



Australian
Volunteers

Australian
Aid 

Australian Volunteers Program Vanuatu

Australian volunteers have supported partner organisations in Vanuatu to achieve their development goals since 1966. The 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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Vanessa Manuake and Australian volunteer Red James work together as Paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) at ProMedical in Port Vila. Photo: Darren James

Judy Kalotap, Senior Forestry Officer at the Department of Forestry, and Australian volunteer Urban Forest Officer Helen Wood working together at the Tagabe nursery facility in Port Vila. Photo: Darren James

Sarah Nakoli participating in a Vanuatu Paralympic Committee event in Luganville. Photo: Darren James

Our work in Vanuatu

Our team in Vanuatu 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 Vanuatu, including:

- Health
- Economic development
- Agriculture
- Tourism
- Education and vocational training
- Gender
- Media and communications

In Vanuatu, we partner with organisations working in a broad range of sectors, including health, social and services, and education. Program partners are mainly government agencies and local or national NGOs.

The program supports partners through volunteer assignments undertaken in-country or remotely. While the majority of partners are based in Port Vila, the Program also supports partner organisations in the provinces of Vanuatu.

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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The volunteer is outstanding and was a core member of the nursing cadre. She was culturally sensitive, professional, and forthright in the discharging of her duties. The upskilling of the nurses in professional and clinical domains is invaluable, especially the fact that the nurses don't need to move out of the country.”

Dr Sala Tarnate Vurobaravu, Vila Central Hospital



Since 2018
the program
in Vanuatu has
supported

70+
partner
organisations

195+
Australian
volunteers

230+
volunteer
assignments

22
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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Australian volunteer Theatre Nurse Educator Jin Sook Yoo with Lina Olul, Theatre Nurse, at Port Vila Central Hospital. Photo: Darren James



“Our team in Vanuatu love working with our partner organisations and volunteers. It is a privilege to help our partners to achieve their development goals and to see our volunteers become more culturally aware.”

Lou Cochrane, Program Manager – Australian Volunteers Program, Vanuatu

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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Youth helpers Marieth Johnson and Samuel Saul with Australian volunteer Jessica Seymour picking fresh produce in the garden of the Nutrition Centre at Wan Smol Bag in Port Vila. Photo: Darren James

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Australian volunteer Martin Wilson with students Robsen Kenry and Wilkinson Kamil who are studying for Certificate I in Joinery and Furniture Making at Life Changer Christian College. 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 ProMedical

ProMedical, a partner of the Australian Volunteers Program since 2015, is Vanuatu's only professional ambulance service providing paramedic services on Efate and Santo islands.

The organisation's scope of operations includes 24-hour access to emergency pre-hospital care and transport, domestic and international aero-medical evacuation, mortal remains repatriation, hyperbaric treatment, and first aid training courses. To continue to grow and be more effective in their mission to improve overall health outcomes in Vanuatu, ProMedical identified a need to strengthen their approach to training, mentoring, and progressing Ni-Vanuatu students through diploma modules.

Australian volunteers Elise Davey and Alexander Dudley completed assignments as a Paramedic and a Paramedic Clinical Supervisor, respectively. Elise's assignment centred on developing and implementing a clinical training program for students studying an online Diploma of Paramedical Science, as well as providing training and mentoring to local paramedics and the community. Alexander's assignment focussed on providing supervision to new clinical staff and supporting paramedics with clinical advice and consultation to improve health outcomes for ambulance patients.

Staff are now able to more confidently provide paramedic response to medical emergencies, which in turn is helping Vanuatu to maintain a self-sufficient, high-quality ambulance service. ProMedical staff reported that Alexander became a trusted member of the team who shared the organisation's vision for delivering high quality pre-hospital care. As well as training new clinical staff, Alexander contributed to delivering education to vulnerable people and the general public. In addition to extensive involvement training local paramedics, Elise supported ProMedical to strengthen their social media presence, and took on the role of providing clinical assistance to a local palliative care group linked to ProMedical. Her contributions were highly valued by her colleagues.

ProMedical's involvement with the Australian Volunteers Program has been transformative in terms of training, staff capacity and confidence building, and the development of effective procedures and processes. To date, ProMedical has also successfully applied for four Impact Fund grants from the program.



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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