



**REPORT TO**  
**THE CIVIL SOCIETY FUND OF IRISH AID**  
**ON**  
**SERVE'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2010-12 (YEAR 2)**

## **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 2011 –March 2012<sup>1</sup>

**Project Year:** Year 2 of 3

## **Section 2: Organisational Updates**

The ten organisational development updates in the first year report also relate to the second year of reporting. Furthermore, the following updates are relevant:

1. SERVE received acknowledgement from the Office of the Minister of State for Trade and Development on Feb 9<sup>th</sup> that our submission to the Irish Aid Programme Funding Cycle 2012-2015 was successful;
2. SERVE completed the results based framework required under the 2012-2015 programme and submitted it to Irish Aid;
3. SERVE completed the Comhlamh Code of Good Practice self audit in December 2011;
4. SERVE applied for membership of Dochas in January 2012 and were formally approved as members of Dochas on May 3rd 2012;

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

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

The first year report addressed the design changes prompted by the Irish Aid allocation to SERVE. These changes led to six refocused objectives for the SDP 2010-12. The invitation by Irish Aid to apply for programme funding for the 2012-2015 Cycle introduced another layer of uncertainty about the status of the second year of our three year 2010-2012 CSF funding<sup>2</sup>. It was decided to continue with the essential elements of the second year of the

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<sup>1</sup> The project planning for the annual SDP programme begins in February of each year with implementation scaled up on an annual basis in June of each year. This reporting period represents the second year of the programme commencing June 2011 focused on the programme commitments decided upon before being invited (July 2011) into the new Programme round (Application made September 2011). March 2012 represents the end of the reduced and refocused second year and the transition date for commencing the new Programme round.

<sup>2</sup> There was an absence of clear guidelines about whether the second year of the CSF programme could continue as planned or should it be shelved until the 2012-2015 programme funding application cycle was complete and decided upon. It is important to note that in the first year of the CSF round (Calendar year 2010), that Irish Aid did not disburse their funding until Nov 23rd 2010. This created a

CSF programme, and to delay programme activity on the other components until complete clarity emerged about the 2012-2015 Programme Cycle. This led to a significantly reduced refocused second year of the CSF programme based on the following objectives:

1. Implementation of partnership based holistic community based **orphans and vulnerable children programme** in Rustenburg, South Africa with our partner Tapologo;
2. Investment in **the Young Africa Beira Community Skills Training Initiative** ( The broader Skills Training objectives were put on hold and incorporated into the 2012-2015 Programme Cycle ;
3. **Building the capacity of communities and partners** in the target areas through the Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme for the Calendar Year 2011;

The Irish Aid allocation for Year 2 of the CSF programme was **€143,860** but with the refocused objectives relevant to the bridging period between the CSF and 2012-105 Programme Cycle, SERVE expended only **€73,640** of the Irish Aid allocation.

### Risk Report Update

Risk	Impact/Update
Funding constraints may undermine the work around being Programmatic and may lead to less commitment to strategic planning;	The disbursement date of Irish Aid funds on Nov 23 <sup>rd</sup> 2010 and the invitation to apply for 2012-15 Programme funding led to some reporting confusion and financial bridging issues, but the SERVE board carefully amended the priorities to scale back year 2 of the CSF programme until the 2012-15 Programme Cycle issues were resolved. Programme momentum was maintained within the funding constraints and a credible programme based on tangible results is in place for 2012-15;
The significant decline in the Irish economy leads to a huge supply of volunteers with huge pressure placed on a small volunteer programme staff	SERVE has not experienced an increase in demand for volunteer placements. In fact there has been a slight decrease in demand which SERVE attributes to the poor economic situation and the fact that young adults are choosing to stay in part time jobs to pay for university.
Over-reliance on key individual in SERVE could lead to a skills deficit due to unforeseen circumstances	SERVE staff are continuing to gradually assume more management responsibility. Annual operational plans 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	The improvements in governance highlighted in the first year report are being sustained through 2012. The two SERVE boards, both in the North of Ireland and the South of Ireland are constructively engaged and the strengthening of the Solidarity Group structure is creating a credible channel for future board members.
Fall in income due to recession reduces the capacity to support partners	Despite the prolonged recession, SERVE has managed to maintain its income base and expand it slightly. In common with many similar organisations the challenge is to generate uncommitted funding. There is a fundraising strategy in place to address these challenges.

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degree of reporting confusion as the CSF programme actually began in February 2010 but the funding was not received from Irish Aid until very late in the year.

Over-reliance on key partner, namely Irish Aid	The SERVE board while satisfied that Irish Aid income as a percentage of total income has not exceeded 50%, there is an acknowledgment of a high level of dependence on Irish Aid. Specific steps are being taken to expand the donor base.
Poor value for money or fraud by partners may undermine the quality of SERVE'S development approach	SERVE have not experienced incidences of fraud or misuse of funds. 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.

