



**REPORT TO**  
**THE CIVIL SOCIETY FUND OF IRISH AID**  
**ON**  
**SERVE'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2010-12 (YEAR 1)**

## **Section 1: Overview**

**Name of Organisation:** SERVE

**Project Name:** SERVE'S Development Programme 2010-12

**Country:** South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe

**CSF Contract Number:** CSF063 - 1001

**Date:** March 2012

**Reporting Period:** June 2010 – December 2011<sup>1</sup>

**Project Year:** Year 1 of 3

## **Section 2: Organisational Updates**

The following significant updates took place at an organisational level during the project period:

- A new **Strategic Plan** was developed to cover the period 2012-2014. This has been submitted to Irish Aid as part of SERVE'S application for Programme Funding;
- Following on from the external audit undertaken by Comhlamh in November 2010, SERVE strengthened a number of **policies** regarding the Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme. The following policies were strengthened – Volunteer Recruitment & Selection Policy, Volunteer Training Policy;
- SERVE approved a number of other significant policies including: (1) Partnership Policy; (2) Monitoring & Evaluation Policy; (3) Governance Policy;
- SERVE completed a **Child Protection Audit** with 6 partners, and continue to work with our partners to develop good child protection & safeguarding standards;
- SERVE developed an **Internship Programme** in our Belfast and Cork offices successfully assigning two capable resource people to support our programme activities;
- The SERVE board engaged in a number of significant training events to strengthen **Corporate Governance**;
- In Northern Ireland, SERVE became members of **CADA** – the Coalition of Aid & Development Agencies;
- The **development resource service** delivered by SERVE to the Dublin Province of the Redemptorists was strengthened and renewed through a new Memorandum of Agreement;
- SERVE **Solidarity Groups** were initiated which provide excellent opportunities for returned volunteers and others to contribute in a formal and strategic way to the achievement of the principal objectives in the Strategic Plan;

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<sup>1</sup> The project planning began in February 2010 and project implementation began in June 2010, while the funding from Irish Aid was received on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010. December 2011 is referenced as the reporting deadline, twelve months after the receipt of funds.

## **Section 3: Project Summary and Key Updates**

### **Nature & Scope of Project**

The SDP 2010-2012 aims to deliver positive outcomes for children, young people and women. In the original application it focused on five deprived communities in Brazil, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa. The original application to Irish Aid was €567,930 for 2010-12<sup>2</sup> but Irish Aid declined to fund the Brazil programme component. The Irish Aid funding allocation of €115,266 for Year 1 of this programme was considerably less than expected and budgeted for. SERVE, working from the changed budget perspective, made the following decisions:

1. To seek alternative donor funding for the Brazil component and separate the Brazil component from the three year development programme;
2. SERVE decided to significantly reduce the investment in the childcare component of the project;
3. SERVE commenced a process of *new engagement* with our partner at Muvamba, Mozambique scaling back our commitment to just the classroom building component;

### **Significant changes to project design (risks, context and partnerships)**

The three decisions referenced above were based on the funding allocation from Irish Aid and the challenging fundraising environment dominated by the recession. The original budget was made redundant and reformulated to recognise the new realities.

The **refocused objectives** of the SDP 2010-12 Programme were as follows:

1. Implementation of partnership based holistic community based **orphans and vulnerable children programme** in Rustenburg, South Africa with our partner Tapologo;
2. Provision of infrastructure and support of services to meet **basic human needs** in the areas of childcare, education and health in the target communities in South Africa and Mozambique;
3. Investment in **skills training** for young people and women in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique with our partners Tsholofelo and Young Africa;
4. **Building the capacity of communities and partners** in the target areas through the Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme;
5. **Empower** young people to play an active role in the development process, with the aim of encouraging a HIV/AIDS free generation in South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe;
6. **Mainstream** HIV/AIDS, gender equality, good governance, environmental sustainability and youth participation into all project activities;

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<sup>2</sup> Irish Aid allocated €383,485 to SERVE for 2010-2012, declining to fund the Brazil component of the programme. On 4<sup>th</sup> November 2010, SERVE wrote to Hilda O’Riain of Irish Aid indicating that there was an error in the Irish Aid calculation of the three year budget (which was calculated as the Requested amount less the Brazil component). The correct figure of €403,558 for 2010-2012 was acknowledged by Hilda O’Riain.

