

Australian Volunteers Program Timor-Leste

Australian volunteers have supported partner organisations in Timor-Leste to achieve their development goals since 1995. 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

Our work in Timor-Leste

Australian volunteer *Martin Moignard* with *Joaquim Soares*, Director of *Klibur Domin*, an organisation focused on treating tuberculosis in Dili. Photo: *Harjono Djoyobisono*

Our team in Timor-Leste 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.

health, education, environmental protection, civil society, and agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Our partners are mainly local or national NGOs with support also provided to government and the private sector.

Ricardo Flavio, Team Leader, *Jess Harries*, Australian volunteer *Rheumatic Heart Disease & Malnutrition Mentor*, *Dr. Joaquina de Sousa*, Doctor, and *Januario do Santos*, Health Care worker at *Maluk Timor*. Photo: *Clementino Amaral*

The program provides support across a range of development priorities in Timor-Leste, including:

- Education
- Government
- Human rights
- Health
- Agriculture

Most volunteer assignments are with partners in Dili and Baucau, with plans to expand to include Lautem, Ermera, Aileu and Manufahi over time. 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.

In Timor-Leste, we partner with organisations working in a broad range of sectors, including



“The great thing about Australian volunteers is they easily adapt to the environment and culture; they are friendly in sharing their experiences.”

Ema de Sousa Freitas, Education Program Manager – *The Alola Foundation*



Valuing volunteering

Elga da Silva Maria, President of *Juventude ba Dezenvolvimentu Násional (JDN)*, *Alianca Fernandes*, activist and *Jescia Nelinha Da Silva Ximenes*, volunteer Nutrition Educator. *JDN* is a youth-led, community-based organisation in Dili. Photo: *Harjono Djoyobisono*

Through our Innovation Hub, the program is seeking to better understand the volunteering context in Timor-Leste and how we can partner with key stakeholders to support volunteering at a national level. The program is supporting research on local perspectives on volunteerism and volunteering practice. The research will support the Timor-Leste Government to plan their national volunteering efforts and increase integration of volunteers into peace and development programs.

Since 2018 the program in Timor-Leste has supported

50+
partner organisations

100+
Australian volunteers

90+
in-country volunteer assignments

40+
remote volunteer assignments

23
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.

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Australian volunteer Dr. Eleanor McMorran and Nurse Karolina Surya Embun at Maluk Timor in Maloa. Photo: Clementino Amaral
Photo: Harjono Djoyobisono

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“It’s beautiful to witness our partner organisations and volunteers working together, their connections, managing their expectations for the common goals, and the changes they are able to gain personally and professionally.”

Jose de Sousa, Program Manager – Australian Volunteers Program, Timor-Leste

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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Australian volunteer Community and Development Mentor James Palmer and Adozinda C. B. Soares, Administrator of PERMATIL in Dili. Photo: Harjono Djoyobisono

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Australian volunteer Bernie McEvoy with Nutrition Educators from Juventude ba Desenvolvementu Násional - Tinesia P. dos Santos and Jescia Nelinha Da Silva Ximenes. 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 Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste

Red Cross Timor-Leste, known as Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste (CVTL) is an organisation working to alleviate the suffering of socially excluded and economically marginalised members of the community.

They do this by promoting health and socio-economic development, as well as enhancing individuals' capacity to prepare for, and respond to, disasters.

To strengthen their capacity and output, CVTL aims to build relations with potential donors, beneficiaries and the general public in Timor-Leste. The organisation aims to do this by improving its organisational systems, monitoring and evaluation approach, and communications and fundraising.

CVTL have been a program partner since 2008 and have hosted 14 volunteer assignments to date.

The organisation received an Impact Fund grant to support improved recruitment, support and retention of Timorese employees through a staff wellbeing program.

The impact of the pandemic increased the organisation's workload significantly as CVTL works closely with Timor-Leste's Ministry of Health. In addition to responding to the pandemic, CVTL assisted communities impacted by floods and an outbreak of dengue fever. During this time, the organisation identified a strong need for volunteers to support in Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting.

Australian volunteer Matthew Jones completed a remote volunteering assignment as an Organisational Development Mentor with CVTL. Matthew supported CVTL by establishing and maintaining relationships with external partners, donors, and stakeholders, and applying for large and small grants. Matthew also assisted with the development of a strategic plan for the External Relations Department, which includes holistic pathways for the organisation's communications management with existing and new stakeholders, and enhanced coordination with CVTL's other departments, templates and methodologies.

Rita O'Sullivan, another Australian volunteer, completed a remote volunteering assignment with CVTL, working as a Planning Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) Mentor. Rita mentored the External Relations Department team in improving PMER systems, tools, and processes, including analysis and reporting, and strengthening staff abilities to create and maintain donor/stakeholder relationships. Rita's assignment greatly contributed to CVTL's effort in serving the community and the organisation's response during the pandemic.



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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