#### **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 second year of the SDP involved a total investment of **€294,986** and this report demonstrates that there were **2,374** direct beneficiaries. SERVE uses seven categories to describe how specific project activities help to achieve the six objectives of this programme.<sup>3</sup>

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

<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 2**

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 362 OVC ( Oct '11 to March '12) supported through food, educational, economic, child protection and health interventions in 4 communities in Rustenburg	362	362				T: 129,307 IA: 25,840	362						
Mozambique	Young Africa Mozambique/ Skills to Community Initiative	Skills to Community Initiative led by volunteers including refurbishment of community classrooms and orphanages, initiation of community gardens and agricultural skills training programme, art response workshops, improving study facilities on YA campus and Youth Festival	800	320	480			T: 11,000 IA: 5,500			320 480				
South Africa, Mozambique	Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme	31 volunteers placed in programme countries creating a dynamic that builds capacity, mobilises community based volunteers and builds social capital while delivering cost effectively infrastructure projects;	1,212	230	982			T: 73,606 IA: 30,300				230 982			
<b>Totals</b>			<b>2374</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>1462</b>	<b>0</b>		T: <b>213,913</b> IA: <b>61,640</b>	<b>362</b>		<b>320</b> 480	<b>230</b> 982			

The following pie charts are based on the above table and supplementary budget information and show progress achieved categorised by the three key themes and the seven identified project activities:

Chart 1: Numbers/Percentage of Beneficiaries by Theme

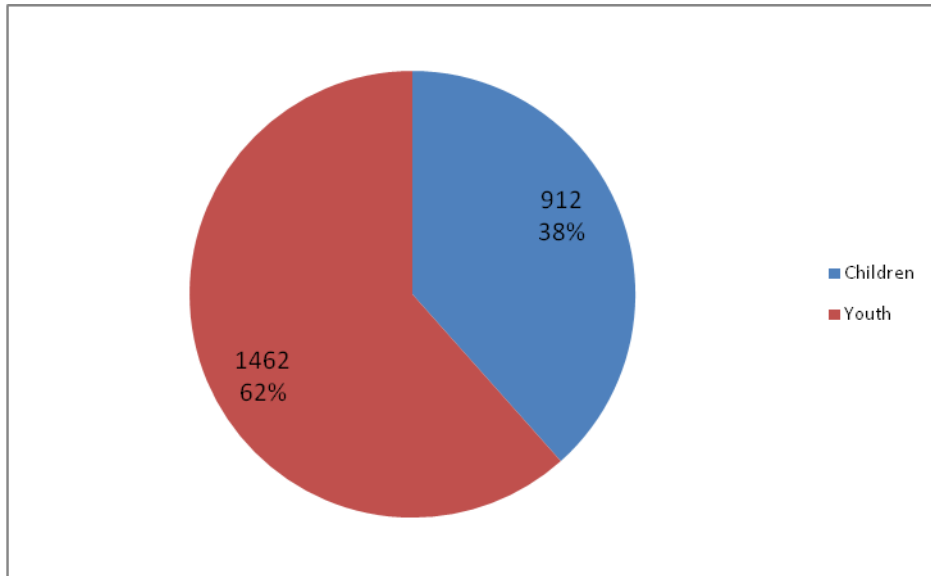


Chart 2: Analysis of Beneficiaries in each Project Activity

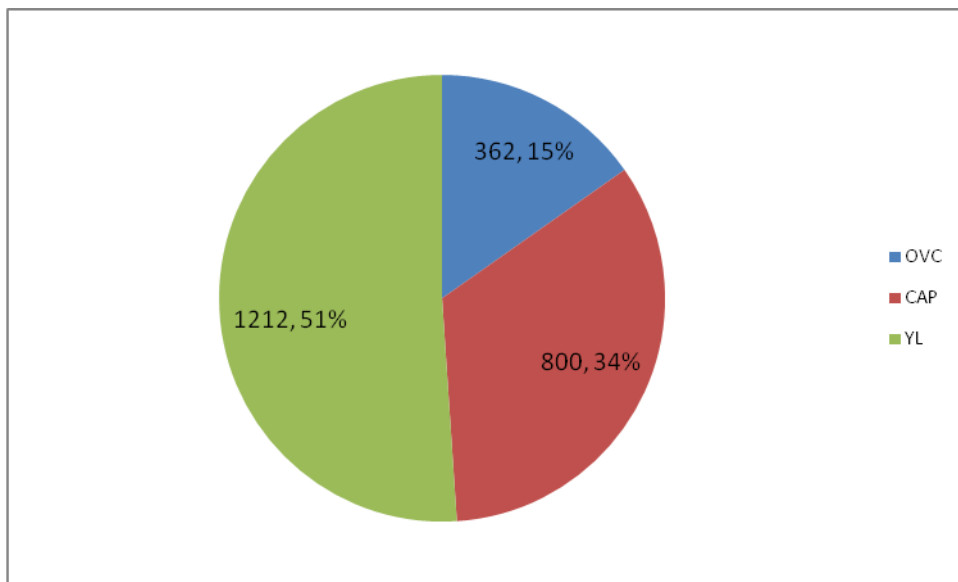


Chart 3: Funding Allocation per Development Theme € (does not include SERVE salary allocation)