## Report on Risk Assessment

Risk	Impact/Update
Funding constraints may undermine the work around being Programmatic and may lead to less commitment to strategic planning	Despite receiving less funding than requested from Irish Aid, SERVE believes that it has continued to advance its Programmatic Approach. Particular emphasis has been placed on working with partners to develop multiyear budgets, act in coherence with national development plans, plan strategically and manage for results.
The significant decline in the Irish economy leads to a huge supply of volunteers with huge pressure placed on a small vol. Programme staff	SERVE has not witnessed a significant increase in the number of volunteer requests. However, SERVE played an active role in a working group to assess long term volunteer options and how this can be linked to government support. SERVE met with Minister Jan O'Sullivan on this issue, when she was working in the Department of Foreign Affairs.
Over-reliance on key individual in SERVE could lead to a skills deficit due to unforeseen circumstances	SERVE staff continue to gradually assume more management responsibility. Annual operational plans are being developed with responsibility per staff member clearly assigned.
New emphasis on the role of Directors post the governance crises in an array of institutions in Ireland may discourage competent personnel from taking up directorships in the voluntary sector	SERVE have developed Solidarity Groups in Belfast, Dublin, Limerick, Cork and Galway as a way of keeping past volunteers active in the organisation. The SERVE Board has strengthened sub committees in (i) Audit; (ii) SERVE Council; (iii) HR and (iv) Risk. SERVE Board undertook training in (i) Corporate Governance Structures; (ii) NGDO Charter; (iii) Dochas Code of Corporate Governance
Fall in income due to recession reduces the capacity to support partners	SERVE experienced a year on year increase in income as per our audited accounts. A reduction in funding from the Volunteer Programme was mitigated by an increase in funding from institutional donors. In the majority of cases SERVE has been able to maintain or administer a small decrease in funding relationships with partners. Our challenge remains securing uncommitted funding. SERVE has developed a strategic approach to fundraising. SERVE has adopted a strategy of running small scale and low cost fundraisers regularly throughout the year, which is providing a growing source of un-committed income.
Over-reliance on key partner, namely Irish Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; SERVE remains reliant on Irish Aid funding (including Mísean Cara funding) for 46% of our overall income. This compares well with the 70% recommendation from Irish Aid;</li> <li>&gt; Efforts to develop other donor and corporate funding met with limited success during 2011;</li> <li>&gt; SERVE did make progress on the development of country specific funding strategies and now have these in place for RSA, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Brazil; and</li> <li>&gt; SERVE continue to explore funding options and plan to develop capacity to access DFID &amp; EU Funding.</li> </ul>

<p>Poor value for money or fraud by partners may undermine the quality of SERVE'S development approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; SERVE approved a Partnership Policy in 2011;</li> <li>&gt; SERVE approved a Monitoring &amp; Evaluation Policy in 2011;</li> <li>&gt; SERVE approved a Financial Procedures Policy on 19/04/2010</li> <li>&gt; SERVE approved an Internal Audit Policy on 19/04/2010</li> </ul> <p>Overall, SERVE is confident that opportunities for fraud amongst partners are low. Regular reports, twice annual visits and clear contracts ensure good oversight by SERVE. Partners have good internal audit and financial systems – see Section 5 Sustainability.</p> <p>SERVE believes that we achieve very good value for money - by supporting key components of larger programmes, or projects closely aligned to our own priorities.</p>
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#### **Section 4: Summary of Project Progress**

This section reports on the progress towards the objectives detailed in the SDP 2010-12 application to Irish Aid. The SERVE SDP 2010-12 is implemented through a partnership model involving 4 partners in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The SDP Programme is focused on three themes - children, young people and women.

The reporting format differentiates the number of beneficiaries between children, young people and adult women. Our development themes are expressed throughout the report by the following abbreviations: C = Children; Y = Youth; G = Gender Equality Programme

The first year of the SDP involved a total investment of **€445,190** and this report demonstrates that there were **6,604** direct beneficiaries. SERVE uses seven categories to describe how specific project activities help to achieve the six objectives pivotal to this programme<sup>3</sup>.

A detailed tracking of Objectives, Results and Outcomes is outlined in Appendix 1.

