

Australian Volunteers Program in Vanuatu

In 2020-21 the Australian Volunteers Program in Vanuatu supported 26 volunteers and 16 partner organisations, focusing on supporting COVID-19 response and recovery, health security and economic recovery.

'I feel grateful to have worked with my partner organisation. They have been so generous with their time and knowledge, allowing me to integrate into their team.'

– In-country volunteer

In 2020-21 in Vanuatu, the program supported:

16
partner organisations

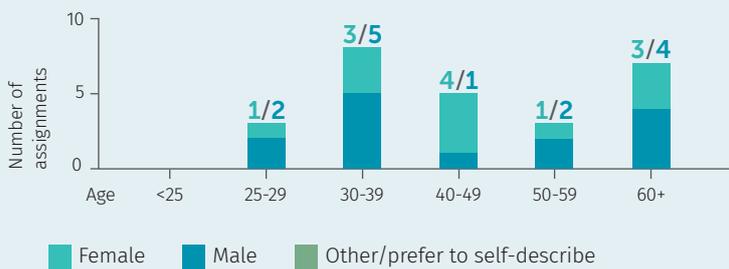
6
partner organisations with Impact Grants

26
volunteers

15 remote assignments
12 in-country assignments

Gender and age of volunteers

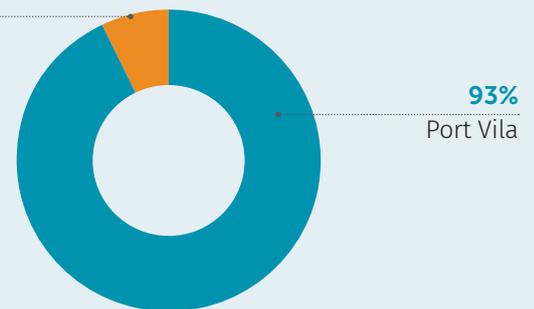
Women 46% Men 54%



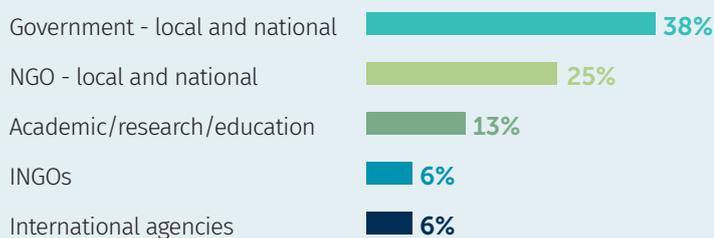
Location of assignments

7%

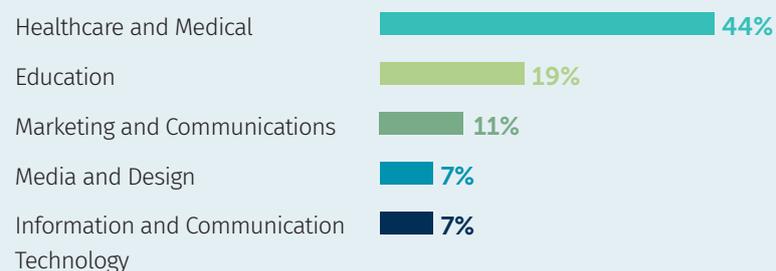
Luganville



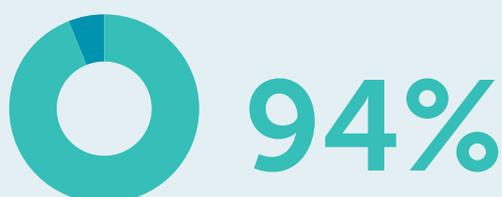
Most common types of partner organisations



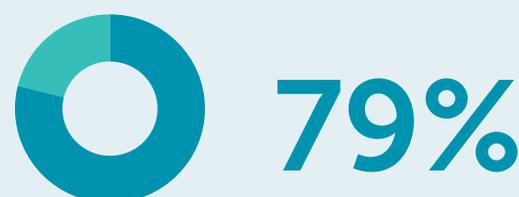
Most common professions of volunteers



94% of partner organisations were satisfied or very satisfied with the volunteer assignment



79% 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 Vanuatu's local and national priorities.

COVID-19 significantly affected partner organisations' capacity to operate and deliver services, particularly those in the tourism sector. Vanuatu was also affected by earthquakes and tropical cyclones.

The program supported 16 partner organisations in Port Vila (on Efate Island) and Luganville (on Espiritu Santo Island), with most partner organisations working in the government and civil society, education, and health sectors.

The program focused on developing remote assignments, child protection policies, and partnership plans, while supporting the changing needs and priorities of partner organisations, particularly related to health security, economic recovery, and stability activities in their COVID-19 response and recovery plans.

Ten partner organisations received funding through the Australian Volunteers Program Impact Fund, including the Ministry of Health, Port Vila Central Hospital, ProMedical, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the National Youth Council to provide girls and young women with training, mentoring and support, and Wan Smolbag Theatre to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities.

Throughout the year, the program celebrated and promoted international volunteering in Vanuatu. A series of events were held to mark International Volunteer Day and International Women's Day. A major local media outlet, the Vanuatu Daily Post, profiled the work of volunteer Danielle Clarke on the development of the first adult resuscitation life support manual for clinical workers at the Port Vila Central Hospital.



Australian volunteer Ben Elliott is a Clinical Instructor with ProMedical Vanuatu and a COVID-19 response volunteer. In this photo he is providing training to student paramedics (L-R) Philimon Kampai, Vanessa Manuake and Celine Eliab. Photo: Gina Kaitiplel.

Spotlight on the Vanuatu Ministry of Health

The Vanuatu Ministry of Health's mission is to protect and promote the health of its population by delivering an integrated, decentralised health system that provides effective and equitable health services. The Vila Central Hospital is the main tertiary referral hospital for Vanuatu and provides specialist clinical services and support services and a training nursing college.

During 2020, two Australian volunteers, Leigh Elton and Danielle Clark, supported Vila Central Hospital to build emergency medicine capacity and improve links with other medical departments such as ambulance services.

Leigh and Danielle also assisted senior medical staff to mentor junior staff, with an emphasis on providing opportunities for women to develop specialist and leadership skills. Staff also designed and delivered an advanced life support resuscitation course for 80 participants, with training assistance from volunteers.

In 2020 and 2021, Dr Daniel Perdomo Loizaga, a Visiting Emergency Medicine Registrar, and two nurses; Libby White and John Foley, also worked with the hospital. They continued to build emergency medicine capacity and improve links with other medical departments.

The Vanuatu Ministry of Health received support from the Australian Volunteers Program Impact Fund to deliver essential personal protective equipment, standard uniforms, and communication support to medical and monitoring teams based at the Shefa Provincial Health Department.

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