profit. He stayed for a few days and he could not handle it at all and he wanted to leave. The respondent had to take him and stay with him until it was time for him to leave, and fortunately he just came on short term, three months only. He said he could not live there, life was not as he had expected at all. They re-allocated him to a school where he taught agriculture for a short period, and he travelled a lot until it was time for him to return home.

As has already been described in Chapter 5, a similar situation unfolded when a Danish volunteer arrived in Mozambique and was unhappy with her living situation. In this case, however, the volunteer escalated her complaints to the Danish Embassy in Maputo and publicly denounced the organisation once back in Denmark despite the fact that her claims had no basis. This led to the complete breakdown of the relationship between the sending organisation and the host organisation.

To ensure that volunteers receive the essential information about the host organisation and the placement, one respondent in Tanzania suggests involving host organisations more in the preparation carried out by the sending organisation: *“Sending organisations need to be*

*more customised: [the volunteers] need to be prepared for the assignment in the organisation where they are going and in this regard involving the [host] organisations] is crucial. Also noting the lack of coordination, a staff member at a Mozambique organisation said, "There is a need to uniform and harmonise all the information they have and the one we give them."*

Host organisation respondents also expressed a desire for international volunteers to show greater respect for the authority of their organisations, as this view from a Tanzania host organisation interviewee indicates:

*"Volunteers should be prepared to know that whenever you go to a new place, a different place, there are different people, traditions, cultures, ways of doing things, and things might not be how you are used to. There you need to take time to learn and understand circumstances; even if you need to change something you will be more effective that way."*

Participants at the volunteer management workshop in Tanzania also expressed a desire for international volunteers to be more respectful of their organisations. As one participant explained:

*"They [international volunteers] should respect the organisation, its procedures and ways of doing things. If they want to improve something, they should do so in appropriate manner instead of going around backbiting leadership, undermining [the] organisation's authority and giving negative feedback to current and potential partners. This has been a tendency of some volunteers, if they do not like something."*

Another workshop participant said that international volunteers, *"should learn to be humble and be part of the organisation and communicate amicably with respect"*.

The consistency with which host organisations (in the study and at the workshop) expressed this frustration may signal a problem with how host organisations are presented to international volunteers during the pre-departure orientation. For example are host organisations characterised as capacity-constrained organisations desperately in need of volunteer assistance? Or are they positioned as professional, proud and resilient organisations, which have persevered despite serious capacity constraints? One host organisation in Tanzania reported a sending organisation stressing the authority of the host organisation in an email to their international volunteers. However, the frequent mention of

challenges with disrespectful international volunteers expressed by host organisations in both Mozambique and Tanzania suggests that sending organisations could do more to encourage international volunteers to acknowledge and respect the authority and professionalism of the host organisations.

### 6.3.3 *Preparing volunteers for the cultural and country context*

Overwhelmingly, host organisations in the study think that the pre-departure orientation for international volunteers is cursory and likely to present the local culture and context from a eurocentric (or western) perspective. According to one host organisation respondent in Tanzania, *“The preparation at the moment is short and superficial, covering basic things about Africa and most of the time cautioning about customs, health and safety issues.”* Expressing a similar view, another Tanzania host organisation respondent says, *“The training is more included to things they should be aware of and be careful about for instance malaria, security, quality of life and the like.”*

While “malaria, security, quality of life” are issues that sending organisations must discuss with volunteers prior to their departure, an exclusive focus on these issues can perpetuate negative stereotypes of all African countries as being dangerous, backward, poverty-stricken, corrupt, and inefficient. All of the host organisations describe how international volunteers tend to think about their host country in this way. As one respondent from Tanzania puts it: *“They have all these negative connotations regarding the state of development [in the country] and they come with fear of the place.”* While it is unrealistic to think that an orientation can reverse negative perceptions about Africa among internationals, it should at a minimum challenge these prevailing stereotypes and equip international volunteers to better understand why these negative and limited ideas about Africa exist in western countries.

According to a few respondents, the pre-departure orientation should also alert volunteers to how they may be perceived by the host organisation staff and the community members where they will be living. For example, international volunteers should be advised that they may be perceived in stereotyped ways, given the image in the host country of white Europeans as rich and the historical reasons for this. Talking about perceptions of white volunteers, one Mozambique host organisation staff member said, *“in most cases*

*community members consider white volunteers as rich people and as people who have knowledge and who do not fail.”* While stark socio-economic inequalities do exist between international volunteers and local staff and community, international volunteers who are perceived to be rich in the host country may not be regarded as being wealthy in their home country.

The different perceptions of what constitutes a wealthy person, combined with the fact that real inequalities exist between volunteers and local staff as well as community members can strain relationships between these groups. This was attested to by host organisations in the study as well as former international volunteers who participated in the online survey about their international volunteering experience. As was noted in Chapter 4, a principal of a Tanzania host organisation shared how stereotypic ideas about white volunteers led to unprofessional behaviour among his staff:

*“[I] heard of disturbing rumours that some of the staff members have been asking for money and other kinds of help or support from the volunteers, thinking that because the volunteers are from Europe, they are rich and must have money.”*

An international volunteer participant in the survey reported, *“there was envy from community members against me as a rich German.”* Another international volunteer reflected that, *“The community is confronted with the life of a rich white person, who can afford and is allowed to travel wherever she wants—while they cannot”.*

These reports underscore a point made by two host organisations in Tanzania: that international volunteers need to be aware of these and other prevailing perceptions so that they can better navigate their professional as well as personal relationships with local staff and community members.

Some of the host organisations in both countries also emphasise that international volunteers need to receive more detailed and authentic briefings on the social and cultural norms they can expect in the host country. For example, how does one dress in a culturally appropriate manner, and greet people respectfully? What can a person expect if s/he dates or befriends someone from the local community? One Tanzania host organisation respondent notes that the basic preparation is not detailed enough, but at least *“it makes*

*them conscious of some things and forthcoming in [asking questions] as well as receptive to the things we ... try to explain to them.”* But other organisations report international volunteers disregarding dress codes, offending staff and beneficiaries, and putting themselves at risk physically because they do not fully understand (or appreciate) the local norms.

Participants at the volunteer management workshop in Tanzania made the point that international volunteers sometimes look down on certain cultural practices in addition to disregarding local cultural norms of dress and behaviour. As the in-country researcher reporting on the workshop documented,

*“Some volunteers use very demeaning language and [are] very Eurocentric when commenting or observing the cultures of communities. They will say something like That’s gross; how can you do this or that? Does a human being eat that? Isn’t it insensible to do that? Why should this be a priority?*

*For example they say why does a poor man entertain a feast for a daughter’s send-off party while such resources could help them in other more important things? This is like saying people are stupid. It does not matter whether their comments are factual or not. Even if you want to change something you do not insult people. More importantly, they should take time to understand the context, meaning and history of these cultural practices because they did not just spring up overnight. They have socio-cultural meaning and value to the people who are practising them.”*

A more comprehensive orientation geared towards respecting and understanding cultural differences would likely lessen the tendency for international volunteers to be so judgemental. It would also reduce their experience of culture shock, which undoubtedly contributes to their negative views on local culture. In fact, the majority of international volunteers participating in the online survey cited cultural misunderstandings and culture shock as affecting the success of their placements. In particular, volunteers found variations in lifestyles, cultural practices, values, as well as language particularly challenging.

## **6.4 Host organisation preparation and orientation for international volunteers**

Certainly, the preparation by the sending organisation is critical and, as one Mozambique host organisation respondent observes, “*the greater the work of sending organisations the better the results*”. However, the host organisation is equally responsible for ensuring that international volunteers are prepared for their placements. As a first step, this involves assigning someone to help coordinate the volunteer’s transition to the host country and to look after his/her well-being during the placement. The responsibilities typically include greeting a volunteer when s/he arrives, arranging for accommodation, and familiarising the volunteer to his/her new living and working environment. All of the host organisations report having someone in charge of this role either at the organisation itself, at the local placement organisation, or both.

### *6.4.1 Volunteer arrival and home stay arrangements*

In Mozambique, the volunteer placement organisation arranges home stays for its volunteers and relocates volunteers when problems arise with the initial living arrangement. In addition the organisation provides volunteer supervision and supports the volunteers with a 24-hour hotline. Another Mozambican organisation shares the volunteer management responsibilities with the above-mentioned placement organisation and its own staff. While the organisation sometimes arranges home stays, it admits that sometimes it cannot afford the costs associated with the home stay and thus there are limits to what they can do. A third Mozambican host organisation reports that although its head office coordinates the volunteer placement, the volunteers stay on their premises; so invariably the district office is also involved in overseeing the volunteers’ living arrangements.

Two of the three Tanzania host organisations rely on a local placement organisation for volunteer management support. One of the organisations arranges for home stays in the community and works with the hosts to ensure that volunteers are integrated into the families and have opportunities to learn about local culture. The other host organisation makes available its staff housing for international volunteers and reports giving clear guidelines to the volunteers on living in the staff area. According to the principal of the organisation, volunteers are advised of the rules on the premises, which, for example, forbid students at the school from entering the staff housing area. Despite this, he reports that the international volunteers do not always comply with the house rules. The third Tanzania organisation relies on a local volunteer coordinator associated with the sending organisation

as well as its principal to handle the various components of volunteer management. That said, the precise division of labour is not very clear.

#### 6.4.2 *Cultural orientations and work training for international volunteers*

A number of host organisations report doing orientations with international volunteers and see it as critical to building a positive relationship between the organisation and the volunteers. Advising international volunteers about local culture and the country contexts is commonly the focus of these orientations. One Mozambique host organisation indicates that it provides a 3-5 day orientation to international volunteers mainly to alert volunteers to the various cultural norms and practices they may encounter and which differ from their culture: *“You go through a process of permanent dialogue to make people realise the issue of cultural differences.”* Another staff member at the same organisation stressed the role of the orientation in challenging prevailing notions of Africa in the volunteers’ home country:

*“The notion of development that volunteers have depends in many cases on the information spread by the media in their home countries. We as mentors of volunteer programmes, when we receive volunteers, particularly the young ones, we have the obligation of preparing them for the reality of the country’s development and they make their own conclusion of what development is.”*

Another Mozambican host organisation describes the orientation as a “preventative measure” to address the conflicts that tend to arise because of cultural differences.

There is also evidence of orientation being done on a more ad hoc basis by some of the host organisations. According to one respondent from a Tanzania host organisation:

*“Volunteers somehow come with a very great expectation of how they are going to be received, thinking that there has been a lot of preparation regarding their arrival and they become very disappointed to find that not to be the case.”*

While the above-mentioned organisation’s orientation may not be structured, the principal reports playing an important role in helping the volunteers feel at home, to adapt to the new environment, and to understand the different cultural practices.

Three host organisations also report conducting trainings to orientate international volunteers to the organisation’s work and to equip them with the necessary information and

skills to perform their responsibilities. At one organisation in Tanzania, volunteers come with an interest in the organisation's work, but need to be trained on the organisation's products, microfinance and solar energy equipment. Similarly volunteers at a school in Tanzania are keen to teach, but lack experience teaching. Thus, during their first weeks the volunteers shadow experienced teachers to gain confidence, to learn how to handle a classroom, and to build their skills more generally in teaching. Lastly, a Mozambican organisation indicates that it sometimes trains and monitors its volunteers before allowing them to commence work with the organisation. However, this tends to be more the case with volunteers that come individually rather than through a sending organisation.

#### *6.4.3 Relationship between staff and international volunteers*

There is no evidence that the host organisations surveyed hold orientation sessions with staff to prepare them to engage with international volunteers. One respondent from a Tanzania host organisation shared his frustration on this issue:

*“There was no consultative discussion about them [international volunteers] or proper information that will make this the organisation's programme. It was something shallow, which did not address questions like – Where do they come from? What is the nature of the relationship to the organisation? Why are we hosting them? What are they here for? In what way should the staff work with them? What are the issues or conditions regarding their work here?”*

Another Tanzania host organisation conceded that there is *“No mechanism of integrating them [international volunteers] with the rest of the staff after they have been introduced around.”* At this organisation and another in Tanzania, volunteers are only used in one department and at one of these organisations international volunteers are given a separate room which creates a further barrier between them and the organisation's staff. The lack of consultation staff about engaging with international volunteers, and their lack of integration into a few of the host organisations has left many staff members feeling isolated from and resentful of the international volunteers.

There is also a view among some host organisation respondents that international volunteers tend to get special treatment and operate outside the organisational policies that other staff must adhere to. This causes further tensions between staff and international volunteers. According to one Tanzania respondent,

*“They come and go as they please; they want everyone to fit in their programmes instead of them fitting in the work plans of the organisation and other staff. They are above normal staff, which is not good for integration. People feel it’s because they are white. This should be dealt with and they should be treated like the rest of the workers.”*

Staff at another Tanzania host organisation feel similarly and think international volunteers are valued more than locals:

*“ When white people come they are more valued in the organisation than black people even though the black person might be qualified and is engaged in the organisation on a permanent basis. If there is a request [from the white volunteer] for anything the volunteers get priority over anyone else.”*

## **6.5 Volunteer support, supervision and risk management**

The reports of international volunteers getting preferential treatment and disregarding organisational regarding working hours, professional etiquette, living arrangements, travel, and project development and implementation, is in part symptomatic of the lack of strategic planning for international volunteers evidenced by mostly all of the host organisations in the study. However, it is also influenced by how well organisations supervise their volunteers. One Tanzania host organisation concedes that according to the contract, volunteers are meant to be supervised and given guidance *“but in reality, they are very free and almost decide anything they want – going places, coming or not coming to work”*. A Mozambique host organisation also recognises its shortcomings in respect of volunteer management and says *“they need to do more to hold the volunteers responsible for their actions at work. This would help avoid absenteeism.”* Despite these critical reflections, and the shortcomings in their volunteer management practices, host organisations are still able to leverage the commitment, skills and education and perspectives of the international volunteers strategically for the benefit of their organisations (see Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion)

Participants in the volunteer management workshop in Tanzania also signalled a need to improve supervision and support to international volunteers. When asked *“How could volunteers be helped to meet their responsibilities?”*, attendees had the following to say:

- The managers should have regular meetings with the volunteers.

- They should be given mentors.
- We should give them a platform where they can express their expectations and participation fully to find solutions.
- We should work very closely with them.
- We should offer them good co-operation in day-to-day operations of the project.

Even with good support and supervision, however, problems can still arise with international volunteers. A few host organisations demonstrated that they have taken steps to assert their interests in dealing with problematic scenarios with international volunteers. For example, one Mozambique host organisation refused to renew its contract with some volunteers that were abusing drugs and advised the sending organisation of the problem. A Mozambique organisation took a much stronger stance when dealing with volunteers who behaved contrary to expectations, as was mentioned earlier in this chapter: the Danish volunteer who was entirely unsatisfied with her placement proceeded to publicly slander the organisation's reputation. The sending organisation took the volunteer's side and terminated its relationship with the host organisation only to find out that the international volunteer was in fact lying. While the sending organisation has attempted to reinstate its relationship with the host organisation, the host organisation has to date refused to do so on the grounds that the sending organisation did not sufficiently consider its perspective at the time of the conflict. In doing this, the organisation is making a strong statement about what it expects from its partnerships with sending organisations in terms of communication, respect and support.

## **6.6 The need for M&E as a basis for continuous improvement**

The picture of volunteer management among host organisations presented in the study is complex. All of the organisations demonstrate various competencies in volunteer management as well as gaps and deficiencies. All of the host organisations also recognise that there is a need to improve their volunteer management practices so that they can enhance the benefit of the volunteering experience for the volunteer and their organisations. Organisations in both Tanzania and Mozambique mentioned that M&E was central to their organisation's ability to improve its programme. For example, a staff member at a Tanzania host organisation stressed the importance of evaluation for developing strong volunteer programmes:

*“The volunteer programme is a very good idea and ... it is also has great potential in Africa, but it needs to be rethought. The first important question, which the centre and perhaps other organisations have not clearly worked out, is what do I need to achieve through volunteers. Answering such a question is important to design programmes that will be measurable in terms of their objectives, deliverables, and achievements.”*

A few organisations, however, felt sidelined from the reporting process by the sending organisations and the international volunteers and felt this undermined their ability to further develop their volunteer programmes. For example a staff member from the same Tanzania host organisation had this to say,

*“Sometimes however, [the German sending organisation] communicate directly to volunteers and volunteers communicate directly to [the German sending organisation]. ....[For example] the daily reports volunteers send, they send them directly to Germany and do not necessarily copy the [the intermediary placement organisation in Tanzania].”*

Another Tanzania host organisation recounted a similar situation:

*“However, the challenge that has been recognised regards reporting system. The volunteer does not necessarily comply with the communication mechanism established. While the host organisation has reason to believe that the volunteer made frequent report to the sending organisation, they have not been aware of what it is the volunteer was reporting on and why they were not copied. It implied that the volunteer felt she was only accountable to the sending organisation, and that she was not compelled to report anything to the host organisation. This was evident, for instance, in the volunteer’s final report upon her departure. The agreement was that her final report also follows the same channels of communication i.e. through host organisation, to the local volunteer coordinator and to the sending organisation, with each level retaining a copy of the report. Unfortunately, she left without leaving her report and the host organisation has not received it up to now. This means that the host organisation is quite in the dark regarding what the volunteer has learnt, her experience in the organisation and any feedback the volunteer might have regarding her stay. Such situations deprive the host organisation [of the] opportunity to respond to any important issues the volunteer might have brought up, but also it means that the host organisation will not work on improving the situation and experience of the*

*volunteer because it does not know the volunteers' recommendations or perception of her various experiences."*

The importance of M&E also featured strongly at the Tanzania workshop on volunteer management. When attendees were asked how sending organisations could improve, the issue of reporting and M&E were raised. One participant stressed that volunteers need to leave their reports with the host organisations, while another participant requested that sending organisations play a role in evaluating the impact of international volunteers on the host organisations.

Only one host organisation respondent criticised its own commitment to enhancing its programme through reflection. According to the Tanzania in-country researcher:

*"The centre as a host organisation is also expected and encouraged to write its report regarding the experience of hosting volunteers every end of the season of the volunteers before others come, but it appears that this is optional and the centre as far as the respondent knows, has never written or submitted such a report."*

## **6.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has attempted to shed light on the preparedness of host organisations to receive international volunteers by looking at the various phases of volunteer management. Perhaps most importantly, the study shows that building effective volunteer management systems in an organisation requires a great deal of time, resources and support from external parties (such as sending and placement organisations) that have expertise in volunteer management. This fact is not fully appreciated by sending nor host organisations, and often led to situations where organisations were hosting international volunteers without having done the necessary planning to prepare for their use. But even without extensive planning, most of the organisations in the study have *de facto* integrated volunteer management practices into their preparation for international volunteers. There is, however, ample scope for improvement in these practices among both the host organisations as well as the sending and intermediary placement organisations.

While many of the host organisations expressed satisfaction with the international volunteers placed at their organisations, many organisations also expressed dissatisfaction. This typically stemmed from a mismatch between the needs and expectations of the host

organisations and the capabilities and motivations of the international volunteer. Through their experience hosting international volunteers, however, organisations gained important insight into the diverse capabilities and motivations of international volunteers, and demonstrated clear preferences with respect to the skills and attitudes they desired in a volunteer.

That said, the study suggests that host organisations are not meaningfully engaged in the selection and recruitment of international volunteers and thus lack the opportunity to exert any significant influence over this phase of the volunteer management. Host organisations were unequivocal in their call for greater engagement in this aspect of the process.

The lack of engagement and coordination between host and sending organisations carried through to the orientation of international volunteers. Host organisations shared a number of criticisms about the pre-departure orientation for international volunteers, particularly in relation to language preparation and briefing volunteers on the host organisation and the cultural/country context. Host organisations also demonstrated some inadequacies in their volunteer orientation and supervision, especially with respect to promoting good staff/volunteer relations and to ensuring that international volunteers respect the rules and procedures of the organisation.

All of the host organisations demonstrated a commitment improving their overall volunteer programmes. However, they stressed that the partnership relationships between host organisations, sending organisations and international volunteers needed to be strengthened, particularly in terms of communication and collaboration. Only then can the host organisations enhance their volunteer management capacity and improve their preparation to host international volunteers meaningfully.

## 7. EFFECTS OF THE IVS EXPERIENCE FOR THE HOST ORGANISATIONS

This chapter focuses on the effects of international volunteers on the host organisations and host communities in the sample in Tanzania and Mozambique. It examines this question in relation to seven issues: the strategic use of international volunteers, impact on programme delivery, evidence of innovation introduced, the costs involved in hosting international volunteers, the impact on local volunteer involvement, resource mobilisation and questions of sustainability.

### 7.1. Strategic use of international volunteers

Evidence of the strategic involvement of international volunteers emerged from accounts of how host organisations have used international volunteers, from the hopes of comparison organisations about what international volunteers could contribute, and from the experience of comparison organisations who had used international volunteers in the past, but were not doing so at the time of the research.

#### 7.1.1. Strategic activities

Among the six host organisations surveyed, the examples cited of how international volunteers had been used strategically in the organisation primarily involved establishing a variety of systems in the organisation, in planning, in devising campaign strategies (e.g. conservation) and in training. In each case the strategic benefit to the host organisations derived from the skills that the volunteers brought (computer skills, research skills, banking skills, planning skills, analytic thinking) and their ability to respond to the needs of the organisations as articulated and guided by the hosts. Four examples are given here.

- A membership-based organisation in Mozambique runs home-based care services and a support network for people living with AIDS, and offers orphan care. The organisation works across a number of districts and provinces. The deputy director reports that in 2008/9 a German volunteer helped the organisation set up a monitoring and evaluation system which enabled the organisation to track and assess the impact of project activities in the communities in which their programmes were operating. The volunteer described his contribution as follows:

*“I travelled [to] all the provinces ... to collect relevant data that I used to set up a data base at the head office with clear indicators for monitoring and evaluation. Now they have accurate control of the activities and they have instruments to*

*measure the implementation over time in terms of impacts and significant change that the projects bring to the communities.”*

According to the volunteer, these changes helped to strengthen staff accountability in the organisation. He also trained staff in the Maputo head office on fundraising.

The deputy director made it clear that the organisation requests international volunteers with specific abilities because it views international volunteers potentially as a specialist resource that can help strengthen its organisational effectiveness at little or no cost.