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<sup>3</sup> OVC = Orphans and Vulnerable Children; BN = Basic Needs; Gen = Gender equality programmes; ST = Skills Training; Cap = Capacity Building; YL = Youth Leadership; Main = Mainstreaming of key issues especially HIV/AIDS

**Table 1: Results and Direct Beneficiaries of SDP 2010 Year 1**

Country	Partner/Project	Results Achieved	Direct Beneficiaries					SDP Beneficiaries per Objective (1-6)					
			Total	C	Y	G	€	OVC	BN	ST	Cap	YL	Main.
South Africa	Tapologo OVC Programme	Average of 390 OVC supported through food, educational, economic, child protection and health interventions in 4 communities in Rustenburg	390	390			T: 165,754 IA:2,633	390					
South Africa	Tapologo Health Clinics Upgrades	Wide range of upgrades and improvements made to 9 clinic sites and one workshop around Rustenburg, leading to improved service delivery for communities and people with HIV	674	155	162	357	T:32,322 IA:4,860		155 162 357				
South Africa	Tsholofelo, Early Education Places	One new creche facility constructed at Mbekisan community and 2 existing creche facilities refurbished	75	75			T: 3,814 IA:3,814		75				
Mozambique	Muvamba Mission/ Primary Classroom Building	5 new classrooms constructed with capacity for 430 students from rural area	430	430			T:13,573 IA:0		430				
South Africa	Tsholofelo/ Community Skills Training Programme	183 people benefitted from 7 distinct Skills Training courses, SMME training and life skills training	183		49	134	T: 56,854 IA:53,000			49 134			

Country	Partner/Project	Results Achieved	Total	C	Y	G	€		OVC	BN	ST	Cap	YL	Main.
Zimbabwe	Young Africa Zimbabwe/ Skills Training Programme	(1) Clean water supply secured for YA Campus benefitting 1094 young people each year in skills training alone; (2) Photocopier purchased; (3) 14 start up business loans approved; (4) Business training delivered to 300 students in TVET courses	1094		1094		T: 23,205 IA: 8,000				1094			
Mozambique	Young Africa Mozambique/ Skills to Community Initiative	Skills to Community Initiative run by SERVE volunteers involving outreach to local orphanages, art response workshops, improving study facilities on YA campus and Youth Festival	620		620		T: 10,000 IA:3,800				620			
South Africa, Mozambique	Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme	28 volunteers placed in programme countries. Significant contribution made to physical development of projects described above and below, as well as education, health & childcare	1,028	200	828		T:67,516 IA:28,948					200 828		
Zimbabwe	Young Africa Zimbabwe/ Life Skills Programme	Comprehensive life skills training programme delivered to 984 young people	984		984		T:0 IA:0							984
Mozambique	Young Africa Mozambique/ Life Skills Programme	Comprehensive life skills training programme delivered to 1126 young people	1126		1126		T:0 IA:0							1126
<b>Totals</b>			<b>6604</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>4863</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>T: 373,038 IA: 105,055</b>		<b>390</b>	<b>660 162 357</b>	<b>1763 134</b>	<b>1028</b>		<b>2110</b>

The following pie charts are based on the above table and associated budget information and show progress under the three key themes and by project activity:

Chart 1: Numbers/Percentage of Beneficiaries by Theme

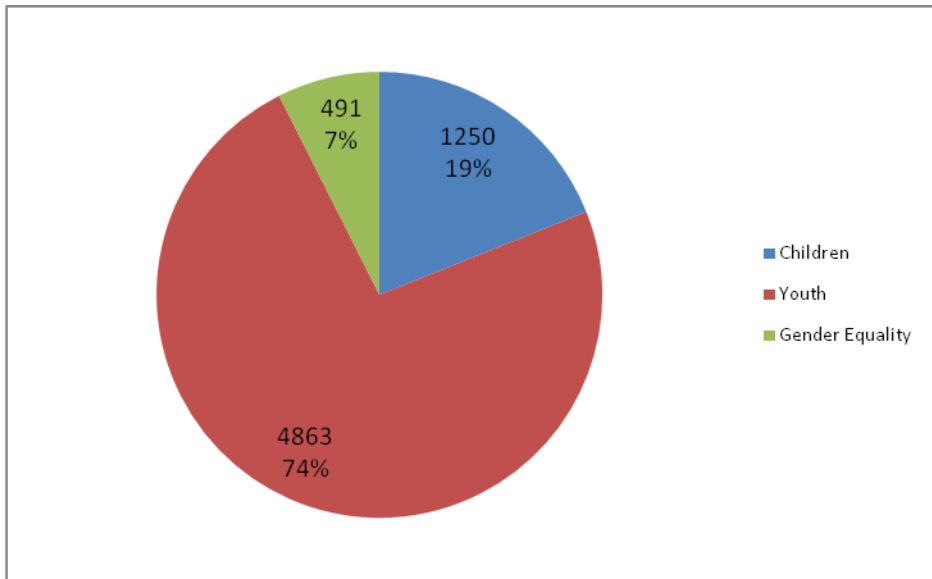


Chart 2: Analysis of Beneficiaries in each Project Activity

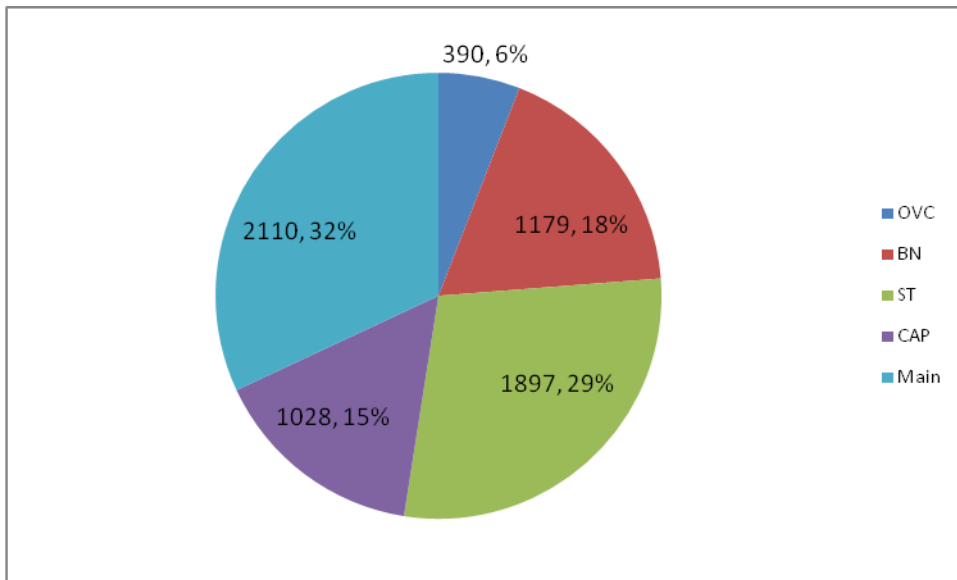




Chart 3: Funding Allocation per Development Theme € (does not include SERVE salary allocation)

