



**Better
Volunteering,
Better
Care**

**Engagement
Strategy**

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Introduction

The Better Volunteering, Better Care Initiative is an organic development of the Better Volunteering, Better Care inter-agency planning phase led by the Better Care Network and Save the Children, UK throughout 2014. The Better Volunteering, Better Care project reviewed and shared existing knowledge on international volunteerism as related to the alternative care of children in developing countries. The project was conceived as the first step of an on-going process to raise awareness of the risks of harm involved in such volunteering practices. Another key emphasis of the project was on the identification of ethical volunteering alternatives in line with the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children welcomed by the United Nations in 2009.

The project consulted with 120 experts from across the child protection, education, media, tourism, corporate sectors, and Christian faith communities and conducted literature reviews and surveys. The project produced overviews of the practice of volunteering in residential care centres, the volunteer travel industry as it relates to residential care and brief country snapshots of the current situation in four specific countries: Cambodia, Ghana, Guatemala, and Nepal. These documents are available for download [here](#). Informed by the findings from the consultation process, 40 experts from across these sectors were identified and convened in London to discuss possible ways forward in discouraging volunteering in residential care centres and promoting ethical volunteering alternatives. The aim of this workshop was to initiate dialogue and inform the development of this strategy.

Analysis of findings

In addition to providing information regarding the scale and characteristics of international volunteering in residential care centres, experts were also called upon to comment on current activities promoting change and best practice, and make further suggestions for potential initiatives. The ideas that experts shared were collected in three different stages.

Stage 1: Discovery mapping

Through initial interviews, 120 people were invited to share their ideas as to the motivation of stakeholders involved in the practice of volunteering in residential care centres, and the main barriers to change in encouraging these stakeholders to improve their practices. Informants were also asked to detail potential engagement solutions, and also discuss any current efforts – for example advocacy initiatives, campaigns, or best practice guidelines. These barriers and solutions, collected from all interviewees were analysed and grouped. Once grouped, the barriers and solutions were then compared, to identify which areas of this global issue were receiving the most attention, and what methods were being used to address it. More detail of this process is given in the Discovery Map Report (available upon request). In summary:

1. There is a plethora of volunteer preparation and education initiatives, originating from both the volunteer travel and development sector. These are aimed at promoting more responsible, impactful volunteering. However, there is no overall regulation (or agreement) on what responsible volunteering entails, and often no reference to child protection.
2. While innovation is visible within the responsible volunteering sector, there is a paucity of volunteering products offering a responsible way to support children and families.
3. A variety of guidelines exist (see Current Activities and Initiatives document) to better regulate companies, care centres, and volunteers themselves. However, with a lack of regulation and oversight in the industry as a whole, there was little evidence of implementation, or even interest in, such guidelines.
4. Awareness campaigns and media coverage has increased in recent years, but such advocacy efforts suffer from a lack of coordination thereby reducing their reach and impact. There is a feeling of preaching to the converted.
5. Few organisations (whether NGOs, travel companies, universities, churches etc.) involved in volunteer travel, child protection, and related areas, are seeking to collaborate in order to create change on this issue.
6. The perspectives of recipient communities and countries are marginalised within the volunteer travel sector. Very few efforts around volunteer education, advocacy, or product design are engaging with recipient communities in meaningful ways.

Stage II: Idea generation and development

The Better Volunteering, Better Care workshop focused on idea generation and development. The outputs are detailed more fully in the Workshop Report (available upon request). In summary:

Participants were asked to express their hopes for the project. These were later grouped and analysed. The hopes fell cleanly into three broad categories:

1. *Collaboration and networking.*
2. *Learning further about the issue and work of other organisations.*
3. *Taking action for change.*

In the initial part of the workshop, participants were asked to brainstorm as many ideas as they could think of to address the focusing question: “*Within the field of child rights how might we redirect the efforts of volunteers from orphanage “visits” to ethical alternatives that have positive outcomes?* These ideas were later collected, grouped and analysed. All of the ideas (nearly 200) fell into one of the following categories. They have been listed below, with the number of ideas per category indicated in brackets.