- Another example of strategic support comes from the Tanzania microfinance host organisation in which a volunteer, who was a banker by profession, helped enhance *the organisation’s client tracking system:*

*“He was very instrumental in the enhancement of the system of recoding, keeping and systematising the tracking of client accounts in the computer. This helped ensure that what was manually available was also available in soft copy and at any point in time it was easy to get into the data base and check the financial status of the branch, groups and individuals, instantly.”*

- A Tanzania host organisation respondent related the experience of a young volunteer who was aspiring to be a nurse and subsequently registered to study nursing in Tanzania.

*“She managed to establish a very effective documentation system in the hospital which they are using up to now, and their records are kept very efficiently. She contributed significantly in studying the way the hospital works and helped systemise the operation. ... The doctor attending the patient can get a full medical history by just entering the patient care identification number.”*

- Planning emerges as another area in which international volunteers were able to support the strategic development of host organisations. This example comes from a host organisation in Mozambique:

*“When we were planning our annual activities the French volunteer suggested many things that the planning did not think about, but were brilliant aspects”.*

### 7.1.2. Optimising strategic benefit

It emerged that optimal strategic benefit will not be realised unless the use of international volunteers is carefully considered and planned for by host organisations. The loan officer at the Tanzania microfinance host organisation was frank in expressing his view that the involvement of international volunteers in that organisation had not been strategically planned, and that this diminished the value of the experience for the volunteers as well as the organisation. He had this to say about the volunteers: *“if what they do is actually, in reality what they came all the way and for all this time to do, then it is a total waste of time”*. With regard to his organisation he gave the following examples of the lack of strategic planning for the use of the volunteers: inadequate consultation with staff about whether and how to accept volunteers in the first place, inadequate preparation for the hosting experience, and a lack of proper planning for how the volunteers would be used and managed. As a result, staff felt that there was a lack of transparency in the organisation, and the international volunteering experience produced a set of risks for the host organisation: some staff felt that the international volunteers were imposed on them; it was felt that *“there is something going on that people are not supposed to know about”* – this can erode trust and produce organisational instability. Furthermore, the lack of proper planning and the expectation by the organisation that the staff needed to accommodate the volunteers in their work produced the risk of distracting staff and compromising their ability to meet their targets.

Four of the comparison organisations had not hosted international volunteers previously, but they were all clear that they would like international volunteers to help them develop their organisations. For example, the manager of the microfinance comparison group in Tanzania indicated that his organisation requires research to answer a number of questions such as: Why is the organisation reaching only about 10% of its potential market share? Why are more men than women taking up loans in his area when the reverse is true in other areas? Why are fewer people taking out loans now than was previously the case? What are the factors that cause people to default on their loan repayments? How can microfinance be positioned as a legitimate support for people needing financial assistance (either for the family or for business) rather than being viewed by customers as *“shameful ... a sign that one is in financial trouble or that they are struggling in life”*. The organisation does not have

the time or the resources to research these issues, but well-matched international volunteers could be very helpful in finding answers to these strategic questions.

Three of the comparison organisations (two in Tanzania and one in Mozambique) stated in general terms that they hoped international volunteers would have the skills, knowledge and exposure to help them develop their organisations and secure better resources:

*“The volunteers would be able to give us ideas and advise us on how to move forward or what to do ... to have more decent incomes that will help improve our lives”.*

Two of the six comparison organisations (both in Mozambique) had hosted international volunteers previously, but had stopped doing so for strategic reasons. In one case the organisation was doing a five-year strategic review and had put their international volunteer-involvement programme on hold until the new direction was established. However, the respondent commented that an international volunteer could have been very helpful to them in this process, to support the drafting of the strategic plan and proposal writing. The second organisation had hosted international volunteers for three years, but stopped this two years before the research because *“we wanted to make a balance of their involvement and see to what extent their work added value to what local volunteers are doing”*. Since then they have decided to request international volunteers again, but want to ensure the appropriate match: *“Age does not matter at all ... but we will look more on the experience they have. For us it is important to have experienced people, rather than those that still have to learn things, which is time consuming.”*

Both host and comparison organisations are thus agreed that the strategic use of international volunteers would be most beneficial for their development. Strategic benefit is evident from the examples of host organisations that have improved their systems and from those comparison organisations that have stopped recruiting international volunteers until such time as they are clear on the role they should play.

The analysis suggests that three factors govern the extent to which host organisations achieve strategic benefit from the international volunteers:

- First, benefit derives from careful planning of how and where the volunteers will be used in the organisation and the need for affected staff to be involved in this process from the start.

- Second, organisations need to specify clearly the skills, attributes and attitudes they are seeking from the international volunteers. Although most of the host organisations indicated that they did develop terms of reference for international volunteers with specific skills, the data shows that in many cases these matches did not materialise.
- Third, strategic benefit is directly related to the extent to which international volunteers are managed and guided during their stay in the organisation.

## **7.2. Impact on programme delivery**

Two effects emerged in relation to programme delivery: impact on the reach of the programme and impact on the quality of the programme.

One organisation mentioned that international volunteers help extend the **reach** of its programmes. This Mozambique organisation runs projects in agriculture and other forms of rural socio-economic development and says that it “hosts international volunteers because we have the ambition to cover the national territory with an average of 40 to 50 projects per year. This implies hiring personnel and we have few resources for covering salaries. This situation is circumvented particularly by international volunteers, whom have applied their know-how and capabilities for the organisation.”

However, in four out of six host organisations (two in Tanzania and two in Mozambique) the impact was greatest in the arena of programme **quality**, particularly when one takes into account the cases in which host organisations were able to use international volunteers strategically. For example, the establishment of systems that strengthen staff accountability through tracking project activities is important for organisational effectiveness. The introduction of monitoring tools and evaluation indicators are mechanisms that help organisations track their functioning and impact, and equip the organisation with the mechanisms needed for continuous improvement. The development of data bases in hospitals or micro-finance institutions can be instrumental in making organisations more efficient in their service delivery.

It is significant that the host organisations spoke about these improvements in very positive terms. This suggests that they approve of the contributions made by the volunteers to the enhancement of organisational effectiveness and that they have been able to sustain the improvements since the volunteers have left (four months prior to the research being

conducted). For this to happen, the organisations must have been closely involved in the process of setting up new systems and would have influenced their design. Staff would have worked with the volunteers to decide on how and where to collect data. It is also clear that staff were trained to ensure that the systems could be fully used.

For these benefits to be realised, however, the data show that once again a number of conditions have to be in place. They include:

- involving staff in planning for the volunteer placement as an integral part of organisational functioning;
- ensuring that the placement matches the position as closely as possible;
- developing productive working relationships between international volunteers and permanent staff;
- international volunteers having a learning orientation towards the host organization and respecting staff rather than seeing themselves as being 'better than' or 'above' staff;
- setting clear deliverables for the international volunteers against which their contributions can be assessed and measured;
- ensuring that staff are in a position to run and sustain any improvements that international volunteers might have made in the organisation.

### **7.3. Evidence of innovation introduced**

*"A house that does not host visits is a strange one ... international volunteers bring innovative thinking and different experience of dealing with problems."* This comment from a respondent heading up a host organisation in rural Mozambique captures the expectation of most informants in the study that international volunteers would bring new ideas and new knowledge about how things can be done. The fact that the volunteers come from developed countries (such as Germany) was of particular interest to beneficiaries from a comparison organisation in Mozambique who felt that *"it would be fine to exchange ideas on how they do things so that we also can improve our things here"*. These views demonstrate an openness on the part of the respondents to engaging with the international volunteers around change. One host organisation respondent from Tanzania suggested, however, that local people might be more open to new ideas from European volunteers because *"people have a tendency to trust white people; they will follow suit if encouraged;*

*that way they can change, they can see the value in it*". The analysis below suggests, however, that race was not a significant factor in the adoption of innovative ideas.

Innovation can be defined as the introduction of something new as well as renewing a process that already exists. It applies to changes in thinking about how to do something, as well as the useful application of a new approach, invention or discovery.<sup>9</sup> This suggests that innovation in the host organisations depends on a number of factors: international volunteers contributing their insights and ideas based on their experience, host organisations being open to engaging with these, and volunteers being willing to follow through on their suggestions in collaboration with the staff. One Mozambique host organisation respondent described the process this way:

*"An international volunteer brings innovation/innovative thinking and different experiences of dealing with problems. They can contribute to the improvement of certain activities that the organisation is implementing. If there is a doubt, quickly there is an exchange of ideas and things move forward."*

In other words, innovation in the host organisations is the product of constructive engagement between staff and international volunteers on the basis of a shared interest in the organisation's effectiveness.

Two types of innovation were identified by a Mozambique host organisation respondent – cultural and technical. He described intercultural engagement as innovation in that *"it opens reciprocally to a vision of universality"*. He provided an example of how, at a time when Mozambique was experiencing popular uprisings owing to the high cost of living, international volunteers with knowledge of non-violent activism made an important contribution to the perceptions of the host organisation and community in respect of the various strategies for fostering social change. In the case of technical innovation, on the other hand, he comments that international volunteers *"bring new insights for the old problems"*.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Innovation>

Earlier in this section a number of examples were provided of how international volunteers helped host organisations improve their systems and practices. In addition, three more examples (all from Tanzania) emerge that fit the notion of innovation:

- **Pedagogical change in technical training:** In a vocational training centre, international volunteers suggested that ways be found to involve the students more closely in every project that was being handled in the workshop on behalf of clients. This way they could get theoretical and intensive practical training at the same time. The students could also provide manpower in the workshop and, if properly supervised, would learn a great deal by being involved in production. According to the respondent the adoption of the innovation was very successful, but it was difficult to sustain: “The idea was taken aboard and it worked well, and students benefited very much, and they contributed significantly in production, but administration issues, which saw inconsistency in many things, let it die a natural death.”
- **A child-centred approach in pre-primary education:** At a pre-primary school a volunteer showed that through her interaction with the young children at the school she was able to win their trust and their cooperation, resulting in more active participation by the children. According to the key informant, *“[the volunteer] was also good with children, gave them very good attention and cared for the children in a very rare and different way than what they are used to and how we normally tend children in our communities. She brought innovation in games and taught children new games. She provided first aid, and children loved her for the way she cared for them. ... sometimes they would just pretend or injure themselves a little so that they can get her attention. We have first aid in the school, but the difference with her was the way she handled children. This taught the staff if you wanted children to be close to you, what you should do. The question is whether they have such patience.”*

However, this host organisation also produced an example of how innovation can be resisted on the basis of cultural tradition. The same volunteer questioned the practice of disciplining children by caning them. *“She was ... advocating for that, saying that instead they should perhaps just be scolded in extreme cases and in normal situations be told or have things explained to them. She felt that punishing*

*children will make them difficult and aggressive in the future.”* In this case, however, the staff felt that *“circumstances sometimes require disciplining children in the local context”* and they were unwilling to follow her example.

- **Harnessing wind energy:** The best example of innovation came from the vocational training centre which has a renewable energy department. In the course of interactions between an international volunteer and the department head, it transpired that the head had a particular interest in wind energy, which was an area not being supported by the centre at that time. The volunteer encouraged his senior to pursue his dream and to start researching the development of a wind energy product at the centre. By the time of this research, more than a year later, a wind turbine had been developed and the centre was preparing to roll it out to customers.

Significantly, the volunteer had no prior knowledge of wind energy. Instead, he demonstrated a real interest in the head of department and the centre, and responded to the head’s passion for wind energy by encouraging him to pursue his dream and offering him support in that process. The researcher reported the respondent’s account of the interaction as follows:

*“The volunteer told him that if he really wanted the knowledge and skills to harvest wind energy, then he will get it. The volunteer told him they should work together and they will get somewhere. The volunteer was the inspiration behind the initiative to start research and experiment on wind turbine in the centre; he encouraged the respondent. The respondent remembered that the volunteer told him, “you are expecting big things, you are think perhaps someone from Europe should come and teach you; or perhaps you should to a university somewhere to study about this; but I think we should try and do this under the conditions and circumstances we have, let us take advantage of things we can manage right here and begin with them.” The volunteer encouraged him, worked with him, researched with him. The most impressive thing was that the volunteer also had no idea about wind technology, he was as much in the dark as the respondent, and perhaps even much more in the dark because he had no vocational or professional training of any sort up to the time. They were making headway getting somewhere when it was his time to leave, but he contacted the volunteers who were coming after him when he was back in Germany and*

*encouraged them to continue to work with him in the wind turbine project. They were inspired and worked with him throughout their stay where they made great achievements, and they also inspired the current volunteers to work on the project, and they are dedicated in it. The current volunteers had met with the previous volunteers who explained to them about the project and asked them to work on it.”*

Although some respondents felt that professional experience was the main factor in enabling international volunteers to help organisations achieve innovation in their practice, the data suggests two other key ingredients for change: **genuine interest** on the part of the volunteer in the future of the organisation and the level of **commitment** that the volunteer demonstrates in his/her engagement with the organisation.

Furthermore, **for innovation to be sustained**, it is clear that close and mutually beneficial engagement between the international volunteers and the staff is required to put in place the support for the innovation. While the pedagogical innovation at the vocational training centre could not be sustained owing to ‘administration issues’, the development of the wind turbine product was pursued over a number of years with the volunteers ensuring that there was continuity and understanding among newcomers as one cohort replaced another. The outcome of the wind turbine example is as follows:

*“At the moment the project has gone through many experiments and they are in the process of preparing to roll out the product to users. It would not have been possible without the encouragement, dedication, daring spirit, and belief in the possibilities of things the volunteers had imparted in the department [encouraging them to] push forward with the project despite constraints. The respondent is now the in-house expert of wind turbine, and the lead project leader in the centre. The centre also has benefited because the wind mills that are produced are for the centre, [and] they have added a product line as well as training product, which all benefits [the community]. The respondent also acknowledges the great contribution in ideas and breakthrough suggestions various volunteers who have been involved in the project have given. He believes sincerely that without them, there is no way he would have started and without their continuous interest and participation through work and ideas, he would have not have reached the stage of having a working finished product which can properly produced and be used by other people.”*

Finally, it is important to note that one respondent from a Mozambique host organisation indicated that it is not only international volunteers who can help organisations innovate; he mentioned that local volunteers have also supported innovation in his organisation in relation to local issues that need to be addressed. However, no specific examples were provided.

#### **7.4. The costs involved in hosting international volunteers**

Among all the respondents surveyed for this study (host and comparison organisations as well as host and comparison communities), the basic premise was that international volunteers represent a ‘free pair of hands’. All the organisations commented that this was the key attraction within the resource-scarce environments in which they operate. In one host organisation in Tanzania the branch manager was expressed this view as follows: *“There was an opportunity to host them [international volunteers] without any costs to the organisation, so there was nothing to lose.”*

This perspective illustrates another view commonly held by most of the respondents in both host and comparison organisations, viz. that free labour does not make any demands on the organisation:

*“Another advantage is that most of them have a genuine desire to do something and be useful, to help out. ... So it means in your organisation you have two extra people for one year who can help with work without financial costs to the organisation.”*

In addition, sending organisations may provide international volunteers with some funds to use in promoting the project(s) in which they are working. In the case in which this was mentioned by the host organisation, it was perceived as a major benefit.

However, the management of volunteers requires time and resources from the host organisation, and this translates into costs. The loan officer in the Tanzania micro-finance host organisation differed from his manager on this issue, arguing that international volunteers can make considerable demands on an organisation, taking up the time and attention of staff who would otherwise be focused on other core tasks in the organisation: *“... local staff ... they have deliverables and without proper incorporation of volunteers in the work schedule, they might be more distracting or derailing than colleagues you work with”.*

The resources required to train and manage international volunteers become clearly evident in those cases where the volunteers come straight from school with little experience. At the primary school in Tanzania the teachers had to train the international volunteers to teach and how to handle classes. At the vocational training centre in Tanzania the international volunteers *“had no idea about anything; it is right here [they are taught] welding ... taking measurements, or assembling anything; they are trained in all of that at the centre”*.

Two examples were given of cases in which the host organisations were responsible for direct costs in hosting international volunteers. One was in Mozambique where international volunteers have to obtain a Document of Identification and Residence for Foreigners which costs approximately USD 850. The host organisation petitioned the government to reduce this fee, arguing that it cannot afford to pay this for its international volunteers, but initially it was not successful. Since these costs were not sustainable, the host and sending organisations shared the costs. Since then the cost has dropped to USD 500. The other was in Tanzania where the vocational training centre invested in sending an international volunteer and a staff member to a seminar on wind turbines in Dar es Salaam. This cost was shared between the vocational training centre and the sending organisation.

Finally, it is important to mention that the host organisations are aware that the sending organisations and international volunteers themselves incur costs in coming to Tanzania or Mozambique. However, in some cases the value of the volunteer experience in relation to the cost was questioned by respondents, particularly in respect of young and inexperienced volunteers:

*“... you cannot say they [international volunteers] do absolutely nothing, but it is hard to say what is it that they do that is significant or valuable to worth the cost, the year they spend, time and many efforts and resources put towards running that programme of sending volunteers from abroad to our organisation.”*

These views suggest that in general the host organisations are not thinking hard enough about the costs they need to invest in making the international volunteer experience a worthwhile exercise for their own purposes. Staff time is required to manage the volunteers (whether or not a specific staff member is appointed as the volunteer manager or coordinator), to train them and to oversee their integration into core functions of the institution or organisation.

## 7.5. Impact on local volunteer involvement<sup>10</sup>

A key area of interest in this research is how the presence of international volunteers impacts on the relationship between host organisations, their communities and local volunteers. In itself that relationship is shaped by the ways in which volunteering is broadly understood in the host countries, Mozambique and Tanzania. As will be outlined below, local volunteers are present and active in all but one of the organisations surveyed – host as well as comparison organisations. However, the organisations view the local volunteers differently from the international volunteers.

### 7.5.1. Context of local volunteering

Volunteering is embedded in African culture and this means that local volunteering is often taken for granted as part of a way of life. However, in 2010 Mozambique passed legislation that recognises the value of volunteering in the socio-economic development of that country and sets up an agency that will oversee the interests of volunteers, both foreign and domestic. The aim is to establish a national volunteer service and increase the capacity of volunteer-involving organisations to manage volunteers more effectively in respect of national development objectives and the Millennium Development Goals.

In Tanzania the government released a draft national volunteer policy in 2007, which is being reviewed by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Development. A product of wide-ranging consultation, the draft policy sets out a range of measures to be taken in order to recognise and promote volunteerism in support of national development objectives and the Millennium Development Goals. While the draft states that government will put in place a legal framework to guide volunteerism throughout the country, no such plan is yet evident.<sup>11</sup> The development of the draft policy on volunteerism in Tanzania is particularly significant in the light of that country's history of socialism following independence. The Arusha Declaration of 1967 was premised on "Socialism and Self-Reliance" and required Tanzanians to contribute their labour in exchange for development. Although such contributions were notionally of a voluntary nature, they were in fact obligatory because non-participation was penalised.

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<sup>10</sup> The term 'local volunteer' is used in this study in preference to the term 'national volunteer'. It refers to citizens who get involved in various activities within their local or neighbouring communities, or even in communities in other parts of the country. Their involvement may be ad hoc or regular, of varied duration, and may or may not attract support in the form of a stipend, depending on the volunteer policy environment in which they are active. The term 'local volunteer' is distinguished from the term 'national volunteer' which is used by United Nations Volunteers to describe citizens who are contracted to serve for a specific period of time and are supported financially to do so.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Volunteers (2009) *Laws and Policies Affecting Volunteerism since 2001*

In Tanzania the research found perceptions among respondents in both host and comparison organisations and communities that “the spirit of volunteerism is very low”. Although the tradition of mutual aid persists, the 21<sup>st</sup> century environment has also seen an increase in levels of individualism that appears to have eroded common purpose. According to one respondent from a comparison community group in Tanzania, *“people in rural areas have lost a sense of belonging or collective identity ... they support each along the lines of family and friendship rather than as a community”*. In another community focus group a participant said: *“Volunteerism is difficult in our context because people do not link or associate it with their own welfare. People think volunteering is about doing or giving to someone else and not that it is also good for you”*. A school principal in Tanzania commented that outside her school she had not encountered one person volunteering. She contrasted this with her perception of the situation in Uganda where, she says, *“people in that country are more motivated and do volunteer quite vibrantly”*.

Varied community perceptions were found about the **motivation for local volunteerism**. In Tanzania some community respondents locate volunteering in the spiritual realm, *“doing the work of the Lord and inspired by religious teachings”*. Others defined volunteerism as *“readiness to serve without prioritizing material or monetary reward, and the ability to give one’s energy and time in worthy causes as a contribution in the betterment of life of others without giving precedence to one’s own benefit”*. In other cases respondents expressed the view that people do not volunteer because one has to be well-off to volunteer.

Despite these varied perceptions about the spirit of volunteering among local people, the research shows extensive use of local volunteers in all the organisations surveyed across the two countries. This is described in the next sections.

#### 7.5.2. *Types of local volunteers*

Three categories of local volunteers emerge from the data:

- Local volunteers who founded organisations/institutions and run them on a voluntary basis (founder of a kindergarten; sisters from a religious order). We refer to these as ‘founders’;
- Local volunteers who have a stake in the organisation or institution (such as the parents of children at a school or the leaders of membership groups in a micro-finance organisation). We refer to these as ‘stakeholders’;

- Local volunteers who serve in the organisation for limited periods of time (1-3 months). We refer to these as 'short-term volunteers'.

The first two categories were more prevalent in the Tanzania survey than in Mozambique. In Mozambique the local volunteers were mostly in the last category.

a. Founders

In Tanzania three examples were given of organisations that had been founded by volunteers. One host organisation, a pre-primary and primary school, was founded by a small group of Tanzanian Catholic nuns through a religious order. The nuns do not receive salaries, but receive limited financial support from the Church. In addition to running the school, they also volunteer in the surrounding community doing humanitarian work among the sick and the aged. The school is sustained through school fees and the staff grow produce on the farm on which the school is based.

In the second case (a comparison organisation) a vocational training centre was started by a Philippines volunteer (also a nun) for young girls who were unable to continue their schooling owing to teenage pregnancy. The founder ran the centre for 14 years and has since retired. Today the teachers receive a stipend drawn from the sale of artefacts produced by the centre, as and when funds are available. Given the precarious nature of this revenue stream, it is clear that the staff serve the centre largely on a voluntary basis.

The third example came from one of the participants in a comparison focus group (also in Tanzania) who shared her experience of volunteering by starting a pre-school class in a religious ministry, using the church as a venue for the centre. She ran kindergarten classes for ten years, free of charge for children in the community and explained that she volunteers *"because of the motherly love she has for children"*. Another respondent in the group added that she also volunteered *"so that these children will learn to give and support others as they have also been supported ... they will know the importance of giving back to the community"*.

