

Make a difference this Volunteers' Week

Dear Sir,

As a director at VSO, the international development charity which works through professional volunteers, I know what an incredible impact volunteers can have in the developing world. Since VSO began in 1958 over 30,000 UK volunteers have shared their skills in some of the world's poorest communities, changing people's lives forever.

But at VSO we also know that many people write themselves off, disregarding their skills as unwanted in the developing world, believing that only doctors and teachers are needed. Nothing could be further from the truth. To fight poverty we need a whole range of people and skills. From educationalists to healthcare professionals, managers to business people, IT experts to engineers.

This Volunteers' Week we're asking people to think about the skills they have, and how they could use them especially in Pakistan, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Mongolia and Eritrea, the countries where we most need volunteers. Right now over 1,500 VSO volunteers are working with colleagues in the developing world, making the impossible possible. By visiting www.vso.org.uk this Volunteers' Week you could be taking your first step towards joining them and bringing a world without poverty a little closer to reality.

Yours sincerely

Richard Hawkes

Director of International Programmes, VSO