Ideas

1. Raising understanding and awareness through information dissemination. (88 total ideas).
 - a. Training (e.g. responsible volunteering training for university administrators, parents, government officials, volunteering.) (36 ideas)
 - b. Guidelines, standards, regulations (e.g. for travel companies, donors, governments, volunteers) (22 ideas)
 - c. General awareness campaigns (13 ideas)
 - d. Social media awareness campaigns (7 ideas)
 - e. Awareness videos (5 ideas)
 - f. Inclusion of development issues and responsible volunteering discourse in high school and service-related university curriculum (3 ideas)
 - g. Celebrity endorsements for awareness campaigns (2 ideas)
2. Involvement of recipient communities (throughout all activities). Participants offered ideas of different ways of engaging with local groups, for example with volunteer exchange programs. (21 ideas).
3. Travel products aimed at offering alternatives to volunteering in residential care centres. (21 ideas).
4. Resource development. (10 ideas). Generating resources to support advocacy and best practice.
5. Volunteer feedback systems. For example, creating volunteer review systems to share best practice. (8 ideas)
6. Learning centres in countries with high numbers of residential care centres / residential care volunteering. Centres that could support both volunteers and communities to ensure best practice. (3 ideas)

In addition to this brainstorm, participants self-selected a range of ideas to further develop. These are profiled in more detail in the Workshop Report. In summary, the ideas included:

- **Learning to volunteer** – an initiative designed to work with volunteers both in their home country, and the country they are visiting to prepare, orientate, and offer support for their experience, and encourage follow-up action post-trip.
- **Information and communication frameworks for faith communities** – a communications strategy, rooted in theology, to work with faith communities to enhance the methodology linked with missions supportive of families and communities.
- **“I Ask Questions” campaign** - a global communications effort designed to encourage people to think critically before volunteering, and to understand the right questions to ask
- **Influencing media thought leaders** – an engagement strategy aimed at helping journalists understand and properly represent the harm involved in volunteering in residential care centres in mainstream media.

- **Research to inform best practices in university/school partnerships** - an initiative to raise awareness of the problems of volunteering in residential care centres, and encourage ethical volunteering practice in the USA service-learning community (and beyond) through academic research.
- **Advocating with CSR departments** – an engagement strategy to encourage CSR departments to redirect employee volunteering away from residential care centres towards ethical alternatives
- **National forum on orphanage tourism/volunteering** – a multi-stakeholder alliance model, with the potential to be replicated in different country contexts to address volunteering in residential care centres with national stakeholders.
- **Travel alerts** – working with embassies to disseminate information about orphanage volunteering to travellers going to countries where this is a particular problem.
- **Alternative products for tourism industry that meet best practices / do no harm criteria** – guidelines for the travel industry to support the design of responsible volunteering products.
- **“Sliding Doors” video campaign** - a video campaign designed from the perspective of the child/family to raise awareness about the realities of residential care centres and volunteering in such settings.

Stage III: Participant mapping

Following the workshop, information was collected on the number of engaged contributors, the level of their engagement, and their sectors.

In addition, 31 out of 40 workshop participants responded to an invitation to share feedback about the workshop, and discuss their interest in maintaining involvement with the project moving forwards. These interviews also resulted in the sharing of information relating to participants' current initiatives, and future opportunities they were planning for.