Two of these three cases thus provide examples of founders being located in a religious context while the third is an example of community action by concerned individuals. It is striking that in all three cases the voluntary activities had been sustained over many years as a service to the local community in these rural areas.

b. Stakeholders

Two types of volunteers emerge in this category from the Tanzania data:

- people who volunteer and receive a stipend: they work at the organisation or institution because they have a calling or because they want to support the community.
- people who participate in activities because they have an interest in seeing that organisation or institution succeed.

The first category is described by an interviewee from a comparison organisation in Tanzania as follows:

*“The school does not have resources to pay regular and competitive wages, and therefore working here is a calling, an inspiration to do God’s service more than for material rewards. That is why we consider it voluntary work. The rate of teachers who come and within no time leave is high for exactly that reason, [viz.] that there is no certainty of regular or sufficient income.”*

In the second category we find examples of parents who volunteer to support the schools by carrying water to build new classrooms or helping to cultivate and harvest food that is grown on the school farm.

*“The parents who come to volunteer are often those who have a problem with paying fees, and want to maintain goodwill with the school so that when they do not pay on time their children will not be sent home.”*

In addition, some parents make sporadic donations to the schools:

*“... particularly those whose children who are studying there or just from the goodness of their heart they can donate either text books, a lorry of sand for construction of buildings, some bricks, or buy a piece of furniture and that’s it. There is no organisation, international or local that they have an established or sustainable relationship with.”*

Also in this category are the group leaders who serve in the two Tanzania microfinance organisations surveyed and who volunteer to lead the membership base in order to facilitate the smooth running of the organisation: *“These leaders work as volunteers because they are not members of staff; they are clients who are also among the people who have borrowed*

*and are servicing loans.*" The leaders of these groups have been coordinating the groups, following up on members and being responsible for the smooth functioning of the group without pay. The practice in the comparison organisation is the same. At one time the microfinance host organisation used to pay its group leaders a small commission (5% of loan profit) for this service, but this has now been stopped. The comparison organisation pays no commission.

c. Short-term volunteers (1-3 months)

Across the host and comparison organisations in Mozambique, local volunteers are active in food security awareness campaigns, conservation, malaria and HIV awareness campaigns, and home and community-based care for people living with AIDS.

Between 3 and 14 local volunteers were active in two of the Mozambique host organisations surveyed, with local volunteers outnumbering international volunteers in both cases. The Mozambique comparison organisations used up to 22 local volunteers in their activities. (The third host organisation indicated that at the time of the study its local volunteer recruitment programme was on hold whilst a new five-year strategic plan was being drafted to map out new projects and activities.)

Across the Mozambican organisations surveyed, examples were given of local volunteers working in their own communities and also serving in places away from their own homes. Although these volunteers generally served for short periods of time, there were cases in which volunteers who had performed well were integrated permanently into the organisation they were serving. However, this was said to be rare.

7.5.3. *The value of local volunteering*

Despite local volunteers serving for short periods of time, the comparison organisations in Mozambique indicated that they would not be able to function without the use of local volunteers. According to one, *"Local volunteers are important and crucial for carrying out the work of the organisation as they are the ones who visit the patients/members almost daily, giving counselling and also providing treatment for opportunistic diseases. Without the support of local volunteers, the organisation would not be able to reach its objectives, nor its mission."* Another put it this way: *"Without the support of volunteers (both national and international), the organisation could not have reached its current stage"*.

These views were echoed by a Mozambican host organisation respondent: *“Most of the work being carried out, particularly in issues relating to HIV/AIDS campaigns, relies heavily on volunteers ... they are the linkage between the organisation and the communities”*. From the perspective of beneficiaries, local volunteers play an important role in their lives as *“they are the ones responsible for our current [improved] health status”*.

The host and comparison microfinance organisations surveyed in Tanzania were unequivocal about the central role played by the voluntary group leaders in supporting the membership, which is the lifeblood of the organisation in each case. A key respondent from the host organisation put it this way:

*“These leaders have extensive responsibilities because they are responsible for registering the group from the beginning, [and] they facilitate the smooth functioning of the group and loan repayment.”*

The view from the comparison organisation was:

*“Without these leaders, if the organisation were to operate at all, it would at a very high cost, because it would have to pay people to play the role of the leaders, otherwise it will face complications of dealing with elusive individuals and it might crumble under failure to recover loans.”*

Respondents in both the host and comparison organisations in Mozambique described the value of local volunteers in positive terms: patient, persistent, with the ability to teach beneficiaries how to prevent malaria and HIV infection: *“They understand our people, their difficulties and their values”*; *“they have the advantage of knowing the culture and the habits of the community they work with and also ways of dealing with certain issues that an international volunteer might ignore”*; and despite low levels of education among local volunteers, *“they have the will and disposition for working”*.

Among the Mozambique beneficiaries, however, there were different views of the value added by local volunteers. Some comparison organisation beneficiaries praised their local volunteers for showing them respect and humanity rather than patronising them, but at the same time complained that some of the local volunteers are not sufficiently patient and that they do not always protect patient confidentiality. This was echoed by beneficiaries from a host organisation who were of the view that local volunteers sometimes show lack of

respect and do not keep the HIV status of beneficiaries confidential. A beneficiary from one host organisation commented that when local volunteers work in their own communities, it is sometimes difficult to take them seriously:

*“How do you want me to believe in someone who I know well, teaching me how to preserve the environment, if the parents are part of destructive behaviour? How do you want me to believe in somebody telling that I must use condoms, if I know the person and his behaviour?”*

These data indicate that in Mozambique there is no difference between host and comparison organisations in their attitudes to local volunteers. Both types of organisations are clear that their operations depend squarely on short-term local volunteers for delivering their services and that despite the constraints (such as not being able to serve for longer periods of time), local volunteers add a great deal of value to the activities of these organisations. When the ‘stakeholder’ category of volunteers is added from Tanzania (both in the microfinance organisations and in the schools) we see added synergy between the two countries: the host and comparison organisations in both countries are dependent on local volunteers for the reach, success and sustainability of their operations.

The beneficiaries of both host and comparison organisations in Mozambique were more ambivalent about the quality of service provided by local volunteers, and this is something that host organisations may be able to rectify through improved training.

#### *7.5.4. Constraints to local volunteering*

In both countries, two main **constraints** to local volunteering emerge from the data.

- The first is **poverty**, which weakens people’s ability to volunteer because they need to find paid work: *“The challenge in Tanzania is that one cannot afford to volunteer, even if they wanted to”* said one participant in a comparison community. A host organisation interviewee in Mozambique commented that *“Local volunteers work for us in their spare time as they have to work ‘seriously’ to earn a living”*. Despite the recognition of these circumstances, organisations seem critical of local volunteers who request cash support for the costs of their involvement. The request is criticised on the grounds that local volunteers should not receive any financial support.

- The second is that there are **no institutions or arrangements that facilitate volunteering**, even if people want to gain some experience: *“The conditions and circumstances of life in Tanzania do not make it easy for people to volunteer. Developed nations have institutions and arrangements that can facilitate that.”* Community respondents in one Tanzania comparison organisation focus group noted that they do not have the skills and techniques of mobilising people to volunteer.

#### 7.5.5. Comparing local and international volunteers

One host organisation respondent in Mozambique commented that even though local volunteers often perform very well, the main disadvantage is that they generally are unable to serve for as long as international volunteers who are placed for a period of 6 or 12 months. Nevertheless, the organisation did have experience of *“disappointing international volunteers”*, which led him to conclude that both local and international volunteers could add benefit to the organisation. According to another host organisation surveyed in that country, it is advantageous for Mozambican volunteers to work alongside international volunteers because this brings the local people in contact with people from other parts of the world, *“exploring new approaches, strategies of dealing with problems and challenges in their day-to-day work”*.

In two cases Mozambique respondents mentioned that they view local and international volunteers as being **complementary** in their contributions to the organisations they serve. One respondent from a Mozambique comparison organisation that relies on local volunteers, but had hosted international volunteers in the past, put it this way:

*“Local volunteers have the advantage of knowing the culture and the habits of the community they work with and also ways of dealing with certain issues that an international volunteer might ignore. But it is true that international volunteers are fundamental, particularly in terms of technical skills and improved methodologies of tackling adversities, etc. They differ but also they complement each other”*.

That said, the data show that the value of having longer-term volunteers in place cannot be underestimated. International volunteers that are dedicated to an organisation for a fixed period of time (preferably 12 months or more) can produce an element of stability on which the organisation can rely. A respondent from the comparison training centre in Tanzania

feels that international volunteers who are placed for 12 months or more would make a huge impact in stabilising the staffing situation, which would have real benefit for the children at the centre:

*“Local staff who want to volunteer are informed of the meagre allowances and informed that the job demands willingness to help, more than material rewards. They come, but apparently just to assess the gravity of the situation. After they have learnt that the situation is difficult they leave, having stayed only a month and at most three months. This behaviour is very discouraging and also negatively affects children who have to deal with new teachers now and then, and do not even develop a connection with the teachers. ... International volunteers are expected to be different because they tend to be committed to volunteering when they come and you can rely on being with them for a certain period of time and they can actually stay for the agreed time.”*

From the viewpoint of the beneficiaries, one from a host organisation suggested that local volunteers do not have sufficient knowledge to be effective: *“Look, seriously speaking, I do not trust much of what local volunteers tell us. If they are with someone we trust yes, for example people from other places who know well things”*. However, the Mozambican researcher comments that this view may derive from a prevailing attitude among older people that whites *“have absolute knowledge of everything ... I found that the community members I interviewed believe more in white volunteers and even in local volunteers if they learn that what they [the local volunteers] are saying/teaching was taught by a white person.”*

In this regard, international volunteers with better education than local volunteers have different things to offer the host organisations. Sections (a) and (b) of this chapter have outlined in some detail those instances in which the international volunteers have delivered significant benefits to the host organisations in respect of strategic inputs and programme quality. The data show that local volunteers were not able to play this role for the organisations surveyed. For this reason, it is possible to regard the two sets of human resources as being complementary in nature. Both are significant and both are valued by the organisations surveyed.

In summary, the host organisations surveyed generally say they value international volunteers because they are fully funded, they have good education backgrounds and they

may help the organisation gain access to new sources of funds. What has clearly emerged from this analysis, however, is that without local volunteers, the organisations would not even be in existence.

This study did not survey the volunteers active in the host or comparison organisations – neither local nor international volunteers. It is thus not possible to comment on the relationship between international and local volunteers in the host organisations. However, given the evidence cited elsewhere that in a number of cases international volunteers were very distant from local staff (among whom must have been local volunteers), we assume that there were no special efforts made in these organisations to pair local and international volunteers. The question that arises for future research is how the presence of international and local volunteers in an organisation can be structured to impact on the quality of the services offered by the organisation and how this might affect the nature of the volunteering experience for both local and international volunteers.

#### **7.6. Resource mobilisation**

All the organisations in the sample (host as well as comparison organisations) indicated their hope and expectation that international volunteers would help them access resources. This takes various forms.

As noted earlier, the respondents set great store by the skills that international volunteers can bring to their operations. Although the data show that in a number of instances the volunteers were not able to perform their tasks without training from the host organisations, respondents attached value to the volunteers' strong education backgrounds, their ICT skills and their ability to learn quickly. In addition, most respondents perceive volunteers to be a 'free pair of hands' viz. people who are able to carry out various activities that the host organisations would normally have to pay for: *"The main advantage is that these volunteers do work with no pay; if we were paying those doing the work, it would be difficult as we do not have financial means"* was the view of a Mozambique comparison organisation. Since the host organisations in this study are either dependent on donors for funds or are based in deep rural areas where they survive on meagre sources of income from a variety of domestic and external sources, the presence of willing, skilled and committed volunteers can make a huge difference to their ability to improve or extend their services.

### 7.6.1. Financial support

In the main, however, it is financial support that most organisations hope the international volunteers will produce. Most organisations were unequivocal in their expectation that international volunteers could serve as a means of linking them to new sources of funding, as is expressed in this view from a Mozambique host organisation: *“Involving international volunteers opens opportunities/the possibility of external support”*. A similar view expectation came from a Tanzania host organisation: *“When they go back to their countries they will talk about the place and what they experienced and what they saw. In that way you might find there are people who are wealth there and they can support the organisation or the community.”* At the same time, this respondent was concerned about the motivation for financial support from international contributors, feeling that donor self-interest was at work rather than a genuine intention to support development:

*“They may want great publicity to just show that they have done something to school. Wanting media coverage and all sorts of conditions to acknowledge, recognise or publicise their support. They can just do a small thing, but they can use it for their promotion than the support for school.”*

The interviews across the two countries produced a range of examples of how international volunteers had mobilised in-kind donations and financial resources for the host organisations from sources outside the country. They include sourcing donations of football balls, blankets and bicycles (for local volunteers to travel to their places of service), mobilising bursary support for local people to further their studies, procuring grants for the host organisations and organising regular funding flows through the establishment of support groups in countries such as Spain, France, Portugal, Italy and Kenya: *“Volunteers in several cases helped the organisation to secure financial resources in France, Spain, Portugal and Italy. Currently there are [name of the organisation] cells operating in these countries with main objective of fundraising.”* In another case, a Tanzania host organisation mentioned that each of their international volunteers brought with them €750 as ‘project promotion’ money, which enabled the organisation to extend its marketing of the solar energy products without incurring any extra cost.

Two clear examples of fundraising emerged. In one instance an international volunteer serving with a health organisation in Mozambique helped the organisation develop a funding

proposal that produced a three-year grant of \$1 million for two projects from USAID. In another instance an international volunteer fundraised €20,000 for a Mozambique host organisation after his return to Germany. Given that the host organisations are generally dependent on donor funding, these are significant sources of support. Other sources of financial support mentioned in the interviews include a Tanzania organisation receiving funds from the German embassy in that country for solar energy demonstration kits. The connection with the embassy was made through an international volunteer serving with the organisation at the time.

Fundraising skills among the international volunteers were mentioned as being particularly important: *“Having an experienced international volunteer in planning and proposal writing skills would be of much value for the institution”* said a respondent in a Mozambique comparison organisation which had hosted international volunteers prior to the study. Although they had suspended this aspect of the programme at the time of the study, the value of international volunteers for fundraising was clearly still recognised: *“the volunteers play a significant role at the organisation in various tasks such as developing projects in various areas, including fundraising.”*

In some cases, however, this expectation produced disappointment, for two reasons. First, a Tanzania host organisation mentioned that some of the young volunteers are just out of school and have limited networks and no fundraising skills:

*“Most of them are not professionals yet and because of the fact that most of them have not experience yet of soliciting resources, they do not yet know perhaps how to write proposals, where to send them, what kind organisations help with what etc.”*

The second is that the international volunteers become reluctant to promote the host organisations to funders if they feel that the organisation lacks financial discipline. This is the view of a different host organisation in Tanzania:

*“It has been difficult for international volunteers to help in seeking and getting new resources because they feel there is no financial discipline. So organisations that were to help get a report which makes them refrain from supporting; these volunteers are also disheartened to do so, because they feel there will be misallocation of resources.”*

Nevertheless, an example was also given of how international volunteers in a Tanzania host organisation managed to change the attitude of a donor who had previously been concerned that money had not been used for the intended purpose.

Another phenomenon that emerged in the data is that some international volunteers feel that they are expected to mobilise resources for their host placement community. This took two different forms, both in the same host organisation in Tanzania. First (as noted earlier), the international volunteers arrived with €750 each, which was 'promotion money' to be used for the marketing of the solar energy products in the rural area that the organisation served. The organisation saw this as a considerable benefit that amplified its marketing efforts at no additional cost.

The second example is quite different: one of the international volunteers made contact with a different organisation (a centre for orphans and vulnerable children) for whom she then produced a proposal to fund the provision of solar energy for the children. This was done without the knowledge of the host organisation and contravened the conditions of her contract. The volunteer acted on her own initiative and did not share her intentions with the host organisation, although it appears that she did consult the sending organisation, which initially approved of the idea. The host organisation refused to sanction the proposal and, once all the facts were revealed, was supported in this by the sending organisation. What transpired was that the volunteer's initiative could have benefited the children's centre if she had worked through her host organisation: not only could the project have been launched, but the host organisation would have been involved in its implementation, thus producing more sustainability. The host organisation respondent put it this way:

*"the only problem with the project that was not approved was because the volunteer made it a personal project. If she had applied it appropriately through the organisation, it would have been supported and the organisation would have also benefitted from the project."*

#### *7.6.2. Assumptions about international volunteers and resource mobilisation*

All these views indicate that in most cases there was a perception among respondents and beneficiaries that international volunteers are well placed to establish links with external donors. Two reasons emerge for this view: First, the perception that international volunteers have networks through which funds can be sourced. This links closely with a phenomenon documented elsewhere in this report viz. that the respondents tend to view the

international volunteers as representative of wealthy and powerful countries. They expect the international volunteers to have the networks that can provide access to funding, and the skills to tap those. As has been shown above, this is an assumption that does not often materialise, especially among younger international volunteers.

Second, there is a perception that organisations in Europe will trust the judgement and testimony of the volunteer who advocates for the organisation, and this will facilitate the flow of resources: *“Organisations tend to trust people from their countries more than from Africa. [International] volunteers have the ability to be trusted at their homes. [This makes it easier for] organisations and people from there when they want to help an organisation, than [when] that organisation makes a direct bid”* was the view of a host organisation in Tanzania. This perspective was supported by a Mozambique host organisation: *“International volunteers do give the real picture of the needs, weaknesses and strengths of the developing countries. Their reports influence assistance, particularly the technical one as, in my view, financial assistance in Africa do not contribute for development, only for extravagant corruption.”*

However, a very different view emerged from one focus group in Tanzania. This group of beneficiaries from a primary school (host organisation) raised a major concern about *“a close relationship between perceptions linking volunteers and donors”*. The participants indicated that *“the tendency to over-rely on donors has created a dependency syndrome”* and pointed to the importance of local communities working together to raise their own funds and construct the classrooms themselves:

*“The school has not enough classes, and for next year a new class for standard five must be built. ... If people, the community which benefits from this school volunteered, and we came together, we might have finished all the classes for the school. The school is constructed using soil bricks, and it is something people can volunteer and make bricks for the school without using a cent. There are also builders in the community: they can volunteer their skills and be helped by people and build the class rooms. People can contribute whatever they can, those who can afford, a bag of cement, or anything. Eventually, what might need cash for a class to be finished might just be Tshs. 2, 3 or 5 million, a lot down from Tshs. 13 million [the total cost of building one classroom] and that amount the people who established the school can raise more easily than the whole amount.”*

The view from this group was that international volunteers

*“can come in and support in these initiatives instead of them being the sole driving force or for us to expect them to just raise funds and get resources for us. When we overcome that, then volunteerism is going to be beneficial and established on principles of mutual benefit, sustainable development and respect, and it can be a positive contribution.”*

These findings suggest therefore that host organisations and some comparison organisations view international volunteers as key to widening their access to resources. The resources include skills, free labour and donations of various kinds, but the highest hope is placed on the ability of the international volunteers to help organisations mobilise financial support. Within this small sample, evidence emerged of three instances in which this transpired, all of which were in Mozambique: two host organisations were assisted by the international volunteers to access grants and one organisation is supported by a network of support groups in different European countries. The assumption that international volunteers can assist with fundraising is based on the expectation that they have wide networks and some fundraising experience. For some organisations in Tanzania this proved to be not the case, especially among young volunteers. The data also show that some respondents in Tanzania are concerned about the motivation for international donations and how sustained they may be, while others in that country raised strong objections to the ‘dependency syndrome’ that emerges when international volunteers are seen purely as conduits for financial support rather than significant partners in development.

It is interesting to note that in the volunteer survey (Appendix 2), the majority of returned volunteers from both programmes believed that their contribution was more significant in terms of skills transfer than by providing resources directly to their host organisations. This supports the findings above that international volunteers are not naturally or easily able to mobilise resources for host organisations. Organisations that have high expectations in this regard are likely to be disappointed.

## **7.7. Sustainability**

The relationship between international volunteering and the question of sustainability can be viewed from different perspectives. At one level we need to pose the question of whether the international volunteers help host organisations meet their current needs

without compromising their ability to meet their needs in future. This perspective is drawn from a widely quoted definition of sustainability and sustainable development produced by the United Nations Brundtland Commission which argues that “sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (March 20, 1987).

While sustainability is often related to environmental issues, it is also necessary to locate human development in relation to social change that impacts on the ability of communities to navigate social, political and economic conditions in both local and global contexts: “The relationship between human rights and human development, corporate power and environmental justice, global poverty and citizen action, suggest that responsible global citizenship is an inescapable element of what may at first glance seem to be simply matters of personal consumer and moral choice.”<sup>12</sup>

International volunteering represents one form of global citizen action. It provides opportunities for volunteers and host communities to engage each other with a view to gaining better insight into how their countries relate to each other, how power relations between countries work to the benefit of some and the detriment of others, and how international relations impact on issues of poverty and development. From this perspective the issue of sustainability should ideally be examined from the viewpoint of the impact of the experience on the international volunteer as well as the impact on the host organisation and its community.

The volunteer survey found that across the two organisations (ICYE and *weltwärts*) returned volunteers were more likely than outgoing volunteers to report higher international social capital, open-mindedness, intercultural relations, civic activism and community engagement. As is noted in Chapter 4, it is on their return to their home countries that these volunteers have the opportunity to make significant impacts on their families, peers and wider communities in respect of sharing insights and new knowledge gained during the volunteer experience abroad. Their ability to position their host organisations as significant players in development could ultimately change the ‘superior/inferior’ perspective of their countrymen and women in respect of relations between Africa and Europe.

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<sup>12</sup> Blewitt, J. (2008). *Understanding Sustainable Development*. London: Earthscan.

The research in Tanzania and Mozambique provides a small window into the extent to which international volunteers contribute to empowering communities to shape their own destinies. The first thing to note is that all the organisations surveyed in this study have been in existence for between 4 and 43 years. In light of the common meaning of 'sustain', which is "to keep from falling; to bear; to uphold; to support",<sup>13</sup> the duration of these organisations shows that they have found various means of running their operations and delivering services needed by their communities. As has been shown earlier in this chapter, the use of local volunteers is one such strategy. Another is the establishment of linkages with organisations locally and abroad to source a variety of resources, including funds and human capital. International volunteers fall into this latter category.

