



Development Programme Update from 2024



660 students from Young Africa's mobile training sites and centres across Zimbabwe celebrated their graduation in December 2024

In Zimbabwe and Mozambique, we completed the final year of the Skills for Youth Resilience Programme with Young Africa. **We helped over 1,400 young people access holistic vocational training which improved employment and income levels and built emotional resilience.** To continue this work, we started the SYRP II with Young Africa, which will run to 2027. These programmes are supported by Irish Aid's Civil Society Fund and other donors such as Electric Aid and the Edmund Rice Trust. We completed Year 2 of the Digital Vocational Education and Training for Young Africans (D-VETYA) project – also implemented with Young Africa. This project was supported by the EU Erasmus+ Fund. It has helped YA to develop an eLearning Platform and a digital Post Graduate Service Toolbox. In Zambia, we supported a **school feeding programme with St. Patrick's, Luyobolola and Flamboyant Special School** in response to a severe drought that was affecting school attendance. In India, we supported **Sumanahalli** to complete an extensive renovation of the **Ave Maria Leprosy Clinic** and purchase much needed medical aids and appliances for people affected by leprosy. In partnership with the Dublin Province of the Redemptorists, we supported Tapologo's OVC Programme in South Africa; the Mavambo Trust OVC Programme in Zimbabwe and completed the Disability Awareness for School Children project with APD in India. In 2024, **we provided funding of €609,000 to our partners**, and we would like to thank our donors and supported for making this possible.

John McCarthy, Development Programme Manager

I returned to work with SERVE in September after my maternity leave, just as the 2024 Volunteer Programme was ending. It was inspiring to hear the stories of those who volunteered this year.

Since my return, SERVE has been busy with events here in Ireland. We completed our Flip-Flop Appeal in Dundalk, Belfast, Limerick, and Cork, raising vital funds for our work. We also hosted the Slow Fashion Show on November 28th in St. Peter's Cork, showcasing local designers and promoting responsible consumption. We hope to hold this event again next year—please reach out if you'd like to get involved!

We're also excited about our new **Solidarity Gifts for our 'Gifts that Give Back'** appeal. These gifts reflect SERVE's impact through our partners worldwide and will be available for purchase at www.serve.ie/shop. They make meaningful gifts while supporting those in need.

A key part of SERVE's work is Global Citizenship Education (GCE), which raises awareness about global issues and encourages responsible, active citizenship. GCE empowers individuals to understand their role in creating a just, sustainable world. It's a vital aspect of our mission and our plans for 2025. Fundraising is challenging right now due to the climate crisis, cost-of-living pressures, and rising homelessness. But we must remember those in the Global South in of our help. Your support is essential. Thank you for all your support in 2024 and for the future!

Paula Quigley, Programmes & Administration Manager

A reflection on 2024



The SERVE team enjoying time together outside of the office

Impact of SERVE Volunteer Programmes in 2024



Volunteers enjoying a Volunteer Training day & Next Steps 2024



This year was action packed and filled with many programmes and events, new faces joining the team at SERVE, and saying goodbye to Maebh & Sophie. From fundraising events (like flip flop appeal and Runamuck), school partnerships, immersion programme, GCE events and volunteer programmes we developed as a strong team, learnt loads and opened our hearts and minds to serve and support people worldwide.

A **highlight of 2024** was the **Volunteer Programme**, where 22 volunteers went overseas to Mozambique and Philippines. This team was led by both new and experienced leaders. Our hearts were opened, connections made, and lives changed forever. In a world facing many humanitarian challenges volunteering goes beyond an act of kindness to an experience that allowed our volunteers to make a tangible impact to contribute to their communities and foster positive change in a turbulent world. It was a privilege to be part of this journey.

Volunteers meet people from diverse backgrounds and cultures which led to valuable insights, personal growth as well as creating lasting memories. If you're interested in going on this global initiative in 2025, please get in touch with nicola@serve.ie. Wishing you a peace-filled safe Christmas and New Year.

