

Australian
Volunteers

Australian
Aid 

Australian Volunteers Program Philippines

Australian volunteers have supported partner organisations in Philippines to achieve their development goals since 2000. 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

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Australian volunteer Enterprise Officer Carine Marie Cesar with a member of Ambasa Food Processing Association preparing taro in Lamut. Photo: David Aguilar

Our work in Philippines

Our team in Philippines 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.

1

Community member Dante Pablo works in the organic greenhouse at a community farm in Lamut, Ifugao. Photo: David Aguilar

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

- Economic growth
- Good governance
- Social inclusion and protection
- Disaster risk reduction
- Gender equality and women’s empowerment

2

Volunteer Program Sustainability Enhancement Officer Hazel Maglantay at Gelacio I. Yason Foundation Family Farm School, Roxas, Oriental Mindoro. Photo: David Aguilar

In Philippines, we partner with organisations working in a broad range of sectors, including

government and civil society and education. Program partners are mainly local or national NGOs, government agencies or academic institutions.

Most volunteer assignments are primarily with partners in Metro Manila and in Camarines Sur. 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.

“

With the training and suggestions provided by our volunteer, we improved our livelihood program and e-commerce. She helped us a lot with proposal writing and implementing our impact grants. Her learning modules for our staff were well researched and easily digestible. She didn't rush things and was participatory in her approach.”

Ms. Carmelita “Mel” Nuqui, Executive Director, Development Action for Women Network

1



2



Since 2018 the program in Philippines has supported

30+
partner organisations

45+
Australian volunteers

35+
in-country volunteer assignments

25+
remote volunteer assignments

8
small grants

Small grants

Through the Impact Fund, we provide small grants of up to AUD\$10,000 to our partners to support their vital work and progress towards achieving their development objectives.

The Impact Fund has supported over 200 partners to deliver hundreds of projects. Projects have been across a range of thematic areas including gender equality, disability and social inclusion, climate action, organisational strengthening, and COVID-19 response and recovery.

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

The team at the Gelacio I. Yason Foundation Family Farm School, Roxas, Oriental Mindoro. Photo: David Aguilar



“ I feel proud of being part of a global program that contributes to sustainable development through participatory capacity-building approaches. Visiting partner organisations and volunteers is always special as it solidifies the work we do. It is heart warming to hear impact stories and learn from local communities.”

Ingrid Saplagio, Recruitment Program Officer – Australian Volunteers Program, Philippines Office

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

Volunteer Carine Marie Cesar and members of Ambasa Food Processing Association preparing ingredients for taro chips production, Lamut. Photo: David Aguilar

5

Australian volunteer Speech Pathology Trainer Jill Smith works with deaf children at Welcome Home Foundation, Bacolod City. Photo: Cam Suttie



In-country

International volunteering is an incredible experience. It's an opportunity for volunteers and partners to share their skills and culture, while making a tangible difference to communities.



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 Stepping Stone

Stepping Stone in Sucat, Parañaque, Philippines works to provide special education, therapy services and vocational skills programs to children with learning, behavioural and developmental challenges.

Stepping Stone's mission is to equip children with learning and behavioural challenges with life skills and basic literacy.

The organisation's partnership with the Australian Volunteers Program has been ongoing since 2018 and, to date, the organisation has been awarded two Impact Fund grants by the program.

Australian volunteer Jessica Chan completed a remote volunteering assignment as a Music and Movement Trainer. During her assignment, Jessica assisted the organisation with developing a music and movement curriculum for students with special needs. Her support also helped build the capacity of special education teachers in managing and implementing the new curriculum. Jessica demonstrated a dynamic and cheerful attitude and communicated well with the teachers and children.

Australian volunteer Peng-Sim Eng also supported the foundation via a remote volunteering role. Peng-Sim worked as a Special Education Program Mentor, helping to improve the school's special education program and assist with developing a new curriculum. She also supported active involvement of teachers during the review processes.

Peng-Sim demonstrated a high degree of professionalism and motivation throughout her assignment and strove to support and encourage both the organisation's teachers and management team. The new curriculum has enhanced the capacity and confidence of the teachers, child therapists and parents thanks to learning new and improved approaches to teaching and learning.



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

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The Australian Volunteers Program is funded by the Australian Government.
The program is managed by AVI in a consortium with DT Global and Alinea International.

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