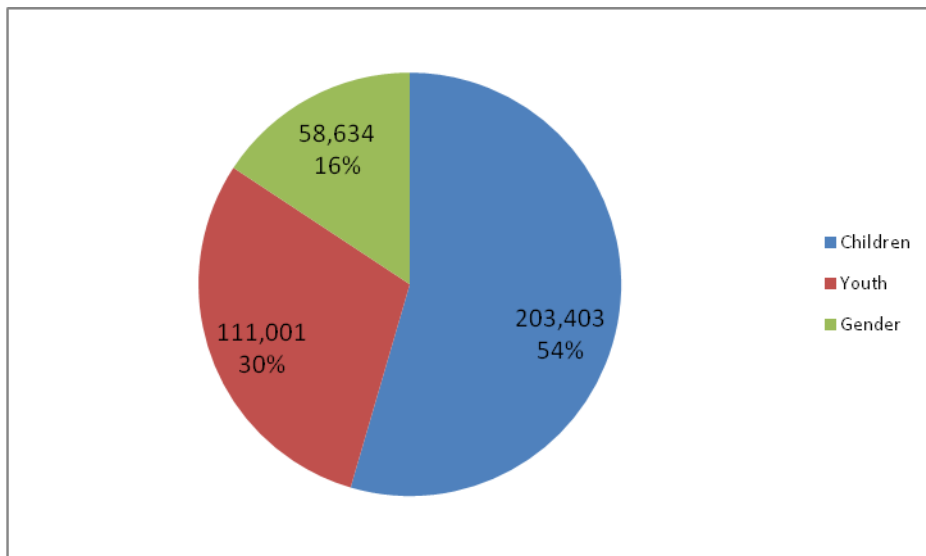
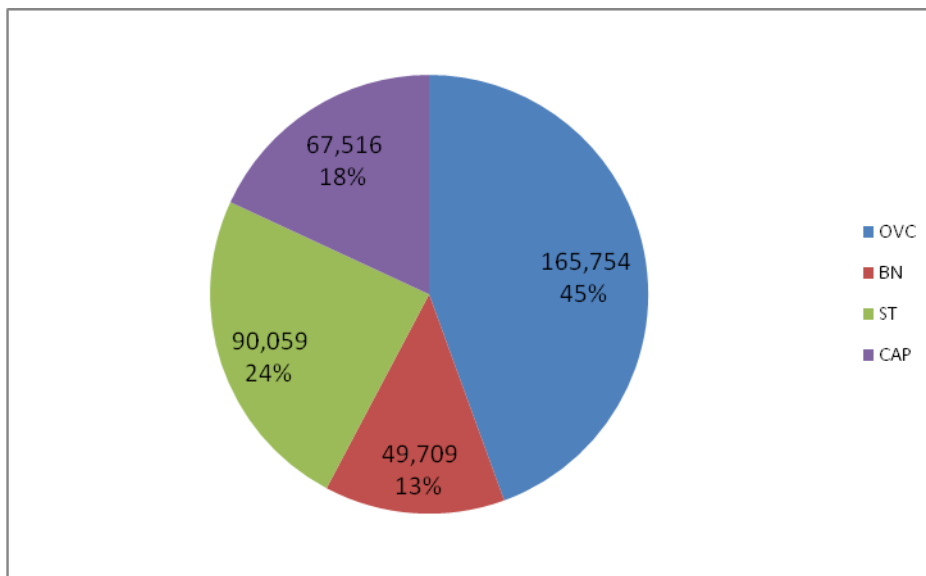


Chart 4: Funding Allocation per Programme Objective (does not include SERVE salary allocation)



The following table details the key Outcomes of Year 1 of the SDP 2010-12 according to the refocused objectives.

**Table 2: Key Outcomes of SDP 2010-12 Year 1**

Project Objective	Key Outcomes
<p>1. Implementation of partnership based holistic community based <b>orphans and vulnerable children programme</b> in Rustenburg, South Africa with our partner Tapologo;</p>	<p>a) Average of 390 OVC per month have improved diet and nutrition status (funded specifically by this programme);            b) Improved coordination between stakeholders has improved decision making, and increased the resources made available for child protection;            c) 108,616 interventions were achieved averaging 396 OVC per month, serviced by an average of 16 CCW per month with each CCW caring on average for 24 OVC with an average of 23 interventions per CCW per month;            d) Progress achieved towards achieving practical gains on each of the four principles on the Convention on the Rights of the Child;            e) High number of at risk children safely retained in their local communities rather than being institutionalised;</p>
<p>2. Provision of infrastructure and support of services to meet <b>basic human needs</b> in the areas of childcare, education and health and in the target communities in South Africa and Mozambique;</p>	<p>a) 670 additional people gaining access to weekly HIV/AIDS health care through nine newly developed Wellness Clinics;            b) 75 additional children benefit from early childhood education at squatter camp with a projected 60% of these children based on project experience likely to continue to primary school with at an average 75% attendance rate. This cohort of children is now beginning to meet the development milestones at this stage of their childhood. The inter-generational cycle of educational disadvantage in this camp is being dismantled for the first time. Parents begin to have positive attitudes towards their child's education (including good attendance). Parents begin to play a more positive and active role in their community. Staff begin to show an interest in acquiring and developing skills and experience for the delivery of a more complete service.            c) 430 children commence primary education in rural Mozambique for the first time, with a boost in the number of girls attending school incentivised by the provision of water resources adjacent to the classrooms. The provision of a daily meal through <i>PAM</i> programme has improved dramatically the nutritional status of children. The participative approach that fostered the involvement of the parents in the building process has strengthened the community's self-esteem arising from their involvement in the project. The expectation is that the inter-generational cycle of little or no educational opportunity will be broken and the gender bias mitigating against female attendance at school reversed permanently.</p>

3. Investment in **Skills Training** for young people and women in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique with our partners Tsholofelo and Young Africa