Secondly, the examination of the strategic use of international volunteers, their impact on programme quality and their role in stimulating innovation in the host organisations (sections (a), (b) and (c) above) shows that host organisations need to be proactive in identifying the areas in which international volunteers can be most effective and need to be able to manage and guide the volunteers in order to realise that potential. The data show that the key factors in sustaining change in host organisations revolved around whether international volunteers had the appropriate skills or the willingness and commitment to work cooperatively with local staff, and whether staff were closely involved in the development of new approaches or systems. The example of how a Tanzanian vocational training centre was able to launch a new product using wind turbines over a period of two or three years is indicative of the benefit that can accrue to organisations that are able to strike enduring and mutually respectful partnerships around an area of common interest:

*"It would not have been possible without the encouragement, dedication, daring spirit, and belief in the possibilities of things the volunteers had and imparted in the department that they should push forward with the project despite constraints".*

Thirdly, the data show that while international volunteers are perceived by local people to enhance the credibility of the host organisations, the fact that they come and go can over time damage the organisations' standing in the eyes of the beneficiaries, as this example from a Tanzanian host organisation demonstrates: *"The volunteers said when we get these products we will improve things in our lives, and problems of lack of electricity would be*

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<sup>13</sup> <http://ardictionary.com>

*solved. But since then, they had been quiet, never to be heard of again.” And similarly: “The volunteer who visited said that if someone wanted more information regarding solar energy and those equipments, they should go and visit the offices, and they will meet them [volunteers] there, but when some of the group members visited they were told they were not there, and they have left.”* Clearly the organisation’s reputation could be at stake if it does not put in place the mechanisms to ensure continuity of service to its beneficiaries with or without the international volunteers.

A variant on this perspective comes from beneficiaries of a Mozambique host organisation whose expectations were dashed by their experience of empty promises:

*“In 2008 there was a German lady who came here to the Quirimbas and she made lots of promises which were not fulfilled and we got angry. A volunteer, particularly white people, quickly raises expectations among the community that she/he is bringing something – a project that will employ people ... food and money coming in. At the end of the day we find that the volunteer is ‘bringing ideas’ and always they gather for meetings, trainings, etc, but with no money, food and jobs ... we do not get used to that.”*

Finally, the data suggest that while some international volunteers were able to unlock donor funding for organisations through new contacts and good fundraising skills, it is ultimately up to the host organisations to sustain the relationships with those funders.

While the prospect of having international volunteers placed for periods of six to twelve months is thus attractive to host organisations, that time passes very quickly. Organisations may find themselves in an annual cycle of inducting and training new international volunteers, a process which is of itself not cost-free, as has been noted earlier. Essentially the international volunteers represent opportunities for host organisations to amplify their human resource base, but the terms on which such engagement is based will determine the extent to which these relationships are likely to advance the goals and objectives of the host organisations.

## 8. PERCEPTIONS OF INFLUENCE

Host organisations in Tanzania and in Mozambique see themselves as having a significant influence on international volunteers. The profile of these international volunteers, most of them being at their pre-tertiary education stage, is such that they are likely to receive enormous benefits from the host organisation. As an interviewee from a Tanzania host organisation put it, *“the volunteers come without professional skills because they have just finished school and are waiting to go to university”*. Also, the fact that the host community is culturally and socially different from their own endows the experience of international volunteering with huge potential for new learning, as another Tanzania host organisation indicated:

*“... there are also many benefits to the volunteers themselves in coming to volunteer. The volunteers feel it is a rare opportunity to come abroad, they experience so much and learn so much about the world. The first hand experience they get is something they would never have gotten no matter how many books they read”*.

Host organisations have specifically singled out four areas on which they have had a positive impact on the lives of international volunteers: skills development, career choice, language proficiency and cultural learning.

### 8.1 Skills development

Host organisations in Tanzania and Mozambique perceive themselves as imparting new skills to international volunteers. Depending on the host organisation’s area of specialisation and on the activities in which international volunteers are involved, the latter acquire new technical skills or soft skills. In one host organisation in Tanzania, international volunteers were able to acquire practical skills associated with building renewable energy products: *“when they come, the office trains them on the products they have; they also train them about micro finance, and specifically about the solar energy equipment product, which is an asset leasing product”*. Such practical knowledge was highly valued by international volunteers themselves as the volunteer coordinator acknowledged: *“some have said they get invaluable practical time and experience. They have mentioned that it is expensive and not very easy to get practical opportunities in their country, and so this opportunity has proven very useful”*. One Tanzanian organisation hosts international volunteers who acquire teaching skills during the course of their experience.

As most international volunteers in the researched host organisations had just finished their secondary school and were preparing for tertiary education, they embarked on the volunteering experience without professional skills. Yet, after one year of volunteer work in the various host organisations, they exited with useful professional skills regardless of whether or not these will be utilised in their home country. For some international volunteers, the technical or soft skills they acquired become a basis for career choice.

## **8.2 Career choice**

Certain international volunteers opt for a particular career path or specific university programme thanks to their one-year volunteering experience. A few choose to pursue a university degree in the kind of activities in which they were involved in the host organisation. A focus group participant in Tanzania declared:

*“International volunteers also benefit from the experience as some of them proceed with studies and careers in specialisation that have to do with what they do as volunteers like teaching. The previous volunteer came in this school because she wanted to be a teacher and on finishing the volunteering experience, she said she is going to the university to study education”.*

The same fact was confirmed in an individual interview that emphasised the instrumental role of the voluntary teaching experience in these terms:

*“the experience they get helps them make decisions regarding their future careers. For instance, when the previous volunteer came she had desire to become a teacher, but the experience of teaching cemented on her resolve to become a teacher”.*

The catalytic role played by host organisation in bringing about this career orientation is highlighted in this statement from a staff member in a Tanzanian host organisation:

*“Last volunteering season we had a volunteer who was aspiring to be a nurse and I linked her to a hospital we have partnered with who hosts volunteers. She worked very well and after realising here you can practice as a nurse without certification, when she finished her volunteering time she registered with KCMC hospital for nursing studies. She was happy to be here.”*

It also appears that some international volunteers deliberately choose their host organisation on the basis of their prospective career paths. The volunteering experience thus helps to reinforce or change a pre-conceived career choice. An interviewee in a Tanzania host organisation put it in unambiguous terms:

*“Some international volunteers use this time to go into organisations that work in areas they are thinking of developing their careers in, and so they get a test of what exactly happens practically and it helps them make important decisions about their careers. Some have changed their plans after volunteering because they realised they have not really liked the practical aspects of the fields they are interested in, and some got a boost from their experiences.”*

Although not all international volunteers link their volunteering experience with their prospective curriculum and career preferences, these experiences seem to suggest a definite link, for many international volunteers, between their volunteer experience, their curriculum choice and their career orientation. Host organisations play a key role in bridging these otherwise separated registers. Volunteering is approached not as a disconnected moment in one’s human development cycle, but as an important bridge to an adequate tertiary education and a fulfilling career path.

### **8.3 Language**

Learning an additional language during the volunteering experience features as a key advantage which increases volunteers’ employability and career prospects. International volunteers placed in Tanzania and in Mozambique have to learn Swahili or Portuguese if they want to make a significant contribution to the host community and shape their year of service as a successful learning experience for themselves. As a result, pre-placement training and on-site orientation put a lot of emphasis on acquiring basic language proficiency. Interviews have revealed that international volunteers continue learning the lingua franca of the host community long after their placement. In the course of this learning process, the host organisation plays an important role. It is in interactions with the staff, beneficiaries and members of the community that the international volunteers improve their language skills. One respondent in Tanzania noted that international volunteers learn most of the language *“when they are here, and it is taking most of their time and effort.”* The same fact is echoed in Mozambique by a respondent who conveyed exactly the same

message: *“those coming for periods of six to nine months spend the first two to three months learning the language and then the time for dedication to the activities is short”*.

Poor local language proficiency and increased time spent in filling in this gap negatively impact on the actual achievements of volunteers. However, acquired language skills become significant assets that qualitatively improve volunteers' employability and profile once they return home. Host organisations, particularly in Tanzania, expressed awareness of their contribution to volunteers' career advancement: *“Another advantage that international volunteers have is that they come and learn for instance Swahili. They add it in their list of international languages they know. This is valuable to them in their career”*. Once more, the career prospects of international volunteers are boosted as a result of their acquisition of a new international language, whether Swahili or Portuguese, with the help of the host organisations and communities.

#### **8.4 Inter-cultural learning**

The data provided insights into what international volunteers and host organisations learn from each other, and how this learning occurs.

##### *8.4.1 What international volunteers learn*

Related to the local language learning exercise is the experience of cultural learning that international volunteers undergo thanks to the contribution of host organisations and communities. From the onset, international volunteers see their journey to Africa as an immersion into a different cultural environment. They come with eagerness to discover the peculiarity of Africa through various facets of the cultural life of the host country. Such a quest for African cultural experience was described in a focus group discussion in the following terms:

*“The volunteer also was interested in participating in activities that happened around the community. If there was a wedding, she would attend and take pictures. She liked eating traditional foods. She wanted to know how we prepare differently from how they prepare, and she tried even to drink mbege, which is a traditional drink and she found it nice. Even if there was a funeral, she would ask questions about what happens there, and she attended with some of the staff, and did learn how funerals are conducted. Like where most of the women stay and most of the men stay, how people actually spend time and days in the house that has lost a beloved one, something they do not usually do in their country”*.

There is also indication that international volunteers carry with them “a romantic view of Africa”, an essentialist view, sometimes supported by old fashioned clichés of African culture. For these outsiders, classical African culture resides in cultural manifestations such as festivals, traditional dances, arts, and other extraordinary cultural events rather than in the features of dynamic and complex urban life. These representations are of course shaped by the view of Africa propagated by European anthropologists or ethnologists as well as by European tourism agencies. One respondent in a Tanzania host organisation expressed his disapproval of this cultural outlook on Africa: *“You find volunteers just laugh to see a person swimming in the river as if it’s so traditional, backward and something strange. That is not good”*.

Whatever cultural learning that international volunteers are able to undertake happens in an ad hoc fashion. Unless host organisations coordinate a cultural orientation programme, international volunteers are left to their own devices with regards to understanding and adapting to the culture of the host community. One Tanzania host organisation justified such deficiency by what they perceive as the short duration of the volunteering experience: *“Regarding culture, volunteers normally learn few words as time is short. But they participate a lot on local festivals, cultural festivals, music performances, plays, etc.”* In the same vein, a Mozambique host organisation staff member stressed that *“due to relatively short time volunteers stay at the organisation, there is no much room for cultural exchange (intercultural learning). Intercultural learning is restricted to language and basic festive events.”*

These testimonies suggest that despite a great quest for new cultural experiences, international volunteers are likely to encounter limited immersion into the culture of the host community, particularly when ‘culture’ is defined as traditional events, singing, dancing without also being inclusive of the spectrum of modern African lifestyles in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The reduced cultural orientation is partly responsible for many instances of culturally inadequate behaviours on the part of the international volunteers or even cultural clashes with their hosts. Certain attitudes of international volunteers have appeared inadequate or simply offensive in the local context of host communities. Examples of these include issues of dress code, of intergenerational codes of conduct, and sexual behaviour. A Mozambique host organisation had this to say about the dress code of international volunteers:

*“even outside work premises – they dress too casually, especially girls wear very short dresses, or very revealing clothes, very short shorts and the like. For girls it is a problem: they can get raped or perceived as inviting illicit sexual affairs, and they might be offended. It has not happened yet, but when you add into it that they are very active in social life going to very different places, there is no guarantee what might happen.”*

However, an example of good cultural adjustment was also cited:

*“The previous volunteers had managed to cope to the local social-cultural circumstances because they eventually adapted well, changed their dress code considerably, used to wear khanga which they liked very much. So, the cultural exchange is not completely lost; it just needs enhancement to realise its full potential.”*

Cultural clash also manifests itself in the area of sexual habits as one can read in this complaint from a Tanzania host organisation:

*“Having international volunteers also can have a negative impact particularly among the youth as they alienate themselves to new cultural thinking which sometimes goes against our traditional/cultural values, therefore colliding with various segments of our society. For instance: lesbianism, kissing in public in rural areas, the dress code, etc.”*

Cultural conflict caused as a result of inappropriate intergenerational conduct was explained as follows:

*“There is a difference between our culture in Tanzania and European cultures. Most of the volunteers are above 18 and they consider themselves grownups, but in our context they are considered very young and it is easy for them to be perceived as disrespectful or stubborn when they relate to elders without regard to certain intergenerational attitudes, for instance when they fail to show the respect expected of children or youths in our context. For example, you find that in our culture, you say ‘shikamoo’ as a respectful greeting to a person older than you, and you say ‘mambo’ or ‘habari?’ to a friend, to a colleague who is your age mate or just someone you think you have no significant age difference with. ‘Mambo’ its English version is ‘hi’ and ‘habari?’ is ‘how are you? Now because they do not understand these things, they end up saying hi to everybody and at any time, and to some it becomes offensive or disrespectful, they would say something like, ‘do these children behave like this*

*to their parents or older people in their countries?’ or ‘they do not know how to respect people older than themselves and they just treat you like their peer?’”.*

All these instances of cultural tensions point to either insufficient cultural orientation or inconsiderate attitudes on the part of international volunteers.

#### *8.4.2 What host organisations learn*

The cultural learning process is not a unidirectional process. Host organisations also learn enormously from the culture of international volunteers. Intercultural learning stands as one of the positive outcomes of hosting international volunteers, as a manager of a Tanzania host organisation admitted:

*“One of the advantages of having international volunteers is that it gave them [the international volunteers] the opportunity to learn local culture and way of life and it also gave both the staff and students opportunity to learn about their culture and the way of doing things, and [was] thus a good platform for intercultural exchange.”*

There is evidence of certain cultural practices in the host organisation being challenged and sometimes forced to change as a result of the involvement of international volunteers in the organisation. In one host organisation in Tanzania, international volunteers’ involvement in sport with students showed local teachers that they could play with students without undermining the required discipline in the school. Here is how a manager of the school explains the cultural shift:

*“One of the profound things here reflecting intercultural exchange was sports with children. In the local culture and in the community, adults do not play with children. In fact, most adults do not play games and especially physical games at all. So that attitude is also ingrained in teachers, and students at this level of pre and primary school. Because of the cultural attitude, teachers were not forthcoming in playing with children. So during games time, children will just go and play by themselves, whatever game they chose. But apparently, for international volunteers, that was not the case in their culture. Playing with children appears to be very important and rewarding, and therefore they are doing that a lot and it has influenced other teachers to follow suit and are more inclined to be involved in games with children than before.”*

Time management is another area where international volunteers' culture of punctuality and time precision has led to change of practices in host organisations. Again, a Tanzania host organisation highlights the positive influence of a European cultural element:

*"We have noted that they take time very seriously. When they plan or you agree on anything, it is important that you observe time because they will be prompt. They also dedicate themselves to timely do exactly what they planned for that time. If it is eating or resting, you name it. This has been a wakeup call to the organisation, and has inspired observation of time as key in work discipline."*

Intercultural exchange also takes place through the mutual teaching of languages as international volunteers are sometimes asked by members of the host community to teach them their European language. In Mozambique the researcher noted that,

*"community members mentioned the case of a male French volunteer who learned some words in Emakwa (the language spoken in Ancuabe). They were not able to learn anything of French. However, they know how to say "good morning" and "enjoy your food" in German. They were taught by a volunteer by the name of Christine"*.

Further proof of successful intercultural exchange emerges from the accounts of several romantic relationships and even marriages between international volunteers and members of the host community. Interviews with host organisations and the community reveal that enduring relationships have been established between certain local families and former international volunteers and their families. A Mozambique focus group participant avowed: *"I do speak French fluently due to international volunteer contact and I also have a boy now living in Lyon with his mother. I lived there for two years, but I did not adapt myself and I ended up breaking up with my girlfriend"*. A focus group in a Mozambican host organisation established that *"there are cases of girls who got married with volunteers and are now living in Canada and in Belgium."* These relationships are evidence of vibrant and deep intercultural intercourse.

## **8.5 Conclusion**

In sum, there is evidence that host organisations and communities exercise huge influence on international volunteers. The fact that most of them embark on a volunteer experience at the pre-tertiary education stage makes it more likely that they will learn a great deal from

the host organisation and community. Given that many of the international volunteers located at the host organisations in this study come to do volunteering without professional skills, they acquire important technical and soft skills under the guidance of host organisation staff. The acquired skills also facilitate their career choice since prior ideas and career preferences can be reinforced or challenged. Thanks to the volunteering experience, they learn a new foreign language and culture which has a positive impact on their future employability and social profile. However, the cultural learning process is bi-directional as the host organisation and members of the host community also learn or adapt to certain cultural elements of international volunteers.

## 9. DISCUSSION

Having presented the data above, four key findings emerge, which could point to strategies for both host and sending organisations to enhance the value of the IVS experience for all stakeholders.

### 9.1. Locating IVS in the wider relationships of development, aid and trade

One of the most striking findings that emerged from the data is that relationships between host organisations and volunteers, and particularly the perceptions that host organisations bring to that relationship, profoundly shape the IVS experience. Chapter 4 provides evidence of the ways in which myths of white superiority and suspicion manifest themselves in the views of respondents across host organisations and their communities as well as in the expectations of comparison groups. This suggests that these perceptions originate not in the hosting of international volunteers, but in a wider discourse that is shared across Tanzania and Mozambique – a discourse shaped by the development history between Africa and Europe, outlined in Chapter 2.

The IVS experience shows that resilient myths of white superiority are very alive in the consciousness of host and comparison organisations as well as the communities they serve. This suggests that the historical relationships of development have shaped both perceptions of self and of other very strongly in Africa and explains why some volunteers are viewed as coming to spy on or exploit host organisations and communities – their presence resuscitates collective memories of previous exploitative relationships.

There is evidence that perceptions of white superiority are instrumentalised by the host organisations when such perceptions serve their short-term interests. For instance they use white volunteers to boost their organisational credibility in the eyes of funders and beneficiaries. While this may serve some short-term utilitarian goal, these perceptions need to be dealt with for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the notion of white European being superior to black African undermines the agency of both the organisation and the local volunteers that are connected with the organisation. The data indicate that the organisations themselves are aware of the falsity of these beliefs as well as the need to challenge them. However, the fact that these beliefs still play out so profoundly suggests how strongly and deeply they are held. Secondly, it means that international volunteers arrive in Africa unknowingly representing a history and a set of

values derived from a colonial past, compounded by current global imbalances between North and South. These may (a) complicate their ability to connect meaningfully with staff and (b) may load them with expectations from the host organisation that they are unable to meet, particularly as young and unskilled volunteers.

The situation is made more complex by the perceptions that the host organisations and their communities believe the international volunteers hold of them. On the one hand the hosts feel that international volunteers often stereotype African people as being backward, ignorant, lazy and passive. At the same time this report cites a number of instances in which hosts commented on the respect, humility and solidarity shown to them by some international volunteers. It is clear from the wider context that these volunteers would have had to work hard to counter the stereotyped perceptions which their hosts were expecting, and to establish a basis for genuinely shared interaction.

This indicates that although IVS is often perceived to be a very localised, inter-personal experience, which is often couched in these positive terms, in reality the micro-level experiences of volunteers and host organisations as well as communities cannot and must not be separated from the wider discourses and international relations of development, aid and trade. It shows how international volunteering is not simply an inter-personal relationship; it cannot be separated from its economic and political historical context. Separating the micro-level experience from the macro-level issues puts the relationship at risk of perpetuating the relationships of North/South dominance rather than challenging them.

As has been mentioned in Chapter 2, the IVS experience offers immense potential to challenge the dominant ways in which Africa is viewed both by itself and by others. The example of the volunteer who believed in the ability of a vocational training centre technician to develop innovations in the field of wind energy in Tanzania is a case that demonstrates the ways that the interpersonal relationships can shift previous notions of inferiority and superiority. There is also no doubt that international volunteers most often return to their home countries as advocates of Africa: the findings of the volunteer survey show that 85% of the returned volunteers described their service experience as 'transformational' or life-changing, one assumes for the better. In practice therefore, these expectations and perceptions are sometimes reversed through engagement. For this impact

to be stronger, however, the imbalances between host and sending organisations need to be equalised, volunteers, organisations and communities need to be better prepared, and IVS needs to be located within the broader development discourse. There is thus a need for host and sending organisations jointly to confront and challenge racial myths in the framework of the orientation and preparation of international volunteers, host organisations and host communities.

## **9.2. Organisations emerge as a critical node for development**

Despite the dominant perceptions of superiority and inferiority that manifest in this study of the IVS experience, a further striking finding is that of the agency of the organisations themselves. Both host and comparison organisations emerge as a critical node for development, especially in delivering services in the context of resource-scarce rural communities. All of these organisations have been in operation between 4 and 43 years, which suggests that despite the challenges of human resource capacity and low levels of financial resourcing, they have found various means of sustaining their operations and are relatively stable. No doubt the role that volunteers – both local and international – play in supplementing human resource capacity is a key factor in this regard. However, the resilience of these organisations must be recognised in and of itself, particularly since civil society is a critical partner for development in Africa. Although development policies in many African countries conceive of a large role played by both the state and the market (a mix between the developmental state and neoliberal politics), in fact civil society often emerges as the somewhat unrecognised, but nevertheless profound contributor to development at the grassroots level, particularly where the state’s intervention is limited – such as in rural areas (Moyo 2011). None of the organisations that participated in this study had any government support (although many did have relationships with various government departments); instead they survive on local resourcing from membership fees and volunteer efforts, and external grants. As noted by Van Blerk (2011 forthcoming) the host organisations constitute “a vital and critical response to human need in a context of poverty”.

In the context of the IVS experience, it is important to recognise the role of the host organisations, their agency, their expertise and their resilience. They are not passive recipients of aid or of international volunteers. Many are strategic in their use of international volunteers and two of the comparison organisations had stopped receiving

international volunteers while they sought to think through the role that international volunteers could play in their new strategies. What emerges in Chapter 5 therefore is how the dominant discourses of international volunteers coming to 'save' Africa (a mindset that – stated or unstated – may be prevalent both within some host communities and in the minds of volunteers) is challenged at the local level. What emerges very clearly is that the impact of international volunteers increases when they work in partnership with the host organisations and when these organisations in turn have shaped the interventions and have been responsible for sustaining them once the volunteers have left.

Host organisations are therefore critical partners in the IVS experience. The more strategic they are in their use of international volunteers, the more able they are to play a central role in the selection of the types of volunteers they require, and the more integrated international volunteers are in their planning, the more likely it is that international volunteers will have an exciting and meaningful placement. Under these circumstances the volunteers are more likely to experience the ways in which they can genuinely offer service to their host organisation and, in this way, contribute to development in resource-poor communities. This means that organisational development through serious engagement with host organisations as key partners in the IVS experience needs to be taken up as a key mechanism for strengthening the potential for IVS to play a meaningful developmental role in the African context.

