Executive Summary
List of Abbreviations
Acknowledgements
Introduction
Background ICS information
Evaluation rationale
Evaluation Methodology
What did we evaluate?
Phase 1
Phase 2
Methodology for the project evaluations
Approach to data collection
Qualitative data collection
Quantitative survey tool
Phase 3
Methodology for the synthesis
Limitations
Findings
EQ1: What changes do the ICS intervention contribute to, and how does this come about across different contexts and sectors?
EQ2: To what extent do the ICS interventions and its design attributes lead to change across the eight identified dimensions of change?
EQ3: Which aspects, if any, of the ICS delivery model build relational dynamics and how do these impact in the lives of poor and marginalised communities?
EQ4: How sustainable are development outcomes and impacts? What aspects of relationships contribute to greater sustainability? What components of change have a positive relationship with sustainability?
Conclusions and areas of learning
Annex 1 – Bibliography
Annex 2 – ICS evaluation site background
Annex 3 – details of placements
Annex 4 – details of the findings of the quantitative survey
Annex 5 – list of respondents
Annex 6 – Aggregated CMO tables
Annex 7 – Field work schedule
Annex 8 – Quantitative Survey
Annex 9 – EvalC3 re-run data table
Annex 10 – EvalC3 re-run model truth tables
Annex 11 – Example of Qualitative data analysis from individual project evaluations
Annex 12 – Evaluation TOR
Annex 13 – ICS quantitative survey full analysis spreadsheet with raw data
Annex 14 – Paris Declaration Principles
Executive Summary

Background to the evaluation and ICS

International Citizen Service (ICS) is a UK government Department for International Development (DFID) funded development programme, led by VSO and is delivered by a consortium of youth development and volunteering organisations that brings together volunteers aged 18-25 from all backgrounds from the UK with volunteers from the host country.

All placements are required to achieve a positive contribution to poverty reduction and sustainable development in host country, personal and social development of volunteers and building volunteer skills to become agents of social change post placement.

DFID and VSO planned a midterm internal evaluation to understand the development outcomes of ICS at the beginning of the implementation of the second contract. This was identified as a critical evidence gap, as all previous evaluation efforts prioritised the perspectives of ICS volunteers and their personal and professional growth following their participation in the programme.

The report covers this large-scale midterm internal evaluation of the implementation of the second ICS contract. It included field work in 16 projects across 5 countries: Zambia (4), Kenya (4), Nigeria (4), Bangladesh (1) and Tanzania (3), thorough qualitative and quantitative analysis and overall synthesis.

Summary of findings

The evaluation included projects across the thematic spectrum covered by ICS: education, sexual reproductive health, livelihood and entrepreneurship. Across the themes and geographies the evaluation found the following areas of change with their associated patterns through which ICS can contribute.

1. ICS increases access to information, services and resources, builds community structures, builds community ownership and social capital by:
   - Unlocking resources in the community
   - Establishing relationships
   - Fostering collaboration
   - Transferring knowledge through training delivery

2. ICS strengthens community structures and promotes patterns of sustained active citizenship, through:
   - Joining outside and inside knowledge (ICS volunteers and communities working together)

3. ICS increases the reach and inclusion of services by:
   - Bridging relationships between communities and decision makers
   - Leveraging communities’ participation

4. ICS increases the reach of services by:
   - Amplifying existing messages
   - Increasing short term functional capacity of organisations

5. ICS challenges social norms and practices through:
   - The attention and interest raised by volunteers when perceived as outsiders

These changes and patterns were not found across all projects, though all projects found some degree of change. Where the changes were found, their sustainability also varied.

Although the evaluation found changes in the increase and access of services as a result of ICS interventions, it did not find sufficient evidence of ICS contributing to the improvement in the technical quality and effectiveness of these services, in particular in health and education.

The single most visible area of difference in the findings on changes that ICS contributes to emerged between projects focusing on entrepreneurship development (in Kenya, Tanzania and some elements in Bangladesh) and all other ICS interventions (education, sexual reproductive health, livelihood). Whereas projects focusing on education, sexual and reproductive health, livelihood have validated most elements of the overarching theory of change, the relevance of some (or all) of the eight identified dimensions of change and the relational approach to development, the ICS entrepreneurship projects included in the evaluation have demonstrated different outcomes and patterns of change for different target groups. This has fundamentally challenged the assumptions behind the ICS theory of change in relation to entrepreneurship projects.

Across all evaluated entrepreneurship projects, ICS volunteers worked primarily with small businesses and prospective entrepreneurs, with different degrees of interaction with community structures and with limited relationship with community members. The evaluation found some evidence of increase in skills and capabilities amongst young entrepreneurs working with ICS to develop their businesses and ICS supporting new businesses to be established. However substantial challenges were identified in some projects on the extent to which young unskilled volunteers can contribute to such outcomes.

It has not been possible at this stage to assess with confidence the extent to which the overall changes that ICS contributes to are sustainable or have been sustained. However, the evaluation found evidence that working with community volunteers and partner organisations with established community relationships enable young ICS volunteers to contribute to more sustained positive changes. On the other hand, changes
The synthesis has highlighted the following learnings that deserve further attention and discussion:

- **Volunteers can successfully amplify the reach of partner services** – Volunteers acting as resources to support existing partner services have been able to increase the reach of services to more members of the community including more marginalised groups.

- **Use of volunteers to directly deliver services and information** – The findings show that ICS volunteers recruited often do not have the necessary skills to contribute to their placements effectively and generate sustainable change when working in a less structured manner, such as delivering services directly and independently without strong partner or programme support and oversight. The quality of volunteer training may also influence the impact of their placements.

- **Partnering with community volunteers** – This intervention has been found to be a key mechanism for sustainable and locally relevant solutions. Community volunteers have been especially effective in mobilising community participation, identifying marginalised groups and establishing trust between host communities and ICS. Community volunteers often also experience significant personal growth and play a key role in longer-term ownership and sustainability outcomes.

- **Entrepreneurship programmes** – Whereas projects focusing on education, sexual and reproductive health, livelihood have validated most elements of the overarching theory of change and the relevance of some (or all) of the eight dimensions of change and of the relational approach to development, the ICS entrepreneurship projects included in the evaluation have demonstrated different outcomes and patterns of change for different target groups to the theory of change, namely the setting up of new businesses, transfer of business skills and increased confidence of the select group of entrepreneurs ICS worked with.

- **Power relations between UK and national volunteers** – The evaluation found evidence that ICS placements have experienced issues of unequal power relations and reinforcement of unhelpful stereotypes towards UK volunteers and their in-country counterparts within host communities.

- **Use of Community Action Days (CADs)** – When CADs are in alignment with programme goals they have been found to have greater and more sustained impact compared to when they are used as a mechanism to make up for a lack of community engagement within a programme’s design.

- **M&E practices** – The evaluation found weaknesses in the M&E practices across the whole portfolio, with much of the tools focusing on measuring ICS activities rather than outcomes. This made evaluating ICS impact from existing M&E data more difficult. There are also inconsistencies in the way data is captured across the consortium. However, this evaluation has found the M&E frameworks and approaches helpful in its analysis useful in understanding ICS impacts.

- **Sustainability of changes** – Appears more positive with close involvement of community volunteers during placement who can continue after volunteer departures, who typically contribute more short-term functional capacity. However, funding withdrawal following volunteer departure can pressure the long-term sustainability of ICS impacts.

The implications of these lessons suggest reviewing the ICS theory of change, particularly as this relates to entrepreneurship interventions and the emergent pattern seen for health, education and livelihood. Decisions around the development of the theory of change may impact on the direction of future ICS programme design. For example if the theory of change is to be updated to better capture all thematic areas or if a separate theory of change is needed for entrepreneurship projects, which would inform de-placement support and placement activity focus for the different thematic areas.

In terms of programme design, ICS management should also consider how the lessons learnt around the use of local community volunteers and CADs can be best reflected in future ICS work across the consortium and plan the necessary resources required to implement the decisions taken.

Training provision and M&E systems should be reviewed and strengthened both in terms of standard tools and systems across the consortium, and those used by individual agencies, to capture the lessons learnt from this evaluation. The sharing of best practice from all agency evaluations and ensuring consistency of tools and processes will help to strengthen ICS delivery in this area.

It is recommended that the final ICS evaluation investigate more deeply cross-cutting issues such as power dynamics and the long-term sustainability of projects after the end of ICS placements, as these require further investigation. The evidence from this evaluation suggests that ongoing sustainability is often supported by ICS achieving a sense of community ownership that lasts beyond volunteer placements, though the withdrawal of funding with volunteer departures can be a challenge. Further details around the degree of changes seen apply to the different groups of primary actors would also help further evidence ICS impact and refine the ICS theory of change.
List of Abbreviations

ACD - Active Citizenship day
CAD - Community Action Day
CBO – Community Based Organisation
CCSV - Community Citizen Service Volunteer
CMO – Context Mechanism and Outcome
CYC - Community Youth Concern
FDG - Focus Group Discussions
ICS - International Citizen Service
INS – Inclusive Neighborhood Spaces
MPR - Mid-Phase Review
NGV – National Graduate Volunteer
NYSC – National youth Services Corps
NZP - Network for Zambian People living with HIV & AIDS
RHC – Rural Health Centre
SRH – Sexual and Reproductive Health
TOC - Theory of Change
TOR – Terms of Reference
VSO – Voluntary Service Overseas

Acknowledgements

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This report constitutes a synthesis of a body of work that took place between July 2016 and April 2017, and that saw the involvement of people across 5 countries, including the communities ICS works with, ICS and community volunteers, and staff of implementing agencies.

For each of the 16 project evaluations a report was written and this synthesis draws substantially from those individual project reports and the data sets. These individual evaluations were conducted and documented by six VSO volunteers who worked as researchers: Robert Lee, Petra Nováková, Tracy Kandeya, Karlijn van den Broek, Lauren Siegmann and Elizabeth Cooke. Individual reports were supported by Marina Torre, Janet Clark (who also conducted the evaluation in Bangladesh) and Julie Therese (who took part in the Mbozi evaluation in Tanzania) members of VSO global monitoring, evaluation and research, who also fed considerably into the final synthesis.

An evaluation steering group was established to accompany the whole evaluation and includes external experts (Dr Rick Davies and Professor Matt Baillie-Smith), DFID representatives (Ed Barney and Sarah Hennell), members of the ICS consortium (Nicholas Andreou from Balloon, Anna Ling from Tearfund, Caleb Rowan from International Service, Helen Frost from YCare International), Felicity Morgan, the ICS Director and Donne Cameron, VSO Director of Programmes.

Dr Rick Davis also specifically accompanied the application of the EvalC3 analysis methodology.
Introduction

Background ICS information

International Citizen Service (ICS) is a UK government-funded development programme that brings volunteers aged 18-25 from all backgrounds from the UK together with volunteers from the host country from summer 2015 to the beginning of 2019. ICS is currently led by VSO and is delivered by a consortium of 12 youth development and volunteering organisations. All volunteering placements are intended to achieve a positive contribution to:

- Poverty reduction and sustainable development outcomes in the host country;
- Personal and social development of the volunteers;
- Building the skills for each volunteer so that they better understand international development and act as agents of social change within their own communities and beyond. To date, ICS has enabled over 27,000 young people to volunteer in a total of 33 developing countries. ICS is a well-established global youth volunteering programme, setting the standard for responsible, inclusive and equitable youth volunteering for international development impact. ICS projects focus on livelihoods and enterprise, sexual and reproductive health, and lifelong active citizens.

The ICS programme has a commitment to be inclusive in its selection process and to offer all young people an opportunity to volunteer: selection criteria are therefore not based on skills, experience or educational background. After selection, ICS volunteers from the UK participate in pre-departure training. Further training is delivered in the country of placement, together with the cohort of national in-country volunteers with whom the UK volunteers are paired. Across the different agencies and projects ICS volunteers work with local organisations or small businesses (as part of the entrepreneurship programme) in activities that include peer education, awareness raising, facilitation, training, action research, development of new resources and some community infrastructure development.

Different agencies apply different intervention models when it comes to the use of local partner organisations and the number of subsequent cycles of volunteers.

Evaluation rationale

The purpose of this evaluation, which consisted of secondary data review, extensive field work and a synthesis, was to address the current evidence gap in ICS and to understand the extent to which ICS projects and volunteers deliver development outcomes across a range of different contexts, geographies and agencies. Previous evaluations of ICS, which included an externally commissioned evaluation at the end of the first contract in 2015 as well as an evaluation of the initial pilot, have focused on the processes rather than impacts of changes achieved by ICS. This produced significant evidence of ICS volunteers’ perspectives on the contribution of ICS to their personal and professional growth (see annex 1).

It also includes an accountability purpose for generating evidence for the impact ICS has achieved and for future programme development learning.

This evaluation constitutes a midterm evaluation for the second ICS contract, which started in 2016. The TOR indicated that a plan for a final evaluation (to take place in the first quarter of 2018) would be defined at the end of this exercise by the ICS evaluation steering committee.

The report targets 3 main audiences:

- The ICS contract management unit and ICS consortium members, for learning from evaluation findings and future programme design
- UK Department for International Development (DFID) as the funder for learning and to a lesser extent for accountability purposes
- The wider international development practitioner community, for sharing sector-wide learning and knowledge, particularly around volunteerism

A separate communications plan will be available to guide the dissemination of the findings of this report to each of the audiences but has not been included in the main body of the report.

Realist evaluation approach

The evaluation applies a realist approach. For a realist approach, rather than focus on what works or does not work, realist evaluation considers ‘what works form whom in what circumstances and in what respects, and how?’. It is a form of theory driven evaluation which as a starting point considers that programmes are shaped by a vision of change and then tests and interrogates these programme theories. A programme theory about what might cause change may not always be explicit and one of the objectives of a realist evaluation is to make this explicit by defining a hypothesis about how and for whom programmes might work and then to test this hypothesis. The testing process involves collecting data not just about the impact or the process of the programme implementation but also about the specific aspects of the programme context which may impact on the programme and the specific mechanisms that may be creating change.

Within a realist evaluation the context and the mechanism determine the outcome. Context refers to features of participants, organisation, staffing, history, culture, beliefs, etc. that trigger the mechanisms. Mechanisms are the way in which new resources interact with different ‘reasoning’ to give changed decisions. The outcome is different behaviour, which leads to different short and medium term outcomes.

ICS Theory of Change

The ICS delivery model is based on an emerging Theory of Change (TOC) that sees development intervention as a non-linear process. Within this, it is understood that positive and desired development outcomes are inextricably linked to a specific context and that what works in one context may not work in another.

The theory of change was originally conceptualised by a cross-agency team of programme and M&E leads from VSO, Y-Care and Raleigh during a 3 day workshop in November 2015 and presented to the consortium Strategy Team on November 20th. The version in Diagram 1, above, is a presentation developed during the inception phase of the evaluation and captured in the ICS Evaluation Strategy of March 2016 that was developed in collaboration with the consortium M&E working group and presented at the Strategy Team of 26th April 2016.
The emerging TOC can be seen to have four distinct elements:

1. **A structured delivery model** that involves various aspects of design, including the training and accompaniment volunteers receive, the way in which programmes are delivered and designed with local partners and the use of host home accommodation. Exact details of volunteer and placement delivery activities will vary by programme, depending on the context and objectives of the placement, but will share the general ICS delivery model approach.

2. **Desired dimensions of change.** These dimensions have been identified by VSO’s ‘Valuing Volunteering’ research as defining characteristics of volunteering interventions that can lead to positive development change.

3. **Relational dynamics.** Relational dynamics refer to the day-to-day interpersonal relationships between volunteers, people living in poverty, partners, host-homes and communities throughout the course of the volunteer placement.

4. **Sustainable long-term change and impact.** The emerging TOC suggests the ICS model brings about positive change in the lives of people living in poverty, whereby people living in poverty experience increased ownership, empowerment and capability to direct their own development processes.

The theory of change is based on the assumption that volunteers build and work through relationships with people they interact with during their placement delivery activities (as part of the ICS delivery model), from people living in poverty to volunteers and staff working in organisations or institutions that seek to reduce poverty. In the case of the ICS volunteering model this includes interacting within groups of volunteers and young people, and interacting amongst young people from the north and the south.

**Diagram 1 – Theory of change**

**Dimension of change**

1. Quality, effectiveness and access to services:
   - Social inclusion – ‘leave no one behind’
   - Innovation that is locally appropriate and relevant
   - Collaboration and networking
   - Ownership and agency
   - Participation - greater participation in decision-making and development processes
   - Social action and active citizenship

2. Sustainable long-term change and impact:
   - Positive changes in the lives of primary actors living in poverty
   - Primary actors experience increased ownership, empowerment and capability to direct their own development processes

**Relational dynamics**

- Pre-departure selection and training
- Between volunteers, primary actors, partners and communities during placement

**Delivery model**

For example: selection process, training, use of host homes, community selection, reflective practice, team model, thematic focus, activities, action-at-home etc.

Through establishing relationships, volunteers contribute towards at least eight different yet interconnected dimensions of change/outcomes. These are rarely standalone and change in one area is often critical to another.

Through the relationships that volunteers build, it is possible to engage and empower people in ways that other forms of intervention often struggle to do.

The Valuing Volunteering research published by VSO on the value that volunteers, including professional and youth volunteers, bring to placements reveals that volunteers are well-placed to develop mutual and trusting relationship that can be a critical enabling factor in facilitating more transformational change. As part of such relational dynamics, Valuing Volunteering evidence shows that volunteerism can add value to sustainable development outcomes in the following eight interrelated ways:

- **Quality and effectiveness:** Improving the quality and effectiveness of services by working with local counterparts to build capacity, increase skills and improve organisational processes.

- **Inclusion:** Increasing inclusion by extending the reach of services to the poorest and most marginalised. This is typically achieved by improving the quality and effectiveness of services (see above), thereby enabling them to access more people, and by identifying inequitable power relations that marginalise and discriminate against people and working in partnership to overcome, change or bypass them.

- **Innovation:** Acting as a catalyst for innovation whereby approaches are devised and implemented that combine the best of ‘outsider’ expertise with local ‘inside’ knowledge – something that the Valuing Volunteering research refers to as the merging of ‘outsider’ and ‘insider’ knowledge. This mutual exchange of knowledge, rather than one-way skill transfer, is central to how volunteering can make interventions more appropriate, sustainable and locally relevant.

- **Collaboration & networking:** Promoting and enabling collaboration across multiple partners and stakeholders that creates opportunities for further innovation. Collaboration can also involve building bridges social capital, networking, convening and brokering access to information and resources within and beyond communities.

- **Ownership & agency:** Strengthening local ownership and the agency of people to take control of their own development by increasing the confidence and aspirations of local counterparts alongside their capacity to realise them. The trusting relationships that volunteers build and the use of approaches such as mentoring and peer-to-peer learning are fundamental in achieving these ‘soft outcomes’ which in turn help to increase local ownership and the long-term sustainability of change.

- **Participation:** Promoting participation by encouraging and modelling approaches that place people at the heart of development processes. This also means that activities are more responsive and informed by actual community priorities and that there is increased local ownership of initiatives.