Nicola Fitzpatrick, Volunteer Programme Manager



SERVE and Young Africa's Impactful collaboration



Youth Entrepreneurship Hub in YA Epworth, Zimbabwe with two beneficiaries (Blessing Muwango, left, and Martha Mataka in the middle)

As 2024 draws to a close, I'm reflecting on another year of fruitful collaboration between SERVE and Young Africa. This year has been particularly exciting, marked by significant milestones and promising new opportunities. This year I have been working closely with Young Africa Zimbabwe and Mozambique as we begin another 3-year development project, the Skills for Youth Resilience Programme phase 2!

Our DVETYA project, supported by Erasmus+, has made substantial strides. Over 5,000 young people across Southern Africa have enrolled in our innovative E-Learning Platform, positioning us to reach those who need it most. This powerful tool, along with our Postgraduate Support Toolbox, will continue to shape the future of education and skill development in Africa.

As we look forward to 2025, there are some very exciting collaborations to come including new potential funding opportunities with YA International as well as a very special first ever SERVE Volunteer Programme in YA Zimbabwe... all of which I am very honoured to be a part of, working together to create a brighter future for young Africans.

Nollaig Hulme, Projects Assistant, YA international and SERVE

SERVE Welcomes new faces!

I recently joined the SERVE community, and it has provided me with invaluable insights into the hard work that our partners in Africa undertake regardless of setbacks, both economic and climatic. Our partners continue to show great resilience and adaptiveness to implement effective development programmes in 2024. Through this fruitful relationship, my insights into the world of Development have been expanded and greatly contributed to my sense of awareness into the hardships that many people across the continent of Africa endure. It is through the lessons learned and adaptive nature of our partnerships that we can promote advocacy and development education here from home within our own communities.

We here at SERVE are also thankful for your support throughout previous years and hoping you will follow suit in the years to come.

Tá súil agam go mbeidh Nollaig shona agus athbhliain faoi mhaise agaibh go léir!

Jack Gartland, Development Programme Officer

Reflection by Gerry

Earlier this year I read the story of Maiti Girtanner who suffered painful torture as a prisoner during the second world war. Defying, the silence imposed by the guards, she spoke to her companions and got them to speak to one another, because 'a human being is above all an articulate being'. Maiti refused to let humanity be muted. Years after her freedom Maiti concluded that "a life closed in on itself bears no fruit". The violence and torture that prevails in 2024 in Gaza, Ukraine, and Sudan to name just a few places prompts me to think of all the Maiti's in the world who today are tortured and silenced. SERVE is a small organisation that helps people to bear fruit. Our international volunteering and immersion programmes bud new generations of citizens committed to justice and change. Our development programme gives voice and agency to Young Africans in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia helping them towards employment and enterprise, where their ideas and skills flourish. Our Global Citizenship Education programme deepens our resolve to journey with minority tribes in the Philippines and people with disabilities in India. During 2024 SERVE in a distinctly impactful way has helped the voice of afflicted citizens to be heard. Together with international partners our outreach bears fruit in terms of delivering education, health, employment and income resilience. Christmas stirs enduring engagement with fragility, and hopeful signs. That the families of all who walk the SERVE pathway may be at peace and blessed at this tender time. That 2025 reinforces our resolve to bear fruit. Thank you to one and all.

Gerry O' Connor, Chairperson



Volunteer's Len & Colm Og fundraising for SERVE's Flip Flop Appeal



CBC Immersion Zambia



SERVE's Slow Fashion Show held in St Peters Cork, Nov 2024 raising vital funds & raising awareness on sustainable fashion.



Volunteer Programme in Mozambique



One of the many Friendship Cafe's held in Cork City Library in 2024

The SERVE Board and Staff would like to sincerely thank you for your continued support of SERVE's work during 2024.

Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year!

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