



VOLUNTEER IMPACT REPORT

July - December 2021



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Cover image: Tanna, Vanuatu: Oxfam's Program Director Anita with Dorothy at the Lapangtawa registration
Unblocked cash beneficiary registrations in Tanna, Vanuatu.
Photo: Oxfam in Vanuatu/Arlene Bax

Acknowledgements: Many colleagues helped to develop and contribute to this report, including members of the Oxfam Australia Volunteer Engagement Team, Supporter Services Team, CRM Team, Web Development Team, Rebekah Prystupa, Fazal Ullah & Lucas Yuen.

The authors would like to acknowledge and thank all volunteers, interns and secondees for their significant contributions to Oxfam Australia throughout the reporting period.


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About Oxfam:

At Oxfam, we believe all lives are equal and no-one should live in poverty. We join forces with people who share this belief, to empower communities to build better lives for themselves. That's why we are there on the ground, not only to save lives in times of crisis, but also to develop lasting solutions. Our work spans wide because there are many causes of poverty. That's why we're also in front of decision-makers, governments, and corporations, and speak out on the big issues.



Foreword

The Oxfam Australia Volunteer Engagement Team are proud to present this Volunteer Impact Report for the period 1 July – 31 December 2021. This is the seventh report celebrating the contributions, impact and achievements of volunteers, interns and secondees (collectively referred to as volunteers) at Oxfam. This report will highlight contributions made by Oxfam volunteers and how this translates into a tangible and significant impact for Oxfam and for volunteers themselves.

It is important to acknowledge that volunteers have continued to dedicate their time, skills, and expertise in the context of an extremely challenging period. The COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected volunteerism globally, resulting in negative impacts for communities made stronger by volunteers. At Oxfam, this environment has also challenged us to re-align our objectives to ensure we continue to support the agency's volunteers, and so we can foster effective and meaningful voluntary contributions. The continuation and expansion of our online volunteering program, strengthened support mechanisms, and increased online engagement are just a few ways that we have ensured that we are continuing to develop a program which achieves this.

As this report will outline, the contributions of volunteers are essential to the successful operation of Oxfam Australia. The Volunteer Engagement Team would like to thank all volunteers during this challenging time for helping Oxfam work toward a just and sustainable world without poverty.

Jordan Steiner
Acting Volunteer Engagement Manager – Oxfam Australia

Key findings



The number of volunteer hours increased from 9,477 in the previous reporting period to 11,878 volunteer hours. The number of office volunteer hours almost doubled from the previous six months



Oxfam's volunteer program grew in size with a total of 25 different roles completed by volunteers across Australia, up from 18 in the previous reporting period. The demographics of Oxfam Australia's volunteer program has also changed with volunteers aged 18-29 now making up 48 percent of volunteers (up from 35 percent)



The financial value of Oxfam Australia's volunteer program increased to \$497,657 (an increase of over \$100,000 from the previous reporting period, due to higher recorded hours)



Volunteers were overall more satisfied in their roles - positive feedback left by volunteers increased to 96 percent (up from 93 percent compared to the previous reporting period)



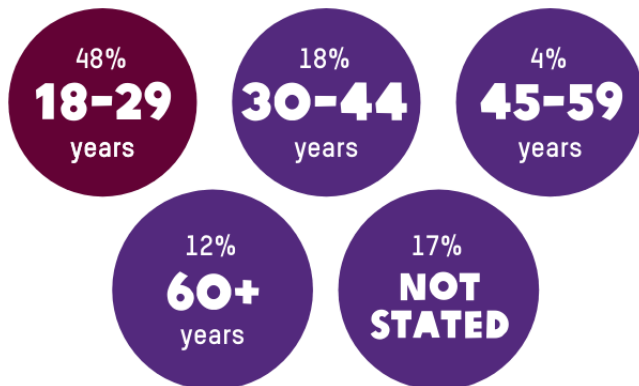
Volunteer hours in the Programs section increased to 1,739 (up from 397). The WA Fair Trade Shop community group also recorded a substantial increase in hours to 1,189 (up from 417)



