

Australian Volunteers Program Palau

Australian volunteers have supported partner organisations in Palau to achieve their development goals since 1993. The Australian Government's Australian Volunteers Program continues this rich history.

The Australian Volunteers Program develops long-term, mutually respectful partnerships with organisations across the Pacific, Asia, and Africa to contribute to locally led change and the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The program aims to:

- Support partner organisations to progress their development objectives
- Increase program participants' cultural awareness and build stronger connections across countries
- Increase key stakeholders' appreciation of the value of volunteering

Bebbolynnda Florencio at the Senior Citizens Community Centre run by The Bureau of Ageing, Gender and Disability in Medallai, Koror Island.
Photo: Darren James

Licensed Practical Nurse Alfred Pedro consulting with Dilsich Dilluchei Maui in the Family Health Unit at the Community Health Centre, Koror Island.
Photo: Darren James

Oshiro Lorin, Environmental Health Worker with the Ministry of Health, and Aidil Rahman, Mosquito Expert Scientist with the Division of Environmental Health, testing wastewater, Koror Island.
Photo: Darren James

Our work in Palau

Our team in Palau works closely with our partners to understand their priorities and objectives. Together with our partners, we identify how the program can support them and how that support might change over time.

The program provides support across a range of development priorities in Palau, including:

- Women's empowerment, including economic empowerment
- Education
- Health
- Sustainable and economic growth

In Palau, we partner with organisations working in sectors including government and civil society. Program partners are mainly government agencies.

Most volunteer assignments are with partners in Koror. The program also supports partners through remote volunteer assignments.

The program facilitates opportunities for partners to connect with each other, exchange knowledge and share experiences. For example, partners participate in online and face-to-face workshops that focus on specific sectors or topics such as disability inclusion, gender equality and safeguarding.

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We are now in the second year of hosting volunteers through the Australian Volunteers Program at the Office of the Vice President in Palau. Currently, the third volunteer, like the previous two, is employed as a legal adviser. The Office of the Vice President and Ministry of Justice is grateful to the program for the volunteers who have helped the agency in multiple ways to strengthen the overall institution, including through developing policing Standard Operating Procedures and training programs, and engaging with communities and partners.”

Roxanne Sual Blesam, Chief of Staff to the Vice President and Minister of Justice - Palau



Since 2018
the program
in Palau has
supported

5+

partner
organisations

10+

Australian
volunteers

10+

volunteer
assignments

2

small
grants

Small grants

From time to time, our partners can apply for small grants to support their vital work and progress towards achieving their development objectives.

Small grants have supported over 200 partners to deliver hundreds of projects across the program. Projects have been across a range of thematic areas including gender equality, disability and social inclusion, climate action and organisational strengthening.

Australian organisations

We also partner with Australian organisations who share our commitment to locally led change. We support existing partnerships between overseas partners and Australian organisations and identify opportunities for new partnerships. Australian partners contribute to skills and knowledge exchange and support volunteer recruitment.

3

Family Health Unit sign at the Community Health Centre, Koror Island.
Photo: Darren James

4



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The program provides an exciting opportunity for local organisations to work together with Australian volunteers to achieve shared goals, objectives, and development outcomes. Australian volunteers not only share their skills and knowledge, but also learn from local counterparts, gaining mutual benefits from the program.”

Apai Rokotuni, Deputy Regional Director, Central and North Pacific

About our volunteers

Our program is all about people – volunteers, partners and the communities in which they live and work.

We value volunteers who are open to mutual learning and skills exchange, and who are committed to contributing to partners' priorities in support of locally led change.

We are committed to ensuring that international volunteering is inclusive and accessible to Australians from a range of backgrounds, with diverse perspectives, identities and abilities. We recognise the

unique strengths and skills that people with diverse backgrounds and experiences offer, and we work with volunteers to remove barriers they may face.

Each volunteer assignment requires specific skills and experience. Australian volunteers work in a broad range of sectors including community and social development, health, science, engineering and architecture, skilled trades, education, disaster and emergency management, gender equality and child protection.

4

Jury Kebekol weaving at the Senior Citizens community centre run by The Bureau of Ageing, Gender and Disability, Medalaai, Koror Island.
Photo: Darren James

5

Oshiro Lorin, Environmental Health Worker with the Ministry of Health testing water at a wastewater facility, Koror Island.
Photo: Darren James



In-country

In-country volunteering enables volunteers and partners to share their skills, knowledge and culture, and form long-lasting relationships along the way.



Remote

Through remote volunteering Australians are supporting organisations overseas to achieve their development goals anywhere, anytime.



Hybrid

By combining remote and in-country phases, hybrid volunteering offers our partners and volunteers flexibility while still allowing for genuine connections and meaningful skill sharing.

Spotlight on Bureau of Aging, Disability and Gender

The Bureau of Aging, Disability and Gender (BADG) in Palau coordinates efforts in addressing the welfare of the community with a focus on older people and those living with disability and / or gender-related challenges. One of the Bureau's primary objectives includes the successful implementation of the Palau National Gender Mainstreaming Policy.

Australian volunteer Amber Witcher completed a remote volunteering assignment with the BADG as a Gender Mainstreaming Policy Officer. During her assignment, Amber assisted staff with strengthening the development of the Palau Gender Mainstreaming Policy and worked closely with the Director and other partnering agencies to design and strategically implement the policy. With Amber's assistance, staff also developed a strategic communications plan designed to ensure stakeholders and the community remain engaged with the policy and to promote gender equality in Palau.

BADG received support from the Australian Volunteers Program Impact Fund. The small grant supported the delivery of stakeholder activities designed to strengthen gender knowledge and leadership in the Palauan Government and promote the importance of gender equality.

The Bureau of Aging, Disability and Gender's involvement with the Australian Volunteers Program has been highly advantageous towards the organisation's key objectives related to the Palau Gender Mainstreaming Policy. Amber demonstrated a high level of professionalism, commitment and excellent communication skills throughout the assignment, building close working relationships within the whole organisation.



The Australian Volunteers Program is guided by principles that ensure we



Support locally led change



Grow strong relationships and partnerships



Value volunteering



Evolve good practice and embrace innovation



Enhance diversity and inclusion



Ensure accountability and value learning

**Australian
Volunteers**

**Australian
Aid**

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