Other observations from participants during these interviews were as follows:

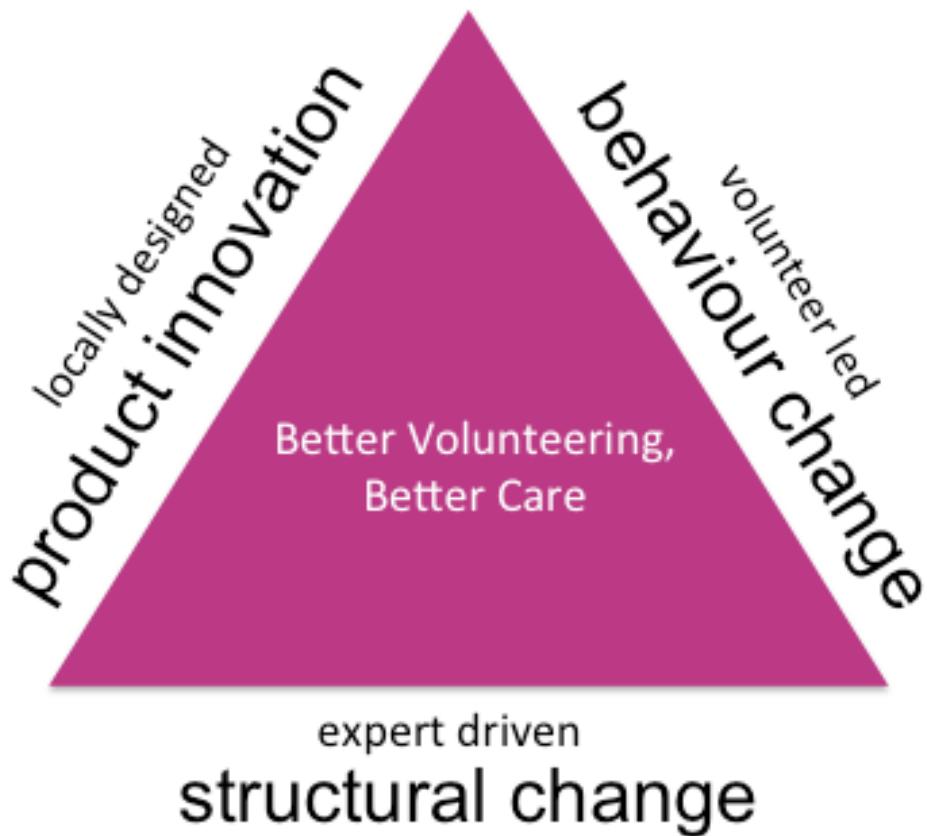
- a) Benefit of a multi-angle approach. Participants commented that it was very useful to hear from a variety of stakeholders with different perspectives, and that continuing to listen and learn in this way should be an important part of any future action.
- b) Number of current initiatives. There is advocacy already happening, in multiple areas. Participants expressed a desire to support and scale such initiatives rather than “reinventing the wheel”.
- c) Highlighting the dangers in “well-run” homes. Current media attention focuses heavily on “fake” orphanages, and overtly abusive and exploitative homes, leading many people to the conclusion that there are “good” and “bad” orphanages. Participants highlighted the need to improve understanding across all sectors of the risk of harm in all residential care centres, especially in relation to international and unskilled volunteering. In addition, it was also seen as important to ensure skilled volunteers focus on capacity building with local staff rather than working directly with children.

- d) Little conversation around alternatives. Although many ideas for alternative volunteering products were suggested at the workshop, none were championed for further development, which resulted in this area not receiving as much discussion and attention. In addition, it was felt that while there are interesting ethical volunteering placements available, there are few that support children and families in a responsible manner.
- e) Communication and awareness raising. Nearly all participants called for a concerted program of awareness raising across multiple sectors. This call was linked to a request for accessible information about the issue.
- f) Involvement from local stakeholders. Many participants expressed the wish to ensure that local organisations and communities receiving volunteers should be engaged in future work on the topic.
- g) Addressing the “child-saving” myth. Participants suggested that one root-cause was the myth of “rescuing” children that is created in a range of settings – from secular media, NGOs, to churches and faith communities. There was enthusiasm to explore this further, with a view to changing the way vulnerable children are portrayed within a range of media.
- h) Creating leadership. Participants were keen to ensure that any future work engaged with leaders within target communities. As one participant commented: “We need to identify champions, put resources in their hands, and let them carry that message to their organisation”.