- **Social action:** When successful, volunteering can create a ‘virtuous circle’ that both sustains and leads to further expressions of social action; it can therefore promote a positive dynamic relationship with active citizenship. This impact can occur at both the individual and collective level – individuals are more likely to sustain their volunteering activities and explore new opportunities when they have positive experiences and impact, and collectively the activities of volunteers can inspire others to become more active.

- **Inspiration:** Volunteering can inspire new ways of thinking and being by modelling alternatives to entrenched norms and behaviours. By prompting greater critical reflection through cross-cultural learning and comparison, volunteers can reveal taken-for-granted power dynamics (e.g. gender stereotypes) and model more equitable norms and behaviours.
None of these eight dimensions of change are specific to volunteering. It is only when taken as a set of inherently interlinked areas that the full value of volunteerism as a development intervention can be appreciated. For example, whilst many development interventions will seek to improve the quality and effectiveness of services, volunteerism has the potential to make change more sustainable by increasing local ownership and agency, more locally appropriate and relevant by promoting participation and effectively merging ‘outside’ expertise with ‘inside’ knowledge, more inclusive by using ‘outside’ perspectives to identify inequitable power relations, and more connected to wider change processes through increased collaboration.

The ICS delivery model typically includes a number of components aimed at encouraging and supporting such relationships, though agencies will vary in their focus on the different elements:

- **Pre-placement training**: ICS volunteers are introduced to a clearly guided and structured volunteer learning journey, including reflection, analysis and synthesis of their experience. Volunteer feedback should trigger adaptation of the training and learning journey (by staff/trainers) if needed.

- **Team planning process**: ICS volunteers learn from and reflect on the previous team’s debrief (and staff knowledge of the full project plan, which has been developed with host partners and based on community need) to adapt and develop the team plan for their own team’s activities over the course of the placement. Some ICS teams carry out action research projects at the start of their placements to inform their placement activities.

- **Living with host families**: ICS volunteers live in counterpart pairs with host families within their placement community. They learn about the culture they’re living in from the inside. This is a great opportunity to change attitudes and behaviours of all actors (volunteers and host family members/wider community).

- **Weekly team meetings**: The team meets on a weekly basis to learn more about global issues in the Active Citizenship Pack (and other resources), reflect on their progress as a team (using the team plan as a basis for discussion) and make any adaptations needed for the next week of activities.

- **One to ones**: Each volunteer has two 1:1s with a Team Leader during their placement (who have 1:1s with ICS project staff) to discuss their learning, reflect on their progress with any personal development objectives set at the beginning of the placement and make any adaptations.

- **Mid placement Review**: The team meet half way through their placement for more in-depth learning and reflection on their progress as a team (using the team plan as a basis for discussion) and make any adaptations needed for the second half of their placement.

- **Team debriefing process**: The team meet at the end of their placement for final learning and reflection on their progress as a team (using the team plan as a basis for discussion). They then propose any adaptations for the next team to use as the basis of their team plan.

- **Post placement debrief**: Back in their own communities (UK or host country), the team comes together again to learn and reflect on their journey, analysing and synthesising their experience. Volunteer feedback should trigger adaptation of the training and learning journey (by staff/trainers) if needed.

- **The pairing of ICS volunteers with in-country volunteers and volunteers in the host community**: In some projects a key mechanism for peer-to-peer learning, knowledge and skill sharing. This theory of change assumes that the ICS delivery model sufficiently trains and supports young, non-skills based volunteers to build relationships between volunteers from different backgrounds, intercultural learning between volunteers and host homes and a way for volunteers to build relationships with the wider community their host home is embedded in. This is then assumed that the intercultural interactions between national, international and host communities would lead to, for example, the challenging of established cultural norms and power dynamics for more equitable behaviours within the host community. Behaviour changes are expected to be owned and championed by community members, leading to sustainable long-term impacts.

**Evaluation questions**: The primary, overarching evaluation questions addressed by both the individual project evaluations and this synthesis are the following:

1. What changes do the ICS intervention contribute to, and how does this come about across different contexts and sectors?

2. To what extent do the ICS interventions lead to change across the eight dimensions of change? (The evaluation focused on the in-country aspects of the delivery model and did not explore the role of selection)

3. Which aspects, if any, of the ICS delivery model build relational dynamics and how do these impact in the lives of the poor and marginalised communities?

4. How sustainable are development outcomes and impacts? What aspects of relationships contribute to greater sustainability? What components of change have a positive relationship with sustainability?

Each of these primary evaluation questions also breakdown into a number of sub-questions, which can be seen in the Evaluation TOR in annex 12. The sub-questions were investigated in each individual evaluation but aggregated into the primary questions only as part of the synthesis. In answering these primary research questions, research has been conducted into the elements of the ICS theory of change.
Evaluation Methodology

What did we evaluate?

This evaluation took place over a period of six months and consisted of different stages and a multitude of activities. The approach and the design for the evaluation has been multi-layered and included an overarching methodological design combining open qualitative research, analysis across a multitude of cases, realist evaluation, and quantitative data collection.

The overall evaluation consisted of 3 main phases represented in the diagram:

- **Phase 1**: analysis of all existing monitoring data from over 130 projects.
- **Phase 2**: Field work and primary data collection in 5 countries, across 16 projects, reaching more than a 1000 respondents, amongst community members, members of partner organizations, volunteers and host homes.
- **Phase 3**: synthesis of finding across all steps of phase 1 and 2.

### Phase 1

All ICS project results, across the whole consortium, as recorded on the ICS database between January 2015 and June 2016 were analysed using the EvalC3 methodology during the autumn of 2016. Project debriefs, project updates and team debriefs were the primary sources of data. Dr. Rick Davies, who developed the EvalC3 tool, accompanied VSO’s M&E data analysis specialist in its application in this exercise. This phase was used as a pre-test for using EvalC3 methodology, with the learnings used to inform the design of the re-run of EvalC3 in phase 3. The results from the first phase were not relied on to inform the findings of this synthesis.

The EvalC3 methodology attempts to develop predictive models to understand what combinations of attributes (project, volunteer, environment etc.) are important (i.e. necessary and/or sufficient) to seeing positive outcomes and impacts, in this case from ICS projects, based on existing evidence. The ICS theory of change as it was articulated on September 2016 served as the basis for these outcomes. However, EvalC3 only provides measures of association for configurations of attributes. Once found, these associations need to be supplemented by within-project inquires to identify the casual mechanisms at work.

The EvalC3 analysis was conducted at the inception of the mid-term evaluation. It was based on the review of already documented material and intended to investigate patterns of project attributes to test further through the primary field work. As this work was done on data already collected by ICS projects, most of which were not originally designed for this particular analysis framework, the data quality and format was often a poor fit. Significant data cleaning was done to address this but the issue of data compatibility with the analysis framework remained. Incompleteness of measurements of attributes or outcomes could lead to certain configurations or findings not being present through the analysis. As such it was only used to guide the work of the in-country evaluations in phase 2 in terms of investigating changes and the factors that lead to change. This data compatibility issue was better addressed in the re-run of the EvalC3 methodology at the end of phase 3 on the data collected in phase 2.

The purpose of the analysis became four-fold as it developed:

- Understand some of the impacts as recorded by ICS projects.
- Test and better understand the strength of the ICS theory of change.
- Examine the quality of data in ICS, offering suggestions for improvement.
- Feed into planned ICS evaluations to be conducted in phase 2 in late 2016.

The findings from this first phase of the evaluation are woven in the main body of the report.
Phase 2

This phase started in September 2016 with scoping the field work, planning all individual TORs and conducting and documenting 16 projects evaluations.

The countries and projects to be included in the evaluations were selected according to the following criteria:

- Projects in existence for at least 12 months.
- Countries where multiple agencies are operating.
- Thematic and geographic representativeness of the selection.

The final selection of projects included the following, a short description of each of these projects’ local and national contexts is outlined in annex 2, with a brief overview of project planning in annex 3.

Table 1 – list of evaluated projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Project Location</th>
<th>Thematic Focus</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Number of ICS volunteers cycles (completed and/or on placement)</th>
<th>Total number of volunteers (including UK and ICVs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Nyimba</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>8 subsequent cycles</td>
<td>157 (79 UKV, 78 ICVs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Samfya</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>2 full cycles and 1 still on placement</td>
<td>54 (26 UKV, 28 ICVs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choma</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>9 full cycles and 1 still on placement</td>
<td>213 (107 UKV, 106 ICVs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kabwe</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health</td>
<td>Restless</td>
<td>2 full cycles</td>
<td>66 (32 UKV, 34 ICVs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Nandi</td>
<td>Deaf Empowerment</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>1 cycle</td>
<td>21 (10 UKV, 11 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>4 cycles</td>
<td>72 (32 UKV, 40 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Balloon</td>
<td>1 cycle</td>
<td>21 (11 UKV, 10 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Njoro</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Balloon</td>
<td>3 cycles</td>
<td>73 (40 UKV, 33 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nanyuki</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship / Livelihood</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>8 cycles</td>
<td>189 (89 UKV, 100 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Kwali Federal Capital Territory</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>3 cycles in total (2 during ICS 1 and 1 in the current contract.)</td>
<td>56 (24 UKV, 32 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Igangan and nearby communities, Ilesha, Osun State</td>
<td>Livelihood (agriculture based value chains)</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>5 cycles</td>
<td>88 (39 UKV, 49 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oke Ode, Kwara State</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>5 cycles</td>
<td>105 (53 UKV, 52 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ikorodu, Lagos State</td>
<td>Participation and governance and Education</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>6 cycles</td>
<td>114 (56 UKV, 58 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Dinapur</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health and Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>4 cycles</td>
<td>69 (33 UKV, 36 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mboai</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Raleigh</td>
<td>6 cycles (each cycle in different communities).</td>
<td>84 (41 UKV, 43 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mbeya</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Raleigh</td>
<td>10 cycles (each cycle in different communities).</td>
<td>148 (69 UKV, 79 ICV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lindi</td>
<td>Education and Livelihood</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>6 cycles in Lindi municipality and 13 in the region.</td>
<td>240 (117 UKV, 123 ICV)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note, that Nakuru and Njoro, Kenya were part of the same evaluation but had 2 separate sets of project documentation for the original EvalC3 work. In this report they have been treated as a single evaluation case (with Nakuru, which was marked as “Active”, the more accurate description). Furthermore, Nandi in Kenya by VSO, working for Deaf Empowerment only had 1 cycle of volunteers at the point of evaluation and no project documentation when the original EvalC3 analysis was done.
**Evaluation sites selection**

As explained above, the projects constituted a purposeful sample aiming to cover the geographic and thematic spectrum of the whole ICS portfolio. The EvalC3 analysis from phase 1 of all monitoring data enabled the evaluation team to assess the representativeness of the 16 selected projects according to their attributes and the presence of elements of the theory of change. Through the EvalC3 tool we calculated the number of points (or attributes, such as dimensions of change) that a particular project case has that is different to the whole portfolio of other project cases (this is called Hamming distance
d, the lower the Hamming coefficient the more similar the project is to the whole set). this Calculation provides a view of the similarity of individual projects to the overall portfolio specifically according to the presence or absence of key attributes and outcomes of the intervention.

For the purpose of this exercise, the similarity (i.e. Hamming distance) was calculated against the general presence or absence of outcomes seen against the eight dimensions of change detailed in the original ICS theory of change (i.e. how typical is the project’s configuration of outcomes seen compared to all of ICS’s work in 2016) and ranked in order of most similar (lowest number) to least similar (highest number) out of a maximum of 134.

There were many reasons and limitations for the final case selection. All agencies were invited to participate in the evaluation, however only a small number registered an interest. This may introduce a degree of self-selection bias within the evaluation project sample. During the planning phase, some agencies also had to withdraw due to operational restraints such as a lack of capacity, security issues and competing priorities. It will be important to ensure that these issues are addressed and a greater representation of ICS agencies are included for the final evaluation. The calculation of the Hamming distances below were done post-selection as a contextualisation exercise, although a simpler form of the analysis fed into the selection step at the start of phase 2.

**Ranking by sector**

The selection of project cases aimed to cover ICS’s main sectors, specifically Education, Health and Livelihoods. Other ICS sectors such as Environment, Governance and Civic Participation account for under 20% of all projects, with some overlap with other sectors, including within the evaluation sample (e.g. Dinajpur in Bangladesh, which also covers Entrepreneurship). All entrepreneur projects were classed as ‘Livelihood’ in the original ICS data and are presented as such here. Ranking of the evaluation sample within its particular sectors is more important than their overall rankings.

There were 27 Education projects, 29 Health and 55 Livelihood within the ICS portfolio at the point of the EvalC3 analysis. Ideally the phase 2 evaluation cases would include both the most similar cases and a handful of outliers for each sector. Exploring more unique cases enables testing of causal mechanisms in contexts that produce atypical and more rarely seen combinations of outcomes.

For Health and Livelihoods, there was an even spread of projects including both some of the most representative for the sector as well as some of the most outlying cases.

For Education on the other hand, the projects were comparatively less similar to the overall sector. The most similar projects for Education on the basis of the occurrence of attributes and outcomes in monitoring data and reports were those in in Palestine (typically working with university students) and Bolivia (often more awareness raising initiatives than children’s education work). These projects did not meet the criteria of being geographically and thematically representative of the ICS’s portfolio as ICS has very few projects in these countries and they differ to the primary education focus for much of ICS’s other Education work, and were therefore not selected for evaluation.

Other potential options for Education include Mondulkiri in Cambodia, Kathmandu in Nepal, Taliensi in Ghana and Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. However, as evaluations were planned to be clustered within countries, it would have been difficult to have coverage of other suitable projects in these places, for example neither Cambodia nor Nepal operate other Education projects and the next most ‘representative’ project in Ghana is ranked lower than those that were selected for evaluation.

It has been noted that the phase 2 geographic coverage disproportionately favours Africa (e.g. over Asia), as most of the planned evaluations in Bangladesh were cancelled due to security concerns. The agency coverage is also heavily in favour of VSO, as these typically offered greatest project access.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Livelihood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Balloon</td>
<td>Livelihood</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njoro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Livelihood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanyuki</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Livelihood</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ikorodu</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Ranked in ‘Governance’, see text below</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igangan</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwali</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oke Ode</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbozi</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Raleigh</td>
<td>Livelihood</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbeya</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Livelihood</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindi</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabwe</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Restless</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choma</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyimba</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samfyra</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinajpur</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ikorodu, Nigeria, aimed at increasing youth participation and learning in active citizenship, was a cross between Education and Governance. It is ranked 3 out of 5 ‘Governance’ projects, however, the 2 lower-scoring cases did not have enough project information to identify any outcomes from the original EvalC3 work and should more likely be ignored for this comparison.

For Education on the other hand, the projects were comparatively less similar to the overall sector. The most similar projects for Education on the basis of the occurrence of attributes and outcomes in monitoring data and reports were those in in Palestine (typically working with university students) and Bolivia (often more awareness raising initiatives than children’s education work). These projects did not meet the criteria of being geographically and thematically representative of the ICS’s portfolio as ICS has very few projects in these countries and they differ to the primary education focus for much of ICS’s other Education work, and were therefore not selected for evaluation.

Other potential options for Education include Mondulkiri in Cambodia, Kathmandu in Nepal, Taliensi in Ghana and Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. However, as evaluations were planned to be clustered within countries, it would have been difficult to have coverage of other suitable projects in these places, for example neither Cambodia nor Nepal operate other Education projects and the next most ‘representative’ project in Ghana is ranked lower than those that were selected for evaluation.

It has been noted that the phase 2 geographic coverage disproportionately favours Africa (e.g. over Asia), as most of the planned evaluations in Bangladesh were cancelled due to security concerns. The agency coverage is also heavily in favour of VSO, as these typically offered greatest project access.

*https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamming_distance*
Overall selection cases similarity

The projects are ranked below based on their Hamming distance in terms of evidence of outcomes on the eight dimensions of change. They may not correlate with their in-sector rankings (Table 2) as there are expected to be differences between sectors, i.e., a project may correlate more to the overall portfolio than its own sector as it is more similar to projects in other sectors. The lower the ranking in the table below the more similar the project case is to the overall ICS portfolio (out of a total of 134).

Table 3 shows the phase 2 locations selection is a relatively even cross-section of the portfolio:

- 4 out of 16 are ranked within the top 20, suggesting highly similar cases
- 4 out of 16 are ranked between 21-60, suggesting mostly similar cases
- 4 out of 16 are ranked between 60-100, suggesting relatively unique cases
- 4 out of 16 are ranked above 101, suggesting more outlier cases

Methodology for the project evaluations

Once the projects were identified and individual TORs defined, field work was conducted by teams of researchers and evaluators in each country. For each country, two researchers/evaluators were selected and appointed as VSO volunteers. The VSO volunteer researchers were stationed for 3 months in each country and were accompanied by an evaluation and research specialist from the VSO global Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (MER) team and by research assistants selected from the pool of ICS and non-ICS in-country returned volunteers.

In Bangladesh the field work was conducted entirely by an evaluation and research specialist from VSO global MER team because of security considerations at the time of the field work.

The methods used in the primary data collections across the different projects have been well-tested by VSO’s M&E team prior to this ICS evaluation and included:

- One-to-one interviews – interviews were conducted by researchers when engaging key intervention stakeholders, such as: teachers in schools that act as focal people for volunteer activities; community leaders and traditional chiefs from villages where volunteers carry out activities; and when perspectives from VSO programme staff were being gathered.

- Small group discussions and focus group discussion – these included focus group discussions (FGD) with primary beneficiaries, community volunteers (typically local youth volunteers from and placed in host communities) and ICS volunteers.

- Observations – researchers employed observation as an approach in various volunteer training and programmatic outreach activities, including an ICS volunteer community action day, the ICS volunteer mid-phase review (MPR), multiple community and school outreach activities and community awareness raising and condom distribution activities.

- Document review – the initial project plan and subsequent project debriefs were studied by the researchers before and during the in-location evaluation phase. By outlining the structure, activities, challenges and reflections of previous volunteer cycles these provided useful contextualisation and additional detail for the evaluation.

- Participatory Validation workshops and summit at the end of each evaluation with stakeholders and participants to validate findings.

- A quantitative survey tool – as described in the section below, this tool was used with all research participants, capturing comparative data from a variety of stakeholders, including individuals and organisations.

Table 3 – Rank of selection sites by Hamming distance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mbozi</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Raleigh</td>
<td>Livelihoods</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanyuki</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Livelihoods</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samfya</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinajpur</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Livelihoods</td>
<td>Inactive</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabwe</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Restless</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyimba</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Balloon</td>
<td>Livelihoods</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Livelihoods</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igangan</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Inactive</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwara Oke Ero</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Inactive</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbeya</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ikorodu</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Inactive</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njoro</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Balloon</td>
<td>Livelihoods</td>
<td>Inactive</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choma</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindi</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwali</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Approach to data collection**

The data was collected using VSO’s evidence principles and all evaluators received detailed training on these principles prior to comment of their roles.

