

A photograph of two women standing on a balcony with a blue railing. The woman on the left has dark curly hair and is wearing a blue and green patterned sleeveless top. The woman on the right has dark hair tied in a bun and is wearing a blue and white patterned short-sleeved shirt. They are both smiling at the camera. The background shows a yellow wall and a blue patterned curtain.

Australian
Volunteers

Australian
Aid 

Australian Volunteers Program Tuvalu

Australian volunteers have supported partner organisations in Tuvalu to achieve their development goals since 2017. 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 Finance Mentor Doris Cunningham with Fuafuaga Tui, Junior Clerk, at the Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organizations offices, Funafuti.
Photo: Darren James

Fakaapoga Esekia.
Photo: Darren James

Volunteer Doris Cunningham with Fuafuaga Tui, Junior Clerk, Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organizations, Funafuti.
Photo: Darren James

Our work in Tuvalu

Our team in Tuvalu 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 Tuvalu, including:

- Governance
- Economic growth
- Education
- Health
- Environmental resilience and climate change adaption
- Gender equality and disability inclusion
- Private sector development in Tuvalu

In Tuvalu, we partner with organisations working in a broad range of sectors including government, education, health, economics and

financial management, disaster and emergency management, and environmental protection. Program partners include government institutions, NGOs and the private sector.

Most volunteer assignments are with partners in Funafuti, the capital city of Tuvalu, although some assignments may require travel to outer islands by sea, in which case strict safety, health and security measures are taken to reduce any potential risks. 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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Our Australian volunteer's assignment was to assist us in developing a plan for a new office. We made a very good team. She was very patient with the limited technical assistance from our side and was a very understanding person to work with. As a result, the new office plan was accepted and endorsed by the Governing Board of the Tuvalu Red Cross Society.”

Ms Tagifoe Taetia Taomia, Secretary General - Tuvalu Red Cross



Since 2018
the program
in Tuvalu has
supported

10+

partner
organisations

15+

Australian
volunteers

15+

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.

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Kaai Fanoiga, Acting Director of Education, and Gabi McMahon, Australian volunteer Adviser Child Protection Policy Implementation at the Education Department facilities in Funafuti.
Photo: Darren James



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Tuvalu remains a key country in the Pacific region, and we want to continue working with our partners on specific areas of economic and climate resilience to ensure that Tuvaluan organisations and individuals are able to thrive in their national and global spaces of focus.”

Isireli Vulaca, Country Program Manager – Australian Volunteers Program, Tuvalu

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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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Traditional dancing at a local event.
Photo: Darren James

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Australian volunteer Gabi McMahon celebrating with colleagues from the Education Department in Funafuti.
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 Development Bank of Tuvalu

Since it was established in 1993, the Development Bank of Tuvalu (DBT) has expanded beyond general banking to providing financial and advisory assistance to the public and diversifying its financial products to include business and personal loans.

Through its services, DBT focuses on lending to promote economic development through the agriculture, fisheries and tourism sectors.

DBT's main priorities include: promoting the participation of people in Tuvalu in economic and social development, rural development, and stimulating export-oriented and import competitive activities. DBT's work helps to strengthen the economic independence of Tuvalu.

Australian volunteer Sandra Joy Griffin completed a remote volunteering role as an Enterprise Risk Management Technical Assistant with DBT. During her assignment, Sandra supported DBT in growing the organisation and strengthening the capacity and knowledge of staff, particularly in the area of risk management. She also assisted DBT in developing tools and work products related to their Risk Management System.

With Sandra's support, DBT was able to plan and conduct risk assessment exercises across the organisation, which assisted each department in identifying and documenting risks. Sandra also supported DBT with producing a draft risk management policy and procedure, a first for the bank. Sandra demonstrated excellent communication skills, a warm personality and she consistently supported and motivated staff throughout her assignment.

DBT's successful involvement with the Australian Volunteers Program has helped the organisation grow and strengthened the capacity of its staff.



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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