- a) Livelihood security was successfully enhanced as just short of 60% of 183 graduates from Tsholofelo Skills Training Programme moved into income earning opportunities and achieved an increase in their average income levels. The majority created income generating opportunities in the informal sector within their community with a smaller number moving into formal employment situations.
- b) Two unexpected challenging outcomes that emerged in the delivery of the skills training programme in the South African squatter camps include: (1) the challenge presented by the fact that educational completion rates in the squatter camps are so low that many squatter camp residents are not able to meet the minimum educational requirements for the courses; (2) Only 26% of the beneficiaries were male, indicative of the great difficulties faced in engaging men in community programmes and services in the squatter camps -the proposed intervention strategies for 2012 onwards are being adapted to attempt to address these development challenges.
- c) The SERVE/Young Africa programme at Beira, Mozambique supporting vocational training programmes and services for 650 vocational students and 646 participating in auxiliary courses is creating employment opportunities for young Mozambicans. An extensive evaluation of the impact of the training programmes and services was completed involving 261 students. 84% of the interviewed students felt that their future was brighter having completed programmes at Young Africa and 76% expressed the view that they had grown in self-confidence. 77% of all graduates from the past three years have secured employment (19% are self employed and 81% employed). This compares very well with national statistics which show only 10% of people in formal employment.
- (d) The Beira community outreach component successfully unleashed a creative dynamic involving a community outreach programme involving young people to manufacture tables, benches, shelves and study huts for local orphanages. This benefitted in excess of 250 children while strengthening the skills base of disadvantaged young people. In addition, the programme communicated important HIV/AIDS messages and achieved goals around involving young people in the development process and the achievement of the MDGs.
- d) 147 students were trained in Junior Achievements and ILO Start Your Own Business in Chitungwiza and fourteen micro-credit loans were approved with a repayment rate running currently at 71%;
- (e) The programme also delivered a Borehole and new photocopier to the Young Africa Campus in Chitungwiza in support of 558 students/ (298 technical students)

	<p>complimenting a strengthened health programme that offered Voluntary Counselling and Testing for HIV attracting 660 people and contributed to an overall pass rate of 83% in courses delivered at the campus;</p> <p>e) The SERVE/Young Africa model for integral development of underprivileged young people was successfully documented and both the campus in Chitungwiza and Beira as well as the documented model are attracting donors and government officials and other stakeholders with a particular interest in the strong evidence that the franchise model has the potential to achieve a robust level of self-reliance. Steady progress has been made towards the achievement of a replicable model</p>
<p><b>4. Building the capacity of communities and partners</b> in the target areas through the Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme</p>	<p>a) 28 of the 80 volunteers were assigned to the target communities and all 80 volunteers completed the comprehensive training programme generating a team of highly motivated and well prepared volunteers;</p> <p>b) Tailor made and high quality development education programmes were delivered to 80 volunteers;</p> <p>(c) Four partners benefited from the assignment of 28 volunteers who contributed (i) to the physical development of health and education infrastructure; (ii) capacity building of participating organisations, (iii) acting as a catalyst for community development initiatives and developing north/south partnerships with communities in Ireland;</p> <p>(d) Programme acted as a catalyst to increase local voluntary involvement (300 local volunteers); mentoring (22 young people mentored); development education (102 local volunteers benefitted); mutual learning (lots of stories); the level of youth participation with partners and more specifically (marginalised youth engagement in Festivals, and Bloom Where You are Planted programme); establishing international links and networks in favour of partners based on trust; engagement with student parliaments; and finally it contributed to an outcome whereby tapping the ingenuity, solidarity and creativity of voluntary action added value;</p> <p>e) Demonstrated that it is possible to implement a creative and relevant volunteering programme that generates a constituency for change in Ireland and overseas and helps to expand civil society's contribution towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals;</p> <p>f) Our partners through the efforts of this programme are slowly becoming champions of child protection, youth participation and gender equality in their local context;</p> <p>(g) Systems were strengthened so that improvements are tangible in partners organisational processes with increased evidence that partners are operating from a base characterised by good governance, good organisational structure, programme quality and robust monitoring and evaluation systems;</p>