IVS is often constructed as an opportunity for volunteers to provide a helping hand, to be involved in capacity building on a one-on-one basis. It is a chance for volunteers to make a personal impact, something to which many young volunteers aspire (Schwinge 2011 forthcoming). What emerges from this study is that IVS becomes a potential resource for development most profoundly where the role and expertise of the host organisation is respected and where international volunteers are positioned as *partners* in the development process.

### **9.3. IVS as a potential resource for development**

The data show that there are many examples of international volunteers contributing to the work of the organisations in meaningful ways. This demonstrates that these volunteers offer a potential resource for development through host organisations located in rural areas, and can provide an important service in the context of scarce human resource capacity. It must

be noted that organisations more often reflected on their experiences of skilled volunteers when it came to discussing the developmental role that volunteers have played, and comparison organisations expressed a desire for international volunteers to be skilled professionals. This is understandable, given the fact that these organisations often work in resource-poor rural areas where they may face difficulty attracting local staff who have qualifications and skills. In addition, some of the organisations work in specialised fields such as renewable energy and micro-finance. Many of the host organisations indicated that unskilled, young volunteers, whilst providing an extra pair of hands, nevertheless require a great deal of attention in respect of their management, orientation and training. This creates more work for the staff of the host organisations and carries with it the risk that scarce human resources within the organisation are directed away from service delivery to volunteer management – something that was not factored into the perceived “free” pair of hands. This is confirmed by the perspective of some returned volunteers who completed the volunteer survey. As has been noted in Chapter 6, a few returned volunteers commented that they felt they were a burden on the host organisation owing to the long time it took to master the local language, alternatively they felt they were not needed by the organisation (which “made up” tasks to keep them busy), or that they were a drain on host organisation resources.

What emerges from the comparison organisations is evidence of high expectations of what international volunteers might be able to offer, should they involve them. This should, however, be read in light of section 9.1 above, since many of these expectations may be rooted in the myths of white superiority and African inferiority that shape local perceptions of international volunteers. Comparing this with the actual experience of the host organisations demonstrates that in relation to expectations, the impact that young international volunteers have on organisations may be relatively limited, even though they do provide a “free pair of hands”. This points to the need for international volunteers (in partnership with sending organisations) and host organisations (in partnership with sending organisations and host communities) to be realistic about what international volunteers can offer, particularly young inexperienced volunteers. They need to place volunteers in positions that maximise their potential contribution, carefully match the volunteers with the available positions and manage volunteers well, as is discussed in Chapter 6.

Another issue that manifests in this regard is the relationship between international volunteers and local volunteers in host organisations. As has been mentioned, one component of the sustainability strategy among the host organisations is the involvement of local volunteers. There is not much evidence of international volunteers working with local volunteers; in fact, when local volunteers are viewed as part of the organisation, the evidence is that in many cases the international volunteers tended not to form close relationships with staff, as outlined in Chapter 5. However, there may be the potential to change this and simultaneously expand the impact of both types of volunteers. As is discussed in Chapters 5 and 7, the organisations note that in many ways they depend on the work of local volunteers. However, in the absence of paying local volunteers stipends, it is difficult for the organisations to secure the involvement of local volunteers for any length of time. Furthermore, in the context of resource constraints, the need to resource local volunteers through stipends becomes problematic and most organisations are negatively disposed towards the issue of making payments to local volunteers. In some cases the organisations take local volunteers for granted and don't actively value the significant role that they play. By contrast, international volunteers are fully funded and, as has been shown, are keenly sought. This sets up a tension where international volunteers may become more valued than local volunteers. What emerges from the data is that international and local volunteers can be used in complementary ways, provided they are well managed. There may be therefore be some value in thinking strategically about how local and international volunteers can work in complementary ways to fulfil different roles within the organisation. As noted in Chapter 6, the data suggest that volunteer management is one operational aspect that could be strengthened in host organisations, which would hold benefit for both local and international volunteers and would enable the organisations to use their volunteers more effectively.

International volunteers therefore have the potential to provide a key resource for development through host organisations. However, for this potential to be realised more effectively, it is important to be realistic about what the volunteers can offer, what resources they require from the host organisations, better matching of volunteers to positions, better volunteer management and strategic use of volunteers, including complementary use of local and international volunteers where appropriate.

#### **9.4. Intercultural learning**

As is discussed in Chapter 2, well managed and credible IVS experiences offer immense potential for building both bonding and bridging social capital. This is important in light of the challenges raised regarding power imbalances that persist in macro-level contexts.

The volunteer survey shows that returned volunteers were likely to demonstrate having friendships with people from other race and class groups, and to be advocates for the countries in which they served. This shows that the IVS experience certainly does contribute to challenging dominant perceptions of the other amongst volunteers.

Host organisations, however, felt that intercultural learning could be further maximised. Bearing in mind that intercultural learning and reflection may be most profound after volunteers return home, and that host organisations see what happens only during the volunteer placement, the host organisations nevertheless felt that intercultural learning was ad hoc and somewhat superficial. Despite this, the volunteer survey shows that this nevertheless sensitises volunteers to longer-term, deeper cultural insights.

That being said, intercultural learning during the placement seems to focus predominantly on language acquisition and the experience of 'tourist culture' – dances, foods and cultural traditions. The orientations that host organisations run for new international volunteers focus largely on operational issues with some content on how the local cultures differ from the European contexts. However, the data suggest that in most cases host organisations are not using the day-to-day interpersonal experiences as a basis for intercultural learning, although these are the spaces in which perhaps the most profound intercultural learning could take place. In Chapter 5 we see that in many of the organisations this space for interaction is under-utilised as there is not a great deal of association between volunteers and staff or between local and international volunteers. Volunteers are often placed in separate spaces, close to the manager's office, rather than being integrated with staff. There is greater engagement between the volunteers and community members than between staff and international volunteers. Across all the host organisations there may be a need to better inform other departments about the presence of volunteers in the organisation and promote greater communication about how they are intended to serve the organisation as a resource. In many cases staff did not know what the volunteers were there to do, and

clearly they weren't introduced to the volunteers. This fosters perceptions that the volunteers are the director's initiative rather than a resource for organisational benefit.

Chapter 7 notes that when volunteers are used more strategically and integrated into the planning of the organisations, as well as orientated to staff and perhaps to local volunteers, the spaces available for interpersonal connections are maximised. This is supported by the findings of the SAGE Net study in South Africa, which demonstrated that the international volunteers and their host organisations are more likely to have a productive experience when the volunteers are integrated into the workings of the organisations: "Organisations that are generally satisfied with volunteers' contribution both appreciate the volunteers' desire to be involved in the decision-making process and are capable of managing volunteers confidently." (Schwinge, 2011 forthcoming)

The data show that, in general, intercultural learning is viewed as happening on an individual or interpersonal level and that it focuses on norms, values and cultural mores. However, much can also be learnt from the organisational culture of the host organisations, as well as their efforts to develop their organisations. Seeing host organisations as pro-active players in the development landscape locates intercultural learning within the wider development context, in which case there is the potential that the experience produces political, economic and social learning for the volunteers, not simply personal intercultural learning. This will help the international volunteers locate themselves within that broader context as global citizens.

## **9.5 Other observations**

In addition to the key findings above, we also note the following trends in comparing the organisations in the two countries.

- The data show that all 12 organisations have a strong sense of agency see themselves as active participants in the IVS relationships. They want to be regarded as equal partners in developing the hosting relationships for international volunteers.
- By and large, the host organisations in Mozambique show a higher level of agency than the Tanzania host organisations. This may be a result of their longer experience of international volunteer involvement than their Tanzania counterparts, as well as

their relationships with particular sending organisations that emphasise mutuality and reciprocity.

- It is striking that the host organisations in Mozambique tend to emphasise the importance of achieving mutual benefit between host and sending organisation, stressing that the partnership should involve a give and take process, and that partner organisations need to learn from one another.
- Interestingly, the small sample in each country included an example of a local intermediary organisation which receives requests for international volunteers and liaises with international sending organisations to fulfil those requests. While the intermediary organisation in Mozambique was established many years ago for this purpose, its Tanzania counterpart has only recently added the volunteer-involvement role into its core business (which is in the renewable energy sector) and may over time come to play a larger role in this respect than is presently the case. The study showed that local intermediary organisations have an important role to play in recruiting and selecting international volunteers, but also need to work closely with host organisations on this. They also need to link the host organisations more closely with the sending organisations, help broker these relationships and establish the terms of engagement.
- Looking across the sectors surveyed in both countries, both host and comparison organisations were unanimous in expressing a need for skilled and strategic human resources and look to international volunteers to bring these.
- In both countries, host and comparison organisations are dependent on local volunteers. Although the organisations are keen to have international volunteers, there was no evidence of them having a dependency on international volunteers, except in the case of the Mozambique organisation whose mission is to recruit and place international volunteers. In most other cases the international volunteers were regarded as a source of added value. Given that the international volunteers cannot replace core staff, this amounts to good volunteer management practice and signals a clarity of purpose in respect of organisational sustainability.

## 10. CONCLUSION

This study explored some of the fundamental underpinnings of the international volunteering experience from the perspective of host organizations and communities. The sample focused on organisations that hosted international volunteers from Europe, although some of the organisations had hosted volunteers from other parts of the world as well.

Its central finding is that IVS occurs in the context of both the history of colonialism and the neo-colonial experience, as well as within the wider contemporary context of geopolitical power imbalances between North and South. This points to the risk that the IVS experience may be perceived in host countries as perpetuating such power imbalances unless cogent steps are taken to re-craft working relationships between host and sending organizations.

The study also yields important findings about the potential of IVS to contribute to development. One of the most significant issues here relates to the relationship between IVS and the organisational development of the hosts in which they serve. The strengthening of a multiplicity of civil society organizations (community-based, non-governmental and private sector) is important not only to deliver much-needed services for poverty alleviation, but as a critical factor in creating a flourish environment for public participation. The organisations surveyed in this study may in some cases operate on a survivalist basis, but they embody a tenacious commitment to improving the lives of their communities. As noted in this report, their resilience needs to be admired, respected and supported. The organisations and their communities in the two host countries need to become strong actors, making it possible for each country to take its rightful place in an increasingly integrated global world.

By recognising the centrality of host organisations as catalysts for development, IVS can be repositioned more clearly in support of organisational development, rather than as a largely interpersonal 'helping hand' experience. Ideally host organisations need to become more forthcoming in expressing their needs for the strategic human resources they require to strengthen their operations, and participate actively in the processes that precede the arrival of international volunteers.

Related to this is the potential of IVS to raise the profile of local volunteering as a critical aspect of public participation for development and democracy. The study points unequivocally to the central role that local volunteers play in sustaining grassroots organisations. In view of the supply-driven nature of international voluntary service in SADC

countries, it becomes important to structure relationships between international and local volunteers in ways that provide room for reciprocal learning, and increase the authenticity of the volunteer experience. Improving the management of local volunteers and their international counterparts is one of the factors that can enhance the quality of the contribution they all make to poverty alleviation and development.

However, in the face of high levels of unemployment in SADC countries, particularly among youth, the supply-driven nature of IVS has already drawn criticism from some national states who regard such programmes as providing opportunities for privileged young people from northern countries at the expense of local youth who are unable to gain employment. Volunteering is as important for local people as it is for international volunteers. Should IVS be structured more tightly in terms of the needs of host organisations and include opportunities for reciprocity and mutual learning through closer interaction with local staff and volunteers, international volunteers would gain deeper insight into the realities of contemporary African life. Opportunities are also needed for local and international volunteers to engage in joint problem-solving and reflection about how power imbalances between first and third world countries need to be resolved.

Ultimately the effectiveness of international volunteers working towards change in their home countries through development education or advocacy for the transformation of international trade and aid relations will be the litmus test of their impact on the development of the host organisations and communities in which they have served.

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## **APPENDIX 1: Information about organisations surveyed**

### **TANZANIA ORGANISATIONS**

#### **HOLY CHILDHOOD PRE- AND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Holy Childhood is an English medium pre- and primary school located in Matala village in the rural district of Moshi. The community of Matala village is poor since almost three quarters of the people depend on agriculture and droughts are common. Holy Childhood was established in January 2000 by the Evangelizing Sisters of Mary (Catholic nuns) who are dedicated to creating a better world for all and to supporting all children in need, especially those who live in the surrounding village. The 'Evangelizing Sisters of Mary' started evangelist work in the community and soon realised that the community was very poor and the quality of education was very low. They also realised that students who finished primary school rarely progressed to secondary or tertiary education, and that many young girls fell into prostitution. It was on those grounds that they endeavoured to provide affordable quality education for local children.

Initially, Holy Childhood operated as a nursery school with 60 children. By 2009 the number of children in the nursery school had risen to 250. In 2005 the community and the school administration began discussions on the need to expand the school into a primary school. In order to raise funds to establish a primary school, the nuns, parents and students cultivated, harvested and sold vegetables at the local market. In January 2007, the primary school began with 80 pupils. In 2008, 80 new pupils were accepted and 80 more in 2009. At the time of the research the school was already in its fourth year of operation and had students up to standard four. The school has 12 teachers: five for pre-primary children and seven for primary school children. At present there are six classrooms, but the aim is to have 18 classrooms.

The objective of the school is to bring change in the local rural community by providing quality education to children who are in turn expected to help their parents and their community in general. Based on its Christian values, the school also aims to provide children with the necessary moral foundation and upbringing to ensure that they become responsible adults. The Matala community appreciates the efforts of the school and talk

about it as being distinctive by providing quality education in English in such a deep rural environment.

School fees remain the primary source of revenue for the school. The garden project and farm animals also help to sustain the programmes at the school. In 2009 and 2010, the school received a grant from Elimu Africa in order to purchase textbooks, computer equipments, worktables, chairs, bookshelves and textbooks. Holy Childhood does not have any other partners it works with except for the *weltwärts* programme, which is sending volunteers to the school. There is no organisation, international or local, with which they have an established or sustainable partnership. As a result, the school normally prepares proposals to try and secure some funding for the purchase of learning materials like books or the construction of school buildings. Most of the proposals fail to realise support, but there are a few ad hoc well-wishers who for various reasons (particularly those whose children are studying there or from the goodness of their heart) make donations such as text books, a lorry of sand for construction of buildings, some bricks, or buy a piece of furniture.

The school normally hosts one international volunteer from the *weltwärts* programme per season. These international volunteers are young, with an average age of 21, and inexperienced with only a high school degree. The international volunteers are mostly involved in manual activities such as crop harvesting and animal husbandry on the farm. They teach children, train them how to use computers and facilitate sports and music sessions. The school does not currently engage local volunteers. There are however, two categories that serve in the school without pay. Firstly, there are 3 nuns (including the principal) who are part of the teaching staff who do not receive a salary but instead get an allowance from the church to sustain their livelihoods. Their primary motivation is to serve for the Kingdom of God and not financial rewards from work. There are also parents who cannot afford to pay the full amount of school fees for their children. They therefore work on the school farm in exchange for the outstanding school fees balance. There are no community members who voluntarily commit to work for the school without some financial rewards. When they work, they are reported to demand payment.

### **TUJIJENGE MICRO-FINANCE LTD**

Tujijenge is a microfinance institution operating under the auspices of Tujijenge Africa, a consultancy firm in microfinance found by six microfinance experts in 2006. Tujijenge Africa

also owns Tujijenge Tanzania. Originally it started as an entity known as Small Enterprise Foundation (SEF), a not-for-profit organisation established as a pro-poor microfinance institution working towards the eradication of poverty by creating a supportive environment where credit and savings services foster sustainable income generation, job creation and social empowerment. Following challenges and dissatisfaction with the organisation, SEF funders consulted Tujijenge Africa to evaluate SEF operations and activities. The outcome resulted in SEF management losing the confidence of its funders, and after consultation with Tujijenge Africa, it was agreed that Tujijenge Africa would register a separate company. In 2008 Tujijenge Microfinance was born and the SEF operations were incorporated under the new company.

Tujijenge Microfinance Ltd. is a company that specialises in providing microfinance services including credit, savings, life and medical insurance. The target clients are people who have difficulty accessing bank loans. The organisation's primary products are therefore loans, and asset leasing of solar equipments for household and other small scale use. Clients access loans in groups of 20 to 40 members and the guarantee each other on loan repayment. Members thus have to know each other, and be sure that they can influence one another to timely pay the loan. Team members meet regularly and are expected to pay back the loans in instalments with some interest until they complete their payments on the loan.

The company has micro-credit operations in urban and rural areas around Tanzania and has been expanding to some other countries like Uganda.

Tujijenge headquarters has relations with local and international financial institutions and donor agencies. These are core financiers of its business. Information about the contributors and financial amounts are withheld from branch managers and employees; however it is generally understood that the headquarters gets soft loans and grants to support its business. The organisation also has a relationship also with Tanzania Renewable Energy Association (TAREA) formerly known as Tanzania Solar Energy Association (TASEA). TASEA used to concentrate on solar energy technology and equipments, but now encompasses the whole realm of renewable energy. The association is based on Tujijenge leasing solar energy products. The relationship includes an agreement on getting the solar equipments that are leased to clients, training on solar energy which sometimes TAREA organises, and involving international volunteers, which TAREA coordinates for the sending organisation.

By the time of the interviews, Tujjenge had only hosted two groups of international volunteers within the different international volunteering seasons. The international volunteers are mostly involved in promotions of solar products in the village. Of the four volunteers that the organisation has received so far, only one is reported as having had some professional experience in banking. Most of the other volunteers are young and inexperienced. Local volunteering at the company occurs through group leaders who coordinate groups of clients ensuring the smooth functioning of the group and the repayment of loans, but do not receive a salary.

### **MAFINGA LUTHERAN VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE**

Mafinga Lutheran Vocational Training Centre (MLVTC) is a registered vocational skills training centre started by and operating under the auspices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania- Southern Diocese. The Centre's establishment was inspired by the Church's recognition that there are so many young people who fail to get employment or to be self-employed because of a lack of professional skills: after finishing primary or secondary school, many young people either fail academically or lack the resources to continue with further education. In 1967 the Centre was thus established to provide these youth with an opportunity to train in vocational skills and to prepare them to either find jobs or to employ themselves.

Students undergo some vocational training for two years in the Centre and qualify at certificate level. The areas of specialisation that students can be trained in include: motor vehicle mechanics, auto-electricity and driving; domestic and industrial electrical installation; tailoring; brick production and laying; carpentry; renewable energy; computer applications.

The Centre is also involved in the production of various products and provides expert services to the community. For instance, in renewable energy, a department that has been there for almost 3 years now, they assemble solar energy facilities and sell to clients; they also provide installation and other services of setting up biogas system to clients. The Centre therefore has two primary objectives: to train students in vocational skills and to use their respective expertise; and to produce products as well as provide relevant service to the community.

At the moment the Centre does not have any relationship with the private sector except as the clients of its services or products, since each department either provides commercial services or specialised commercial products . However, the Centre is currently in the initial stages of discussion with a businessman in renewable energy sector and there is potential for a mutually beneficial partnership between the two parties.

The Centre also has relationships with a number of local as well as international entities. Like Tujijenge (mentioned previously), MLVTC works with TAREA in relation to renewable energy. The partnership with TAREA enables the centre to host international volunteers and is also beneficial in terms of knowledge building on renewable energy. MLVTC also has a relationship with Rural Energy Foundation (REF), which works to promote access to and use of solar energy technology in rural areas. They have an informal working relationship, where they consult each other on various technical issues and give each other helpful information on renewable energy. MLVTC also engages with 'Umeme Jua'an, an organisation that deals with solar energy, around the exchange and loaning of solar energy related materials. The centre has a partnership with an international NGO based in German known as the North-South Institute (NSI) and which has been the principal supporter of the renewable energy department in the centre. There are also donors who help the community through the centre. For instance they pay school fees for some students and in this way help to strengthen the education level of children in the community.

Pertaining to the issue of volunteering, the Centre has been hosting two international volunteers each year for the past five years. All of the volunteers have been placed in the Renewable Energy Department and are usually involved in producing, installing, servicing and marketing solar energy equipment at MLVTC. Usually the international volunteers that the Centre receives are young (aged 18 to 22 years) and inexperienced. . The Centre does not currently engage local volunteers and has not worked with them in the past. The Centre has, however, offered three local students the opportunity to spend 6 months after their studies at the Centre for further training without pay.

#### **MWIKI INTEGRITY PRE- AND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Mwika School started as a kindergarten in 1996 and operated under that capacity until 2008 when a primary school was added as a continuation to the kindergarten. It is an English medium school established to serve the children of Mwika, which is a very rural setting, but

in particular to provide quality education for orphans and vulnerable children. The School is owned by the Hope Foundation, a non-governmental organisation inspired by the Jordan Ministry, which is a Christian church under the auspices of Pentecostal Churches of Tanzania. The Hope Foundation ministers and provides hope and material support to the destitute, widows, widowers, orphans and HIV/AIDS victims in Mwika, Marangu. The Hope Foundation seeks to improve the lot of children in the community by providing quality education at a subsidised and affordable cost.

The school is quite new, with 93 students enrolled, and has up to standard two classes at the moment. In addition to providing a formal education, it also nurtures young minds in Christian values, inculcates attitudes of tolerance and perseverance, and fosters a strong work ethic in the children. The children are also prepared to be role models in the community and in their families.

The School has been working with Imara Ministry Foundation based in Arusha Tanzania, which seeks to build the capacity of churches in Tanzania to realize the goals of their particular ministries. Imara is supported by an organisation known as School Building by the Church (SBC) of Australia. The Foundation helped to secure support for the school from the Mission OZ and Australia Vineyard Christian Fellowship. The donors agreed to support the school for five years, and to fund the construction of better classrooms, school fees for children, and food for the orphanage. Up to now they have built two classes for the School and have been paying school fees for 23 students out of 90 registered children. The children get porridge in the morning, lunch in the afternoon and some children are also provided with school uniforms and school materials. It is, however, unfortunate that the relationship between Hope Foundation and Imara Foundation has become strained recently and the tensions were still reverberating during the fieldwork for this report.

To date the school has not hosted international volunteers, but is keen to involve international volunteers. The only reason why the school has not hosted international volunteers up to now is because they have no formal access or link to them. However, once, tourists passing through the area offered their services to the School after seeing the challenges facing children in the community. The school agreed and the international tourists helped to build separate sleeping dormitories for boys and girls within the orphanage. If given the chance, the administration at the school would like to establish

formal relationships with professional volunteers with skills such as project management, fundraising, education, counselling and child development skills. With regards to local volunteering, most of the teachers at the school serve on a voluntary basis and are paid stipends as opposed to salaries. As a result, the school suffers from a high turnover rate among its staff and faces challenges with retaining qualified staff. It is estimated that only 4 per cent of the School's staff are certified teachers.