The first principle of voice and inclusion focuses on the importance of those people affected by the intervention playing an active part in the evaluation through the use of participatory methods and validation feedback sessions. It also highlights the need to gain the perspectives of the most excluded and marginalised groups whilst being aware of dynamics created by power, interest and influence. Data was also collected in such a way to enable disaggregation by gender age and disability. Communities and stakeholders participating in the project evaluations were not involved in the overall evaluation design but did play an important role in informing the sample structure and were involved in validation workshops which influenced and informed the analysis and reporting. Validation workshops had different formats in each location but they were built into the evaluation timeline at an early stage to maximise stakeholder engagement.

The second principle focuses on contribution and the importance of gaining evidence of change and then exploring how the intervention has contributed to change whilst considering alternative factors which may have also influenced the change. The project evaluation reports capture both positive and negative intended and unintended change and the realist approach was a useful methodology to explore context and mechanisms and provided evidence about how change happened.

The third principle is to ensure that our approaches and designs are ethical, reasonable and relevant for the purpose for which they are intended. We test and peer review our methodological approaches which we did for this work through the steering group and also by sharing learning between the different evaluation teams. Care was taken however not to share findings between the teams whilst the fieldwork was underway so as not to influence or bias the teams. We built ongoing analysis into the methodology and ensured that conflicting findings and divergent perspectives were presented and explained.

The final principle is transparency which we approached in a number of ways in this evaluation. Evaluators always gained informed consent when capturing data and explained to participants how the data would be used. Confidentiality was respected through ensuring anonymity of quotations and anonymity of data presented in validation workshops and sessions. In addition to this we ensured that the evaluators reported both negatives and positives, intended and unintended outcomes in project reports which has in turn been reflected in this synthesis report. Validation session for the final reports have been shared with the relevant agencies although the extent to which they have been shared with stakeholders is not yet clear.

**Qualitative data collection**

Qualitative data was captured through interviews and focus group discussions and a series of participatory workshops. The focus and approach to collection of qualitative data varied for different stakeholder groups. An iterative approach was taken to the development of interview schedules and discussion direction, which were all designed using the overarching evaluation questions as a thematic framework but adapted for the specific group.

Using a framework analysis (see annex 11 for an example from the Zambia evaluation), collected qualitative data was thematically aggregated according to the key evaluation questions, namely: by distinct elements of the delivery model; by the eight dimensions of change; by questioning around relational dynamics; and by additional questioning relating to the sustainability of the intervention.

Alongside this, data was aggregated by emergent themes that researchers identified as pertinent and significant to the intervention in this specific context. By structuring the data in this way, researchers were able to conduct thematic analysis of qualitative data across all stakeholders engaged, whilst also maintaining the ability to analyse and understand general respondent views.

**Quantitative survey tool**

A quantitative survey was conducted at each of the ICS evaluation sites with a range of different respondents, including ICS volunteers, partner staff and community members. This survey tool was not piloted prior to the evaluation due to the lack of time and resources and a need for consistency throughout the evaluation. The evaluation process has highlighted a number of limitations regarding the use of the survey tool and this is a point of learning for the final evaluation, which needs to plan and budget for a pilot if a similar tool is to be used.

The survey questions focused on ICS’s ways of working and perceptions around the eight dimensions of change within the ICS theory of change. Questions were presented as positive statements relating to the way ICS worked and related changes with respondents asked to select a response from a selection of 5 ranging from ‘Strongly agree’ to ‘Strongly disagree’. In total 405 responses (to the survey only) were collected across the 16 projects, though not all respondents answered all questions. The results of the survey for EQ2 focuses on the proportion of respondents who have answered ‘Strongly agree’ as this is typically representative of the overall views, i.e. responses with the most ‘Strongly agree’ also typically have the fewest ‘Strongly disagree’ and ‘Slightly disagree’, there were no instances of highly polarised results by respondent group. The full spread of results for the survey can be found in annex 4.

Information captured include demographics (age, gender, respondent type). Most respondents were community members followed by staff for community organisations the ICS volunteers were placed with.

Out of the 405 respondents, 392 provided details of their background, with community member most common (123) followed by community organisation staff member with ICS placements (59).
399 out of 405 respondents provided gender details, with 50% male and female split.
400 out of 405 respondents provided details of disability, with <1% considering themselves to be disabled.
Phase 3

The last phase took place between April and June 2017 and consisted of a synthesis of all evidence generated in phase 1 and 2. This brought together the primary data and evidence from the 16 project evaluations including the qualitative data and the results of the quantitative survey.

The synthesis employed realist methodology and EvalC3 to analyse the findings from all qualitative research and the findings are included in the next section in this report. This synthesis phase was conducted by VSO’s global M&E team with methodological oversight by the ICS steering committee.

Realist evaluation is a form of theory-driven evaluation which focuses on understanding what the mechanisms are in the ICS model that contribute to change across different contexts. A realist evaluation attempts to answer the questions of “what works, for whom, in what respects, to what extent, in what contexts, and how?” This is achieved by identifying the underlying generative mechanisms that explain ‘how’ the outcomes were caused and the influence of context.

Realist evaluation methods were used to explore what mechanisms the ICS interventions, across different contexts, triggered the generated outcomes. This analysis was used in particular to answer the second part of evaluation question 1 (What changes do the ICS intervention contribute to, and how does this come about across different contexts and sectors?) and evaluation question 2 (To what extent do the ICS interventions lead to change across the 8 dimensions of change?). EvalC3 was particularly useful in addressing evaluation question 2 (To what extent do the ICS interventions lead to change across the 8 dimensions of change?) and to explore the relationship between the different dimensions of change. EvalC3 was also used to explore the second part of question 4 (What aspects of relationships contribute to greater sustainability? What components of change have a positive relationship with sustainability?).

The first part of evaluation questions 1 and 4 (What changes do the ICS intervention contribute to? And how sustainable are development outcomes and impacts?) were answered through a combination of framework analysis of the qualitative data and the results of the quantitative survey.

Methodology for the synthesis

The work on the overall synthesis involved coding all data documented in all 16 evaluation reports from phase 2 using the Context, Mechanism and Outcome (CMO) framework. All CMOs have been extracted from all reports and summarised in spreadsheets under the evaluation questions.

In order to find the recurrence of particular patterns of CMOs, these were grouped and categorised according to their re-occurrence across sectors and geographies. All CMOs have been mapped against the overarching ICS theory of change. This exercise has led to the identification of patterns of change and a simplification of the eight dimensions of change in the ICS TOC.

In addition to this, findings from the use of the survey were extracted from all reports and aggregated across different contexts and projects. Findings from the surveys were analysed and compared with the qualitative data.

The analysis for the synthesis also included re-running EvalC3 analysis with the data from the 16 evaluations to test the new configuration of dimensions of change as attributes to outcomes. Seven project attributes identified from the phase 2 evaluations were tested against the simplified dimensions of change outcomes. Only project attributes that appear to be significant are included in the results.

EvalC3 methodology and results

EvalC3 is an Excel application designed to find sets of attributes of cases (aka models) that are the best predictors of an outcome of interest EvalC3 algorithms were used to search the sample of 16 evaluations for the presence or absence of each dimension of change (outcome) and the attributes of the delivery model mechanisms (see section on evaluation question 3 for more detail on these) associated with these outcomes. For each model, the results are posted in a truth table counting the number of cases for each combination of attributes and outcome as below:

- True positive (TP), both attributes and the outcome are present, the model is a positive predictor
- True negative (TN), neither attributes nor outcome is seen, the model is a negative predictor
- False positive (FP), the attributes are present but outcome is not, the model does not work for these cases, other factors not in the model may have hindered the outcome
- False negatives (FN), the attributes are not present but the outcome is, other mechanisms are likely to have led to the change in the absence of the model attributes

All truth tables for the models presented in the following section can be found in Annex 9.

Volunteer researchers for all evaluations were also invited to feedback into the synthesis report towards the end of phase 3. Researchers who conducted evaluations in Zambia, Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania attended a synthesis meeting, whilst other researchers submitted feedback through email. One researcher for Kenya did not provide any feedback to the synthesis due to personal circumstances. Participants to individual evaluations run by the researchers however were not involved in the synthesis. The findings were then shared with participating agencies at a workshop in July 2017 and feedback collected in August.

ICS Mid-Term Evaluation - A synthesis report
Limitations

The following categories of limitations were highlighted in the individual project evaluations and within the third phase of the mid-term evaluation:

1. The quality of the monitoring data used in the first run of EvalC3 analysis in phase one was inconsistent (see section above for more details about this limitation). The results were used to inform the structure of the phase 2 evaluation work but should not be relied upon for reaching conclusions or understanding causal mechanisms of change.

2. The team of evaluators spent an average of 3 weeks in each project locations in phase 2. During this time they employed a snowballing approach to reach as broad a range of stakeholders in communities as possible. However, access to critical respondents was not consistent across all projects. In some projects partner organisations changed over the years and it was not possible to include all previous partners in the investigation. In the projects where volunteers were not present at the time of the evaluation, the process of identifying stakeholders was more time consuming as they were not consistently documented.

3. Monitoring and evaluation practices in all included projects were found to be weak, the evaluations could not consistently include project monitoring data in the investigations. Data was not recorded in consistent formats across ICS and individual agencies also had their own M&E tools for data capture. M&E practices development by individual agencies could not be included in the synthesis analysis.

4. The fieldwork was conducted by different teams of evaluators in different countries. All evaluators were inducted and accompanied by VSO’s global MER team. However their focus and approach to the task varied, resulting in differences in the individual project reports structure and content.

5. Across the different projects evaluations the need for translation varied, this impacted of the quality and amount of quotes that were collected. This is reflected in the uneven use of quotes in this report.

6. Due to operational issues, the sample of projects included is not fully representative of the whole ICS consortium of agencies, with VSO’s projects in Africa constituting a larger proportion. This is particularly the case for health, education and livelihood, and to a lesser extent entrepreneurship. As such, the findings of this evaluation will not be representative of all ICS projects but should be used as a basis for learning and reflection for all agencies on what changes have been observed for ICS. It will be important that this project sampling issue is addressed for the final evaluation in discussion with ICS agencies at the point of sample selection.

7. As only agencies who registered an interest in taking part in the mid-term evaluation were included in the project selection, there is potential for a degree of self-selection bias within the evaluation project sample. The sampling approach for the final evaluation should look to overcome this limitation in its design.

8. The evaluation piloted the use of a survey. This generated valuable data on the perspectives of partners and community members. However, it was found difficult to use with some audiences and difficult to translate, leading to possible instances of misunderstanding of the questions and less reliable answers gathered. For example, there are significant differences between the responses of volunteers and community members to the extent that they do not appear to be comparable. It is possible to hypothesise that some desirability biases might have influenced responses of partners and community members, however this has not been explored more in depth. The quantitative analysis has focused more on differences in answers to the survey within each respondent type rather than across groups in order to compare their perspectives relative to each other (i.e. comparing what one group felt about a question relative to their answers to other survey questions against a different group’s perspectives of that question relative to their answers to other questions, rather than directly comparing a question across different groups). Quantitative analysis across questions is included in annex 4. The two Raleigh locations in Tanzania provided feedback that was universally positive, though this could be explained by demographic differences in respondents. These two projects were considered separately in the analysis by location to allow for a more informative comparison between locations, though it has not significantly impacted on the findings of the synthesis report. Future use will need to include a simplification of the tool.

9. Some respondents across the different project evaluations were included in focus group discussions and administered the survey. There is therefore some overlap in the total number of respondents.

10. The re-run EvalC3 analysis results in phase 3 includes false positive cases where the combination of attributes used to predict an outcome is present but the outcome has not been seen. Further analysis of differences in context and mechanisms are needed to understand why the model did not work in the false positive cases (e.g. absence of a different factor, or change in project design). At this stage it has not been possible in all cases to investigate the full detail of the macro-contexts of interventions that might have influenced those patterns, so we have not been able to explain why certain cases cannot be explained by the EvalC3 models in this report. These should be explored further in future evaluations and reviews of monitoring data.

11. As the researchers for each individual evaluation within phase 2 were VSO volunteers or VSO staff, there is potential for bias and/or conflicts of interest within these reports through pre-formed judgements towards VSO, ICS interventions or from external pressures. However, VSO’s M&E team has a track record for undertaking internal evaluations and managing potential conflicts this might create. Whilst this may not negate all possibilities of bias within this report, the evaluation team are experienced in exploring improvement and learning in its work within VSO. Furthermore, VSO volunteers were sought as they provided a large pool of potential candidates from VSO’s database. Volunteer researchers were selected for their knowledge of development and experience in research evaluations and not according to their desirability for VSO or ICS. All researchers were allowed to work freely, were adequately supported by ICS and faced minimal interference from ICS staff. Such an approach is thought be have minimised the risk of bias in the evaluation work, particularly as findings were triangulated using validation workshops of key stakeholders in phase 2 and synthesis meetings with researchers for phase 3.

12. ICS projects do not operate in silo in community as other initiatives and organisations may be working in similar areas in some locations. The evaluations offer some information on partnerships established between ICS and other local initiatives but this is not explored more deeply and is likely not exhaustive. Contributions to change from these other linkages could be explored further in the final evaluation.

13. The evaluations often found there had not been enough time to adequately explore sustainability questions since ICS activities were carried out. This would be a good area to explore in the final evaluation.
Findings

Findings will be reported and summarised against the main evaluation questions:

1. What changes do the ICS interventions contribute to, and how does this come about across different contexts and sectors?
2. To what extent do the ICS interventions lead to change across the 8 dimensions of change?
3. Which aspects, if any, of the ICS delivery model build relational dynamics and how do these impact in the lives of the poor and marginalised communities?
4. How sustainable are development outcomes and impacts? What aspects of relationships contribute to greater sustainability? What components of change have a positive relationship with sustainability?

EQ1: What changes do the ICS intervention contribute to, and how does this come about across different contexts and sectors?

Findings

This section documents and summarises the evidence of changes, positive and negative, intended and unintended, found for communities and partner organizations across the 16 projects evaluated.

Evidence and analysis include findings from different geographies, sectors of intervention and agencies.

Patterns of changes, positive and negative, were identified within all evaluations, across all geographies, thematic areas of focus and longevity of the interventions. Their significance, recurrence and sustainability varied by context and project. Some have been found to be recurrent across all projects, others have been identified through isolated examples.

From the more isolated cases it is not possible to infer any conclusion about the scale with which the global ICS portfolio contribute to positive changes for poor and marginalized communities. However, because of the methodological design of the evaluation and the attention paid to understanding the patterns through which change was generated, all patterns found maintain explanatory and predictive power of what the ICS interventions can contribute in certain contexts and circumstances. This therefore remains critical evidence to understand the relevance of the current theory of change and for the future design of ICS projects and programmes.

The most visible area of difference in the findings about what changes ICS contributes to emerges between all projects focusing on entrepreneurship development (in Kenya, Tanzania and some elements in Bangladesh) and all other ICS interventions (education, SRH, livelihood). Whereas projects focusing on education, sexual and reproductive health, livelihood have validated most elements of the overarching theory of change and the relevance of some (or all) of the eight dimensions of change and of the relational approach to development, the ICS entrepreneurship projects included in the evaluation have demonstrated different outcomes and patterns of change for different target groups to the theory of change. This has fundamentally challenged the assumptions behind the ICS theory of change in relation to entrepreneurship projects. More details on the areas of change that have been found across the different thematic areas are given in tables 5-8 below. All projects found some degree of change.

The synthesis exercise also identified geographic variations, related to the impact of different macro-contexts of operation, but also emerging as a consequence of different operational capacity and approaches of teams across different countries. Programme teams in some countries, for example, demonstrated more advanced ability to adapt programme plans on an ongoing basis, to include ICS interventions in wider programming in-country, and to establish strong and mutual partnerships.

Through all the field work in the 16 projects the evaluations attempted to understand what changes within communities ICS interventions contributed to. In order to do so, the field work was shaped to allow for open qualitative research to identify all changes: positive and negative, planned and unplanned.

All evaluated ICS projects had been planned, designed and monitored with a stronger focus on activities rather than on outcomes for communities and partners organisation. Because of this, all evaluator teams found it difficult to distinguish planned from unplanned areas of change. The idea of pre-determined project objectives proved to be redundant in the context of this exercise. Maintaining an open focus in approaching this question therefore allowed the evaluation teams to capture the whole breadth of changes the ICS interventions contributed to.
The main changes identified across all projects and evaluations are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of change / Outcomes</th>
<th>Significance and recurrence</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Livelihood</th>
<th>Entrepreneurship</th>
<th>SRH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Increased access to information, services and resources amongst poor and marginalised people in the target community by existing services.</td>
<td>Found in all sexual and reproductive health projects evaluated (4 projects in Zambia and 1 in Bangladesh) and in all education projects (4 in Nigeria). Some indication of increased access to resources amongst entrepreneurs in Kenya (3) and Tanzania (3).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Increased social capital and interconnectedness amongst community structures and organisations.</td>
<td>Found in Nigeria (4 projects in education and livelihoods), Kenya (Nandi deaf empowerment project), Bangladesh (1 project in SRH).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community structures established and or strengthened.</td>
<td>Found as a key area of change across all 4 projects evaluated in Nigeria and 1 in Bangladesh.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Patterns of sustained active citizenship</td>
<td>Found in all projects evaluated in Nigeria and Bangladesh (1 project).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Some increase in skills and capabilities of young entrepreneurs to develop sustainable and profitable businesses</td>
<td>Found in all entrepreneurship projects, though the degree and consistency of change varied (all in Kenya, 2 in Tanzania and part of the Bangladesh project).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These 5 areas of change have manifested themselves differently across the different thematic areas. The section below explores this in more detail.