Based on an analysis on all the above information, and feedback from the steering group, the following engagement strategy was developed as a proposal for steps to make positive change.

Strategy overview

Desired change: Prospective unqualified volunteers do not volunteer internationally in residential care centres and choose more responsible methods supportive of families and communities



As Fig. 1 demonstrates this strategy is comprised of three strategic goals working towards one desired change. The three goals support and complement each other and the interventions of each goal are informed by the expertise and lessons learned across all three strategic areas.

This strategy is also designed to be emergent – for example through the development of a working group of experts, the goals for structural change are allowed to adapt and grow. While this document gives suggestions for interventions, it is essential to retain a flexible approach. This is not only to ensure that ultimate interventions are as well designed as possible and informed from the learning generated during the process, but also to ensure stakeholders are invested and involved throughout.

Strategic goal 1: Expert driven structural change

To deliver targeted engagement activities leading to structural change. These interventions will be driven by a cross-sector working group of experts and will include:

- Lobbying of the volunteer travel industry to end orphanage placements and adopt recognised best practice
- Development of a framework rooted in theology to support alternative models of care which is approved and promoted by Christian churches and faith-based organisations
- Adoption of service-learning guidelines relating to volunteering with children by Colleges, Universities, and IB schools.

Strategic goal 2: Volunteer led behaviour change

To launch a high profile media campaign to encourage young people to make responsible choices about “giving back”.

Strategic goal 3: Locally designed product innovation

To stimulate and support locally-designed innovation in the volunteer travel sector which are supportive of families and communities.

Additional intervention areas

The development of this strategy has focused on those interventions that are likely to have the biggest impact within the next three to five years. All interventions will be reviewed on a regular basis in order to identify any critical gaps, and develop additional components where necessary.

Many of the ideas generated through this project over the course of the last few months have already been utilised within this strategy. However there are some relatively broad areas that have not been included at this stage:

- 1) Advocating with CSR (employee-volunteering) departments. At this stage, in order to prioritise interventions, the current strategy doesn't include direct advocacy efforts with CSR department to make companies aware of how they can best manage their employee volunteering efforts to protect children. However, we hope these stakeholders may be influenced through other interventions and through the work of the supporting cross-sector working group. It is an area that may also be addressed more directly in later stages of the process.
- 2) Volunteer preparation, or in-country learning centres. While there is much energy around these ideas, the reality is that many organisations are already offering this kind of support to volunteers. Whether it is independent organisations (such as Student Hubs), or volunteer travel companies themselves (such as Cross Cultural Solutions and their internal orientation program) this is already available to volunteers who wish to engage with it. The challenge expressed by many of these organisations is how to reach more prospective volunteers and help them to understand the need for preparation and learning. This strategy seeks to reach such individuals through the media campaign outlined in strategic goal 2, rather than develop any new volunteer preparation models. In addition, this strategy will seek to work with those organisations already implementing such initiatives to ensure they feature appropriate content on child protection and related best practice including in relation to volunteering in residential care.
- 3) Guidelines, standards, regulations for volunteering. There are various elements of this initiative that involve encouraging companies and organisations to adopt best practices. However, it is not suggested to develop one set of guidelines to do so. There are a variety of sector wide guidelines already in existence, and many of those involved comment that implementation is sporadic. The key to behaviour change is promoting greater understanding, and allowing organisations to apply that to their business, creating their own best practices. In addition, the interventions outlined in the strategy will seek in all cases to ensure that where guidelines and standards do exist, that their content on child protection and related best practice is robust and well understood including in relation to volunteering in residential care.