### **PRIDE MICROFINANCE LTD**

PRIDE is an acronym for Promotion of Rural Initiative and Development Enterprises. PRIDE started its operation in 1994. Its primary product and objective is to give loans to small entrepreneurs and business people who otherwise would be unable to access a loan. The initial idea was to build financial and economic capacity to individuals, mainly women businessmen to access loans from banks independently. However, this has proved to be a challenge since some of the clients even after growing their business, wanted to continue to access loans through PRIDE.

In addition to assisting its clients to access loans, the company trains its clients in the community on how to manage a loan. This training focuses on issues such as loan conditions, repayment plan, saving strategies, proper techniques of running and managing a business and financial discipline. The training is provided for three important reasons. Firstly to ensure that clients are able to repay the loans. Secondly to ensure that the loans can help community businesses grow and stabilise. Lastly to ensure that loans and community businesses become lucrative in order to improve the lives of community members and also to enable to afford different costs of living and their various responsibilities.

Thus far, the organisation's clients have mostly been women. A manager at the organisation reported that women constitute 75 per cent of their client base. However, in some branches like in Kyela, there are more male clients than women. Over the past two years there has been a downturn in the organisation's coverage, but it appears that PRIDE and micro-finance institutions in the country have only managed to reach out to about 10 per cent of potential clients in the whole country. There is still a lot to be done in terms of customer acquisition.

The organisation does not have many relationships outside its client base. The primary relationship it has is with banks such as NMB, City Bank and Barclays. Pride gets loans from

these banks on behalf of its clients, and then repays these loans with interest. PRIDE has to ensure it recovers the loans from its clients to maintain its relationships with the banks. As a result, the clients may have to pay higher interest and adhere to tougher conditions than they would have if they were dealing with the bank directly.

PRIDE also has a relationship with IFAD through its Rural Financial Services Programme. In this strategic partnership, PRIDE manages the finances for the RFSP. It also ensures that it recovers the loans and secure interests so that seed money can grow and reach more beneficiaries. The seed money is used to meet the administrative costs of the organisation in managing that fund and to realize a modest return. The government has allocated some money to the organisation from its Kikwete's Fund, which was set up to promote entrepreneurship. PRIDE did get some of those funds but only in a few regions -- Arusha and Kagera

PRIDE has never had international volunteers mainly because it does not have the links or the understanding to initiate the process. The organisation would love to involve mature international volunteers with skills entrepreneurship, forecasting and research. The closest to what can be considered local volunteering within the organisation involves the services of group leaders of MEC product. Clients are involved in the administration of the programme through elected leadership. These leaders do not have any remuneration from the organisation and therefore work voluntarily. The leaders coordinate group meetings and ensure that co-peers do not default on loan payments.

### **TUMAINI VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE**

Tumaini Vocational Training Centre was started in 1990 by Sr. Ceny San Padro, a Filipino citizen. She ran the Centre from 1990 until 2004 before retiring to the Philippines leaving the Centre under the care and management of the local management team she had developed. Originally, the Centre was set up to help young mothers get an education or vocational training, because at the time girls who got pregnant while still in school were expelled. In other words the motivation of starting the Centre was a sad recognition that many young girls who got pregnant and become young mothers whilst became social outcasts and had their future compromised. Today, the Centre welcomes any young girls who become accidentally pregnant and who need help. The intention of Centre is to help those who have not attended school at all and those who dropped out before completing primary education,

to continue with their education through stage seven, which is equivalent to standard seven or regular primary education. Those who dropped out before completing their secondary education are helped to complete Form Four, which is the apex of secondary education at ordinary level.

Given the challenges that continue to face these girls after completing their secondary education, the Centre started a two-year vocational training programme to help these girls get the skills they need to support themselves and their children. Some of the vocational skills they are trained in include computer skills, cookery, weaving, knitting and tailoring. They are also taught mathematics and English and receive counselling support. This holistic approach helps the girls to develop skills, while also empowering them to believe in themselves and to take charge of their futures.

The Centre also runs a nursery school. The initial aim was to help the girls concentrate on their studies while their children are also cared for freely. They had however opened the nursery school to other people who have to pay, and at the moment they have 60 children who pay. In addition to this income, the Centre sells various products made by graduates to sustain itself. After completing the vocational training, some graduates also contribute Tshs. 4000 a month to the centre as a contribution to its activities. The centre is designing and making traditional things, and there is a market for these items among foreign tourists.

Despite their efforts to generate income, there is not sufficient funding to pay staff regular salaries. Thus the Centre has two kinds of staff working there; temporary staff and permanent staff. Temporary staff members are usually paid on an hourly basis for the classes they teach. Permanent staff includes teaching staff and group members who make things for selling in the centre. Group members are not paid, but receive an income from selling their work. In that situation, all of the permanent staff more or less work on a volunteering basis. They are willing to do this because most of them have experienced what the girls in the Centre are experiencing and are committed to helping the girls.

The Centre has never hosted an international volunteer before. The only reason they do not have volunteers at the moment is because they do not know how to get them. If presented with the opportunity, the Centre would gladly host international volunteers and is particularly interested in hosting mature and professional international volunteers with skills in computers, tailoring, weaving, knitting, cookery, fundraising and counselling.

The Centre is not supported by any donors internationally or locally. They have never had the opportunity to work with the government. The Centre only has a few operational and non-financial partnerships with a few local organisations. For example, it works closely with the Iringa Development of Youth, Disabled and Children Care (IDYDC,), and organisation that works with street children in Iringa. They have a working relationship because some of the girls that come into their centre are from IDYDC. They also share experiences and consult each other on various cases they encounter and might have to find solutions for. They also work with UMATI (Chama cha Uzazi na Malezi Bora Tanzania), an autonomous not-for-profit, non-political voluntary national NGO providing Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) education, information and services in Tanzania. Lastly, they also work with Alfa Dancing Group, which teaches the girls traditional dances, for exercises but also for entertainment.

## **MOZAMBIQUE ORGANISATIONS**

### **AJUDE**

AJUDE (Associação Juvenil Para o Desenvolvimento do Voluntariado em Moçambique) is a non-profit organisation which brings together young Mozambicans regardless of race, sex, religion, tribe or level of education. The idea of creating AJUDE dates back to 1993. The organisation aims to:

- promote volunteer activities for young people in their spare time and holidays;
- promote community development and encourage participation of community members in activities for their own benefit;
- promote exchange of youth volunteers in the different regions of Mozambique, of Africa and the rest of the world;
- send young Mozambican volunteers to participate in voluntary work in other countries;
- create opportunities to exchange experiences between youth from different parts of the country and the rest of the world;
- assist with community development;
- promote international understanding through voluntary services;
- enable young people to encounter and understand different cultures;
- encourage the concept of voluntary services as a force in search for peace equality, democracy and international understanding;
- provide opportunities for the people of Mozambique to become aware of international issues.

Through the use of volunteers, AJUDE engages in different community services. It does construction work in remote rural villages, nature conservation work and environmental

education, restoration of historical monuments, bricks mounding, health and Aids awareness campaigns, sanitation projects such as digging water wells and erecting Blair toilets. In some cases communities may ask AJUDE to perform other specific tasks beyond the scope of the agreement. AJUDE is also an intermediary organisation which works with international volunteer sending organisations to place international volunteers in local organisations in Mozambique.

AJUDE has a relationship with state entities such as the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Women and Social Action, Ministry of Labour, National AIDS Council, National Directorate of Youth and the Municipal Council. However, government does not provide any financial support to AJUDE. It also has sound relationships with other civil society organisations in the country. AJUDE has developed relationships with international organisations such the *CYE*, *VSO*, *UNV*, UNICEF, Skillshare. Sometimes, however AJUDE encounters some obstacles to its work from state entities. For example, AJUDE submitted a request to the National Directorate of Migration in order to facilitate the DIRE (Document of Identification and Residence for Foreigners) for international volunteers taking into account that the focus of AJUDE is to host this category of foreign nationals. At the time the request was unsuccessful, but the cost of a DIRE has subsequently been reduced from USD850 to USD500.

Regarding the issue of local volunteering, last year, AJUDE did not receive local volunteers since it is currently drafting a new five year strategic plan which will include new projects and activities. The organisation's activities are all centred on international volunteers. Without international volunteers, the organisation will be greatly strained. The organisation receives international volunteers and places them in different organisations and districts around Mozambique. There are some international volunteers who remain with AJUDE especially at the head office.

## **KULIMA**

Kulima is a non-governmental organisation that was started in 1984. It is devoted to integrated socio-economic development in rural areas throughout Mozambique. The term Kulima is very common in Bantu languages, meaning "to plough" or "to till". The term is directly related to Kulima's history, and the relationships between the land and the livelihoods of rural communities. Kulima was created during the Mozambican civil war and

came into effect as a joint cooperation with Bioforce, a French non-governmental organisation. Initially the objectives of the organisation were around supporting refugees, improving living conditions and providing aid in the resettlement process. In 1990, it was registered by the Ministry of Co-operation as a national NGO and in 1995 was given jurisdiction to operate officially throughout Mozambique. During its early establishment, Kulima's operations were restricted to the rural areas of Maputo, Inhambane and Sofala provinces. Since 1990, it started to expand into other provinces and setting up offices throughout the country. It is now represented in 10 provinces within the country, with 70 permanent staff members and on average 350 technicians hired to carry out specific project activities. The organisation's staff is mainly Mozambican nationals with university or college qualifications.

As part of its mission, Kulima strives to improve the welfare of poor communities in Mozambique and fights against all obstacles which increase the levels of poverty within these communities. It does this through a set of integrated activities that promote productivity in agriculture and marketing of products, promotion of microfinance programs in rural areas, sustainable use of water, promotion of environmental sanitation, health and education for all, proper training of technicians for the different areas of action, the promotion of sectors of women of the elderly, the youth and children, always appreciating the culture of peace, with actions based on human rights and good governance.

The organisation is committed to rural development and income generation, emergency support, adult and civil education, health and HIV/AIDS, gender issues, microfinance, environmental and many other programmes catering for the vulnerable groups in the society. Beyond this Kulima also promotes agriculture in the communities where it works.

Due to its mission, Kulima has established sound relationships with the government institutions in Mozambique as well as in France and Spain. The relationship covers projects in agriculture sector and microfinance through out the whole of Mozambique. Besides the relationship with the government, Kulima often works with or receives funding from partners and donors including foreign governments, international and national NGOs, and national government agencies.

Due to the intensity of projects carried out by Kulima, the organisation engages the services of both local and international volunteers. The volunteers engage in various projects that

range from HIV/AIDS campaigns, microfinance and agriculture to environmental conservation. The average age of international volunteers at Kulima is 25 years. The organisation receives international volunteers from different programmes and countries. Some of the international volunteers that the organisation receives have volunteering and professional experience, although others do not have work experience.

## **RENSIDA**

RENSIDA is a National Network of Associations of People Living with HIV / AIDS (PLWHA). It was established in May 2002, to account for the lack of coordination of national activities aimed at improving quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS, as well as to pressure for government accountability.

The vision of the organisation is to create a Mozambique without a stigma of people living with HIV/ AIDS, where all human rights are respected, and where RENSI DA has a strong role in advocacy of the interests of people living with HIV/AIDS. The organisation's mission is to protect the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS. RENSI DA aims at coordinating actions to strengthen the capacities of associations of people living with HIV / AIDS.

Currently the organisation has 29 members nationwide. The creation of the network was welcomed by the various entities of the Mozambican government, representatives of diplomatic corps accredited to Mozambique, UN agencies, as well as NGOs and individuals. The member associations, in most cases, develop projects to mitigate the impact of HIV / AIDS, such as visits and home care, orphanage care, and offer counselling services to the community and also form groups for dynamic interaction between HIV-positive people. Other activities undertaken by RENSI DA include efforts to advance of the rights of PLWHA across the country, training courses and seminars, campaigns against discrimination and stigmatization of people living with HIV/AIDS.

The organisation also takes an active role in disaster preparedness and prevention, treatment and care in the context of HIV/AIDS within Mozambique. RENSI DA enjoys a good relationship with state entities such as the Ministry of Health and the National Council of Combating HIV/AIDS (NCCS). It is also linked to 34 other civil organisations and non-governmental organisations working on issues related to HIV/AIDS.

With regards to the issue of volunteering, RENSIDA hosts between 3-4 international volunteers and 8 local volunteers depending on the specific programmes. Most of the volunteers work on administration, strategic planning and advocacy.

## **ACOORD**

Association for Cooperation and Development (ACCORD) is an organisation engaging in areas of HIV/AIDS, youth skills programmes, food security and intercultural activities. It was formed by young people in 1998. The organisation started in Maputo but to date, it has branches in Inhambane, Gaza, Manica, Sofala and Niassa. Currently ACOORD has more than 100 members working either on a full time basis or on volunteering terms.

ACOORD's vision is to "continue to undertake efforts at district level and urban centres in order to influence significant changes in community life enabling access to health, schooling, wellbeing, and have their rights safeguarded." Its mission is "to carry out activities that support and increase the efforts being undertaken by the government and other social actors to achieve the MDG's with a special focus on eradicating hunger and absolute poverty, increasing the participation of youth in initiatives of cooperation and development." In order to complement the vision and mission, the organisation articulated the following critical objectives:

- To stimulate processes of education for development, promoting consciousness and social engagement in order to reduce North South imbalances;
- To stimulate cultural dialogue, supporting and promoting international and national interchanges
- To support and spread initiatives and experiences of cooperation
- To contribute for creation of consciousness of international solidarity
- To promote education actions and preventive training at community level for fighting against HIV/AIDS as well as other diseases
- To create through juvenile tourism a sustainable socio-economic development of the country

ACOORD has established a strong relationship with government institutions such as the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the National Council for Fighting HIV/AIDS. This relationship is focused on programmes carried out by ACOORD in areas of HIV/AIDS and youth skills programmes. On the other hand, ACOORD has relationship with civil society organisations such as FDC (Community Development Foundation), and several community-based organisations. It partners with UN agencies such as UNICEF and UNESCO, as well as US

government agency the USAID. There is no record of any involvement with the private sector.

ACCOORD engages volunteers in its activities. In October 2010, the organisation had 22 local volunteers serving in the provinces of Inhambane, Maputo, Gaza, Niassa, and Nampula. In the past (until February 2009), ACCOORD used to rely on the services of International volunteers. International volunteers were useful in fundraising and structuring networks with funding agencies. One international volunteer, who served at the organisation last year and was from Germany, was praised for developing a number of administrative frameworks as well as accurate reporting templates and several fundraising projects. The international volunteer contributed immensely to the current support that the organisation is receiving from USAID. The organisation provisionally halted the engagement of international volunteers because of its restructuring process that is currently underway.

#### **FOCADE–AMA**

FOCADE–AMA (Associação de Meio Ambiente) is a Mozambican organisation involved in environmental conservation and HIV/AIDS and Malaria Prevention programmes. These two programmes are currently running in the Quirimbas area where the staff does campaigns on Malaria and HIV/AIDS prevention. They distribute mosquito nets and condoms.

FOCADE-AMA has relationships with several CBOs at the provincial level, including the provincial representation of the National AIDS Council, which supports the organisation with condoms and other materials for awareness campaigns. Regarding the issue of partnerships, the organisation's relationship with other non-governmental organisations, private sector and international organisations is weak.

The organisation does not host international volunteers, but would love to have them on board. The organisation believes that having international volunteers will help them secure funds from donor agencies. They also believe that international volunteers can help them with the required international publicity. Currently the organisation is making use of local volunteering. Local volunteers are involved in two programmes within the Quirimbas area namely: environmental conservation and HIV/AIDS and Malaria prevention.

## **KINDLIMUKA**

Kindlimuka is a Mozambican membership association non-governmental organisation officially registered in 1998. The organisation was established to assist People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWAs) and their families. The total membership currently stands at 280, with more than 150 AIDS orphans also benefiting from the association. PLWAs form the majority membership whilst the remainder consists of people who are sympathetic but not necessarily positive themselves.

The programmes and activities of Kindlimuka range from directly and materially assisting PLWAs and their families, providing food and education assistance for orphans, funeral assistance to the families of the deceased, home visits and counselling, assistance to PLWAs to claim their right as workers living with HIV/AIDS, income generating projects and networking for lobbying the National Assembly and government. Kindlimuka plans to network with similar organisations in South Africa in an effort to influence the national government to make medication more accessible and affordable to its members and other PLWAs. HIV prevention within the local communities is another significant task that Kindlimuka envisions. The organisation is involved in raising awareness in the society about the dangers of infection with HIV / AIDS as well as its prevention. In short the organisation's six programme areas can be summarised as follows; Prevention, Counselling, Lobby and Advocacy, Home Based Care, Orphaned and Vulnerable Children support and income generating activities. Out of the total membership, at least 57 are directly involved in the various programmes.

Kindlimuka's activities are mainly targeted at the poorer sections of Maputo and the surrounding areas while the limited resources are directed towards providing practical assistance at community level. At least 350 orphaned and vulnerable children have since directly benefited from Kindlimuka's OVC support scheme while about 4130 people have also directly benefited from the organisation's home based care and counselling programme.

Kindlimuka enjoys good relationships with state entities such as the Ministry of Health and the National AIDS Council. It has strong ties with many donor organisations and United Nations agencies such as OXFAM International, WFP (World Food Programme), SAT (Southern Africa Trust), Save the Children, USAID, ACTION AID, UNDP and UNAIDS.

Kindlimuka has worked with both international and local volunteers. The organisation hosted international volunteers for about three years, but over the past two years it has stopped receiving them. The organisation is however looking forward to resuming their engagement with international volunteers once it is done with the ongoing reflections and planning of new programmes and activities. The organisation would want to involve professional volunteers with experience in medicine, psychology, social work, nursery and many of those other relevant fields. With regards to local volunteering, local volunteers are the epicentre of the organisation. They visit patients doing counselling and providing treatment. The home based care programmes rely extensively on the efforts of these local volunteers

## APPENDIX 2: Results from volunteer survey

### International Service Perspectives from *weltwärts* and ICYE Volunteers

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--Draft--

## International Service Perspectives from *weltwärts* and ICYE Volunteers

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## Background

This research looks at a variety of outcome areas on international volunteers serving with the *weltwärts* and ICYE volunteer sending-programs. Findings from this report fall into three general categories. The first category explores differences between prospective volunteers and those who returned from international service. Differences in the following outcomes are explored: international social capital, open-mindedness, international understanding, intercultural relations, life plans, civic activism, community engagement, media attentiveness, and financial contributions. The definitions and discussions of these concepts are provided below, and are explored in greater detail in other sources.<sup>14</sup> This report also examines differences in these outcomes between the *weltwärts* and ICYE volunteer-sending programs.

Volunteers also provided their perspectives on how international service affected host-communities. Returned volunteers rated their perspectives on the accountability, reciprocity, and the equity of their service placement. In addition, they rated whether activities matched local priorities, and whether the community requested and wanted their services. Volunteers also assessed their effectiveness across a variety of activity areas, from caring for children to influencing public sector reform. Finally, volunteers described whether they made a lasting contribution to community members, along with what these contributions might be. The outcomes assessed include skills transfers, money or other resources, or even possible problems they may have triggered in host communities.

## Conceptual Definitions

*International social capital* measures how frequently respondents communicate with their personal and organizational contacts that live in other countries. It further assesses whether respondents use these contacts to link people or organizations to useful resources and to advocate for issues. According to previous studies of volunteers serving with other programs, volunteers have used these contacts to coordinate humanitarian aid projects, exchange opportunities, research trips, internships, or return trips to the host country.<sup>15</sup> These contacts may also be used to facilitate future employment opportunities or to leverage resources for host communities.

*Open-mindedness* measures one's capacity to look at situations from multiple perspectives, to be flexible in their thinking and ideas, and to see various sides of a disagreement. Open-mindedness is a willingness to try new things, to consider new facts, and to change views based on consideration of these facts.<sup>16</sup> The open-mindedness concept is often associated with concepts of tolerance, peace, acceptance of diversity, and reduction of stereotypes and prejudice.<sup>17</sup>

*International understanding* measures how much people think about problems of nations outside their own as well as how these problems might be solved. It specifically assesses their understanding of issues related to global poverty and economic development. Previous studies of returned

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<sup>14</sup> Lough, B. J., McBride, A. M. & Sherraden, M. S. Measuring volunteer outcomes: Development of the International Volunteer Impacts Survey. (Center for Social Development, Washington University, St Louis, MO, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Lough, B. J., McBride, A. M. & Sherraden, M. S. Perceived effects of international volunteering: Reports from alumni. (Center for Social Development, Washington University, St Louis, MO, 2009).

<sup>16</sup> Hare, W. (1985). *In defence of open-mindedness*. Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's Press.

<sup>17</sup> Blommaert, J., & Verschueren, J. (1998). *Debating diversity: Analysing the discourse of tolerance*. London: Routledge.

international volunteers indicate that young people gain an enhanced understanding of other countries, minority issues, immigration, and inequality, as well as an enhanced global perspective overall.<sup>18</sup>

*Intercultural relations* measures one's relationships with people of other cultural, ethnic, or racial backgrounds, including their interest in developing relationships with people from different cultures.<sup>19</sup> Often, volunteers are living outside of their country and culture for the first time, possibly learning another language and interacting with people who are very different from themselves. Previous research suggests that international volunteers who interact with people who are different may increase their interest in and understanding of, other cultures.<sup>20</sup>

*International life plans* addresses a person's desire to work in a career related to international or social and economic development. International service often provides opportunities to broaden horizons and explore career directions. Previous research indicates that international service may lead to educational and/or occupational changes toward international careers.<sup>21</sup>

*Civic activism* focuses primarily on the political processes of civic engagement. It includes boycotting, petitioning, attending political meetings, discussing politics, and contacting others to promote an issue.<sup>22</sup> Civic activism is considered an important component of an active and inclusive democracy, social justice and socioeconomic equality, and overall civic health.<sup>23</sup>

*Community engagement* focuses on non-political engagement, including local involvement and participation in communities. In order for people to make a positive impact on society, they must learn the importance of engaging in local community activities such as volunteering and participating in local groups, clubs, and organizations.

*Media attentiveness* is a straightforward concept measuring how frequently respondents keep informed about local and international news. The concept of *financial contributions* is also clear-cut, measuring how often respondents contribute money to local nonprofits or national organizations.

