

Australian  
Volunteers

Australian  
Aid 

# Australian Volunteers Program Sri Lanka

Australian volunteers have supported partner organisations in Sri Lanka to achieve their development goals since 1980. 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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A local fisherman from Negombo, Western Province. Photo: Harjono Djyobisono

## 1

Australian Volunteers Program staff, Jay and Manchula, celebrate International Volunteers Day 2022. Photo: Colin Collett van Rooyen

## 2

A tea picker from Udugama, Southern Province. Photo: Harjono Djyobisono

## 3

A tuk tuk in the Pettah area of Colombo. Photo: Colin Collett van Rooyen

## Our work in Sri Lanka

Our team in Sri Lanka 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 Sri Lanka, including:

- Economic development and business
- Tourism development
- Gender equality
- Disability inclusion
- Reconciliation

In Sri Lanka, we partner with organisations working in a broad range of sectors, including agriculture, forestry and fisheries, education, and civil society and government. Program partners are mainly local or national NGOs or international agencies.

Volunteer assignments are with partners throughout Sri Lanka, including the capital Colombo. 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.

“

As a small NGO, it is very difficult to find resources to fill skills gaps locally. The approach to locally- led development and the friendly nature of the in-country team motivated us to work with the Australian Volunteers Program.”

Sugi (Nadarajah Sukirtharaj) - Jaffna Social Action Centre

## 1



## 2



Since 2018  
the program in  
Sri Lanka has  
supported

**25+**  
partner  
organisations

**40+**  
Australian  
volunteers

**30+**  
in-country  
volunteer  
assignments

**25+**  
remote  
volunteer  
assignments

**10**  
small  
grants

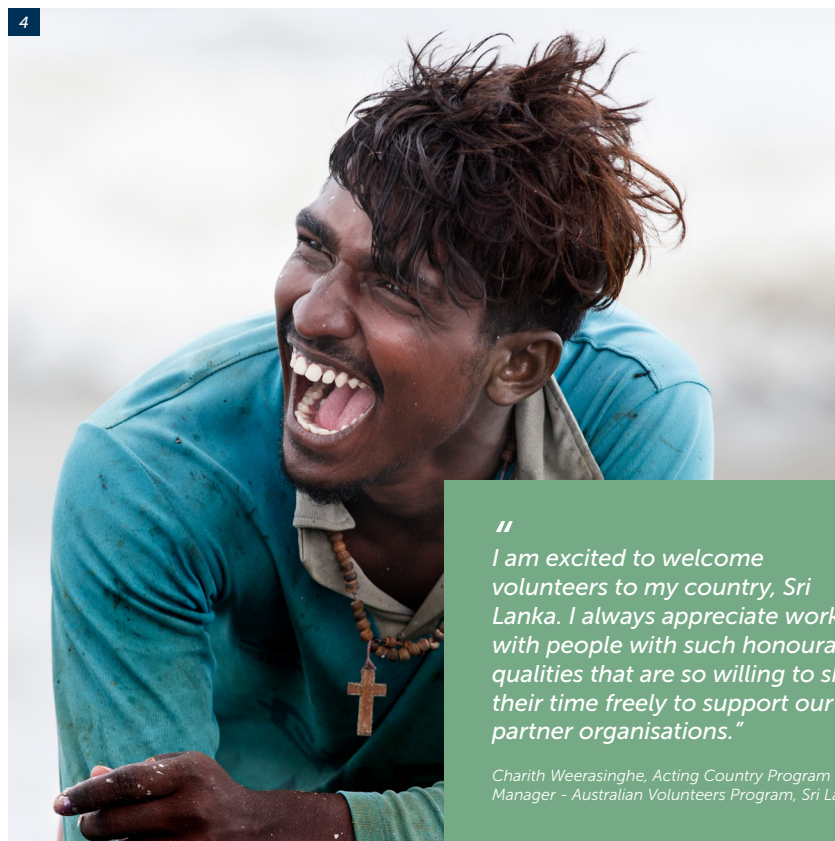
## Small grants

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.



*"I am excited to welcome volunteers to my country, Sri Lanka. I always appreciate working with people with such honourable qualities that are so willing to share their time freely to support our partner organisations."*

Charith Weerasinghe, Acting Country Program Manager - Australian Volunteers Program, Sri Lanka

## 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.

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Sandun, a local fisherman from Negombo, Western Province. Photo: Harjono Djoyobisono

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Avanthi from Digana, Central Province. Photo: Harjono Djoyobisono



### 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 United Nations Population Fund

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a partner of the Australian Volunteers Program since 2018, is the United Nations' sexual and reproductive health agency.

UNFPA is working in Sri Lanka to deliver family planning, prevent maternal deaths and eliminate gender-based violence and harmful practices. The program works with UNFPA in Sri Lanka, supporting work focusing on sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, women empowerment and population dynamics.

Australian volunteer Kate Allio completed two remote volunteering assignments with UNFPA as a Program Associate. She supported the organisation's sexual and reproductive health programs. During her assignments, Kate supported the organisation with the development of their strategic plan for 2022-2025. She also worked with staff to develop the terms of reference for effective evaluation and assisted with external consultations and group discussions on maternal health-related work. Additionally, Kate worked with staff and stakeholders to initiate a review on the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls in Sri Lanka.

Staff appreciated Kate's expertise and collaborative way of working and, despite the challenges of remote volunteering, felt that her skills in evaluation greatly benefitted the organisation's key objectives and planning.



## 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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