Strategic goal 1 – Expert driven structural change

It is essential that this strategy remains focused on specific changes needed across different sectors in order to achieve its overall vision. As such, it is important to identify the structural changes required in different sectors in order to support behaviour change in volunteers. Experts from these sectors will be engaged to help define these desired changes and take leadership in reaching target audiences. Some organisations and individuals currently engaged in these areas have been identified as examples. The suggested interventions below have been selected through identifying the areas:

- in which engaged participants are already advocating,
- in which most impact can be made,
- and the closest to addressing root causes.

They are suggestions only and should be adapted according to expert feedback.

1. Lobbying of the volunteer travel industry to end volunteering placements in residential care centres and adopt recognised best practice.

Organisations currently engaged in this area: Better Care Network, Better Care Network Netherlands Chapter, Bond, Comhlámh, ECPAT, Friends International, Institute for Responsible Tourism, People and Places, Responsible Travel, Save the Children UK. Moving forwards, it is essential to ensure a range of stakeholders are engaged in this process, especially those from within the volunteer travel sector.

Suggested goal: Volunteer travel agencies remove orphanage placements from their product offerings and implement appropriate policies for any products working with children.

This intervention may prioritise a specific market where there is already interest and activity, but geographic reach would be determined through the feedback of the organisations involved. There would be a specific effort to reach beyond Anglophone countries and engage with a variety of regions.

Suggested interventions:

- Consultation with engaged organisations in the volunteer travel sector to jointly develop interventions
- Development of required resources
- Training and support for individual volunteer travel agencies to incorporate best practice in child protection, implement child protection policies and adjust product offerings
- Ensuring existing guidelines and advocacy initiatives include a component on children, and more specifically on orphanage volunteering
- Advocacy at travel industry events
- Advocacy with aggregation sites (i.e. GoOverseas, Idealist)
- Advocacy and training workshops with travel media and general media, raising awareness of initiatives and securing coverage.

2. Development of a framework rooted in theology to support alternative models of orphan care missions which is approved and promoted by Christian churches and faith-based organisations.

Organisations currently engaged in this area: ACCIR Kinnectd Initiative, Better Care Network, Christian Alliance for Orphans, Faith to Action Initiative, Hope and Homes for Children, and Poverty Cure.

Suggested goal: Christian churches, denominations, and faith-based organisations approve and promote alternative models of orphan care missions (the initial focus would be for Anglophone sending countries).

Suggested interventions:

- Consultation with engaged organisations in order to jointly develop interventions
- Identification of church communities to work with
- Development of required resources
- Inter-agency guidance around child protection that can be included in messages and mission planning.
- Adapting existing guidelines and advocacy initiatives to include a component on children, and more specifically on orphanage volunteering
- Advocacy at orphan care and mission events
- Advocacy and training workshops with faith-based media, raising awareness of initiatives and securing media coverage.

3. Adoption of service-learning guidelines relating to volunteering with children by Colleges, Universities and IB schools worldwide

Organisations currently engaged on this issue: Everyday Ambassador, Friends International, GlobalSl.org, Learning Service initiative, Ohio Northern University, Omprakash, ThinkImpact, Support for International Change.

Suggested goal: Colleges, Universities, and IB schools adopt service-learning guidelines promoting responsible volunteering with children. The initial focus for colleges and universities would be on Anglophone sending countries, primarily the USA, but ideally would extend to non-Anglophone regions. In addition, a further extension of this goal is to reach out to all high schools engaged in international volunteering (not just those working with the IB curriculum).

Suggested interventions:

- Consultation with engaged organisations in order to inform interventions
- Identification of schools, universities, professors to work with
- Development of required resources
- Advocacy at teacher conferences, service-learning events
- Training and support for teachers, admissions offices, careers departments to better understand how to engage with responsible volunteering practices that protect and support vulnerable children.

- Adapting existing guidelines and advocacy initiatives to include a component on children, and more specifically on orphanage volunteering.
- Advocacy and training workshops with relevant media, raising awareness of initiatives and securing media coverage.