### Education:

**Table 5 – Education changes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Increased access to information, services and resources amongst poor and marginalised people</th>
<th>Improved school attendance and reduced absenteeism of pupils – to some extent (reported)</th>
<th>These have been reported by school staff and officials across all projects, including those in Zambia focusing on SRH but within schools, or those in Tanzania working on employment skills in secondary schools. In Nigeria, the evaluators found evidence of 100 children supported to access education in Ikorodu as part of the intervention. However, it has not been possible to validate this through the analysis of school registers or attendance tracking.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased use of participatory teaching methods by school teachers – to a limited extent (reported)</td>
<td>This has been reported consistently across all project evaluations, mainly through the innovation and inspiration of ICS volunteers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This comes with some limitations as the absence of baselines and thorough understanding of existing teaching practices means the strength of the evidence of the change is limited.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Increased social capital and interconnectedness amongst community structures and organisations</td>
<td>Increased community awareness (parents, teachers, leaders) of the importance of education for all and increased access to children out of school – to a large extent</td>
<td>This was found in particularly in Nigeria through the support to Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces and the Back2School programme in 3 projects as well as in Kenya in the Nandi Deaf Awareness programme. All 5 sexual reproductive health projects also identified changes related to community engagement in education and children participation in education, given the focus of the intervention with primary schools as placement partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of groups of parents of Deaf Children in Nandi – to a significant extent</td>
<td>This was found only in one project in Kenya where new parents groups support and raise awareness of the needs of local deaf children, e.g. around local service access and funding applications.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in approach to discipline and decrease in use of corporal punishment by school teachers – to a limited extent (reported)</td>
<td>An increase in awareness has been reported in 2 locations in Nigeria. The extent to which this change is translated into practice and is sustained after and between volunteer cycles is currently difficult to ascertain.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community structures established and or strengthened, and 4. Patterns of sustained active citizenship</td>
<td>INS continue working with community and national volunteers on the Back2School programme – to a significant extent</td>
<td>Found in Nigeria in all 3 Back2School projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Livelihood:

Table 6 – Livelihood changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Increased access to information, services and resources amongst poor and marginalised people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community awareness of agriculture and access to agricultural services, particularly for local youth seeking employment – to a limited extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased information about social enterprises and employment opportunities for women and marginalised groups in host community – to a limited extent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Increased social capital and interconnectedness amongst community structures and organisations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased self-confidence, sense of ownership, and commitment to improving community of community members – to a large extent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sexual Reproductive Health:

Table 7 – Sexual Reproductive Health changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Increased access to information, services and resources amongst poor and marginalised people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in occurrence of teenagers’ pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease – to some extent (reported)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There has been significant behaviour change. Pregnancy cases have dropped. This year just one, which we attribute to the education they are getting.” Head teacher, Secondary School, Nyimba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The time VSO were not here the number was too small for attending family planning. When they started the numbers increased. Even in family planning they’ve seen a change, there’s greater child spacing. Before it [the number] was too small.” RHSC staff, Nyimba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Increased capacity of partners to reach larger population groups within target community with messages, services and information related to SRH – to a large extent | This has been found across all projects. In all cases partner organisations have experienced an increase in their functional short-term capacity to deliver their services – able to provide their services to more people in the community. There is no evidence that such functional increase can be sustained after the volunteers’ cycles have been completed. |

| Increased demand and uptake of services and use of local health programmes – to some extent | This has been found across all 5 projects. Both the sustainability of such increase in demand, and the capacity of health structures to respond have not been evidenced. |

| Volunteers replacing and jeopardising locally available resources – to a large extent | This was found in Zambia in 2 projects, where local volunteers moved to allow space of direct intervention for ICS volunteers. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Increased social capital and interconnectedness amongst community structures and organisations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local CBOs working together – to a large extent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Community structures established and or strengthened, and 4. Patterns of sustained active citizenship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Established community structures – to a large extent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Entrepreneurship development:
Table 8 – Entrepreneurship changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh – SRH</td>
<td>There are taboos against speaking about sexual reproductive health.</td>
<td>7 peer educators were selected from the communities and trained by the volunteers with representatives of the 4 youth clubs. The peer educators were motivated by wanting to improve their skills and knowledge and wanting to help the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria – Livelihood</td>
<td>The residents of Iggangan, Asuku, Ilosi and Oke Agbede are largely small holder farmers.</td>
<td>ICS volunteers accompanied the establishment of young farmers clubs, in collaboration with agricultural services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya – Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Local young people lack business knowledge</td>
<td>ICS volunteers provide business training and in some cases, small business loans, to entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This pattern of contributing to change has been predominantly found in all projects in Nigeria and Bangladesh13 (5 projects in total). Some isolated examples have been found in the other projects as a consequence of the community action days in particular, which run separately from the main focus of the projects and enable ICS volunteers to work more directly with communities.

In Bangladesh ICS volunteers worked to find experts and expertise in the community, coordinating the training material for the peer educators and the community courtyards. They consolidated the knowledge in a handbook working across formal services and CBOs.

In the instances where this pattern was found, ICS volunteers did not deliver services directly (like training or community awareness) but invested in finding appropriate expertise and brokering relationships.

This was particularly successful in cases where ICS volunteers worked alongside the community and other forms of local community volunteers and were part of a cohesive project, as opposed to being distributed across a larger number of secondary partners (also referred to as placement partners).

The table below includes a specific example of context mechanism and outcome analysis to evidence this pattern:

How did these changes come about? The context-mechanism-outcome (CMO) analysis

In order to assess how the identified changes came about across all the individual cases and in the synthesis, contexts and mechanisms were identified, mapped and grouped.

Different levels of contexts analysed included:

- Macro-context of the countries and geographic location of intervention.
- Operational context of the agency leading the project being evaluated.
- Operational context of the ICS delivery model.

Through the analysis of the interaction between the different sets of contexts, the mechanisms triggered by the ICS interventions and the identified outcomes, we were able to identify the following set of theories to explain how the changes identified in the section above emerged. As already indicated in the description of the changes (outcomes), the explanatory theories vary in their recurrence and representativeness of the whole portfolio. Some patterns of change were found in isolated cases, and while they might not be representative of the whole ICS intervention, they are critical in understanding, explaining and predicting how and under which circumstances ICS can contribute to positive change. A table showing all the CMO patterns below is shown in annex 6.

Pattern 1: ICS increases access to information, services and resources; builds community structures, builds social capital and active citizenship by: unlocking resources in the community, establishing relationships and fostering collaboration.
Pattern 2: ICS strengthens community structures and promotes patterns of sustained active citizenship, through joining outside and inside knowledge (ICS volunteers and communities working together).

This pattern of change has been identified across all the same projects as above and it appears to work in conjunction with the pattern described above. The most representative examples in Bangladesh and Nigeria found the combination of ICS volunteers and community volunteers operating together to respectively create interest and widen reach, and deepen the engagement and relevance of the intervention. The interaction between ICS volunteers (both from the UK and from other parts of the countries of implementation) and local community volunteers is critical to ensure the merging of inside and outside knowledge and therefore the local relevance of potentially innovative practices.

This is what this community has developed. Since ‘...’ us - the young farmers, the CCSV, and the community. ‘...’ other, we have to work together to achieve common goals, so since ICS are here, they love to cooperate with...’ (Young Farmer’s Club, Igangan)

In projects where ICS volunteers worked as additional human resources without (or replacing) local volunteers, this pattern of change was not observed (this was found in 4 projects in Zambia, 1 project in Tanzania and 2 projects in Kenya).

‘The parents of the children they know us very well – if it was just the ICS they would not entrust their children into their hands. When we are involved they freely let their children become involved and to attend programmes’ (community volunteer, Kwali, Nigeria)

Table 10 – Pattern of change 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh – SRH</td>
<td>ICS interventions established community structures and worked with and brokered collaboration between 4 individual youth clubs, peer educators, child marriage prevention committee, girls club and entrepreneurs with their committee.</td>
<td>Strengthened community structure and their ways of working collaboratively to a significant extent (as an example the 4 individual youth clubs have merged into an overall one with the capability to apply for formal registration as a result of the interaction with ICS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorest and most marginalised members of the community not reached by existing initiatives of youth clubs, peer educators and child marriage prevention committees.</td>
<td>ICS volunteers worked in an inclusive manner, introducing the practices of going around the community door to door. Peer educators and youth clubs learnt this approach and realized this had the potential to engage people that would have otherwise been left out.</td>
<td>The door to door approach is now practiced by all peer educators and community participations in courtyard sessions has increased, which includes the poorest and most marginalised.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pattern 3: ICS increases the reach and inclusion of services by bridging between communities and decision makers and leveraging community participation.

This pattern was again found in the same projects in Bangladesh and Nigeria, operating across education and health services. Some evidence was also found in a livelihood project in Nigeria, where ICS interventions connected communities and young people to agricultural services. Similar patterns were found in the Nandi Deaf Awareness project in Kenya through the establishment of Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces.

‘...’ the local area to a meeting in which they successfully applied for funding for local deaf children.

In projects where ICS volunteers worked as additional human resources without (or replacing) local volunteers, this pattern of change was not observed (this was found in 4 projects in Zambia, 1 project in Tanzania and 2 projects in Kenya).

‘...’ the local government to invite deaf youth in local clinics to some extent.

Table 11 – Patterns of change 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh – SRH</td>
<td>Existing community support for the sessions in the courtyard.</td>
<td>ICS volunteers established contact with Union Parisad (local authority) to gather larger support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria – Livelihoods</td>
<td>Existing gaps between formal health services and communities.</td>
<td>ICS volunteers built links with service providers, invited government officials and experts to the community action days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya – Deaf Awareness</td>
<td>Existence of government services and funds for deaf children, but limited interaction with deaf communities.</td>
<td>ICS intervention supported the organisation of Deaf Youth in Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces. This enabled the local government to invite deaf youth in the local area to a meeting in which they explained how community groups could access funds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pattern 4: ICS increases the reach of services by amplifying existing messages and increasing short term functional capacity of organisations.

This pattern of change was particularly prominent in the SRH projects evaluated in Zambia, where volunteers worked mostly to add functional capacity to local organisations and disseminate existing messages. Volunteers added human resources to the partner organisations and capitalised on their ability to generate interest in the community to disseminate existing messages and create awareness more widely, thereby increasing the reach of services but having little impact on their technical quality.

In Zambia, ICS interventions operate in a complex context of existing messages and influences on sexual reproductive health and rights, delivered both by governments and civil societies. All interventions focused on SRH and intervened in a range of spaces including education and health services. Across all four projects, outcomes have been identified around increased access and awareness of services. The main mechanism for this in all projects has been an increased short term functional capacity of placement partners, given the volume of additional resources arriving in the ICS cycles.

“The coming of Restless Development through ICS is able to boost our human resource. They are working as our partners, not as Restless. For example, during the Community Health Day event, they are able to do a lot of activities; we [clinic] don’t have time to talk about drug abuse to children, but they [ICS volunteers] have that time. They usually help us [clinic staff], the only thing they can’t do is prescribe drugs. They really help us if they come, they register [patients], help clients with books, teach about HIV/AIDS when I am counselling.”

Psycho-social counsellor and ICS focal person, Clinic, Kabwe

Therefore, in the context of ICS operating in conjunction with pre-existing local and national interventions, the mechanisms of the repetition of topic and amplification through creative ways of presenting information generated an increase in the people reached by the same messages.

“There is limited human resources at these health centres. At a rural health centre you’d just have three members of staff, against 14,000 people, so it’s a bit tricky for them to tell people all the time because they’ll be busy attending to those people. Without interventions from people like us, those other organisations, it’s very difficult for people to access information. So that is why there’s that huge gap.” Project staff, Nyimba

The same mechanisms (repetition and short-term functional capacity) however, also generated negative outcomes in the same projects by replacing locally provided messages and reducing locally provided awareness. Interestingly, instead of building on the existence of community volunteers and generating synergies, the ICS intervention in Zambia (both in the implementation of VSO and Restless), led to the removal of the local resources and volunteers.

“We just moved [the community health volunteer sessions] to make room for the ICS volunteers. The ICS volunteers would come, and there’d be no community volunteers there. Before ICS, community volunteers came often, up to four days a week. When VSO came, we shared. The first year, ICS volunteers shared skills and new ideas with community volunteers. In the second year, that didn’t happen. I don’t know why. Community volunteers stopped coming.” RHSC staff, Nyimba

In these circumstances, in addition to jeopardising the availability of local resources, the quality and the relevance of the services offered directly by volunteers was found to be inconsistent. In all the cases in Zambia, for example, ICS volunteers were required to directly deliver training and awareness sessions, often on topics they did not fully master and were not skilled or trained on. This jeopardised the quality of the information and the relevance of the intervention. This was avoided when volunteers operated to surface local knowledge and broker relationships with experts as appropriate.

Examples of this pattern of change (i.e. direct delivery and amplification of messages) have also been found in the first design of the 3 education projects in Nigeria, before their redesign to focus on community inclusive spaces.


Pattern 5: ICS challenges social norms and practices through the attention and interest raised by volunteers when perceived as outsiders.

It would be interesting to explore this identified patterns of change more in depth. The emergent mechanism of ICS volunteers generating interest and challenging local practices and attitudes seemed often to be related to their being from the UK. This raises serious concerns about the risk of unwittingly perpetuating stereotypes about people of different backgrounds and therefore needs to be explored further.

The evaluation in Nigeria found that Nigerian and UK volunteers bring new ideas and energy into their community, which attract a lot of interest. Interviewees were very clear that Nigerian and UK volunteers were treated the same, however it has been noted that interviewees were more likely to refer to ‘white volunteers’. The complexities and implications of this are not addressed in this evaluation, however it is worth noting that this occurs and that VSO could do well to consider the implications of this in future programming.

Reflection

Although all patterns described above have been found and have contributed to changes, the evaluation highlighted that they are not equally able to contribute to sustainable positive change. Where volunteers have worked as catalysts for change, brokering collaborations and bridging between services, institutions and communities, this has lead to deeper and potentially more sustainable positive change. This will be explored further in the answers to evaluation questions 2, 3 and 4.
EQ2: To what extent do the ICS interventions and its design attributes lead to change across the eight identified dimensions of change?

This section documents and summarises the evidence of change, against the eight dimensions of change proposed in the original ICS TOC. This second evaluation question was narrower than the first and enabled us to find presence or absence of positive change across eight determined areas of change.

The analysis summarised in this section also explores the interrelated nature of the eight dimensions of change and their relationship to operational attributes of ICS. This includes the findings of the re-run of EvalC3 using the evidence from the 16 projects evaluations (for a more detailed explanation of how to read the EvalC3 findings see page 29 of the methodological section and see Annex 9 for the EvalC3 re-run source data table).

The findings against this question have allowed us propose a redesigned TOC that maps the relationships against the dimensions.

An overall intention of the evaluation was to test and validate the overarching theory of change and to understand if and how ICS contributes to the eight dimensions of change that have been found part of the relational approach to volunteering in the Valuing Volunteers research.

The evaluation of all education, livelihood and health projects generated evidence of changes against the designated dimensions of change. The findings however have demonstrated different significance of the dimensions of change and a different pattern of relationship between them. Critical dimensions of change have been found to be:

- Inclusion (particularly in terms of increased access to services);
- Ownership & agency and social action;
- Collaboration and Networking;
- Participation and participatory practices;
- Innovation and inspiration;

Across all entrepreneurship projects included in the evaluations, we have not found sufficient evidence of change in many of the dimensions of change as they are understood within in overarching ICS theory of change, though they have resulted in change in terms of establishment of new businesses and increase in entrepreneur skills and confidence.

The practice found through the evaluation demonstrated a pattern of change illustrated in diagram 4.

Diagram 4 – Emergent pattern of change

The emergent theory of change is based on the evidence seen through the evaluations for this mid-term review and may not capture the full spectrum of pathways to how change happens. As such, continual refinement through iterative evidence generation is needed to build on its relevance and accuracy.

This emergent theory of change appears a good fit for the findings for health, education and livelihood projects, but is less representative of entrepreneurship projects. Details of the relationship between the different dimensions of change in this emergent theory of change and the differences seen for entrepreneurship projects are discussed in the following sections.

This emergent theory of change will either need to be reworked to incorporate the outcomes and patterns of change seen for entrepreneurship, or alternatively, developing a separate theory of change for entrepreneurship may also be appropriate for understanding the impacts of ICS interventions.

\[\text{EQ2: To what extent do the ICS interventions and its design attributes lead to change across the eight identified dimensions of change?}\]

\[\text{This section documents and summarises the evidence of change, against the eight dimensions of change proposed in the original ICS TOC. This second evaluation question was narrower than the first and enabled us to find presence or absence of positive change across eight determined areas of change.}\]

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\[\text{An overall intention of the evaluation was to test and validate the overarching theory of change and to understand if and how ICS contributes to the eight dimensions of change that have been found part of the relational approach to volunteering in the Valuing Volunteers research.}\]

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\[\text{- Inclusion (particularly in terms of increased access to services);}\]

\[\text{- Ownership & agency and social action;}\]

\[\text{- Collaboration and Networking;}\]

\[\text{- Participation and participatory practices;}\]

\[\text{- Innovation and inspiration;}\]

\[\text{Across all entrepreneurship projects included in the evaluations, we have not found sufficient evidence of change in many of the dimensions of change as they are understood within in overarching ICS theory of change, though they have resulted in change in terms of establishment of new businesses and increase in entrepreneur skills and confidence.}\]

\[\text{The practice found through the evaluation demonstrated a pattern of change illustrated in diagram 4.}\]

\[\text{Diagram 4 – Emergent pattern of change}\]

\[\text{The emergent theory of change is based on the evidence seen through the evaluations for this mid-term review and may not capture the full spectrum of pathways to how change happens. As such, continual refinement through iterative evidence generation is needed to build on its relevance and accuracy.}\]

\[\text{This emergent theory of change appears a good fit for the findings for health, education and livelihood projects, but is less representative of entrepreneurship projects. Details of the relationship between the different dimensions of change in this emergent theory of change and the differences seen for entrepreneurship projects are discussed in the following sections.}\]

\[\text{This emergent theory of change will either need to be reworked to incorporate the outcomes and patterns of change seen for entrepreneurship, or alternatively, developing a separate theory of change for entrepreneurship may also be appropriate for understanding the impacts of ICS interventions.}\]
Quality and effectiveness

Some change is observed in service quality or effectiveness but there is limited or unclear evidence as to the extent of positive change. Reference may be made to some positive impacts for staff / volunteers in partner organisations but this is more confined to select individuals rather than across the whole organisation.

Findings from the qualitative research

The field work has found very limited evidence of improvement in the technical quality and effectiveness of services. However it found extensive evidence of the increase in reach of services and the increase in community ability to access services and resources by volunteers acting as short-term functional capacity, allowing these services to reach more people. This area of outcome has been identified across all sectors and geographies, although the mechanisms that have led to this and the specific way in which the increased reach and access has varied (see section below on inclusion). Positive increase in reach and access has also appeared to be found mostly in conjunctions with positive changes in communities’ ownership and empowerment.

In Bangladesh we found evidence of improving the quality of services through the generation of a handbook for staff / volunteers in partner organisations but reference may be made to some positive impacts or effectiveness but there is limited or unclear evidence from Nairobi and Nanyuki in Kenya, that a significant lack of volunteer skills can negatively impact project relationships and outcomes, as volunteers are unable to contribute to their placements, instead becoming a burden to entrepreneurs. This has led conflict between entrepreneurs, volunteers and ICS in these two projects and inhibit the transfer of skills or the formation of new businesses. There is no evidence of volunteers improving the quality or reach of any other services available in the host community as a result of their ICS entrepreneurship placements.

In the projects evaluated in Zambia, stakeholders reported recurrent lack of confidence on the quality and effectiveness of services when these have been delivered directly by ICS volunteers, with limited community and partner support. This has been found in the quality and content of training sessions and awareness raising activities around SRH.

All three education projects in Nigeria were operating in the context of an acute shortage of qualified teachers in subject such as sciences and maths, low morale and poor infrastructure resulting in high dropout rate. The first iteration of ICS interventions focused on teacher training, however they did not generate any evidenced outcome (from feedback and project data analysed for the evaluations) on the quality of education for pupils.