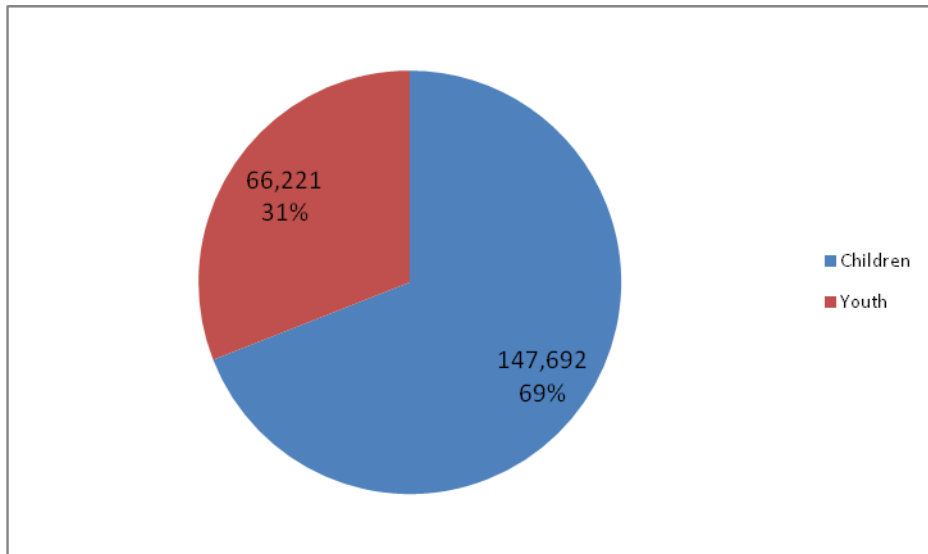
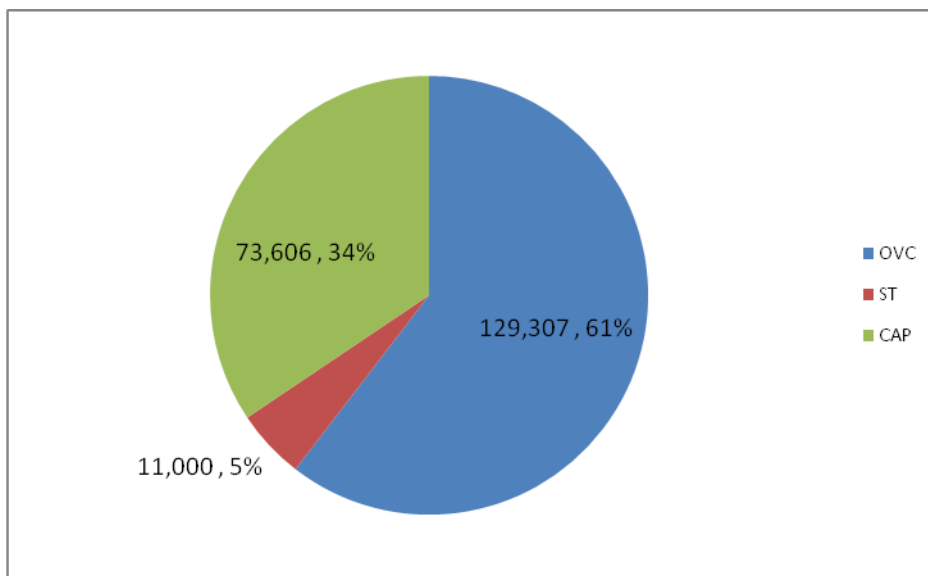


Chart 4: Funding Allocation per Programme Objective (does not include SERVE salary allocation)



The following table details the key Outcomes of Year 2 of the SDP 2010-12 relevant to the scaled back refocused objectives.