<p>5. Empower young people to play an active role in the development process, with the aim of encouraging a <b>HIV/AIDS free generation</b> in South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe</p>	<p>a) Over 2,000 young people across four centres benefitted from effective life skills training being mainstreamed into skills training courses. A detailed evaluation of 260 Young Africa students has shown that 77% found Life Skills training to be "very useful". 98% of students responded that Life Skills Training helped them to make different decisions in terms of relationships/sexual behaviour;</p> <p>b) A Candlelight Memorial service in Harare as part of an international commemoration day for those who have died from HIV/AIDS, a Sports Festival "Keeping Young People Busy through Sport", an Arts festival called "Celebrate Life-Discover Yourself- both held in Chitungwiza"; with two sporting festivals in Beira and a FAYA festival(Festival de Arte Young Africa) with the theme 'Celebrate your Life be a winner' with HIV/AIDS messages mainstreamed into all activities reached in excess of 6,500 people between the ages of 15-24;</p>
<p>6. Mainstream HIV/AIDS, gender equality, good governance, environmental sustainability and youth participation into all activities</p>	<p>a) HIV/AIDS was successfully mainstreamed into all skills training (see 5 above);</p> <p>b)The target of achieving 40% female registration in Skills Training courses was achieved with evidence of partners developing strategies, more sophisticated targeting and disaggregation by gender;</p> <p>c) Developing strategies to achieve outcomes around good governance was given great attention under objective three and there is undoubtedly a new culture emerging but it is difficult to measure the impact of these efforts yet;;</p> <p>d) SERVE works hard at prioritising and mainstreaming youth participation. The joint approach with partners to develop culturally friendly youth leadership programmes was progressed significantly during the first year of the programme;</p> <p>e) The programme failed to coordinate appropriate strategies for mainstreaming environment issues;</p>

### **Section 5: Sustainability & Exit Strategy**

SERVE projects are implemented in partnership with organisations who are rooted in their local communities. SERVE are satisfied that each of the four partners linked to this development programme have:

1. Competent governance structures;
2. Experienced & capable personnel;
3. Activity programmes and plans aligned with local, regional and national government strategies;

Furthermore, our appraisal indicates that our partners and the target communities are making satisfactory progress in terms of:

4. Community ownership and involvement;

5. Good succession planning;
6. A range of diversified income sources;
7. Transparent accounting; and
8. Emerging audit and evaluation culture;

The outputs and outcomes achieved through this development programme will be sustained by:

1. Ongoing capacity development with focused training programmes for both SERVE and partners;
2. Refinement, appraisal and testing of the Franchise Model determining its potential for self-reliance and replication;
3. Planned exit points linked to predetermined objectives;
4. Engagement of beneficiaries, partners and civil authorities in determining objectives;

More specifically, in respect of the sustainability of each outcome:

### **1. Community based Orphan & Vulnerable Children**

The Godisanang OVC Programme funded under this programme is a joint venture model involving NGOs and the local authorities with a big emphasis on empowering the local community. The SERVE Irish Aid funding amount accounts for approximately 25% of the total budget and the funding is channelled through a very strong partner with good governance and a satisfactory donor base with carefully designed exit strategies. The programme is administered by very capable and competent staff. There is also a strong advocacy element to this programme with significant efforts being made to ensure that South Africa fulfils its commitments to children outlined in the constitution and international conventions that South Africa subscribes to.

### **2. Provision of Infrastructure and services in support of basic needs**

The financial support in favour of infrastructural development of health clinics, early education units and classrooms is **construction specific funding** and the investment is made against the certainty of income from local governments or other donors for running costs. Investment decisions are aligned with the strategic planning of the three partners Tapologo, Tsholefelo and Muvamba and the local and regional plans of local governments relevant to the geographical area where the partners serve. There is confidence from an institutional and financial perspective that the services will be maintained beyond the period of Irish Aid funding.

### **3. Investment in Skills Training to increase Livelihood security of target group**

The Young Africa model operational at Beira, Chitungwiza and Epworth requires considerable initial capital investment. The franchise model of delivering the training in partnership at a campus setting with local enterprises promises the potential of a high degree of self-reliance. While this is undoubtedly challenging in complex political states like Zimbabwe, indications are that the campus at Chitungwiza has achieved 65% self sustainability and 55% at the newer campus at Beira. This outcome augers well not just for the **project specific financial sustainability** but also for the development of a **potential replicable model**. The Young Africa project initiatives are administered under a strong governance structure with a high degree of local involvement and ownership. The Government of Mozambique have taken a strong interest in the concept of the franchise model and courses and planning are aligned with the government planning and initiatives.