For entrepreneurship, there is evidence of ICS volunteers improving the business skills of entrepreneurs by providing relevant training in all projects. However, there is evidence from Nairobi and Nanyuki in Kenya, that a significant lack of volunteer skills can negatively impact project relationships and outcomes, as volunteers are unable to contribute to their placements, instead becoming a burden to entrepreneurs. This has led conflict between entrepreneurs, volunteers and ICS in these two projects and inhibit the transfer of skills or the formation of new businesses. There is no evidence of volunteers improving the quality or reach of any other services available in the host community as a result of their ICS entrepreneurship placements.

Findings from the quantitative survey

The quantitative survey included a specific question relating to quality & effectiveness of services. Stakeholders were asked to what degree they agree that ICS volunteers helped to improve local services.

The responses from the survey match the findings of the qualitative research. This question was one of the lowest scoring questions overall across all respondent groups (ranked 12 out of 13 for ‘strongly agree, 49% of total respondent), including volunteers, community members and community organisations with ICS placements. It further suggest that volunteers were mostly unable to improve the technical quality of services and only achieved limited success in extending access and reach of services in some locations.

Findings from EvalC3 on quality & effectiveness

As explained in the methodological section, through the EvalC3 analysis we have tested patterns of association between different dimensions of change, and between operational design attributes and dimensions of change as they emerged from the qualitative research.

Only a limited EvalC3 analysis of attributes associated with improved quality and effectiveness of community services was possible due to the limited evidence of this change having occurred from the qualitative evaluations.

In addition to Bangladesh, as discussed above, Nandi (Kenya) and Ikorodu (Nigeria) were also chosen as cases where there is some evidence of positive changes in quality and effectiveness: in Nandi volunteers provided information to the deaf community of government services, who then encouraged each other to register for disability cards in order to access government support. In Ikorodu, with the Back2School programme, community members set up small grants to help out of school children to return to school.

For the EvalC3 analysis, an indicative model was developed from the qualitative evidence and tested. This model was iterated on to find the combination of relevant attributes that provided the most True Positives (where the model works) and the fewest False Positives (where the model does not work) and False Negatives (where other models are more relevant).

This found that the project having evidence of collaboration & networking and community ownership & agency outcomes were best associated with and necessary to service quality & effectiveness improvements, at 92% accuracy for the sample.

There were 2 cases of False Positives in Igangan and Kwali (Nigeria), where there were evidence of collaboration & networking and community ownership & agency but limited evidence of changes in the quality outcome. For both of these, there were significant project design changes over the course of the intervention to make them more locally relevant. Evidence of collaboration & networking and community ownership & agency were found only after the re-design, after which only 1 cycle of ICS volunteers worked in the project.

We are hypothesising that the time factor might be the explanation for the absence of outcomes in these 2 cases.

Nevertheless, this result supports the findings that community ownership and collaboration is a key element of improving the quality and reach of local services.
Ownership & agency and participation

Volunteers make a significant contribution to increasing either the confidence, aspirations, belief that actions will make a difference (personal agency), sense of ownership of local development processes or capacity for personal reflection and learning of staff/volunteer in partner organisations or people living in poverty in host communities.

Some volunteer activities suggest a degree of community engagement and/or participatory practice.

Findings from the qualitative research

Across the 16 projects evaluated, we have found evidence of the group of dimensions of change around community participation, ownership and agency leading to social action. These dimensions of change have been found, both as critical outcomes of ICS intervention, and as a mechanism put in place through ICS interventions that generated effective services with increased reach and sustainable practices.

In particular we found such outcomes in all projects in Nigeria, spanning across livelihood, education and community cohesion. In the projects evaluated in Nigeria, the second round of design for all 4 projects resulted in strengthened mechanisms for the community to take ownership of the interventions. This has manifested itself through, for example, the establishment of a community led programme called Back2School, where parents hold others to account when children fail to attend without valid reason. Working with community volunteers in Nigeria, ICS volunteers have facilitated community participation and increased commitment and trust.

In one of the evaluated projects in Nigeria, ICS in-country volunteers remained engaged, and established a local organization called YAID. This was inspired by the ICS intervention and enabled by the experience of co-leading.

Extensive examples of community participation and social action as a result of ICS interventions were also found in Bangladesh where community volunteers continued to operate through the courtyard sessions after the completion of cycles. In Bangladesh the ICS interventions and collaboration directly inspired social action: ICS volunteers co-lead sessions with peer educators (community volunteers) and consistently provided feedback after the sessions. This increased their confidence and willingness to continue their involvement. In addition to this, the community action days, established by ICS volunteers, continued taking place after the end of the volunteers’ cycles managed directly by community members.

These examples of evidence are illustrative of how ICS can contribute significantly to community empowerment and agency, but are not representative of all evaluated projects. In Zambia for example the evaluation found examples of negative change on patterns of community ownerships and agencies. In the operating context of limited partners’ capacity for reach, it was found in instances that local volunteers were moved to make space for ICS volunteers, reducing the provision of locally owned services and reducing their frequency in-between cycles. Across 3 projects in Zambia, ICS and community volunteers did not work together to complement organisational capacity: ICS volunteers replaced the role of local community health volunteers, who were moved. As a result, at the time of the evaluation, the community health facility was no longer in existence.

For entrepreneurship projects, ICS has assumed that entrepreneurs starting their own businesses have gained a greater sense of ownership of their enterprise, this has been difficult to test. Nevertheless, the structure and content of training curriculum provided to entrepreneurs are designed by ICS primarily. The business training delivered by ICS volunteers from this curriculum allows for collaborative rather than participatory input from entrepreneurs, where they decide the direction of ICS activities.

Community participation and participatory practices are a key requirement for positive outcomes on social action, and increased effectiveness of services in terms of reach. They are a critical intermediate outcome towards the improvement of services effectiveness in terms of reach and inclusion.

Findings from the quantitative survey

There were three questions relating to community ownership & agency in the quantitative survey. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or not that:

- ICS volunteers encouraged local people to take ownership and control
- ICS volunteers helped to strengthen community organisations
- ICS volunteers helped to build or strengthen local skills

The first question was poorly rated overall, ranking 11 out of 13 for ‘strongly agree’ (52%), with only community members and project participants rating it well. This was particularly poorly scored for Igangan (Nigeria), Nanyuki and Nairobi (Kenya). After these, the Zambia projects were next lowest rated. This difference between the survey result and evaluation findings from Igangan, Nigeria in particular is difficult to explain. Nanyuki and Nairobi were entrepreneurship projects in which ICS volunteers had limited interaction with the community, and helps to explain their low scores for community ownership and participation (see below).

The second question was ranked 7 out of 13 (62%), with community leaders particularly positive.

The third question was ranked 5 out of 13 (66%), and was relatively well-regarded across the board for respondent types. For this question and the previous one, Nigeria projects, including Igangan were rated more positively relative to other locations and matches the findings from the qualitative work better.

There were three questions relating to participation in the quantitative survey. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or not that:

- ICS volunteers have encouraged local participation
- ICS volunteers have helped to raise awareness of community priorities
- ICS volunteers support local community priorities to be better addressed

These questions were poorly rated respectively, with the first particularly well rated by UK volunteers and community members. Nanyuki and Nairobi in Kenya performed relatively poorly compared to other locations for both questions (though these were still well regarded overall in terms of participation), followed by Zambia (excluding Samfya).

For the latter two questions there were quite a range of answers seen which overall results in a fairly average rating compared to other questions in the survey and it has been difficult to identify any trends for these.

Across the 3 questions, Bangladesh scored the highest out of all evaluation locations, matching the positive findings on participation in Bangladesh from the qualitative data.
Findings from EvalC3

As explained in the methodological section, through the EvalC3 analysis we have tested patterns of association between different dimensions of change, and between operational design attributes and dimensions of change as they emerged from the qualitative research. The data in the box below summarises the extent to which changes in ownership and agency have been found in association with other dimensions of change and attributes (see page 29 of the methodological section).

Ownership & agency, participation and collaboration & networking all appear to be closely inter-related.

For community ownership and increased agency, EvalC3 found collaboration & networking (83% accuracy) and participation (78% accuracy) to be the best predictors of this outcome. In fact, for the sample of projects, it was found that evidence of collaboration & networking was sufficient for community ownership.

The previous EvalC3 analysis, run at the beginning of the evaluation on monitoring data, also found participation to be critical to the outcome, though it did not find evidence of collaboration. This may be in part due to a relative shortage of examples where increased community ownership, participation and collaboration were found.

The in-country evaluation findings coupled with the EvalC3 results suggests that when the local community feel they have participated in the creation of new forms of collaboration, such as new neighbourhood groups and associations to address local concerns, they are more likely to have a greater sense of ownership for the direction of these initiatives.

Evidence from the qualitative evaluations of increased community ownership and agency from Nigeria, where the use of community volunteers in participatory spaces, such as Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces, created new forms of community-owned organisations, and ICS co-creation with peer educators in Bangladesh empowering community ownership fits well with the EvalC3 results.

The data in the following box explores the association of other delivery model attributes and dimensions of change to outcomes in community participation.

**PARTICIPATION**

- **Working with community volunteers** (delivery model) – 70% accuracy and is **sufficient**
  - TP – 4: Oke Ode, Igangan, Kwali, Ikorodu (Nigeria)
  - FP – none
  - FN – 1 other project with other mechanisms leading to outcome: Dinajpur (Bangladesh)

- **Ownership & agency** (dimension of change) – 82% accuracy and is **necessary**
  - TP – 5: Dinajpur (Bangladesh), Oke Ode, Igangan, Kwali, Ikorodu (Nigeria)
  - FP – none
  - FN – 1 other project with other mechanisms leading to outcome: Dinajpur (Bangladesh)

- **Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces** (delivery model) – 85% accuracy
  - TP – 4: Oke Ode, Igangan, Kwali, Ikorodu (Nigeria)
  - FP – 1: Nandi (Kenya)
  - FN – 1 other projects with other mechanisms leading to outcome: Dinajpur (Bangladesh)

For participation as an outcome, EvalC3’s results found that working with community volunteers is sufficient to ensure local participation (90% accuracy), though community ownership is a necessary condition (82% accuracy for community ownership alone). Working with local community organisations to find target groups for volunteers to work with and the use of Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces (INS) are also both found to be well associated with the outcome at 81% accuracy.

This result is in line with the findings of the original EvalC3 analysis, where community ownership was also found to be the best predictor of community participation, alongside social inclusion, both at 71% accuracy.

Though EvalC3 does not provide explanatory power as which way causation works between community ownership and participation, the in-country evaluations provide some evidence of cyclical reinforcement from Bangladesh and Nigeria, as participation and collaboration with peer educators (community volunteers) create a greater sense of community ownership, which in turn encourages continued and deeper levels of community participation.

Working together with community volunteers, particularly those embedded in the community, can assist ICS volunteers to identify the most relevant members of the community to reach. This helps to bridge the gap between ICS and the community and encourages community participation. INS as a participatory mechanism has been a helpful way of achieving this in Nigeria6.

6 University of Salford. ‘Knowledge and Place’ policy report 2014. Understanding ‘co-presence’ in sustainable volunteering. Available at: http://www.salford.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/493008/UKaid_sustainable_volunteering_report.pdf. The Social Inclusion Volunteering Project (2011 – 2013) funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Office of the Prime Minister, which has become a key tool not only for sustainable (health) volunteering. It means ‘working together to share knowledge and ideas’. It has a focus on Ugandan context (there must be some institutional link here, but I can’t see it made explicit in the report). The fear is that UK volunteers may be left to work alone, as replacements for local staff, rather than colleagues. Co-presence supports systems change through knowledge transfer and recognises volunteering as key vector of change. Volunteering is not a substitute for other kinds of care, but a form of change through skills transfer. In terms of an “effective relationship”, it is also associated with improved accountability and credibility.
Inclusion

Reference is made to how volunteers increased community engagement and outreach. However, it is unclear as to whether the poorest and most marginalised were included and/or if that engagement led to increases in the use of a service or increased awareness that led to behaviour change. Additionally, it may be noted how volunteers identify factors (such as unequal power relations, gender, ethnic affiliation and/or other forms of discrimination) that perpetuate poverty.

Findings from the qualitative research

Across all SRH projects evaluated we have found evidence of increased reach; in Zambia through ICS volunteers acting as amplifiers of existing messages and in Bangladesh through supporting practices that bridge between communities and services. In Bangladesh for example, ICS volunteers have encouraged the use of door to door visits amongst existing services, this has increased the reach amongst parts of the communities who would not otherwise be reached by services.

“People started coming in bigger numbers compared to the community volunteers. People were interested. They were not only giving [information] on cleanliness, but also how to protect themselves from infections. They [the ICS volunteers] were giving new information, so they [local people] came in larger numbers.” RHC staff, Nyimba

“Some people in the communities, they never knew that some services in the hospital were free, they thought they had to pay. By the volunteers giving the information on where to access these services they have now started accessing them because they know it’s free. Some of them used to be scared just to go to the hospital, they used to think they had to pay to access certain things, for example, an HIV test, STI screening, condoms... now they know they are free, meaning the number of people going to the hospitals and health centres has increased.” Project staff, Nyimba

In the education projects, we found also extensive evidence, in particular from Nigeria, that ICS interventions can play a role in enabling education services to reach out to children who are out of school. This has been achieved through the work of Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces and strengthening communities’ ownership of ensuring no children are left out of school. The evaluation of the same projects however found very limited evidence of improving the quality of education services, beyond extending their reach. In Nigeria for example all 3 education projects evaluated started at the beginning of ICS with a focus on improving the quality of math and science education.

A number of factors – including the ICS commitment to recruit ICS volunteers without reference to their skills, education and experience – mean that their contribution to improving the quality of maths and science education has been extremely limited. The interventions have therefore been re-designed to focus on community participation in education.

“What of children who don’t want to do science and maths? Then we have created an exclusion. We had focus groups discussions about why young people were out of school and their challenges, and they said would love to be part of the space but it looks more like a school thing and what do they know? So it started getting us thinking, is it science or maths that will solve the problem, or is it actually people understanding the essence of education in the first place and embracing it. Rather than just having children running around the streets we have more impact, if we can get the right group of people and feed the right skills. Remember the essence of INS is spaces, skills and engagement. So that is what brought us along the line of ‘should we be a maths and science project?’ It was successful, but was it inclusive?” (Y-AID volunteer)

“We started seeing there was a need for Back 2 School, because there were children in the spaces that said they don’t want to go to school. So that’s where we saw there was a need, for sensitisation, the interest now has to be in education. So the office then changed the whole programme to Back 2 School through the inclusive neighbourhood spaces, so that is how that started” (CCSV volunteer)

The volunteers and Y-AID partner staff indicated that, through the neighbourhood spaces and the Back2School project, they have been reasonably successful in attracting young people who are disengaged from the school system. The volunteers reported being mindful of delivery aspects that could encourage participation from poor and marginalised young people, most notably through planning the locations of the inclusive neighbourhood spaces.

‘Better to have the spaces in the neighbourhood – because if the intention/the interest is getting children back to school – and this child is not in school they won’t think ‘it is my programme’. It won’t attract the children because they might think it is not for me as I am not at school. But when it is happening in the neighbourhood – it will encourage their interest with a free mind – they won’t go to a school because they are frightened of school’ (CCSV)

In all formal education interventions, it was felt that volunteers missed chances to engage with the poorest and most marginalised due to an emphasis on their programme in schools.

“They haven’t so much gone into the community. They have restricted their services to schools and clinics. They don’t pick youths from far away in the community. Maybe that’s why there’s that gap. They would be able to encourage other local youths to participate.” In-charge & ICS focal person, Clinic, Kabwe

A nurse from another clinic stated that it is particularly difficult to identify the poorest and most vulnerable within the community without actively targeting and engaging young people in the community.

“This can only happen if they do door-to-door visits. It’s difficult to identify the poorest, to see how they are living. There’s another NGO - DAPP - who are direct to this. Within the volunteers, no. Maybe it’s happening but I don’t know.” Nurse, Clinic, Kabwe

In Kenya, the Nandi project focused on Deaf Awareness and was designed entirely to promote the social inclusion of deaf children. Findings showed initial signs of community awareness and connection, however the depth and sustainability of this could not be assessed at this stage.

Across all entrepreneurship projects evaluated, in Kenya, Tanzania and Bangladesh, stakeholders noted the intent and desire to reach poor and marginalised people. In Tanzania village leaders reported that efforts were made to recruit the most marginalised of the young people in the communities, ‘The main idea was to recruit young people who were living in hardship between the ages of 18-35 for the programme. It was not an easy task because they were not confident that they could take part and compete. They wanted their friends to come along. We had to make an extra effort to recruit students. In the end we had a ‘mix of people’ (Village Executive Officer, Shajj)

In Kenya evaluated projects focused on reaching disabled women and people living with HIV and AIDS. Across all entrepreneurship projects however, the findings demonstrate the problematic nature of trying to reach poor and marginalised people in such interventions; in Bangladesh community members reported that people who had eventually managed to successfully complete the process and obtain the loans were the most affluent members of the community. In the projects evaluated in Tanzania and Kenya, stakeholders reported that the management and mechanism of a loan could be challenging for very small start-up businesses. Loan payments were often delayed and the loan amount relatively small, meaning some entrepreneurs were unable to invest in their business as planned when pitching for the loan. Focusing on
Findings from the quantitative survey

There were two questions relating to social inclusion in the quantitative survey. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or not that:

- ICS volunteers helped the poorest and most marginalised people in the community
- ICS volunteers helped to improve access to local information and resources

The first question was the one ranked worst by ‘strongly agree’ out of all the questions (43%). This holds for all respondent types and there seems to be agreement across the board that ICS volunteers have found it difficult to target the poorest and most marginalised in the community. However, this was rated far better for Nandi (Kenya), Nigeria (apart from Kwali), and Bangladesh, and much worse for the Zambia projects.

This supports the findings of the evaluations that the INS and use of community volunteers and partners to target the most marginalised in the community have resulted in greater social inclusion in Nandi, Nigeria and Bangladesh.

The second questions is ranked 9 out of 13 for ‘strongly agree’ (58%). This in part also relates to increasing access and reach of services (and not inherently about reaching the poorest and most marginalised), which may partly explain why it is higher than the first question in terms of overall responses.

Findings from EvalC3

The data in the box below summarises the extent to which changes in social inclusion have been found in association with other dimensions of change and attributes (see page 29 of the methodological section).

**INCLUSION**

- **Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces (delivery model) – 70% accuracy**
  - TP – 4: Nandi (Kenya), Oke Ode, Kwali, Ikorodu (Nigeria)
  - FP – 1: Igangan (Nigeria)
  - FN – 2 other projects other with mechanisms leading to outcome: Choma (Zambia), Nairobi (Kenya)

- **Working with community volunteers (delivery model) – 70% accuracy**
  - TP – 3: Oke Ode, Kwali, Ikorodu (Nigeria)
  - FP – 1: Igangan (Nigeria)
  - FN – 3 other projects other with mechanisms leading to outcome: Choma (Zambia), Nairobi, Nandi (Kenya)

The use of Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces with a sense of community ownership was found to most associate with social inclusion as an outcome, with 78% accuracy, though community ownership by itself was relatively poor at 58%. Working together with community volunteers was the next most associated attribute at 70%.