Strategic goal 2 – Volunteer led behaviour change

To launch a high profile youth-led media campaign to encourage young people to make responsible choices around volunteering with children.

The need for a high-profile campaign was identified by a large number of participants, but it is crucial that such a campaign has a specific audience in mind, and uses appropriate channels to reach that audience. Young people (students) were identified as one of the most common demographic of volunteers. In addition, many actors identified the challenge of “engaging with those who don’t know they need to engage” – hence “volunteer training” initiatives having limited impact. A high-profile campaign to target “unreachable” young people will complement existing activities working to better prepare volunteers for their experiences. It is essential to engage young people to design and lead the delivery of the campaign in order to ensure it is embedded within social and educational structures, and has a relevance to the interests of young people. Such a campaign would primarily focus on Anglophone countries, with likely leadership from the UK, due to the current engagement of Students Hubs and Volunteer Service Overseas International Citizen Service (VSO ICS) in this project.

The overall campaign initiative does not solely focus on the problem of volunteering in residential care centres, but rather this will be one strand of a multi-strand campaign. The rationale behind this is that while this issue is the key focus of this initiative, we do not wish to solve it simply by moving the problem somewhere else. For example, while it may be possible to encourage people not to volunteer in orphanages, if they do not understand the underlying issues, they may still support organisations which allow untrained, unvetted travellers to teach children in a school with no supervision. Keeping a broad base allows the campaign to tackle a range of contributing issues.

The initiative will have a supporting theme, centralised website, discussion forum, and offline activities which will play the role of building a supporter base and identifying champions and advocates within the target group. Once these underlying components are established, three different campaigns will be launched over a suggested three to five year period. The young people involved will establish the messaging of the campaign and underlying themes. A suggested structure is outlined in the table below.

Organisations currently engaged in this area include Learning Service, Student Hubs and VSO ICS. It is recommended that this campaign be guided by an experienced marketing agency. [TIE](#) and [Leo Burnett Change](#) are two organisations already engaged with this process who have experience in this area and may be willing to consult or offer pro bono services. Advertising agencies leading the field in youth engagement are currently [Livity](#) and [Iris](#).

The successful model from Mind.org and Rethink Mental Illness with their [Time To Change](#) platform is a good example of how a range of different campaign initiatives over a 5 year period can change attitudes and behaviours on a particular topic.

Media campaign – suggested interventions

Target group involvement		
Suggested goal: Young people take the lead in promoting responsible volunteering driven by a learning attitude.		
Suggested interventions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project competitions for young people (calling for most innovative solutions to behaviour change) – winning project is implemented • Engagement of a working group of young people to input into campaign design and implementation • Workshops with young journalists and photographers • Trainings with student unions 		
Website and offline outreach		
Suggested goal: Information on responsible volunteering is easily accessible to young people		
Suggested interventions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better Volunteering website which features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Accessible resources explaining the harm associated with volunteering in residential care centres ◦ Recommendations for responsible volunteering agencies ◦ Advice for travellers and on how to choose a placement • Speaker series throughout schools and universities • Stands at university societies fairs and career fairs • Training for university and high school career centres and guidance counsellors 		
Locations for interventions outside of a university / school setting may be identified through the target group involvement.		
Suggested theme 1	Suggested theme 2	Suggested theme 3
Focus: To raise awareness of the harm associated with orphanage volunteering	Focus: To promote understanding of responsible volunteering	Focus: To create a change in perceptions of developing countries
Suggested tag: #donoharm	Suggested tag: #howtohelp	Suggested tag: #4thworld
Leading media: Video series – 5 x 1-2 minute awareness video Supporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with young people telling their story of volunteering in residential care centre 	Leading media: Crowd-sourced image campaign of positive images of “how-to-help” (i.e. pushing back the “hugging babies” selfies) Supporting media: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celeb endorsements (ideally diaspora i.e. Idris) 	Leading media: Online image quiz which seeks to breakdown visual stereotypes of the developing world Supporting media: Crowd-source image campaign for unstereotypical images of

