

# Australian Volunteers Program in Fiji

In 2020-21 the Australian Volunteers Program in Fiji supported 23 volunteers, 25 remote assignments and 15 partner organisations, with a focus on and improving health security, stability, and economic recovery in Fiji, all priority areas due to COVID-19.

*'The volunteer came during a crucial time and assisted with the many processes needed to support the work of our instructors.'*

– Partner organisation spokesperson

## In 2020-21 in Fiji, the program supported:

**15**  
partner organisations

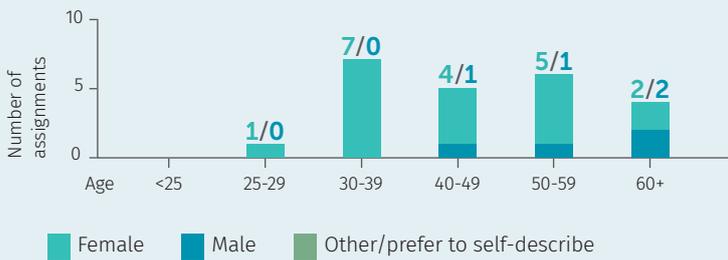
**5**  
partner organisations with Impact Grants

**23**  
volunteers

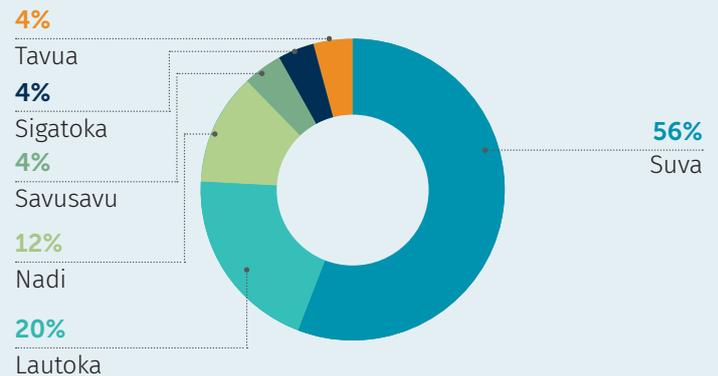
**25**  
remote assignments

### Gender and age of volunteers

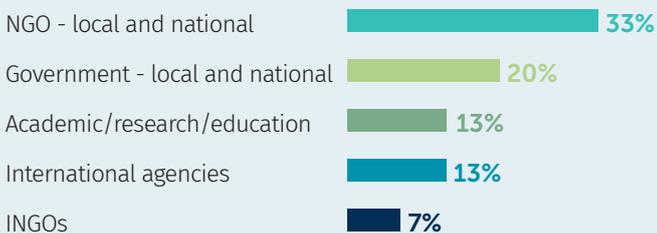
Women 83% Men 17%



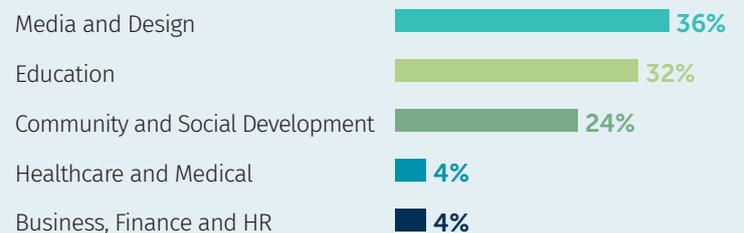
### Location of assignments



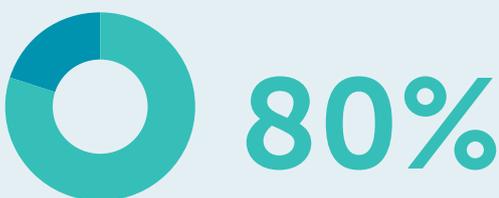
### Most common types of partner organisations



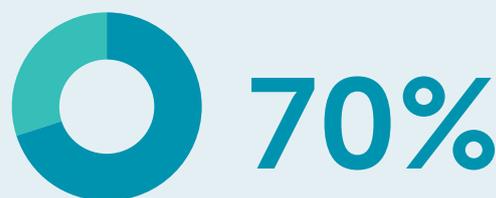
### Most common professions of volunteers



80% of partner organisations were satisfied or very satisfied with the volunteer assignment



70% of volunteers were satisfied or very satisfied with the program



\* The above data is drawn from reports completed by volunteers and partner organisations. Responses were not received from all volunteers and partner organisations, and not all respondents provided a response to every question.

In 2020-21, in accordance with Australia's COVID-19 Development Response Plan, the Australian Volunteers Program supported partner organisations to implement their response and recovery efforts, aligned with Fiji's local and national priorities. The program also focused on improving health security, stability, and economic recovery in Fiji.

The program managed 25 remote volunteer assignments, supported 23 volunteers and 15 partner organisations. These partner organisations work in Fiji's private, education, health, governance, and sport sectors, focusing on gender equality, disability and social inclusion, and climate action.

The majority of the assignments were located in the two major cities of Suva and Lautoka, including three organisations in rural areas who received support for the first time. Partner organisations welcomed the support of remote volunteers, particularly those who had previously worked in-country.

The program delivered workshops in Nadi, Suva and Labasa/ Savusavu to promote and adapt remote volunteering to partner organisations' needs.

Five partner organisations also received a small grant from the Australian Volunteers Program Impact Fund. These included Fiji Cancer Society, Lautoka School for Special Education, Na i Soqosoqo Vakamarama i Taukei Cakaudrove, The Savusavu Tourism Association, and Tennis Fiji.

The program celebrated and promoted international volunteering in Fiji by sharing a monthly volunteer story and by recognising International Volunteers Day on social media.

The program participated in the 14th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and 7th Meeting of Pacific Ministers for Women, including as a panel speaker on women's empowerment, highlighting the program's work in disability education. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women, Senator the Hon Marise Payne attended the conference.



Stewart Grant, Volunteer Policy Officer (dietetics/nutrition) with his senior counterpart Dr Isimeli Tukana at the Ministry of Health and Medical Services offices. Photo: Darren James.

## Spotlight on Tennis Fiji

Tennis Fiji is a national sporting organisation responsible for the development of all tennis-related activities in Fiji. A recent shift in strategic priorities has seen the organisation adopt a stronger focus on the role tennis can play as a tool for personal and social development. As a result, Tennis Fiji is trying to reach out to women and girls in Western Fiji, particularly in Ba and Lautoka.

Australian volunteer, Julia Gorman, completed three assignments with Tennis Fiji between 2017 and 2020, including roles in gender inclusion, engagement, and development, both in-country and remotely. Support from Julia has allowed Tennis Fiji to improve its capacity to engage with a more diverse audience, grow its leadership group and share its messages with a wider audience.

With Julia's assistance, female staff improved their knowledge of strategies to boost the participation of women and girls from different communities in Tennis Fiji's outreach programs, and local staff delivered training and activities to new staff and volunteers in their communities.

Staff also enhanced their ability to manage Tennis Fiji's social media channels, target key audiences in its outreach programs, as well as share messages about health, nutrition, non-communicable diseases, and respectful relationships. This valuable content attracted attention from local, regional, and international stakeholders and created opportunities for collaborations with new organisations.

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