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

Project Objective	Key Outcomes
<p>1. Implementation of partnership based holistic community based <b>orphans and vulnerable children programme</b> in Rustenburg, South Africa through a partnership model with Tapologo- <i>This project objective was pursued given the vulnerable target group and the utmost importance of nutrition. The bridging issues did not lead to any postponement or rescheduling.</i></p>	<p>a) Average of 362 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) Interventions in favour of an average of 362 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 21 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>3. Investment in skills training for young people and women in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique with our partners Tsholofelo and Young Africa- <i>This project objective was significantly scaled back in the light of the bridging issues referenced in the narrative report.</i></p>	<p>This programme component was significantly scaled back with investment only in the Beira Community Skills initiative, which had the following impact:  The Beira community skills outreach component successfully unleashed a creative dynamic involving a community outreach programme involving young people to improve educational facilities, develop an income generation projects for girls living in the Hostel and hosting two successful Sports Festivals.  This benefitted in excess of 800 young people 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.</p>



<p><b>4. Building the capacity of communities and partners</b> in the target areas through the Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme- <i>The recruitment for the Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme begins in February each year and therefore the programme was well advanced with volunteers assigned etc., by July 2011 when the invitation from Irish Aid came to apply for the Programme Cycle 2012-15, this project component was implemented as per the plan for Year 2 of the CSF programme.</i></p>	<p>a) 31 of the 85 volunteers were assigned to the target communities and all 85 volunteers completed the comprehensive training programme generating a team of highly motivated and well prepared volunteers contributing directly to increased social capital, improved social cohesion, personal development and empowerment;</p> <p>b) Tailor made and high quality development education programmes were delivered to 85 volunteers leading to an engaged constituency committed to active participation in the development sector ;</p> <p>(c) Four partners benefited from the assignment of 31 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 (276 local volunteers); mentoring (27 young people mentored); development education (335 local volunteers benefitted); mutual learning (lots of stories); the level of youth participation with partners and more specifically (marginalised youth engagement in Festivals); 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) Evidence of partner systems and processes being strengthened facilitating partners to operate from a base characterised by good governance, enhanced organisational structure, programme quality and robust monitoring and evaluation systems;</p>
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## **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 NGO's and the local authorities with a big emphasis on empowering the local community. The SERVE Irish Aid funding amount continues to account 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. Investment in Skills Training to increase Livelihood security of target group**

The Young Africa franchise model operational at Beira promises the potential of a high degree of self-reliance. The Beira campus has achieved 55% self reliance after 4 years of operation. 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 the programme funding application to Irish Aid for 2012-2015, there are strategies to strengthen the self-reliance performance through capacity building of the Heads of Divisions/ Franchise Holders.

### **3. 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.

## **Section 6: Lesson Learning**

The following are the main lessons learned:

1. 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. As part of our SDP 2012-15 (Programme Funding application), 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;
2. **External evaluations** of the franchise TVET model being pioneered by SERVE/ Young Africa have 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 and delivering effective TVET Programmes. 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 as part of the Programme Funding SDP 2012-2015;
3. Proper implementation of a results based management system is one of the key determinants in working programmatically. SERVE is committed to working with partners to develop their ability to **track changes at the outcome level** but this is difficult as partners face unique challenges which can make this process very difficult. It is also difficult as SERVE is still learning about **Results Based Management systems**. There is a realization amongst partners however, that implementing a good RBM system will help measure the effectiveness of their programmes;
4. It is difficult to measure the impact of Life Skills training programmes, especially when working with young people who are highly mobile. Young Africa Zimbabwe has led a group of seven other Zimbabwean organisations under the banner of the organisations Stop Aids Now! And Rutgers WFP, to develop a toolkit for measuring the impact of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) & HIV prevention programmes. The toolkit is called “Are you on the right track? Six steps to measure the effects of your programme activities”<sup>4</sup>. SERVE believes that this toolkit has great potential and will promote its use amongst our key partners for the SDP 2012-15;
5. The policy framework of our partners can be strengthened, especially around the areas of documented **Governance Manuals**. This forms part of our capacity building programme with partners under the SDP 2012-15;
6. The **Volunteer to Build Capacity Programme** makes a huge contribution to the work of SERVE and our partners. However, given the nature of the work – young people from Ireland working alongside people from very poor communities in the developing world - **it is difficult to measure all the impacts of the Programme**. This will be an ongoing challenge for the SDP 2012-15. To tackle this issue SERVE will engage in external evaluations of the volunteer programme which we expect will help deliver some measurement tools for the “softer” aspects of the programme;
7. As SERVE worked on the SDP 2012-15 application, which involves a more strategic partnership with the partners referred to in this report, it emerged that one significant weakness was the **lack of external evaluations** to support our work with these partners. As part of the SDP 2012-15, SERVE is planning to strengthen our evidence base by undertaking the following evaluations and research (i) Research into joint model between Tapologo and Royal Bafokeng Nation (government) on effectiveness and possible replication of this model; (ii) external evaluation of the Young Africa Franchise Model with a focus on the level of self-reliance; (iii) strategy paper to develop learning around engaging people in TVET programme in squatter camps; (iv) research into the role and contribution of the voluntary sector in target

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.youngafrica.org/images/stories/Downloads/areyouontherighttrack2011.pdf>

countries and the role of Irish volunteers; (v) Comhlámh external audit of SERVE Volunteer Programme; and (vi) external evaluation of the SDP 2012-15.