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Image campaign tied to video series 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elba, Freeya Agyeman, Michael Essien) • Blog articles on responsible volunteering 	<p>developing nations. Nominations, challenge format.</p>
Channels: TV, Radio, Social Media (focus on Facebook, Instagram), magazines, blogs		

Strategic goal 3 – Locally designed product innovation

To stimulate and support locally-designed innovation in the volunteer travel sector which are supportive of families and communities.

Many informants and participants commented that it is essential to be able to answer the “what can we do” question, and not just push out a message of “stop”. While it is possible to do this through the promotion of responsible volunteering models, it is also important to find solutions for people to support vulnerable children through families and communities. Ideally, the money and time donated to residential care centres would be reinvested in ways that strengthen families and communities and prevent family separation.

Currently there are few models for volunteering which seek to support vulnerable families and communities in this way. This strategic goal seeks to stimulate innovation in the volunteer travel industry. It also seeks to demonstrate that this initiative encourages cross-border volunteering, and promotes the idea of finding ways to connect with people from other countries for mutual benefit.

This would initially be a pilot initiative in countries with some of the following characteristics:

- a) Locations where volunteering in residential care centres is very prevalent and so successful alternative models are much needed
- b) Locations where these project has existing connections and on-the-ground knowledge
- c) Locations where it is relatively inexpensive to acquire the appropriate visas and permits for volunteering in these countries

Possible initial countries include Cambodia, Ghana, and Nepal – with the likely inclusion of an additional country in Central or South America. It should be noted that in Nepal, volunteering is not allowed on a tourist visa, and appropriate paperwork is costly. However, the inclusion of Nepal in this initiative would be helpful in looking at that particular problem to ascertain if there is a possibility of developing learning-based alternatives, or whether there is a way to partner with other organisations or government bodies to ensure volunteers can secure the appropriate visa status.

Organisations currently engaged in this area: In-country travel experts would be engaged for this project, but would also be supported by child protection organisations with experience in the region in order to ensure best practice during product design.

Examples of such organisations include Better Care Network, Friends International, Kaeme ,Kinected, Next Generation Nepal , Save the Children, UNICEF.

In order for this project to have full support in-country, government ministries and other relevant stakeholders will be engaged to give input, and also to support understanding of how volunteer travel initiatives can be appropriately designed to protect the best interests of children.

Locally designed innovation – suggested interventions

Suggested goal	Suggested interventions
Relevant in-country stakeholders are engaged with the project and with each other to identify locally appropriate approaches to raise awareness on the issues related to residential care and identify locally ethical volunteering or learning services alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings with government ministries, embassies, NGOs and other stakeholders such as responsible volunteering and travel agencies as appropriate, to update, receive feedback, and foster collaboration. Series of information events on child protection within travel and tourism and how it can impact on children and communities
Actors have a clear understanding of market forces, gaps, competitors and key innovators within the volunteer travel sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of volunteer experiences A review of opinions from in-country tourism industry A review of opinions from international tourism industry sending volunteers
Actors are engaged with and informed by communities and understand risks to child protections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with community leaders, families, care leavers, and young people regarding their perspectives on volunteers Assessment of community's awareness of risk with regards to volunteers Consultation with local child protection actors working in family strengthening and other alternative care models
Development of short-term volunteer products for un- or low-skilled volunteers which are supportive of families and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prize – driven business competition with local innovators and travel industry actors Adaptation workshops, bringing together local travel agents with child protection specialists to develop ways to adapt products to remove orphanage visits and involve other supportive products
Successful introduction of new products to market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market analysis to understand current offerings, costs, share Business and child protection mentorship for local innovators selected Placement at international travel markets Introductions with international travel agents Marketing campaign

Strategic Approach

The underlying foundation of all interventions within this strategy will be a facilitated cross-sector working group. During the course of this project, many participants identified a need to share resources more effectively between participants, and articulated a desire to more effectively support initiatives already in progress. In addition, the provision of accessible resources, credited by respected NGOs and development agencies, was seen as an immediate need. It is important to contribute to structural change through improving stakeholder understanding of child protection issues.