The previous EvalC3 work found participation and inspiration to be the most important attributes, though there were only a few cases where social inclusion had been seen. It was noted that having local partners help to identify the most marginalised in the community for ICS volunteers to reach was key to social inclusion. This aligns with the findings of the re-run EvalC3 in terms of working with community volunteers and having a sense of community ownership.

The in-country evaluations also support these findings directly, with the use INS a helpful mechanism for allowing the most marginalised in the society to participate in ICS projects in Nigeria and for the Nandi Deaf Awareness project, though these need to be designed with input from community volunteers to identify the most marginalised and ensure their relevance. Where local information was not used in this way to target services towards the most marginalised in the community, volunteers often found it difficult to improve social inclusion despite their intentions.

In Mbeya, ICS sought to improve youth employability by increasing youth engagement with the dairy value chain. Because of the change in the design after the realisation of the barrier associated to the feasibility of diary value chains, the outcome was not found. As such it is listed as a FP case in the EvalC3 analysis.
Collaboration & networking

Findings from the qualitative research

Collaboration & networking have been found to be both areas of outcomes (as improved interactions and collaborative practices within communities brokered by ICS) and critical ways of working of ICS volunteers. Evidence of this has been found both in positive and negative outcomes and patterns of change.

In terms of increased collaboration & networking as an outcome in communities, this has been found of significance in several instances: in Bangladesh where we observed increased collaborative practices amongst youth clubs and community organisations, in Kenya where parents of deaf children have formed groups, in Nigeria where different types of community volunteers have started working together more strategically and consistently. These findings are important in explaining how ICS interventions can broker improved collaboration & networking and how this leads to positive outcomes for communities and their access to services and resources.

In the case of Bangladesh and Nigeria however, it is important to note that volunteers were placed into small communities that already had a high degree of interconnectedness. It is likely that the activities of the volunteers benefited from this existing interconnectedness as much as they contributed to increased interconnectedness in the community.

Entrepreneurship projects focused on supporting a specific group of entrepreneurs to start businesses and had a comparatively fewer opportunities to build community collaborations, although the projects in Tanzania did result in entrepreneurs forming new independent support groups for each other.

In terms of ways of working, across all ICS interventions the patterns of collaboration that have been found are multi layered and complex and includes the following:

- Collaboration amongst volunteers
- Collaboration with ICS implementing agencies
- Collaboration with primary partners
- Collaboration with secondary partners
- Collaboration with community structures

The collaboration with local partners (primary and secondary) and community volunteers has been found to be one of the most critical mechanism for delivering relevant and appropriate messages and intervention, this is evidenced across all projects, through positive and negative examples. Good collaboration has also been a key enabler for adaptive programming. The same has been found true for cases where poor collaboration with partners was identified: this emerged as the most recurrent mechanism generating negative outcomes or ineffective irrelevant practices.

In cases where the collaboration with the main projects partners was weak or inexistent and volunteers were placed with a multitude of secondary (or placement partners), as it was found in Kenya and Zambia, the ability of the intervention to strengthen community cohesion, participation and sustained change was diminished.

Collaboration within teams and volunteers and with staff of implementing agencies was found to be inconsistent across the 16 projects. Overall, with the exception of the Raleigh projects in Tanzania on entrepreneurship, the evaluations did not find sufficient evidence of intentional investments in such collaboration and an over reliance on the instruments of community action days and pairing in host homes to enable good collaborations within teams (see more in the next section about operational design).

The following picture attempts to summarise the different stakeholders and their channel of interaction:

Diagram 5 – Patterns of collaboration

Some evidence is presented of increased collaboration by partner organisation with others or increased interconnectedness within communities.
Findings from the quantitative survey

There was one question relating to collaboration & networking in the quantitative survey. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or not that:

- ICS volunteers encouraged people and groups in the community to work together

The question was ranked 2 out of 13 (72% ‘strongly agree’) and is generally well regarded compared to the other survey questions. This was particularly well rated for Bangladesh where there is good qualitative evidence of positive changes in collaboration.

Findings from EvalC3

The data in the box below summarises the extent to which changes in collaboration and networking have been found in association with other dimensions of change and attributes (see page 29 of the methodological section).

EvalC3 found community ownership together with evidence of innovation and inspiration to be both necessary and sufficient to collaboration & networking as an outcome. Participation is also associated at 78% accuracy. This is consistent with the previous EvalC3 results, where a good relationship with the community was most important at 70% accuracy. This was reflective of cases where volunteers helped to create new networks and connections between community members and partner organisations.

The qualitative data from the in-country evaluations demonstrated collaboration as both a mechanism for other outcomes (such as participation and community ownership) and itself as an outcome. As a mechanism, it is more often related to how ICS volunteers work with other stakeholders and the outcome involves changes in the community between different stakeholders forming new collaborations. This shows that collaboration is multi-levelled and is critical to ICS achieving positive impacts in community, as demonstrated by the frequency with which it is well associated with other outcomes through EvalC3.

Findings from the qualitative research

In the case of both Nigeria and Bangladesh the evaluation found examples where ICS volunteers inspired patterns of social action amongst community volunteers. The links between the community volunteers and the ICS volunteers have opened up opportunities to extend the reach of the programme to a wider range of young people. The participation of ICS volunteers in community, their enthusiasm for the work, and their willingness to work publicly on community issues, is inspiring to the CCVs volunteers and young people they work with.

Innovation has also been highly misunderstood and often confused with examples of the novelty brought about by the presence of ICS volunteers from the UK. Innovation has only been proven to contribute to change when applied in the context of close collaboration with partners, allowing for the interaction between inside and outside knowledge to ensure relevance and appropriateness.

In Nigeria, for example, the evaluation team found that the UK and Nigerian volunteers are seen as something new and different in the community. They represent new ideas and new energy. The presence of the volunteers in itself attracts much interest. Some interviewees noted that the impact of bringing ‘others’ into the community sparked a willingness to engage in new ideas and practices.

However, many interviewees also referred to the ICS volunteers being white and foreign. It does appear that having foreigners in community attract a special interest from community members, and their perception of foreigners is distinct when compared to their perceptions of other outsiders (e.g. other national volunteers from different communities). Curiosity towards strangers and a belief that the foreign volunteers had something unique to offer probably all played their part in this response. However, the evaluators did not interview volunteers on this issue and this was a limitation on the ability to investigate this phenomenon further.

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Innovation has also been highly misunderstood and often confused with examples of the novelty brought about by the presence of ICS volunteers from the UK. Innovation has only been proven to contribute to change when applied in the context of close collaboration with partners, allowing for the interaction between inside and outside knowledge to ensure relevance and appropriateness.

In Nigeria, for example, the evaluation team found that the UK and Nigerian volunteers are seen as something new and different in the community. They represent new ideas and new energy. The presence of the volunteers in itself attracts much interest. Some interviewees noted that the impact of bringing ‘others’ into the community sparked a willingness to engage in new ideas and practices.

However, many interviewees also referred to the ICS volunteers being white and foreign. It does appear that having foreigners in community attract a special interest from community members, and their perception of foreigners is distinct when compared to their perceptions of other outsiders (e.g. other national volunteers from different communities). Curiosity towards strangers and a belief that the foreign volunteers had something unique to offer probably all played their part in this response. However, the evaluators did not interview volunteers on this issue and this was a limitation on the ability to investigate this phenomenon further.

Findings from the qualitative research

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differently’. Similarly, inspiration has also been mistaken as volunteers doing things differently in itself being a challenge to established social norms. As a result, there is limited evidence of change in either of these areas.

Nevertheless, for inspiration, ICS staff and volunteers tended to rate this question lower than community members and partner organisations (relative to their ratings for other questions). It may be that volunteers have been overly critical and the community overly optimistic on the level of change for this, though this is difficult to test.

There was one question relating to social action in the quantitative survey:

- ICS volunteers inspired or strengthened social action or volunteering in the community

This question was ranked 4 out of 13 on ‘strongly agree’ (67%). UK volunteers were by far the most sceptical with only 21% strongly agreeing with the statement. Most other respondents were more optimistic. This may be a stated desire by many respondents to increase their social action, which was found in the evaluations, though this is difficult to test.

EvalC3 findings

Innovation & inspiration

The data in the box below summarises the extent to which changes in social action have been found in association with other dimensions of change and attributes (see page 29 of the methodological section).

Social Action

The data in the box below summarises the extent to which changes in social action have been found in association with other dimensions of change and attributes (see page 29 of the methodological section).

From the qualitative data, social action is often a result of community volunteers being inspired through working with ICS to further active citizenship within their communities. This could then lead to increased access to services and social inclusion, as seen in Nairobi, Nandi (Kenya) and Ikorodu (Nigeria).

However, a number of respondents, including ICS national volunteers, across the evaluation sample have indicated they have been inspired to social action but have not had time to realise this yet at the point of the evaluation and there is not yet evidence of an actual change in social action.

EvalC3 found increased quality & effectiveness with evidence of social inclusion and increased access to services to associate well with social action at 64% accuracy and appears to be sufficient for the outcome. Innovation & inspiration with social inclusion had an accuracy of 66%.

The previous EvalC3 results showed inspiration and participation to be mostly associated, both at 84% accuracy and noted it primarily as a result of community members’ close participation and collaboration with ICS projects inspiring them to further social action within their communities.
EQ3: Which aspects, if any, of the ICS delivery model build relational dynamics and how do these impact in the lives of poor and marginalised communities?

Within the synthesis evaluation, some elements of the delivery model have been identified as critical in supporting relational dynamics to be established, particularly for health, education and livelihood projects. These included:

1. The use of a local partner.
2. The interaction with local community volunteers.
3. The accommodation in host homes and the pairing of volunteers.
4. The ICS commitment to non-skill based recruitment of volunteers.
5. Volunteers’ training.
6. The use and management of community action days.
7. The establishment of Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces.

1. The use of a local partner

As already identified in the exploration of the patterns of change in the section above, the relationship with the partner organisation, including all levels of partners and placements, and the people volunteers worked with, were pivotal to enabling ICS volunteers to contribute to positive change.

Strong relationships between the implementing agencies and the partners, and close collaboration between volunteers and partners and placements organisation have been found to be key to ensuring relevant and responsive interventions. The EvalC3 results (see EQ2 section above) showed that participation as an outcome and the partners, and close collaboration between implementing agencies were pivotal to enabling ICS volunteers to contribute to placements, and the people volunteers worked with.

In some instances this has been perceived by volunteers as partners being unable to provide adequate work opportunities for them.

Relationships with partner organisations have also been a critical conduit to enable volunteers to interact with communities.

Entrepreneurship projects on the other hand had more limited community interactions and relied less on partners. Partners were usually involved in recruiting local entrepreneurs but had little responsibilities for day-to-day project delivery, where volunteers provided training directly.

2. Community volunteers

The inclusion of community volunteers in Nigeria and Bangladesh has been a critical operational design. In Nigeria for example the evaluation found that apart from working with young people in the Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces, ICS volunteers were unlikely to build significant relations with people living in poverty in their communities. The links to the community were instead established through their work with the community volunteers and partners and their host homes. The EvalC3 analysis also showed a close association of using community volunteers with achieving better social inclusion and participation outcomes.

In Nigeria the recruitment of community volunteers and national youth volunteers strengthened the capacity of the ICS volunteers to deliver effective programmes in the community. The community and national volunteers have good community knowledge and networks at the grassroots level and can assist ICS with build stronger relationships with young people:

‘The community citizen service volunteers – are a set of people who do the groundwork in the community – they know how to get the children from home. Having CCSVs make it easier for ICS and NYSC to work in the communities, they lay the groundwork.’ (NYSC Manager)

There is evidence that volunteers, based in or close to their own communities, have an increased potential for ownership of interventions and sustainable change but only with community support. Community volunteers recruited from and serving within their communities offer the greatest potential for sustained ongoing community ownership and sustainability of volunteering interventions6). This association of using community volunteers to enable community ownership was also seen in the EvalC3 analysis.

3. Host homes and volunteers pairing

Through placement in local host homes volunteers have a more immersive experience in their community and its local culture. This is beneficial for volunteers as host homes can provide much needed background knowledge about community issues. Some host homes are also local leaders, holding positions in local community development associations and with links to local government. These host home owners have been very useful in linking the ICS activities into the local network of influence. The connection to host homes is the entry point into local networks and activities would be significantly harder to implement if the host home owners did not have positions of influence in their communities or did not have access to local community knowledge to assist the ICS volunteers in their activities. The use of host homes has provided a conduit to build relationships with communities.

ICS volunteers from the UK and from the country of placement are paired together in host homes. This has been reported by all stakeholders as an important enabler for cross-cultural interaction and understanding. This element of the design however has not been sufficient to ensure good relationships within teams of volunteers and in particular between the volunteers from the UK and from the country of interventions.

Relationships within teams and particularly between UK and national volunteers have been found to be problematic and complex across the whole set of evaluated projects. Different financial means across the two groups often generate tensions and division.

The same has been found for the different status that international volunteers seems to achieve within placements.

In few instances (in the Raleigh projects evaluated in Tanzania) the project design included intentional activities to bring the teams together: In Shaji volunteers routinely met at lunchtime Mondays to Fridays where a ‘lunch mumba’ would provide the daily meal, there was shared training prior to placement, and organised social events where everyone met together all helped to create a strong team,

‘There was lots of team building – for example the volunteers would meet every Saturday at a different host home and would prepare a meal for everyone – the host home would join in and we would play games and have fun’ (Host father)

This is nevertheless an isolated example and the interaction and collaboration between national and UK volunteers needs more in-depth attention (see also section on collaboration above).7)

4. Volunteer skills and training

The aspect of the ICS design which aims at recruiting young volunteers with a diverse range of background and skills and expertise, and the accompanying training element, has proven quite problematic across all evaluations.

The youthfulness of the volunteers brings a special energy to the ICS program and undoubtedly supported youth mobilisation in the communities, an important part of the programme. Young volunteers are more likely to be willing to live in family environments than older volunteers (with the benefits this brings discussed earlier in the Host Homes discussion).


7)Volunteer. Tourism. Journal of Sustainable Tourism 16(5):530-43. study suggests that existing literature is overly optimistic about volunteer tourism. It obtains a risk that short-term volunteer missions can reinforce cultural stereotypes, and asks how sending organisations can work to ensure that episodic missions have positive effects for cross-cultural understanding and relationships. The findings indicate that volunteers (with the benefits this brings discussed earlier in the Host Homes discussion).
On the other hand, across the majority of evaluations, stakeholders commented that volunteers did not have relevant skills or experiences (e.g. small business, teaching, health information or farming experience) and this meant sometimes volunteers could not contribute to their placement meaningfully. This was particularly noted in the evaluations of all projects designed to contribute to change by increasing organisational human capacity and where volunteers had to provide training or other services directly. Some partners and community members expressed disappointment at the lack of volunteer skills and this has impacted on the quality of ICS relationships.

In particular, for the entrepreneurship development project evaluations in Nairobi and Nanyuki in Kenya, two narratives emerged from stakeholders and partners: one around the volunteer as “cheap labour” which helped the business save on expenses, a second one about the volunteer as an intern that the placement helped to develop and train. This appeared a somewhat lesser issue in Nakuru, Kenya (though some volunteers’ lack of hands-on experience and skills were still a challenge) and Tanzania. The reason for the difference is uncertain; it may be a result of more focused training and support tools for volunteers to transfer business knowledge in the latter cases, but this could not be fully tested.

Appropriate intervention design that understands what young volunteers can and cannot contribute has been the critical element to resolve this tension. Overall, volunteer training has not been able to impact positively on this across the evaluations. It has often proven too much or too intensive in a too short amount of time for volunteers, particularly given the existing low skills. At times the training was also perceived as repetitive (for example, repetition between the training received in the UK and the one received in-country), not fit for purpose, and / or not relevant. The training volunteers received did not appear to enable volunteers to approach their placement with a critical, action-learning oriented approach.

5. The use and management of community action days

Across all project evaluations, community action days (CAD) have proven problematic in the ways they have been implemented, managed and in what they were set to achieve.

In some instances CAD have been instrumental to volunteers engaging directly with communities; this has for example been found in Kenya where the CAD interventions have raised community awareness about social enterprises, entrepreneurs and volunteering.

Often the CAD compensated for a lack of intentional design in the overall intervention. CAD however are not sustained over cycles as they are usually a free initiative of the volunteers, therefore they failed to sustainably build community relationships and ownership.

6. The establishment of Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces

Across all evaluations in Nigeria, ICS volunteers established and supported Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces. These are local community meetings that bring together groups of children and young people to facilitate the discussion of local issues with the aim of developing achievable solutions, facilitated by ICS volunteers. Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces also serve as platforms for skill-sharing amongst community members and ICS volunteers.

These intervention has proven very effective in strengthening social inclusion, participation and promote community ownership and agency, for example in the Back2School projects and has also been evidenced through the EvalIC3 analysis.

Across the 16 projects evaluated, we have found evidence of what aspects and factors of the ICS interventions seem to enable patterns of sustainability. However, it has not been possible at this stage to assess with confidence the extent to which the changes that ICS contributes to are sustainable or have been sustained.

The sample of evaluations included projects with different length of implementation and different numbers of subsequent cycles. Around 50% of the projects have had more than 5 consecutive cycles of volunteers, therefore being quite mature in their implementation. Most projects were evaluated when volunteers were not in placement, which enabled further investigation of what might have been sustained from the results of previous cycles.

The overall finding at this stage is that the programme as it is currently designed is not supportive of sustainability, with short-term assignments, low-skilled volunteers and inconsistent hand-over between cycles.

The overarching finding is that it is very difficult for communities and community volunteers to continue programming without the resources that accompany volunteers. This has been found particularly true in projects that operate with the pattern of contributing to change by adding short-term capacity to local organisations.

In examples where we found factors that might lead to sustainability, unsurprisingly, the role of local partners and community volunteers remains critical to ensure continuity and potential sustainability. In Bangladesh, the community structures that ICS volunteers helped to develop have played a key role in supporting the ongoing work in the community. The community have taken on roles and responsibilities within these structures driven by a commitment to ensure that the work continues. They have seen the benefit to the community of the work that has already been done and this acted as a mechanism to maintain their activities. It should however be emphasised that the community structures are at a very early stage so it is too early to understand how well these structures and dynamics will withstand the test of time. It will be important to revisit the community after a period of at least a year to see whether initiatives have progressed and been sustained.

Also in Bangladesh, The Child Marriage Prevention Committee is well established, organised and motivated. They had the opportunity to mobilise and have seen outcomes from their action but are also aware of the potential limitations of their action. Retaining influential people within the community as committee members will be important. Committee members stressed the importance of the youth club and the peer educators to support their work and they also emphasised the importance of awareness raising work to complement their enforcement activities. There is a strong synergy that currently exists and sustainability of the work of the
committee is influenced by this being maintained and the continuation of the work to raise awareness about the negative impacts of child marriage. There is a risk that the problem may just be displaced to neighbouring areas and undertaking work to raise awareness with neighbouring communities could help to reduce this problem.