There are no concerns about the dependency ratio on SERVE/ Irish Aid. In its programme funding application to Irish Aid for 2012-2015, there are specific proposed strategies to strengthen the self-reliance performance through capacity building of the Heads of Divisions.

The Skills Training Programme focused on the squatter camps in the Rustenburg area of South Africa is targeted deliberately at the poorest of the poor with all the challenges and complexities that this brings. The programme is very dependent on SERVE/ Irish Aid funding and the organisational structure supporting the project is very dependent on two or three individuals. We justify the investment in skills training in the squatter camps because it supports a target group that nobody else will work with. There is significant programme learning for SERVE and we remain committed to finding strategies to alter the financial dependency and to ensure good succession planning at our partner.

#### **4. Building capacity through the Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme**

The output and outcome section above, lists the different ways in which SERVE works to build the capacities, structures and systems of our partners. The partnership approach to development with the strong emphasis on local ownership is pivotal to achieving sustainability. The programme recognises the unique contribution made by the voluntary sector in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and acting as a catalyst to achieve community gain. The Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme from a SERVE perspective is now strengthened through a stronger policy environment and regular self-audit and external audit. Specific targets and achievements around organisational capacity as well as mobilising volunteers and participating in advocacy networks and the building of international alliances will help sustain the project outcomes into the future.

#### **5. Achieving a HIV/AIDS free generation in target communities**

The mainstreaming of Life Skills into all programme activities and the ongoing development of tailor made youth leadership training programmes is a dynamic contribution to maintaining and sustaining gains made through HIV/AIDS intervention strategies.

### **Section 6: Lesson Learning**

The following seven salient learning points (deliberately avoiding highlighting previous year learning) are highlighted;

1. The first year of this CSF funded 2010-2012 project represents SERVE's first funding application and implementation of a Development Programme as understood as distinct from a project approach. The delay in receiving news from Irish Aid about **the reduced funding allocation** along with the emergence of a sustained recession posed menacing budget challenges from the outset of the programme. The substantial reduction in funding with the decision of Irish Aid to not fund the Brazil component **thwarted carefully laid plans** and **consumed a huge amount of time** in devising new strategies to recognise the new funding realities.

Particular learning included:

- (a) The absence of a performance based/results based criteria for decision making was a significant limitation when resources are limited;
- (b) The process of **prioritising funding allocations** in the context of reduced funding is helped by having clear goals and priorities at a programme level; and

(c) Sudden and unexpected donor decisions such as the Irish Aid decision to discontinue funding the Brazil programme with SERVE midway through a partnership agreement inevitably leads to significantly **negative partnership and organisational fallout**

2. The programme struggled in its first year to track and report on mainstreaming specific expenditure and to develop a robust tangible baseline or set of indicators. It is difficult to empower partners to pursue a **Results Based Management System** when SERVE itself is only learning about optimal strategies for Results Based Management;
3. The strengthened **policy framework** achieved by SERVE during the first year of the programme delivers unexpected benefits to beneficiaries, volunteers, partners and the SERVE organisation;
4. The volunteer programmes have a very strong **multiplier impact** benefiting partners, marginalised young people and Irish communities over a longer timeframe;
5. The skills deficit in the programme countries is acute and hence the **growing recognition of TVET programmes** that prepare young people for income generating outcomes. The learning from the SERVE/Young Africa franchise model for delivering integrated vocational training for disadvantaged youth proposes a potentially replicable model that yields cost effective results. SERVE is planning to expand its commitment to the TVET sector including a commitment to develop strategies to address the acute shortage of agricultural skills in Mozambique;
6. **External evaluations** of the franchise TVET model being pioneered by SERVE/Young Africa has shown that work needs to be done to build the capacity of the **Franchise Holders** if programme goals are to be met around self-reliance. Poor teaching methodologies, poor equipment standards, lack of access to credit and developing links with the marketplace have been highlighted as areas of weakness. SERVE is committed to working with our partner Young Africa to address these identified issues in the next phase of this programme; and
7. There is a growing recognition that significant improvements can be made around working with partners to help them operate from a **clear policy and programmatic basis** through, for example, providing support for development of strategic plans and for organisational development – and through the volunteer to build capacity programme and targeted mentoring initiatives;