## **Methodology**

### *Research Design*

Data for this report are taken from a survey administered by Volunteer and Service Enquiry of South Africa (VOSESA). VOSESA administered an adapted version of the Center for Social Development's

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<sup>18</sup> Law, S. K. *In search of 'real' life experience: Conceptualizing Canadian Crossroads International's (C.C.I.'s) overseas volunteers as alternative tourists*, University of Calgary, (1994). See also: South House Exchange & Canada World Youth. *Canada World Youth impact assessment: Synthesis report*. (Canada World Youth, Montreal, Quebec, 2006).

<sup>19</sup> Berry, J. W. Intercultural relations in plural societies. *Canadian Psychology* **40**, 12-21 (1999).

<sup>20</sup> Sherraden, M. S. & Benítez, C. North American community service pilot project. 92 (Center for Social Development, Washington University, St. Louis, MO, 2003). See also: Schröer, R. *Voluntary service: Opening doors to the future*. 133 (Association of Voluntary Service Organizations (AVSO), Brussels, 2003).

<sup>21</sup> Jones, A. Assessing international youth service programmes in two low income countries. *Voluntary Action: The Journal of the Institute for Volunteering Research* **7**, 87-100 (2005). See also: Kelly, S. & Case, R. *The overseas experience: A passport to improved volunteerism*. (CUSO and the Center for Research and Education in Human Services, Toronto, Ontario, 2007).

<sup>22</sup> Norris, P. (2002). *Democratic phoenix: Reinventing political activism*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>23</sup> Skocpol, T., & Fiorina, M. P. (Eds.). (1999). *Civic engagement in American democracy*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press and Russell Sage Foundation.

International Volunteer Impacts Survey (IVIS).<sup>24</sup> This survey was implemented using a cross-sectional design to assess volunteers' perceptions on key outcomes. In order to understand if outcomes differ between outgoing and returned volunteers, prospective volunteers were compared with returned volunteers who served earlier with one of two volunteer-sending programs.

### *Study Population / Volunteer-Sending Programs*

ICYE has facilitated placements of over 20,000 participants in over 30 countries since 1949. On average, ICYE currently sends approximately 800 long-term volunteers into the field each year. On average, volunteers serve for 35 to 45 weeks. Volunteers typically serve in a support capacity alongside staff and local volunteers providing educational, care, training, administrative and material support services in a variety of community based organizations. Most volunteers come from Europe and Latin America. Volunteers serving with ICYE are typically young, with a current average age of 22 years. Volunteers are mostly female (68%). Volunteers serving in host-countries typically live in urban and semi-rural settings and board together with other volunteers in live-in projects, independent living arrangements or with host families.

*weltwärts* is an initiative launched by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, which has sent approximately 10,000 volunteers to developing countries (according to the OECD country list) since 2008. In 2010 alone, *weltwärts* sent around 4,288 international volunteers into the field. The volunteers are between 18 and 29 years old and serve for between 6 and 24 months, during which time they work in partner organizations undertaking a range of activities intended to support development. The volunteers must be German citizens. The average *weltwärts* volunteer is 20 years of age and 60% are female. Volunteers may live in rural or urban settings, with or without host families.

### *Survey Administration*

The adapted version of the International Volunteering Impacts Survey (IVIS) measures key outcomes of service from the perspective of volunteers. It is designed to measure outcomes before and after international service. During the adaptation process, the volunteer-sending programs involved in this study commented on the questionnaires and helped adapt the questions slightly to meet the context of European volunteers. The survey was administered electronically to outgoing volunteers (2010-2011) as well as returned volunteers (2005-2009) across the two programs.

The sample for ICYE included outgoing volunteers prepared to serve during 2010-2011, and alumnae that served from 2005-2009. All ICYE volunteers completed the survey in English. These surveys were administered to ICYE volunteers serving in developing countries across multiple continents. Given the passage of time since 2005, many of the ICYE alumnae email addresses were no longer relevant. Consequently, approximately 380 emails bounced back when sending the email invitation to ICYE volunteers to participate in the survey. In the end, VOSESA compiled functioning emails for just over 1,250 ICYE volunteers. VOSESA administered the survey to all ICYE volunteers directly. An estimated 18 per cent for ICYE volunteers completed the survey, resulting in a 14 per cent response rate for returned volunteers, and 31 per cent for outgoing volunteers.

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<sup>24</sup> Lough, B. J., McBride, A. M. & Sherraden, M. S. Measuring volunteer outcomes: Development of the International Volunteer Impacts Survey. (Center for Social Development, Washington University, St Louis, MO, 2009).

VOSESA surveyed a sample of outgoing 2010-2011 *weltwärts* volunteers and returned volunteers that served during 2008-2009. *weltwärts* surveys were administered to a sample of volunteers serving in African countries only. *weltwärts* volunteers had the option of completing the survey in English or a translated survey in German. The majority of *weltwärts* volunteers chose to complete the surveys in German. A total of 17 German sending organizations agreed to participate in the study. VOSESA administered the survey to volunteers with 7 of these programs directly, and the remaining ten organizations agreed to send an email invitation from VOSESA inviting their volunteers to participate in the study. It is unknown how many of these ten organizations actually sent the survey to volunteers, or if they followed-up to encourage response. Consequently, it is not possible to determine the exact response rate for *weltwärts* volunteers. However, 13 of these organizations confirmed that they sent the survey to 478 volunteers, indicating a response rate of less than 23 per cent.

In total, around 1750 volunteers received the survey. Of these, 455 responded resulting in a total response rate of around 26 per cent. As a conservative measure, this response rate also includes emails that bounced back or never reached potential participants. Of those responding to the survey, 71 per cent fully completed the survey. See Table 1 for details about the sample response rate.

**Table 1: Approximate response rates by volunteer group**

<b>Respondent Group</b>	<b>Administered Survey</b>	<b>Respondent to Survey</b>	<b>Completed Survey</b>
<i>weltwärts</i> Outgoing Volunteers	~200	55	40
<i>weltwärts</i> Returnees/Alumnae	~350	100	69
ICYE Volunteer Survey- Outgoing	255	97	79
ICYE Volunteer Survey- Returnees/Alumnae	970	203	136
<b>Total All</b>	<b>1750</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>324</b>

Despite the low response rate, gender and age demographics between the respondent samples and the volunteer populations are relatively comparable for both programs. (See Table 2.) Reliable demographics are only available for volunteer age and gender. Respondents from both programs are slightly older (by about one year) than volunteers in the population. Likewise average gender differences vary by about one per cent. Similarity between the samples and volunteer populations indicate that non-response bias may not be a significant concern.

**Table 2: Age and gender differences between the respondents and the volunteer population**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Respondent mean</b>	<b>Population mean</b>
<i>weltwärts</i> Outgoing Volunteers	21 years	20 years
ICYE Outgoing Volunteers	23 years	22 years
<b>Gender (per cent female)</b>	<b>Respondent per cent</b>	<b>Population per cent</b>
<i>weltwärts</i> Outgoing Volunteers	59%	60%
ICYE Outgoing Volunteers	61%	60%

Because of the inclusion of multiple facilitating programs (particularly for *weltwärts*), it was not possible to know the demographics makeup of the total sample that received the survey. However, demographics for survey respondents are listed in Table 3. Although some of the statistics in this table appear to indicate possible systematic differences between prospective and returned-respondents, a logistic regression indicated no statistically significant differences between groups, excluding age. In cases where percentages appear to be higher, this could reflect natural changes over time (i.e. slightly more returned volunteers are married, have received a Bachelor’s degree or higher, and earn a higher individual income). Naturally, returned volunteers are also slightly older. Based on these findings, comparing survey responses from prospective and returned volunteers as a pseudo-longitudinal proxy may be justified.

**Table 3: Respondent characteristics by volunteer group**

	Prospective Volunteers ( <i>n</i> = 104)		Returned Volunteers ( <i>n</i> = 142)	
<b>Demographic Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Gender				
Female	69	60%	135	67%
Male	47	40%	68	33%
Marital status				
Married	2	2%	21	10%
Not married	111	98%	182	90%
Education				
Less than Bachelor’s degree	74	64%	114	57%
Bachelor’s degree or higher	41	36%	87	43%
Individual income				
Less than €20,000	55	90%	126	87%
€20,000 or more	6	10%	19	13%
	<b>Mean</b>	<b><i>sd</i></b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b><i>sd</i></b>
Age	22.7	3.85	25.6	4.43

### *Analytic Methods*

Analysis methods aim to identify differences in key outcomes between prospective and returned volunteers, as well as correlations between outcomes, and differences between programs. Significance tests used composite measures of key outcome areas. Each major outcome area reported on in this study is composed of multiple survey items from the adapted IVIS. Although slight variations have been made to some indicators, each of these composite variables was re-tested for reliability. Table 9 in the Appendix displays indicators that compose each of these variables, along with their associated internal reliability coefficients.

Independent t-tests are used to determine significant differences in outcomes between prospective and returned volunteers. Propensity score matching was not possible given the relatively small n-size of responses. Pearson’s correlations are used to examine correlations between concepts. In order to understand differences between volunteer-sending programs, a logistic regression is employed using

volunteer program as the dependent variables (ICYE = 0, *weltwärts* = 1), along with nine composite outcomes as independent variables. In addition to controlling for outcome variables, the logistic regression controls for the category of volunteer (outgoing = 0, returned = 1).

## Results

### *Differences between Prospective and Returned Volunteers*

Significance testing between prospective and returned volunteers indicates statistically significant differences in five of the nine outcomes. Differences in the means within each outcome are summarized in detail in Table 4. Returned volunteers are more likely than outgoing volunteer to report higher international social capital, open-mindedness, intercultural relations, civic activism, and community engagement. Ratings on the four remaining measures of international understanding, life plans, media attentiveness and financial contributions are higher for returned volunteers, but are not significantly different from outgoing volunteers statistically. This finding is not entirely consistent with expectations. It should be noted that international understanding trends toward significance ( $p = .08$ ), and would be significant using a one-tailed hypothesis test.

**Table 4: Differences between prospective and returned volunteers**

<i>Factor</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Factor</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Int'l Social Capital</i>			9.66*	.00	<i>Civic Activism</i>				
Prospective	3.14	1.19			Prospective	2.86	1.44	2.15*	.03
Retrospective	4.43	1.20			Retrospective	3.23	1.61		
<i>Open Mindedness</i>			3.56*	.00	<i>Community Engagement</i>			1.98*	.05
Prospective	5.26	0.75			Prospective	5.37	1.15		
Retrospective	5.52	0.58			Retrospective	5.08	1.50		
<i>Int'l Understanding</i>			1.74	.08	<i>Media Attentiveness</i>			.41	.68
Prospective	4.86	1.37			Prospective	5.53	1.19		
Retrospective	5.14	1.39			Retrospective	5.59	1.23		
<i>Intercultural Relations</i>			5.23*	.00	<i>Financial Contributions</i>			1.15	.25
Prospective	5.37	1.19			Prospective	2.89	1.76		
Retrospective	6.01	1.03			Retrospective	3.13	1.87		
<i>Life Plans</i>			1.31	.19					
Prospective	4.50	1.45							
Retrospective	4.76	1.86							

\* $p < .05$

*Correlations between Outcomes:* A higher rating on each composite measure was significantly correlated with higher ratings on other composite measures in the survey, with a few notable exceptions. Volunteers' ratings of international social capital were not associated with local community engagement (in their home country). Likewise, financial contributions were not associated with open-mindedness. Although the correlations on these measures were positive, they were not statistically significant. (See Table 5). Significant positive correlations between concepts likely indicate a propensity for some respondents to consistently rate themselves higher or lower than other respondents. However, it may also indicate that increases in one category are

legitimately associated with increases in another outcome category. This may be particularly true in cases where correlations are high, such as between intercultural relations and international social capital ( $r = .54$ ) or open-mindedness ( $r = .59$ ).

**Table 5: Correlations between IVS outcome subscales ( $n \approx 335$ )<sup>a</sup>**

	IC	OM	IU	IR	LP	CA	CE	MA	FC
International Social Capital (IC)	--								
Open-Mindedness (OM)	.33**	--							
International Understanding (IU)	.36**	.47**	--						
Intercultural Relations (IR)	.54**	.59**	.40**	--					
Life Plans (LP)	.27**	.26**	.23**	.30**	--				
Civic Activism (CA)	.45**	.29**	.45**	.38**	.38**	--			
Community Engagement (CE)	.10	.28**	.25**	.16**	.12*	.29**	--		
Media Attentiveness (MA)	.14*	.29**	.33**	.21**	.12**	.21**	.31**	--	
Financial Contributions (FC)	.29**	.10	.15**	.17**	.20**	.41**	.15**	.15**	--

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , <sup>a</sup> Cases with missing data are excluded

### *Differences between Programs*

Comparing outcomes between programs, volunteers from ICYE rated themselves higher than volunteers from *weltwärts* on all measures, with the exception of community engagement and media attentiveness. (See Table 6.) However, these findings do not take into account differences in the status of volunteers (outgoing and returned). In addition, because the majority of *weltwärts* volunteers completed the survey in German, differences may be an artifact of item wording or language differences.

**Table 6: Mean differences between volunteer programs**

Outcome Category	Program	N	Mean	sd
International Social Capital	ICYE	158	4.52	1.25
	<i>weltwärts</i>	75	4.23	1.06
Open-Mindedness	ICYE	157	5.63	0.55
	<i>weltwärts</i>	74	5.29	0.58
International Understanding	ICYE	157	5.32	1.38
	<i>weltwärts</i>	74	4.74	1.34
Intercultural Relations	ICYE	157	6.25	0.91
	<i>weltwärts</i>	74	5.48	1.07
Life Plans	ICYE	150	4.93	1.80
	<i>weltwärts</i>	71	4.40	1.94
Civic Activism	ICYE	151	3.36	1.70
	<i>weltwärts</i>	72	2.97	1.37
Community Engagement	ICYE	152	5.00	1.60
	<i>weltwärts</i>	71	5.23	1.23

Outcome Category	Program	N	Mean	sd
Media Attentiveness	ICYE	152	5.59	1.35
	<i>weltwärts</i>	70	5.59	0.93
Financial Contributions	ICYE	151	3.45	1.90
	<i>weltwärts</i>	70	2.46	1.63
Weeks served internationally (returned vols.)	ICYE	192	32.65	17.99
	<i>weltwärts</i>	93	47.08	65.51

In order to better understand differences in outcome ratings controlling for type of volunteer, a logistic regression indicates that only three differences are evident between programs. Controlling for type of volunteer, returned *weltwärts* volunteers are more likely to indicate higher international social capital, while returned ICYE volunteers are more likely to indicate higher intercultural relations and financial contributions to local or national nonprofits. (See Table 7.) To the degree that these differences are not due to survey error, they may reflect varying priorities between programs, inherent differences in volunteers participating in the programs, or a number of other systematic differences.

**Table 7: Logistic regression of differences between *weltwärts* and ICYE outcomes**

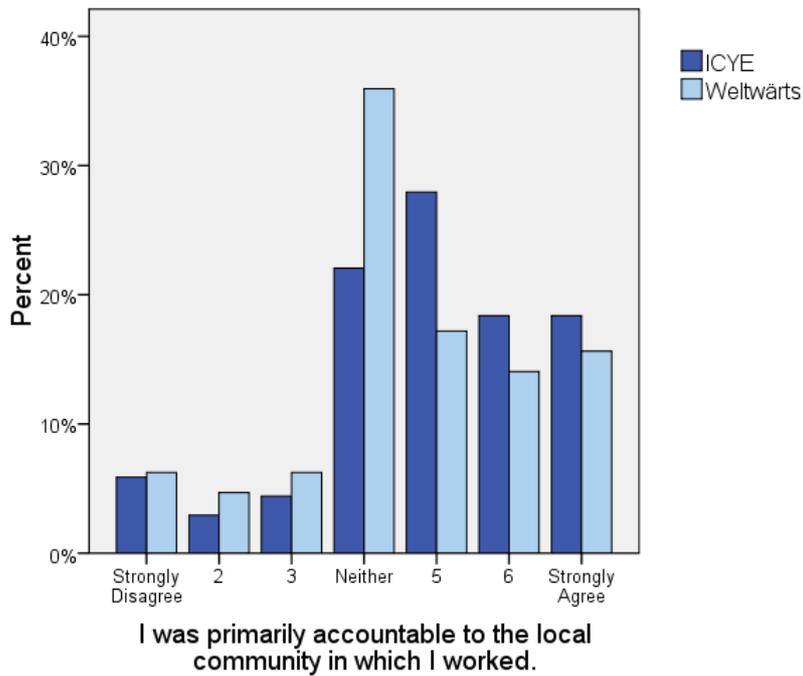
Independent variables	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p
Volunteer Status (outgoing)	-.10	.32	.09	1.00	.76
International Social Capital	.32*	.14	5.27	1.00	.02
Open-Mindedness	-.09	.27	.12	1.00	.73
International Understanding	-.12	.12	1.06	1.00	.30
Intercultural Relations	-.80**	.17	22.62	1.00	.00
Life Plans	-.05	.08	.39	1.00	.53
Civic Activism	.17	.11	2.21	1.00	.14
Community Engagement	.04	.11	.12	1.00	.73
Media Attentiveness	.19	.12	2.46	1.00	.12
Financial Contributions	-.36**	.08	18.27	1.00	.00
Constant	3.16	1.25	6.43	1.00	.01

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

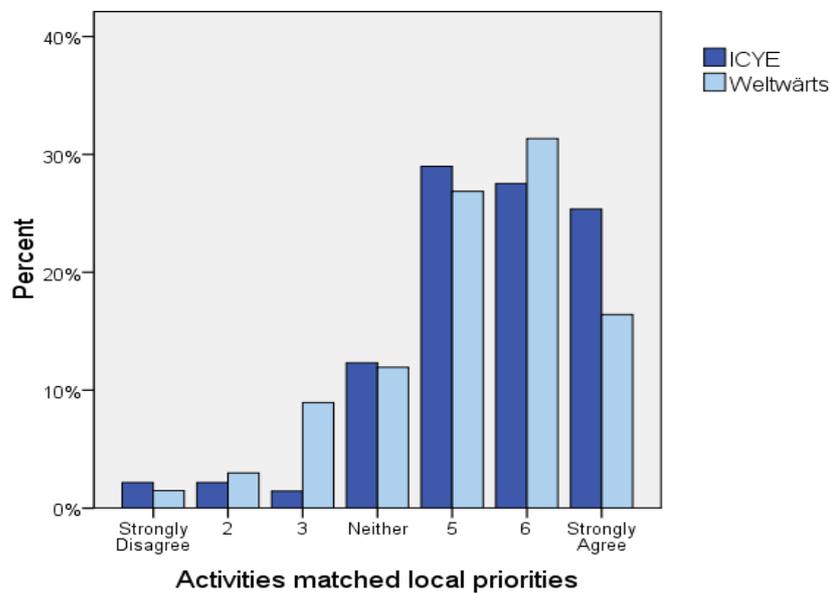
#### *Volunteers' Perspectives on Host-Community Outcomes*

*Host community accountability and reciprocity:* The majority of volunteers from both programs indicated that they felt primarily accountable to the local community in which they worked—although many also felt ambivalence or uncertainty towards the locus of accountability. (See Figure 1). In addition, most volunteers from both programs believed that service activities matched local priorities and that the host community requested and wanted these services. However, volunteers from the two programs diverged widely in their perceptions of equality with host community members. In contrast to ICYE volunteers, the majority of *weltwärts* volunteers perceived significant differences in the social status between themselves and host community members.

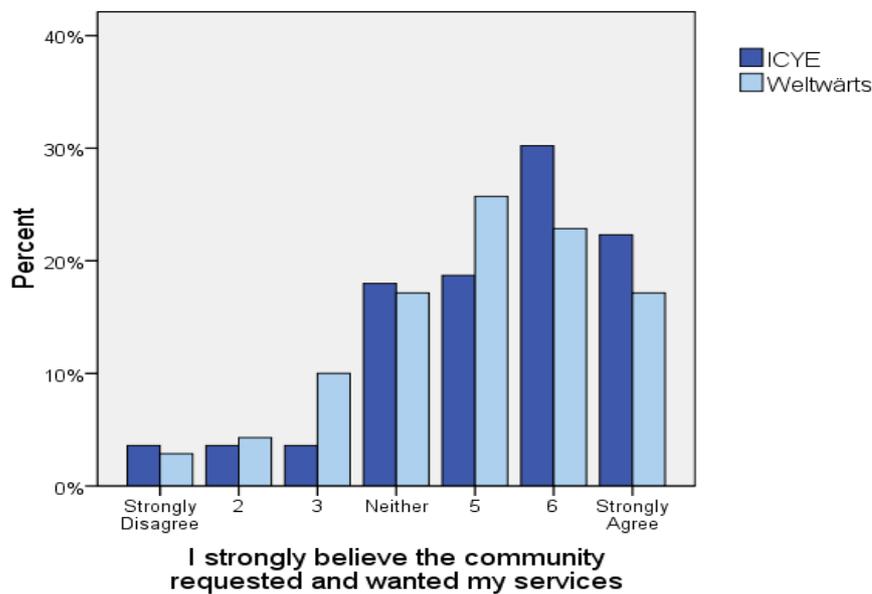
**Figure 1: Perceptions of community accountability**



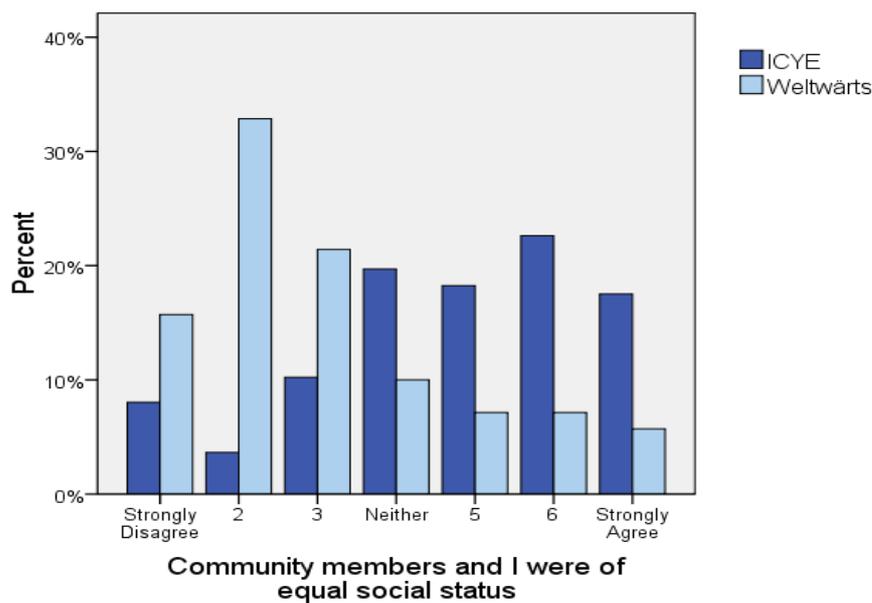
**Figure 2: Local relevance of services**



**Figure 3: Demand-based service provision**



**Figure 4: Perceptions of social equality**



*Perceived Effectiveness:* Across nearly all outcome categories, returned volunteers from ICYE rated themselves more highly than returned volunteers that served with *weltwärts*, with four exceptions. *weltwärts* volunteers were slightly more likely to report being effective at promoting cross-cultural exchange; tutoring or teaching children, youth, or adults; providing economic and social opportunities for youth, and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria or other infectious diseases. On the other hand, ICYE volunteers reported being much more effective at building or providing housing, providing disaster and humanitarian response and preparedness, helping to introduce legislation

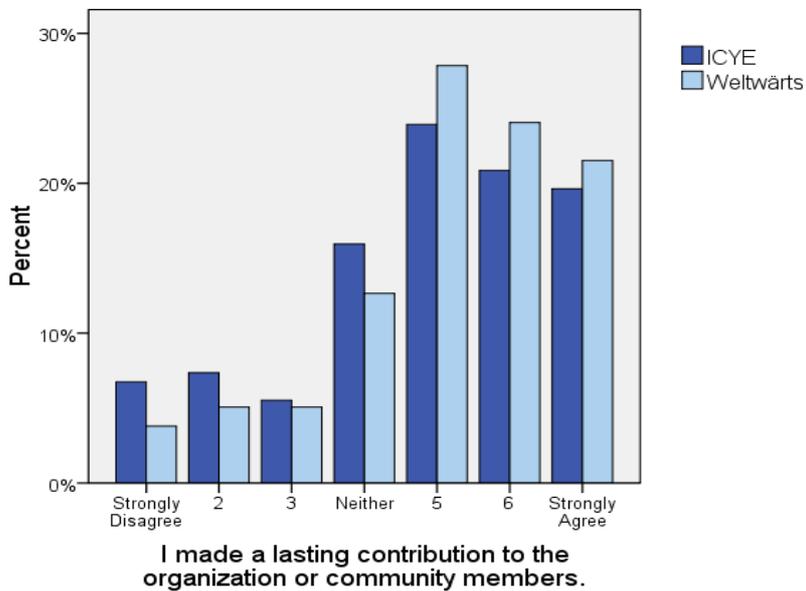
and influencing public sector reform, lobbying the host country government for increased resources to an organization, caring for infants and/or children in a daycare facility, and providing medical or dental health care or prevention. (See Table 8). These differences may reflect variations in program priorities or may indicate differences in the effectiveness of programing.