The girls’ club has had quite significant input from volunteers but is now supported by two teachers and also by the peer educators who delivered a number of awareness sessions to the club since the final ICS cycle. The club has a number of sub-committees so many members have positions of responsibility, which helps to sustain their work, coupled with support from the teachers and the school head. At present it feels like the club is quite reliant on the peer educators for input on awareness raising. The girls’ club members could potentially be the peer educators of the future and for the work to be sustained over a longer period it is important to consider how younger people can be supported to step into the roles held by older youths who may eventually take up employment or other responsibilities, reducing their time available to the club.

In Bangladesh the evaluation also found strong active groups of alumni who remained organised and active. However, it is too early to establish the extent of the sustainability as all projects had undergone a redesign and were in the early stages of the new implementation.

Similarly, in Nigeria the evaluation found elements that could enable sustainability, such as the creation of registered organisations of community volunteers and host homes and the registration of organisations created by ICS alumni.

There is a lack of evidence of the sustainability of businesses set up by the entrepreneurship projects in Kenya and Tanzania, as the evaluation has been unable to comment on the quality of businesses started, though the assumption has been that those successful in securing a loan are likely to be more viable by default. Many of the successful pitches have only recently set up a business or are still awaiting loan payments at the time of the evaluation, though there is evidence of some examples of both business growth and failure or loan default. Where a loan mechanism was used, the sustainability of the loan to entrepreneur businesses has not been investigated.

As already noted across the whole report, many stakeholders across all the projects indicated that the presence of foreign volunteers builds community interest in the programme. Many community members expressed positive impressions about young people leaving their home countries to work overseas. We have already explored the fact that this interest in foreign volunteers increases engagement with young people and that it is sometimes easier to engage with local people of influence when a foreign volunteer is present. There is a risk however, that the presence of UK volunteers perpetuates the stereotypical notion that actors from developed countries (especially white actors) have some kind of special knowledge or skill and can bring something to the development process that would not be possible if it were only community or national volunteers.

This has implications for sustainability post-programme, as the withdrawal of foreign volunteers might lessen engagement from young people and make engagement with local people of influence more difficult and should be explored in more depth.

Conclusions and areas of learning

Conclusions

This ICS evaluation has attempted to fill a critical evidence gap on the extent to which ICS interventions contribute to positive and sustainable changes in the lives of poor and marginalized people.

Whereas the evaluation has not fully succeeded to establish the extent to which this occurs across the whole portfolio, it has generated rich data on the ways in which ICS contributes to change and the attributes of the programme that are likely predictors, across different context, of positive and desired outcomes. This is critical evidence for ICS in order to review and design existing and future interventions.

This evaluation has highlighted the role that young people can play in brokering collaborations, mobilising communities and bridging between communities and services and institutions, when accompanied by local partner organisations. The evaluation has also identified the challenges that emerge when young volunteers with insufficient skills and experience are placed in situations where they are required to deliver technical services or information directly to vulnerable people on short-term placements.

These findings above should contribute to the body of evidence both on how youth volunteering can contribute to positive change and on how this can be understood and evaluated, which should be of interest to the wider international development community of practice. It has revealed questions for further investigation and future research, such as the relationship between international and national volunteering, and cross cultural communication in short term international volunteering programmes. Some of these areas can be explored further in the final ICS evaluation, which should be of particular interest to DFID and ICS management.

All individual project reports have offered context and projects specific recommendations, which have been shared and discussed at the end of each evaluation. These have also been explored in the validation workshops at the end of the field work in each country and have been of significant interest to the ICS programme staff for future programme development and review.

The lessons from individual evaluations with their specific contexts will be aggregated into a separate document, to be shared with the wider ICS consortium separately to this synthesis report.

The synthesis report has highlighted a number of more general areas of learning for ICS to consider. Though they may not be relevant or applicable to all ICS projects,
they should nevertheless provide valuable evidence for future ICS programme design and evaluations. Responses to these lessons and follow-on action points should be decided by ICS management and DFID.

Summary of learnings from synthesis

- Volunteers can successfully provide additional capacity to partners / community structures to increase the reach of their services. However, this often requires strong relationships or coordination with partners to achieve.
  - Where the coordination / partnership is less strong, volunteers may risk displacing local capacity rather than enhancing it
  - Partners have been found to be key enablers for volunteers to identify and access target community groups, often proving instrumental in providing the necessary support to volunteer placements ensuring activities are locally relevant
  - Volunteers can effectively act as catalysts for strengthening relationships between service providers and community members and within community groups to form new collaborations. This has been a key way of increasing service reach in many cases.

- Without sufficient training or skill-based selection, there is a risk that volunteers do not have the required skills to provide services directly to vulnerable people
  - The synthesis found evidence that in some projects ICS volunteers do not have the required skills to deliver services directly, particularly in health and education contexts, including instances where volunteers provided incorrect information to disadvantaged community members on recommended health practices and services available
  - Though the evaluation did not review volunteer training quality and content, it was clear in many cases that volunteers were not prepared to work in inclusive and participatory ways, this may be a result of poor training or a lack of volunteer experience

- Investment in training and support resources, such as volunteer handbooks, may have somewhat mitigated a lack of volunteer skills, though training provisions were not reviewed for this evaluation
  - A lack of volunteer skills have negatively impacted the relationship of ICS with community members and partners in a number of projects, as they have been unable to meet expectations or contribute to their placements
  - On the other hand, unskilled volunteers have been found to be well-suited to amplify existing messages or support the work of partners rather than start new service delivery initiatives

- Working closely with community volunteers, being involved in programme design and direction, can help foster positive outcomes in community ownership, participation, sustainability, and lead to personal growth and social action for the community volunteers

- Providing safe spaces for community engagement, such as Inclusive Neighbourhood spaces can increase community participation and help identify community priorities or marginalised groups

- Community volunteers are also shown as an effective avenue for volunteers to access the wider host community with its activities and outreach. In some contexts, traditional leaders or host home families have used their existing influence in their community to help volunteers access specific target groups

- The pairing of UK and national volunteers on placement and within host homes has generally achieved better integration within the ICS team and facilitated cultural exchange

- The synthesis has uncovered evidence of potential issues of power relations between community members, national and UK volunteers

- Volunteer placements may perpetuate existing stereotypes or power dynamics between UK volunteers and national counter-parts, with UK volunteers frequently seen as outsiders with specialist knowledge

- Cultural differences between UK and national volunteers and discrimination against national volunteers have led to the exclusion and disempowerment of national volunteers in some cases

- These issues were reported incidentally for this evaluation and deserve further investigation

- When CADs are incorporated within the project design and purposes, their impact are greater and more sustained than when they are used as the mechanism for achieving community engagement when it has not been sufficiently planned in the design

- When CADs are integrated into wider programme design, in-line with the programme objectives and community priorities, they can be especially helpful in community engagement

- However, when CADs are used as a means of offsetting the lack of purposeful community participation within the project design, they have been found to result in less sustainable impact

- Significant weaknesses have been found in M&E practices across ICS, with data focusing more on activities rather than outcomes

- ICS has tended to capture information on activities rather than outcomes in its M&E practices that is consistent across the consortium. This has made it difficult to assess the impact of ICS interventions from existing M&E data and consider whether changes are expected or unexpected for each project

- There are also inconsistencies in what data is captured and how it is captured across the agencies, both in terms of ICS-wide M&E tools monitoring activity delivery and individual agency tools, making it difficult to use in a synthesis or comparative context

- This mid-term evaluation has found the use of the CMQ approach and EvalIcs methodology useful frameworks for assessing ICS intervention impacts, though any continued use of the quantitative survey should reflect the lessons learnt, e.g. making the survey tool simpler to understand and translate.

- The findings in health, education and livelihoods has helped to refine the theory of change. However, the ICS theory of change currently does not fit with entrepreneurship projects as they have different outcomes and patterns of change

- Projects in health, education and livelihoods have demonstrated the relevance and interconnectedness of the dimensions of change within the ICS theory of change, from which an emergent theory of change has been observed

- This emergent theory of change highlights the importance in particular of volunteers working towards community participation, collaboration and ownership to achieve more sustainable positive outcomes and impacts

- On the other hand, the theory of change has been found to be a poor fit to ICS entrepreneurship projects, which have so far appeared to place less emphasis on relational dynamics with partner and host communities compared to other themes, focusing instead on working very closely with a select group of entrepreneurs

- The outcomes from entrepreneurship projects are more targeted around successfully starting businesses, improving business quality and entrepreneur aspirations and confidence, which are not captured in the ICS theory of change, with less emphasis on wider community engagement and partnerships

- There is evidence that entrepreneurship projects have successfully achieved many such outcomes, however the data of development impacts as framed in the ICS theory of change have been difficult to assess in this evaluation, with comparatively more limited evidence available compared to health, education and livelihood – it is uncertain whether this is due to a lack of such outcomes, a lack of data or a combination of both
The evaluation has found limited evidence of long-term sustainability of changes achieved by ICS placements after the end of volunteer placements in the host community:

- Volunteers have been found to be able to add short-term functional capacity to partners, however, there is limited evidence of whether the boost in the reach of partner services in such cases is sustained once volunteers depart.
- Similarly, volunteers are able to generate interest in children and community members that can lead to improvements in attendance rates, e.g. in schools. Again, it is unclear whether this interest is sustained once volunteer placements end.
- In many cases, there hasn’t been enough time since the end of volunteer placements for the evaluation to accurately assess sustainability outcomes, this includes many of the new businesses established in the entrepreneurship projects.
- Where there appears to be greater evidence for sustainable outcomes, these have tended to closely involve local community volunteers and partners to continuing their work with ICS, though there remains suggestions of sustainability challenges should the funding that accompanies volunteers be withdrawn.

These lessons suggests a number of implications for the future of ICS programming. This includes further development of the ICS theory of change, in particular vis-a-vis entrepreneurship programmes and the emergent pattern seen for health, education and livelihood. ICS will need to decide whether to develop a new theory of change that better incorporates entrepreneurship programmes and the emergent development of the ICS theory of change, in particular more deeply cross-cutting issues such as power dynamics.

This evaluation highlighted a number of challenges identified when using unskilled volunteers for direct service delivery in more technical roles. ICS needs to assess whether such risks can be mitigated through more comprehensive and supported training, through sharing of best-practice across the consortium, or if ICS volunteer roles need to be revised to focus less on direct service delivery and more on capacity building in certain types of interventions or themes. It is expected that the lessons from the 16 individual evaluations that make up this mid-term evaluation will be shared and agencies will review these in the context of their own programmes, as not all lessons or recommendations will be relevant for all ICS interventions.

Furthermore, ICS should look at strengthening the M&E systems across the consortium to measure not just activities but also outcomes and impacts, and to do so in a more consistent manner. Some of the tools and frameworks used in this evaluation may be suitable for consideration for the regular monitoring and assessment of ICS impacts.

This would be particularly relevant for better measuring the sustainability of ICS impacts over the long-term, as it has been difficult to assess in this evaluation. The evidence from this evaluation suggests that ongoing sustainability is often supported by ICS achieving a sense of community ownership that lasts beyond volunteer placements, though the withdrawal of funding with volunteer departures can be a challenge. It is recommended that the final ICS evaluation investigate the withdrawal of funding with volunteer departures can be a challenge. It is recommended that the final ICS evaluation investigate these lessons or recommendations will be relevant for all ICS interventions.

In terms of programme design, ICS management should also consider how the lessons learnt around the use of local community volunteers and CADs should be reflected in future ICS work across the consortium. This will take time and resources at contract management level to review, as well as potential investment at community and partner level, especially if greater engagement with community volunteers and partners is to be implemented more widely.

Annex 1

Bibliography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing evidence</th>
<th>Reports</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ecorys external evaluation case studies (x12), and mid-term/ final evaluation reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>VSO/ IDS Valuing Volunteering research</td>
<td>The role of volunteering in sustainable development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raleigh/ ODI ‘Building paths for youth entrepreneurship’ research (Nicaragua and Tanzania)</td>
<td>Building-pathways-for-entrepreneurship</td>
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<td>Jigsaw Consult evidence based case study on Raleigh's work to deliver WASH outcomes (Nicaragua)</td>
<td>Evidence based case study- Raleigh's work to deliver WASH</td>
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<tr>
<td>VSO evidence based case studies on health, livelihoods and active citizenship outcomes (Bangladesh, Nigeria, Nepal, Tajikistan and Kenya)</td>
<td>Evidence based case study- VSO Nepal ASRHR outcomes through youth volunteering</td>
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<td>Evidence based case study- VSO Bangladesh youth community volunteering and ASRHR outcomes</td>
<td>Evidence based case study- VSO Nigeria youth volunteering and active citizenship</td>
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<td>ICS hub employability research (Tanzania and the Philippines)</td>
<td>Available on demand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jigsaw Consult impact report for Progressio on health outcomes (Malawi)</td>
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Annex 2
ICS evaluation site background

Zambia
The majority of births is not attended by a skilled health worker. Knowledge and practice on infant and young child feeding practices are low. Infectious but preventable diseases contribute significantly to child deaths and illnesses. All these factors contribute to Zambia’s high maternal, newborn, and childhood death indicators.

Zambia has an HIV prevalence rate of 14.3%, one of the highest in the world.

The life expectancy in Zambia is at 49 years, compared with 54.4 years in sub-Saharan Africa and 58 years in other low-income countries.

Kenya
Youth unemployment is very high: 65% of those aged less than 35 do not have a job. Prospects for this group are also limited by a lack of education; 92% of the unemployed youth have no training beyond basic schooling. This leaves 1.3 million young Kenyans isolated, disaffected, and unemployed.

The Kenya National Survey for Persons with Disabilities (KNSPWD) undertaken in 2008 noted that 4.6% of Kenyans experience some form of disability. A complex web of rights-based issues, including gender inequality and associated myths and cultural beliefs, leads to the exclusion of people with disability within political, social, and economic life as well as within the disability movement itself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project location</th>
<th>Thematic focus</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Local Context</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nyimba</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>The vast majority of people in Nyimba District live in rural communities with limited access to health and education services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samfya</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Rural setting 700km north of the country’s capital, Lusaka. There exists a high incidence of school abstention and drop out due to child marriage and early pregnancy; high rates of HIV infection and subsequent stigmatisation; high rates of alcoholism; high prevalence of prostitution; incidences of gender-based violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choma</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Young people do not access health services and lack the education needed to prevent health issues affecting them such as teenage pregnancy, STIs, early marriage, spread of diseases (malaria, water borne disease), child mortality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabwe</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health</td>
<td>Restless</td>
<td>Young people have limited access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services and limited knowledge of SRHR topics.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Project location</th>
<th>Thematic focus</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Local Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nandi</td>
<td>Deaf Empowerment</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>In 2014 Nandi County had the lowest number of community support systems created for the deaf children (according to a DFID-funded National Special Needs Education survey). In 2015 a baseline study commissioned by VSO Kenya on Community Empowerment for Deaf Children (CEDI) initiative project in Kwale, Bungoma, Nyandarua and Nandi counties revealed that despite engagement in employment, the deaf youth were undergoing a number of challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Nairobi has the largest population of urban youth in Kenya. Unemployment amongst young adults in Nairobi currently stands at around 2.5 million. Nairobi has a home to various SMEs and social enterprises and a vibrant community that thrives on social innovation. Young job seekers often lack adequate business skills, mainly due to low levels of education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakuru</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Balloon</td>
<td>Nakuru is a rapidly growing town with a bustling market, a large young population and sufficient money in circulation to allow growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njoro</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Balloon</td>
<td>Nakuru is a rapidly growing town with a bustling market, a large young population and sufficient money in circulation to allow growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanyuki</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship / Livelihood</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Nanyuki District is one of the poorest in Kenya in terms of per capita income. Waged employment only absorbs 4% of the population. The youth forms the bulk of the unemployed labour force. Agriculture and nomadic pastoralism are widely practiced. The other economic activity in the area is tourism due to its proximity to mountain Kenya and large number of game reserves and ranches in the area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23 Kenya National Survey for Persons with Disabilities (KNSPWD) undertaken in 2008 by the National Coordinating Agency for Population & Development (NACAP) in collaboration with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and relevant line ministries.

24 Nakuru and Njoro were similar projects in nearby locations and both locations were part of the same evaluation. Together they are referred to as ‘Nakuru’ from this point on in the report.
Nigeria
Youth constitute over 70% of Nigeria’s total population; however, they are under-represented in governance structures and processes. Large numbers of young people are unemployed; when looking for a job, they show a lack of interest in agriculture which is causing national concern. High number of school drop outs and low enrolment rates are amongst the main challenges faced by the education system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project location</th>
<th>Thematic focus</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kwali Federal Capital territory</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>In spite of steady development undergoing in some areas (e.g. infrastructures) Kwali still faces several developmental issues such as the availability of basic amenities – constant electricity and access to water – educational support services as well as adequate health care facilities. School drop outs is major issue in the area, both at primary and secondary level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igangan and nearby communities, Ilesha, Osun State</td>
<td>Livelihood (agriculture based value chains)</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Igangan and its surrounding villages are, comparative to other areas of Nigeria, relatively poor and marginalised. The residents of these towns are mostly smallholder farmers. The demographic profile of local farmers is ageing and lack of interest by young people in agriculture is of concern to the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oke Ode, Kwara State</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>The incidence of out of school children is prevalent in the area. Basic literacy among students is low. Children in the community do not have a voice on issues affecting them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ikorodu, Lagos State</td>
<td>Participation and Governance and Education (back to school programme)</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>School dropouts and youth unemployment are very high. Many young people are unaware of child rights, women’s rights and civic responsibilities. They generally show apathy towards political processes and are disengaged from processes affecting the development of their community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bangladesh
Bangladesh has the highest prevalence of child marriage (66 per cent), with girls living in rural areas being hardest hit. There is widespread lack of awareness of sexual and reproductive health rights. Poverty is a significant driver for child marriage with parents wanting to secure economic and social security for their daughters and protect them from perceived harm such as sexual harassment. Frequent flooding and river erosion in Bangladesh leads to a constant threat of insecurity and poverty which affects decisions about schooling and marriage for girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project location</th>
<th>Thematic focus</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dinajpur</td>
<td>Sexual Reproductive Health and Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Dinajpur has high levels of isolation, low productivity, low and irregular income for much of the population and a significant number of people are from religious minority groups. There is a high prevalence of child marriage and significant gaps in inclusive governance. Strong community structures (such as youth clubs) run by volunteers are present in the area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tanzania
According to the last census carried out in 2012, young people aged between 15 and 24 constitute 19.2% of the population. It is a group that experiences limited opportunities for employment and restricted opportunities to develop skills, but yet is frequently expected to play a critical role in supplementing household income.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project location</th>
<th>Thematic focus</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mbozi</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Raleigh</td>
<td>The majority of the population works as small scale farmers. Women and youth significantly contribute to the household income but have limited access to benefits resulting from their engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbeya</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Raleigh</td>
<td>The majority of the population works as small scale farmers. Women and youth contribute significantly to the household income but have limited access to benefits resulting from their engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindi</td>
<td>Education and Livelihood</td>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Local people are mainly engaged in fishing in Lindi Bay and some farming on the outskirts of the town, apart from small businesses. Employment opportunities are limited. The government plans to construct a liquefied natural gas plant which is expected to re-invigorate Lindi’s economy; yet, there is some concern that the town will not be able to produce skilled workers of sufficiently good standard for employment, due to low educational standards in local schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All projects selected volunteers through an assessment day, which assessed volunteers against criteria around motivation and passion for volunteering. All projects were committed to selecting volunteers from diverse backgrounds regardless of pre-existing skills and experiences. All placements were for between 10-12 weeks, apart from Mbozi, which lasted 9 weeks per team.