The Better Volunteering, Better Care initiative will be a global working group of organisations and individuals advocating:

- Against harmful international volunteering practice related to residential care.
- For ethical volunteering – especially with regards to the protection and welfare of children and volunteering that are supportive of families and communities.

The movement will be coordinated by the Better Care Network and Save the Children as the “backbone” organisations, but supported by between 5 and 10 additional “catalyst” members from different sectors. The purpose of engaging these individuals is not only to promote leadership in responsible volunteering across a variety of sectors, but also to better support the initiatives that they are already working on, and ensure that all activities are sharing organizational and technical resources (where possible), supporting each other’s advocacy efforts, and sharing lessons learned.

This approach is based on the Collective Impact Framework approach to tackling complex social problems. Collective Impact was first written about in the Stanford Innovation Review in 2011 (Kanier and Kramer, 2011)¹ and increasingly utilised by influential strategic consulting firms such as FSG.² A current example of a Collective Impact approach is Save the Children UK’s “Read on. Get on.” campaign which unites organisations from across a range of sectors in working towards a common aim.³ The five key elements of the collective impact framework include:

- A shared vision for change
- Shared measurement systems
- Mutually reinforcing activities
- Continuous communication
- Backbone organisations in a coordinating role

The Centre for Social Impact (Australia) gives a clear overview of the Collective Impact Framework on their website:

¹ http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/collective_impact

² <http://www.fsg.org/OurApproach/CollectiveImpact.aspx>

³ <http://www.matthewtaylorsblog.com/politics/reading-change-differently/>

The Collective Impact approach is premised on the belief that no single policy, government department, organisation or program can tackle or solve the increasingly complex social problems we face as a society. The approach calls for multiple organisations or entities from different sectors to abandon their own agenda in favour of a common agenda, shared measurement and alignment of effort.⁴

The collective impact approach was deemed relevant for this strategy, because it seeks to bring together actors from across a broad range of sectors to create change. This approach is also supportive of the primary need of this strategy to build empathy, relationships, and a commonality of language and experience to support targeted initiatives. In addition, this strategy is emergent, so while some targeted and mutually reinforcing components have been suggested, these should be adapted and modified by the working group of actors involved and learning generated to ensure the change sought is appropriate and relevant.

Cross-sector working group components

Suggested goals	Suggested interventions
Supported and unified advocacy, with a strong flow of current information through authoritative channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of an appropriate collaboration platform to facilitate resource sharing and development, as well as a forum for discussion Coordination of access to expert advice and resources Map the actions of experts/ambassadors/advocates raising awareness and bringing about change
Recognised experts and organisations taking leadership in their sector, as well as collaborating to create change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of sector-specific “taskforces” comprised of organisations and individuals already active on the issue. These taskforces would help shape strategy and interventions in their particular area of expertise. Engagement and support of specific organisations in receiving countries as working group representatives, responsible for country updates and information flow. Yearly workshop with key group members to share activities and move forward in a spirit of cooperation
Increased number and success of advocacy efforts being undertaken by working group members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of support to selected projects to scale advocacy efforts Coordination of relevant expertise to capitalise on future advocacy opportunities
Improved coverage of advocacy efforts in international media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement of international media contacts Training for members on media and public relations opportunities relevant to their advocacy efforts
Availability of appropriate resources for member advocacy efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research framework useful to a range of sectors Overview and Country specific information on orphanage volunteering (also to be defined according to needs)

⁴ <http://www.collaborationforimpact.com/collective-impact/>