**Table 8: Perceptions of activity effectiveness by volunteer program**

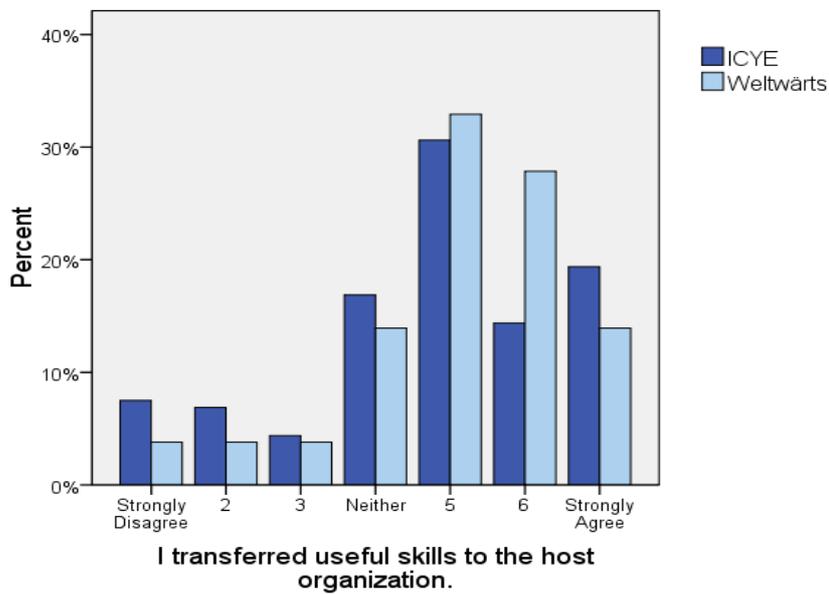
Activity	ICYE	<i>weltwärts</i>	$\Delta$
Promoting cross-cultural exchange	5.90	5.93	-.03
Caring for children in a daycare	5.86	4.69	1.17
Providing physical therapy	5.79	4.86	.93
Tutoring youth or adults	5.50	5.51	-.02
Distributing food, crafts, etc.	5.30	4.42	.88
Supporting conflict resolution and peace	5.28	4.47	.81
Improving access to information technology	5.18	4.52	.65
Providing primary education	5.15	4.57	.57
Providing assistance for the elderly	4.98	4.06	.93
Strengthening civil society	4.95	4.41	.54
Helping learn English	4.82	4.80	.02
Building or providing housing	4.79	2.45	2.34
Providing other medical/dental care	4.77	3.76	1.01
Empowering women and families	4.75	4.33	.41
Improving management capacity	4.69	4.48	.21
Promoting environmental sustainability	4.56	4.41	.15
Providing economic and social opportunities for youth	4.56	4.72	-.17
Providing disaster response and preparedness	4.52	2.75	1.77
Reducing child or maternal health	4.43	3.72	.71
Encouraging micro- or rural development	4.37	3.73	.64
Lobbying host government	4.32	3.11	1.21
Combating infectious diseases	4.29	4.55	-.26
Helping read or write in local language	4.14	3.28	.86
Influencing public sector reform	4.02	2.73	1.29

The majority of volunteers from both programs believed that they made a lasting contribution to the organization or community members. Most of these perceived contributions came in the form of skills transferred to the host organization. In comparison, few volunteers provided money or other resources directly to the host organization or community members, though *weltwärts* volunteers were more likely to provide resources. The majority of volunteers serving with both programs did not believe their presence may have caused some problems in the community, though *weltwärts* volunteers were more likely to believe they may have caused problems.

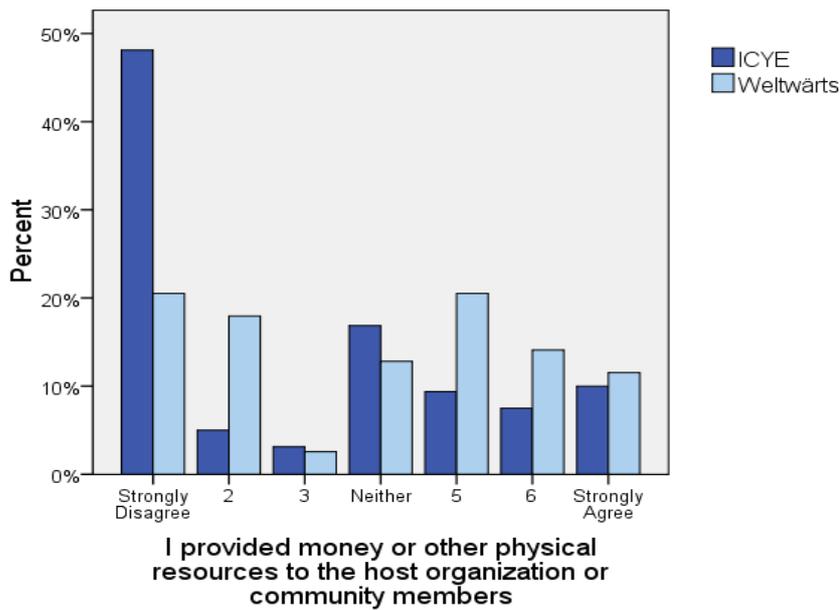
**Figure 5: Perceptions of sustainable contributions**



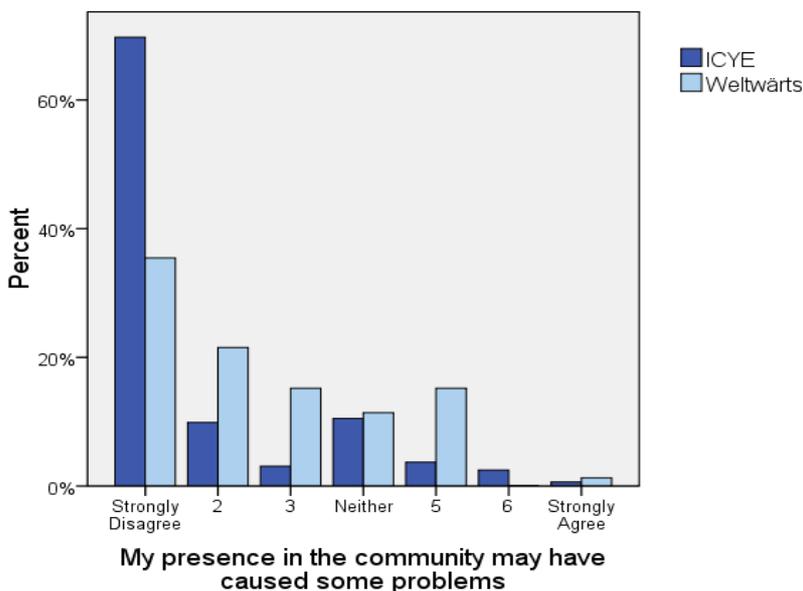
**Figure 6: Perceptions of useful skills-transfer**



**Figure 7: Direct monetary or other resource provisions**



**Figure 8: Perceptions of perceived problems**



For the sake of promoting effective practices and institutional accountability, the potential problems perceived by volunteers will be described briefly. The majority of volunteers expressed cultural misunderstandings and culture shock that may have affected their success. These differences included variations in lifestyles, cultural practices and values, and language. A few *weltwärts* volunteers expressed an explicit realization that, “German values don't match the local situation.”

These differences did not seem insurmountable, however. Most volunteers concluded their open-ended responses stating that both sides benefitted from the intercultural exchange. One difference that was difficult to overcome, however, was the language barrier. Some volunteers believed they were a “burden to the organization” because they were not able to work effectively or to perform needed tasks due to language barriers. This was described as particularly problematic during the first few months of the placement.

A few volunteers also felt they were not needed by the organization; that the organization had to “make up” tasks for them to accomplish, and that these tasks did not have significant practical value to the organization. As one volunteer, who ended up leaving her placement, stated, “I felt more like a burden than a contributing person, I had to make up my own project later on which wasn’t easy...” Another volunteer remarked, “Sometimes it was obvious that they had a hard time encountering stuff for me to do, and at times, I felt extremely insignificant.”

Given the time and manpower required to train and integrate new volunteers, some volunteers felt that they were a drain on host-organizational resources. If some form of financial compensation was provided to the hosting organization, this may have been perceived as less of a problem. However, some volunteers expressed concern that the organizations and community needed to use their own resources to host them. As one volunteer expressed, “The local organization I stayed with didn't get any resources from the [sending] organization, and even needed to pay or provide my lunch meal. My host family also did not receive enough money for feeding me”.

The relatively short duration of the service placement was also a concern from some volunteers. In addition to the resources needed to train and integrate new volunteers, the lack of continuity and quick turnaround may have had a negative effect on the intended beneficiaries. This was a particular concern for organizations working with children, who may require greater stability and permanence—or who may become attached to volunteers. As expressed by one volunteer, “I think the kids couldn't handle the quick change all the time...with the flood of foreign volunteers and visitors coming and going, the kids’ social aptitudes suffered.”

A final area of concern for volunteers was a possible negative effect on the attitudes and identities of host community members. Because many neighboring organizations and communities do not receive volunteers, this may lead to perceived inequity in service provisions. As illustrated in one case, “There was some animosity towards the people I helped from their neighbors that did not receive the same, or any, assistance”. Realizations of inequity may also negatively affect the identity of host community members, and may create animosity when, “The community is confronted with the life of a rich White person, who can afford and is allowed to travel wherever she wants—while they cannot”. As another volunteer stated, “there was envy from community members against me as a rich German.”

These challenges should be considered in relation to the many potential positive benefits and contributions that volunteers also expressed. Although the great majority of volunteers did not believe that their presence in the community caused problem, expressions from volunteers that perceived or witnessed challenges may help inform ways to improve future service placements—thereby improving the experience for both volunteers and host community members.

## Discussion

These survey data have a number of limitations that constrain definitive conclusions. They are based on cross-sectional design; lack non-volunteer comparison groups, and have possible response and non-response biases. Nonetheless, these findings are a valuable addition to current research on IVS, which has only begun to compare differences across models over time.

Of all the perceived outcomes on international service, the one with the largest effect size for both programs was related to international social capital. Compared to prospective volunteers, returned volunteers reported being more closely connected with organizations that work internationally, and well as frequently corresponding with acquaintances or contacts that live in other countries. Returned volunteers did not only keep in contact but they also reported using their international contacts to link people or organizations in host communities to useful resources, to advocate for people or organizations internationally, and to give money or other useful resources directly to contacts living in other countries.

The findings also highlight some interesting correlations between outcomes. For instance, volunteers who stay closely connected with organizations and contacts internationally also tend to interact more frequently with people from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds. They are also more likely to report having many friends from different racial, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, and a greater interest in forming friendship or working with people of different backgrounds. Given high correlations between increases in international social capital, intercultural relations, and open-mindedness, it is likely that relationships formed during international service tend to promote greater open-mindedness and a desire to form additional relationships with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds—even after returning home. Although the direction of these relationships is a bit tenuous, a virtuous circle is likely formed where exposure to cultural diversity leads to a greater openness toward forming friendships with diverse people, which then results in even greater exposure to diversity, etc. One important implication of this finding is that building and maintaining relationships with people in other countries may result in a volunteer's desire to build relationships with diverse people upon returning home.

Findings also indicate that international service affects returned volunteers' community engagement and civic activism in their home countries. Upon returning home, volunteers seem to become more interested in joining local groups, projects, or clubs. They seem to have a greater increase interest in volunteering locally as they find time to make positive differences in their home communities. Increased civic activism is an important finding considering that some development theorists assert that true social change can only be realized as people living in countries of higher power and influence become engaged *in their own home countries* to change the laws and policies that negatively impact developing countries. It is encouraging that returned volunteers are more likely to report helping to raise awareness of global issues, of attending political gatherings, and of writing media and organizations to voice their views on globally important issues.

The problems expressed by volunteers may help elucidate how volunteers programs can increase the benefit of international service for volunteers and host communities. For instance, a greater emphasis on language preparation prior to service would greatly decrease the number of complaints and challenges expressed by volunteers. In addition, preparatory sessions that orient volunteers toward cultural practices and values of the host community could help reduce culture shock, along with many of the misunderstandings expressed by returned volunteers. Increasing service duration

is another change that may increase perceived outcomes on host communities. Longer service durations, along with service continuity between volunteer placements may also help reduce contributions to host communities. Keeping volunteers in placements for a significant duration may help reduce the amount of staff time needed to orient and integrate new volunteers. In addition, it may help reduce distractions and the disruption of services experienced by intended beneficiaries (particularly when children are the intended target of services).

It is unknown why *weltwärts* volunteers expressed a greater perception of inequality with community members in comparison with ICYE volunteers. Whatever the case, a number of volunteers from both programs expressed concern that disparities in equity and power may have a detrimental impact on host community members as they confronted all that they did not have in relative comparison with more wealthy and privileged volunteers. While this is potentially problematic, there may also be a latent upside to this outcome. Awareness and consciousness-raising of differences in power and privilege is often perceived as a key factor in organizing, empowering, and mobilizing communities to work towards change. Volunteers or host-program staff members with knowledge of community organization principles may help catalyze these realizations towards “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.”<sup>25</sup>

To gain a holistic picture of outcomes of international service, findings from the perspectives of volunteers should be integrated and compared with perceptions of host-community members. Returned volunteers often label their experiences were “transformational” or life-changing (as did 85% of volunteers taking this survey). In line with these changes, volunteers often perceive that they benefit more from the service experience than host communities. While the service experience clearly provides many positive benefits to volunteers, understanding impacts from an inclusive perspective requires the voice of both community members and volunteers. When the perspectives of both parties combined, a more holistic picture may come into view. With good programming, it is anticipated that both volunteers and communities would report being equal benefactors of international service.

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<sup>25</sup> Freire, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York: Continuum. p. 36

## Appendix

Table 9: Measurement of Key Outcomes ( $n \approx 335$ )

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International social capital ( $\alpha = .84$ )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Used international contacts to link people or organizations to useful resources</li><li>• Closely connected with an organizations that works internationally</li><li>• Used connections to advocate for people or organizations internationally</li><li>• Given money or other useful resources to contacts living in other countries</li><li>• Many friends acquaintances or contacts that live in other countries</li><li>• Frequently correspond with people in other countries</li></ul>
Open-mindedness ( $\alpha = .63$ )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before making a decision</li><li>• Flexible in thinking and ideas</li><li>• Look at situations from many points of view</li><li>• Willing to try new things</li><li>• Hard to see from others point of view (transposed)</li><li>• Strong appreciation of other nations cultures and customs</li><li>• Work very effectively with people who are different from self</li></ul>
International Understanding ( $\alpha = .83$ )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perceived understanding of the reasons for global poverty</li><li>• Perceived understanding of how low-income countries can develop economies</li></ul>
Intercultural Relations ( $\alpha = .80$ )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frequently interact with people from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds</li><li>• Many friends from different backgrounds: racial, cultural, ethnic or language</li><li>• Interest in working/forming friendships with people of different backgrounds</li><li>• Comfortable talking about diversity with people of different cultures</li></ul>
Life Plans ( $\alpha = .80$ )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan to pursue an internationally-related field of study</li><li>• Plan to pursue a field of study related to social or economic development</li><li>• Plan to pursue a career related to social or economic development</li><li>• Plan to pursue a career in an internationally-related field</li></ul>
Civic Activism ( $\alpha = .85$ )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frequently attend gatherings on political issues</li><li>• Frequently write or email media and orgs. to voice views on an issue</li><li>• Often help raise awareness of global issues</li></ul>
Community Engagement ( $\alpha = .84$ )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Find the time to make a positive difference in community</li><li>• Interested in joining local groups projects or clubs</li><li>• Perceived ability to make a difference in community</li><li>• Interested in volunteering</li></ul>
Media Attentiveness ( $\alpha = .78$ )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep informed about international news</li><li>• Keep informed about local news</li></ul>
Financial Contributions ( $\alpha = .83$ )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contribute money to national organizations</li><li>• Contribute money to local nonprofit organizations</li></ul>

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Note: The response set for each item is weighted from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

## APPENDIX 3: Consent form for interviewees and focus group participants



INFORMED CONSENT FOR  
**Research Project on the impact  
of international volunteering in  
SADC countries**

### INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES FOR A RESEARCH PROJECT ON SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERING IN TWO SOUTHERN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

1. You are invited to participate in an evaluation study conducted by VOSESA. We are studying the impact of international volunteering in two Southern African countries – Tanzania and Mozambique. We are contacting you because of your involvement in the field of service and volunteering. We want to learn about your experience in service and volunteering, particularly international volunteering if you have had experience with international volunteers.
2. This interview or focus group might be different from others you have participated in because it is more like an informal conversation. We want to understand a lot of different things about your experience in service and volunteering. I will ask about the programme, your experience of working with international volunteers, your perceptions of how international volunteers compare with local volunteers and what you think the international volunteer(s) have contributed and learnt during their placement. I'd like to encourage you to share any additional thoughts as well.
3. The amount of time involved in your participation will be approximately 1.5 hours for either an interview or a focus group. We anticipate meeting once during your participation in the project.
4. There are no known risks associated with this research other than possible discomfort with the time it will take or the questions we will be asking about your experiences of the programme.
5. The possible benefits to you from this research are that you will have an opportunity to talk about your experiences and will contribute to the knowledge of the field.
6. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in the research study or withdraw your consent at any time. You will not be penalised in any way should you choose not to participate or withdraw.
7. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication that may result from this study.
8. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may contact Karena Cronin at + 27 11 486 0245 or on [karena.cronin@vosesa.org.za](mailto:karena.cronin@vosesa.org.za). You may also ask questions or state concerns regarding your rights as a research participant to the researcher in your country.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a signed copy of this consent form for my records. I hereby consent to my participation in the research described above.

_____	_____	_____
Participant's signature signature on participants' behalf if participant is less than 18 years of age or not legally competent.	Date	Parent or legal guardian's

## APPENDIX 4: Consent form for volunteer survey participants

Note: The same approach was used for *weltwärts* outgoing and returned volunteers. In some of these cases the communication was sent out by VOSESA while in others it was sent out by the German sending organisation.



Dear ICYE volunteer,

As you know from your association with ICYE as a volunteer, volunteering in the international context is a worthwhile experience for your own development, and an opportunity to contribute to development in a country other than your own. However, we often don't know what the impact is on you or the host community, unless we measure it.

ICYE has been approached by an organisation called Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa (VOSESA) based in South Africa. VOSESA is a non-profit organization that does research on volunteering and it is interested in measuring the impact of your volunteering experience. This is a very exciting project and for this reason ICYE has agreed to collaborate with VOSESA on it.

All that is required from you is to complete the questionnaire to which [this link](#) will take you. Please do so either before returning to your home country or within the first two weeks after having arrived home.

**The questionnaire will give you an opportunity to reflect on your volunteering experience. It covers issues that play a role in your personal development, such as your attitudes, career goals, your experience of civic activism and your media engagement.**

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to respond to any questions that you do not wish to answer. You will not be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or withdraw.

We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication that may result from this study. There are no other foreseeable risks to you as a participant in this survey. Likewise, there are no direct benefits associated with your participation in this research, except that by completing the survey you could think about the benefits that your volunteer experience may have in your life. In addition, the information you provide will help improve international volunteer programs, thereby benefiting future program participants and recipients.

We hope that you will assist us and the broader international volunteering community by completing the questionnaire. Should you have any query or problem in filling in the questionnaire, please contact [karena.cronin@vosesa.org.za](mailto:karena.cronin@vosesa.org.za).

We thank you for your time and involvement in this study. By clicking on the continue button below you indicate your willingness to participate in the survey: *I have read this study information sheet and have been given a chance to ask questions. I agree to participate in the research study on the Impacts of International Volunteering and Service.*



Salvatore Romagna  
Secretary General, ICYE Federation



Helene Perold  
Executive Director, VOSESA

**Continue**

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