### Annex 3
**Details of placements**

All projects worked closely with local partners, and some also provided additional support to local youth enterprise initiatives and partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Design of placements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nyimba</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Jan-14</td>
<td>Community outreach visits, awareness raising sessions, peer education, computer skills training</td>
<td>Placements within a network of local placement partners working in the relevant thematic area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samfya</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Jun-15</td>
<td>Community outreach visits, awareness raising sessions, peer education, teaching</td>
<td>Placements within a network of local placement partners working in the relevant thematic area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choma</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Mar-13</td>
<td>Community outreach visits, awareness raising sessions, peer education, computer skills training</td>
<td>Placements within a network of local placement partners working in the relevant thematic area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabwe</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Feb-16</td>
<td>Community outreach visits, awareness raising sessions, peer education</td>
<td>Work primarily through local schools and to some extent local health clinics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakuru / Njoro</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Sep-14 / Jun-16</td>
<td>Business training, peer education, market research for entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Designed by Balloon with support from local partners, Balloon remains primary placement organisation of programme activity delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Sep-14</td>
<td>Business training, peer education, market research for entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Designed to complement existing VSO volunteer placements in Kenya for first two cycles, however VSO placements were no longer involved in cycles 3-4. Placements with local youth enterprise initiatives and partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nandi**
- **Country:** Kenya
- **Start:** Jun-16
- **Activities:** Community outreach visits, awareness raising sessions, peer education
- **Design of placements:** VSO pilot project ran for 4 months with some of the volunteers going on to be team leaders for ICS. Placements were with local partners working in the relevant theme.

**Nanyuki**
- **Country:** Kenya
- **Start:** Feb-14
- **Activities:** Peer education, marketing, business research, awareness raising sessions
- **Design of placements:** Volunteers placed in community-based organisations to support existing projects.

**Oke Ode**
- **Country:** Nigeria
- **Start:** Oct-13
- **Activities:** Peer education, teaching, awareness raising sessions, action research
- **Design of placements:** Placements within a network of local placement partners working in the relevant thematic area.

**Igangan**
- **Country:** Nigeria
- **Start:** Feb-15
- **Activities:** Peer education, awareness raising sessions, engagement activities
- **Design of placements:** Designed by VSO and local partner. Programme focus shifted from improving cocoa value chain to involving young people in agricultural employment.

**Kwali**
- **Country:** Nigeria
- **Start:** Feb-15
- **Activities:** Teaching, awareness raising sessions, capacity building
- **Design of placements:** Work primarily through local schools with placements with local partners. Shifted focus from improving maths and literacy skills in schools to supporting out-of-school children.

**Nandi**
- **Country:** Kenya
- **Start:** Jun-16
- **Activities:** Community outreach visits, awareness raising sessions, peer education
- **Design of placements:** VSO pilot project ran for 4 months with some of the volunteers going on to be team leaders for ICS. Placements were with local partners working in the relevant theme.

**Nanyuki**
- **Country:** Kenya
- **Start:** Feb-14
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- **Design of placements:** Volunteers placed in community-based organisations to support existing projects.

**Oke Ode**
- **Country:** Nigeria
- **Start:** Oct-13
- **Activities:** Peer education, teaching, awareness raising sessions, action research
- **Design of placements:** Placements within a network of local placement partners working in the relevant thematic area.

**Igangan**
- **Country:** Nigeria
- **Start:** Feb-15
- **Activities:** Peer education, awareness raising sessions, engagement activities
- **Design of placements:** Designed by VSO and local partner. Programme focus shifted from improving cocoa value chain to involving young people in agricultural employment.

**Kwali**
- **Country:** Nigeria
- **Start:** Feb-15
- **Activities:** Teaching, awareness raising sessions, capacity building
- **Design of placements:** Work primarily through local schools with placements with local partners. Shifted focus from improving maths and literacy skills in schools to supporting out-of-school children.

**Ikorodu**
- **Country:** Nigeria
- **Start:** May-14
- **Activities:** Community outreach visits, awareness raising sessions, peer education, capacity building, mentoring
- **Design of placements:** ICS worked closely with national and local volunteers in programme design and delivery. Shifted focus from improving maths and literacy skills in schools to supporting out-of-school children.

**Djinaur**
- **Country:** Bangladesh
- **Start:** Sep-15
- **Activities:** Peer education, awareness raising sessions, capacity building, mentoring
- **Design of placements:** Placement with a range of local community-based partners.

**Lindi**
- **Country:** Tanzania
- **Start:** Mar-15
- **Activities:** Peer education, awareness raising sessions, capacity building, employment training
- **Design of placements:** Work primarily through local schools though the Regional Education Board partner.

**Mbeya**
- **Country:** Tanzania
- **Start:** Jun-16
- **Activities:** Business training, peer education, capacity building, awareness raising sessions
- **Design of placements:** Designed by Raleigh with support from local partners, Raleigh remains primary placement organisation of programme activity delivery.

**Mbazi**
- **Country:** Tanzania
- **Start:** Jun-16
- **Activities:** Business training, peer education, market research for entrepreneurs
- **Design of placements:** Designed by Raleigh with support from local partners, Raleigh remains primary placement organisation of programme activity delivery.
At each of the 16 evaluation sites visited in phase 2 of the evaluation, a quantitative survey tool was used to collect feedback from a variety of stakeholders, from community members to ICS volunteers and staff. The survey questions presented positive statements regarding ICS’s ways of working relating to the 8 dimensions of change. Respondents were asked to provide an answer on a 5-point scale ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’. The results of the survey presented below focus primarily on the proportion of respondents who answered ‘strongly agree’ as this tended to be the criteria with the highest proportion of answers and appears most representative of the whole sample.

The table below summarises the overall findings from the quantitative survey which will be explained in details in the individual sections below. The full analysis is available in spreadsheet format but is not published with this report.

### Dimension of change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>% strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration and Networking</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspiration and social action</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality and effectiveness</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspiration and innovation</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership and agency</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership and agency</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership and agency</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership and agency</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality and effectiveness</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most people tended to agree ICS worked well, particularly referencing innovation, collaboration and participation. However, from the survey data, reaching the poorest and most marginalised and improving local services were less evident to respondents.

In terms of variance by location, Mbeya and Mbozi in Tanzania (both Raleigh) were by far the most positive, though this can mostly be explained by differences in demographics as both had more community members than other locations, who were more positive than other groups. Besides these, Nandi in Kenya and Dinajpur in Bangladesh (both VSO) were most positive. Nandi had a relatively small sample of 17 respondents, with 5 community members and 7 staff members of local organisations with ICS placements. 50 of Dinajpur’s 70 respondents were community members.

Other locations generally had similar levels of agreement in their responses which are reflective of the overall average view.

1. UK volunteers
2. National volunteers
3. Community organisations with ICS placements
4. Community organisations without ICS placements
5. Community members

### Survey questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>% strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helped to strengthen community organisations</td>
<td>23% 46% 49% 63% 84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped to improve local services</td>
<td>14% 33% 43% 63% 71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped the poorest and most marginalised people in the community</td>
<td>22% 27% 17% 63% 63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported local community priorities to be better addressed</td>
<td>19% 48% 51% 75% 83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked in an innovative way</td>
<td>48% 72% 68% 75% 88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged people and groups in the community to work together</td>
<td>33% 71% 62% 75% 93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped to improve access to local information and resources</td>
<td>31% 48% 48% 75% 74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped to build or strengthen local skills</td>
<td>32% 52% 59% 63% 83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged local people to take ownership and control</td>
<td>15% 39% 39% 57% 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have encouraged local participation</td>
<td>52% 58% 58% 75% 91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have helped to raise awareness of community priorities</td>
<td>22% 61% 60% 63% 77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspired or strengthened social action or volunteering in the community</td>
<td>21% 68% 53% 75% 84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenged community to think about things in new ways</td>
<td>23% 44% 50% 71% 82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Volunteers and team leaders were least positive about the way ICS volunteers worked in community, with UK volunteers less positive than national volunteers and team leaders.

By contrast, Community members were the most positive about ICS, followed by host homes and community leaders.

Community and partner organisation staff sits between volunteers and community members in their opinion of ICS’s work. Community organisations without ICS placements rated ICS higher than community organisations with ICS placements, with partners on average in between the two groups.

With regards to more specific questions, volunteers and ICS staff were far more cautious on the ability of volunteers to help local people take ownership and control, and challenging the community to think in new ways than community members.

ICS volunteers were more optimistic about being able to work in innovative ways and facilitating local participation, which community groups generally endorse in their own feedback.

Community organisations without ICS placements (along with community members and leaders) were more likely to suggest that ICS helped to strengthen community organisations compared to those with an ICS placement, who also felt ICS were least able to reach the poorest and most marginalised in the community.

The most consistently positive statement across respondent groups revolved around ICS volunteers encouraging local participation, encouraging community groups to work together and inspiring social action and volunteering in the community.

The largest difference in opinion between community members and community leaders was around ICS helping to address community priorities, with the former far more optimistic than the latter group.

**By age**

Respondents improved in their feedback of ICS the younger they are. This is likely mainly driven more by different respondent types rather than age, as younger respondents are more likely to be within the community member group. Respondents aged 19-25 are more evenly mixed between volunteers and community members, leading to a less positive outlook compared to younger age groups.

**By agency**

Most evaluation sites were VSO projects. The sample of other agencies was not large enough for a viable comparison and any differences that have been observed (e.g. Raleigh projects as mentioned above) could be driven by respondent demographic differences as opposed to differences in agency.

### Annex 5

**List of respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>% strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>17 2 5 3 2 5 6 2 2 1 2 7 5 7 3 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group participants</td>
<td>9 34 15 43 9 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>10 19 11 14 14 19 10 21 18 29 26 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>13 7 21 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group interviews</td>
<td>2 2 4 1 1 3 1 6 7 5 6 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group participants</td>
<td>4 4 10 32 30 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paired interviews</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>2 3 2 2 1 3 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneur business visits</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>70 17 18 16 17 11 15 10 15 38 33 37 66 13 16 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory activities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23% 44% 50% 71% 82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host partner organisation</td>
<td>3 1 1 1 2 4 1 4 5 10 6 32 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>6 15 11 22 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placements</td>
<td>44 14 1 10 4 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>6 2 12 3 8 7 2 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICS volunteers</td>
<td>4 1 1 6 2 17 5 13 19 6 28 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host families</td>
<td>8 2 3 5 4 4 6 5 3 2 2 3 6 13 4 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities</td>
<td>72 5 16 7 12 9 66 36 19 19 10 53 4 2 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>10 46 3 5 82 72 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICS staff</td>
<td>2 2 1 1 2 1 2 2 3 1 2 1 5 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>2 1 2 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1 6 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local volunteers</td>
<td>22 11 5 6 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer educators</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total participants</td>
<td>125 26 66 33 37 54 86 70 54 55 49 133 165 82 113 38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Aggregated CMO tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bangladesh – SRH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are taboos against speaking about sexual reproductive health.</td>
<td>7 peer educators were selected from the communities and trained by the volunteers with representatives of the 4 youth clubs. The peer educators were motivated by wanting to improve their skills and knowledge and wanting to help the community.</td>
<td>Large underserved parts of the community accessed relevant information and messages around SRH previously provided by partners to more limited parts of the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness and willingness to develop community structures in Dinajpur.</td>
<td>ICS interventions established community structures and worked with and brokered collaboration between 4 individual youth clubs, peer educators, child marriage prevention committee, girls club and entrepreneurs with their committee.</td>
<td>Strengthened community structure and their ways of working collaboratively to a significant extent (as an example the 4 individual youth clubs have merged into an overall one with the capability to apply for formal registration as a result of the interaction with ICS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorest and most marginalised members of the community not reached by existing initiatives of youth clubs, peer educators and child marriage prevention committees.</td>
<td>ICS volunteers worked in an inclusive manner, introducing the practices of going around the community door to door. Peer educators and youth clubs learnt this approach and realized this had the potential to engage people that would have otherwise been left out.</td>
<td>The door to door approach is now practiced by all peer educators and community participations in courtyard sessions has increased, which includes the poorest and most marginalised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing community support for the sessions in the courtyard.</td>
<td>ICS volunteers established contact with Union Parishad (local authority) to gather larger support.</td>
<td>Large increase in scale of delivery of session and reach of SHR and child marriage prevention messages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing gaps between formal health services and communities.</td>
<td>ICS volunteers built links with service providers, invited government officials and experts to the community action days.</td>
<td>This lead to an increased uptake of health services and even an improved relationships between communities and local clinics to some extent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nigeria – Livelihood</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The residents of Igangan, Asuku, Ilosi and Oke Agbede are largely small holder farmers.</td>
<td>ICS volunteers accompanied the establishment of young farmers clubs, in collaboration with agricultural services.</td>
<td>Improved young people’s attitudes in the community towards agriculture as a viable employment option to some extent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kenya – Entrepreneurship</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local young people lack business knowledge</td>
<td>ICS volunteers provide business training and in some cases, small business loans, to entrepreneurs</td>
<td>A number of entrepreneurs start new businesses after receiving training and support from ICS volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kenya – Deaf Awareness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of government services and funds for deaf children, but limited interaction with deaf communities.</td>
<td>ICS intervention supported the organisation of Deaf Youth in Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces. This enabled the local government to invite deaf youth in the local area to a meeting in which they explained how community groups could access funds.</td>
<td>The INS group gained significant information about the government funds to support deaf communities and successfully applied for funding for local deaf children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nigeria, Tanzania – Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortage of teaching staff (across 3 countries in interventions), in Nigeria in particular shortage of math and science teachers).</td>
<td>ICS volunteers work in schools and during their time they provide temporary relief to staff and provide additional capacity for extracurricular activities.</td>
<td>There appear to be increased attendance during the volunteers’ cycles as the additional capacity enhances students’ experiences. However this is not sustained and the quality of the service is inconsistent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zambia – SHR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>CYC and NZP (partners) have limited capacity to deliver awareness raising and peer education.</td>
<td>ICS volunteers provide complementary addition to pre-existing awareness raising interventions.</td>
<td>Partners are able to largely reach more people specifically in primary and secondary schools and rural health centres during the volunteers’ placements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary and secondary school curricula include messages and information on SHR.</td>
<td>ICS interventions focus in primary and secondary education and health and social services in conjunction with pre-existing local and national interventions. The ICS interventions repeat topics in a creative way.</td>
<td>Children and young people have some increased awareness and interest of key issues on SHR.</td>
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<td><strong>All sectors – 9 projects in Zambia, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania</strong></td>
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<td>High levels of absenteeism and use of corporal punishment.</td>
<td>Volunteers generate interest in school children, local community members and young people in community to attend events, sessions and services.</td>
<td>Increased attendance at volunteer supported events and services. Reported increase in attendance and reduction in absenteeism in school. Increased awareness of inclusion of deaf community. Increased interest of community in livelihood issues.</td>
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Igangan has a well-organised traditional leadership structure, headed by a traditional monarch, the oba. These elders are supportive of the program. ICS interventions bring together community volunteers, national volunteers and traditional leaders, who are motivated to contribute and to engage in social action for the benefit of the community. Significantly increased confidence of young people to approach local elders about issues that concerned them.
Annex 7
Field work schedule

Zambia

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Kenya

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Annex 8
Quantitative Survey
Annex 9
EvalC3 re-run data table

For each of the 16 in-depth evaluations from phase 2, the outcomes presented in the individual reports were coded to re-run an EvalC3 analysis for phase 3. Outcomes were coded 1 where there is evidence it is present and 0 where no evidence it is present. This was done by analysing the CMOs of all project evaluations. Mixed findings columns indicated whether there were mixed findings for the outcome (where no mixed findings was coded as 1 and mixed findings were coded as 0) and were used to check models for accuracy of outcomes. Only ‘Quality & effectiveness’ analysis was run based on its mixed findings column, as the evidence of change where there were mixed findings were particularly weak.

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Annex 10
EvalC3 re-run model truth tables

Re-running the EvalC3 modelling using the outcomes coded as in the table in Annex 9 for the phase 3 synthesis of the evaluation produced a truth table for each of the 8 dimensions of change tested. These truth tables formed a key part of the EvalC3 analysis and findings presented in the main body of the report. Information on how to read the truth tables can be found in the EvalC3 methodology box on p.25.

Service quality & effectiveness

Model attributes
Collaboration & networking
Ownership & agency

Community ownership & agency

Model attributes
Collaboration & networking

Model attributes
Participation & participatory practices

Participation & participatory practices

Model attributes
Working with local partners to find target groups in community

Model attributes
Use of Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces

Model attributes
Working with community volunteers

Model attributes
Working with community volunteers
**Social inclusion**

Model attributes
Use of Inclusive Neighbourhood Spaces
Community ownership & agency

Model attributes
Working with community volunteers

**Collaboration & networking**

Model attributes
Community ownership & agency
Innovation & inspiration

**Inspiration & Innovation**

Model attributes
Collaboration & networking

Model attributes
Service quality & effectiveness
Social action

**Social action**

Model attributes
Service quality & effectiveness
Social inclusion

Model attributes
Innovation & inspiration
Social inclusion
Annex 11
Example of Qualitative data analysis from individual project evaluations

Annex 12
Evaluation TOR

Annex 13
ICS quantitative survey full analysis spreadsheet with raw data

Annex 14
Paris Declaration Principles

The Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness, signed in 2005, lists 5 key principles for achieve greater aid impact. Though the Paris Declaration Principles centre primarily on bilateral aid agreements between a donor and a host country, many of the principles nevertheless can be translated to the context of ICS: ICS is funded by the UK government through DFID, for volunteer placements with local partners in host countries for achieving positive and sustainable development impacts.

The five principles are:

1. **Ownership**: Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.
2. **Alignment**: Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.
3. **Harmonisation**: Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication.
4. **Results**: Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured.
5. **Mutual accountability**: Donors and partners are accountable for development results.

Though all five can be relevant for ICS to some extent, the most relevant principles are ownership, results and mutual accountability. The ownership principle can be translated to partners and host communities ICS works with setting their own strategies for poverty reduction and development. This is further reflected in the ‘community ownership and agency’ dimension of change within the ICS theory of change. The results and mutual accountability principles are borne out through the continuous M&E systems and processes ICS use to report to DFID and for wider publication, of which this evaluation aims to contribute to. With regards to the alignment principle, ICS projects often seek to work in collaboration with local partners within existing locally-based development interventions.

These documents may be available upon request.

These documents may be available upon request.