

VOLUNTEER YOUR SERVICES OVERSEAS

Irish health professionals are changing the lives of marginalised people the world over with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Ireland, the development organisation that works in 24 countries across Africa, Asia and the Pacific. VSO is looking for volunteers to play a vital role in developing the health systems in some of the world's poorest communities.

Health is one of VSO's core programme areas, with VSO volunteers training nearly 17,000 medical staff and helping 984,000 people in the last year alone. Each year, over 2.6 million babies die within the first 28 days of life. Most of these deaths take place in developing countries from preventable causes. For example, in Tanzania neonatal mortality rates are 12 times higher than in Ireland.

VSO health volunteers, such as Dublin's Dr Siobhán Neville and Kerryman Dr Peter O'Reilly, have worked to fight against these statistics, improving standards of neonatal care and saving babies lives in Tanzania. Another successful VSO project in Ethiopia saw a massive 40 per cent decrease in the rate of newborn deaths.

Kate O'Donnell, VSO Ireland's interim executive director, commented, "Irish health professionals are making huge strides in our development programmes overseas. For instance, Stephanie Galvin from Westmeath, who recently returned from volunteering for a year in Jinka, Ethiopia, was responsible for leading the establishment of a new Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. This unit has been running successfully and saving babies' lives ever since."

SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

VSO's volunteers train health workers, empower communities to demand better health services, and promote the use of high-impact technology and data to improve standards.

They don't just do the job themselves – they share their knowledge with local counterparts to ensure change is sustainable and lasts long after they return home. Volunteering



Dublin paediatrician Dr Siobhán Neville has volunteered her services to improve the standards of neonatal care in Tanzania.

is about collaboration, and returned volunteers often comment on the new leadership, management and clinical skills they have acquired on placement.

Think you have what it takes to volunteer overseas? VSO Ireland is always looking for experienced doctors, paediatricians, nurses, surgeons, health managers, anaesthetists, obstetricians and gynaecologists to play a vital role in developing the health systems in some of the world's poorest communities.

If you are interested in sharing your skills visit www.vso.ie or email volunteer@vso.ie.

ABOUT VOLUNTARY SERVICES OVERSEAS



VSO is the world's leading independent, international development organisation that works through volunteers to fight poverty in low income countries.

VSO's high-impact approach involves bringing people together to share skills, build capabilities, promote international understanding and action, and change lives to make the world a fairer place.

VSO's work revolves around core development areas, linked to the priorities of our partners, the Sustainable Development Goals, and our areas of expertise. These are education; health, HIV and AIDS; participation and governance; and secure livelihoods.

To volunteer with VSO, you need both professional experience and qualifications. The majority of VSO placements are a minimum of 12 months, but some shorter placements are available.

VSO cover the following costs for volunteers: outgoing and return flight, costs of immunisations and anti-malarials, medical insurance cover, accommodation and a monthly volunteer allowance.

VSO works directly with local partner organisations to meet its aims, and our volunteers respond to the needs of these local organisations.

VSO is funded by donations from individuals, the Irish government via Irish Aid, corporate partners, trusts and foundations.

To find out more about VSO Ireland visit www.vso.ie