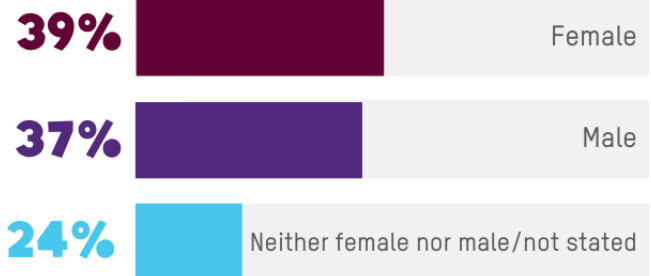
Volunteers who feature in this report indicated the most rewarding part of their experience has been assisting with enabling change from behind a laptop screen and the ability to meet colleagues in the sector. Read more about it below!

VOLUNTEER IMPACT

July – December 2021



Almost half of all volunteers are 18-29 years old



There is a balance between female and male volunteer genders



25
volunteer roles



160
volunteers



11,878
volunteer hours



15 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY VOLUNTEERS

1
volunteer hour

Can enable Oxfam to support 4 families in Sulawesi with a tarpaulin each, providing temporary shelter in the aftermath of disaster.

5
volunteer hours

Can enable Oxfam to build an improved toilet in Bangladesh which can be used by five households during emergency floods.

2
volunteer shifts

Can enable Oxfam to give one woman in Pakistan a sewing machine and materials to set up a small business, making undergarments at home. Many women in rural areas cannot afford to buy sanitary supplies. By learning to make reusable items at home, they can stay healthy and also earn a decent living.

Overview of voluntary contributions

Volunteer hours:

This graph shows an overview of the number of volunteers in each section of Oxfam Australia and the hours contributed during the reporting period. Graph 1 shows the contributions of volunteers completing roles which would usually be based in an office, (due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the majority of these contributions were completed by volunteers remotely).

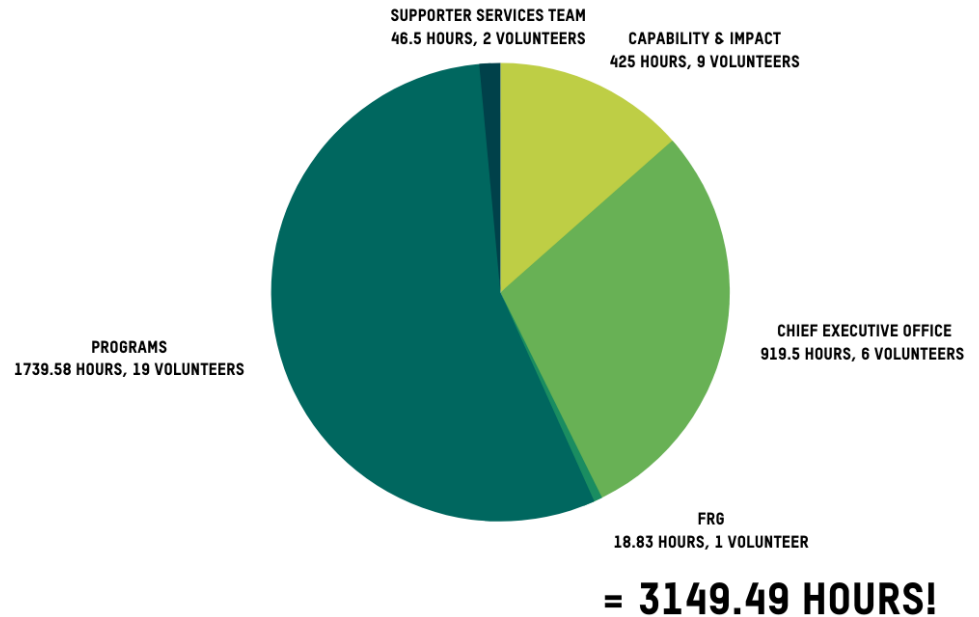
Graph 2 below shows the contributions of volunteers working in retail shops, which are operated by Oxfam Community Group volunteers based in South Australia and Western Australia.

The number of hours completed by Oxfam Community Group Retail Volunteers for this reporting period totals **8,729 hours**. This is an increase of **772 hours** from the previous reporting period.

Retail Volunteer hours typically increase in the latter half of the year to accommodate the busier trading season.

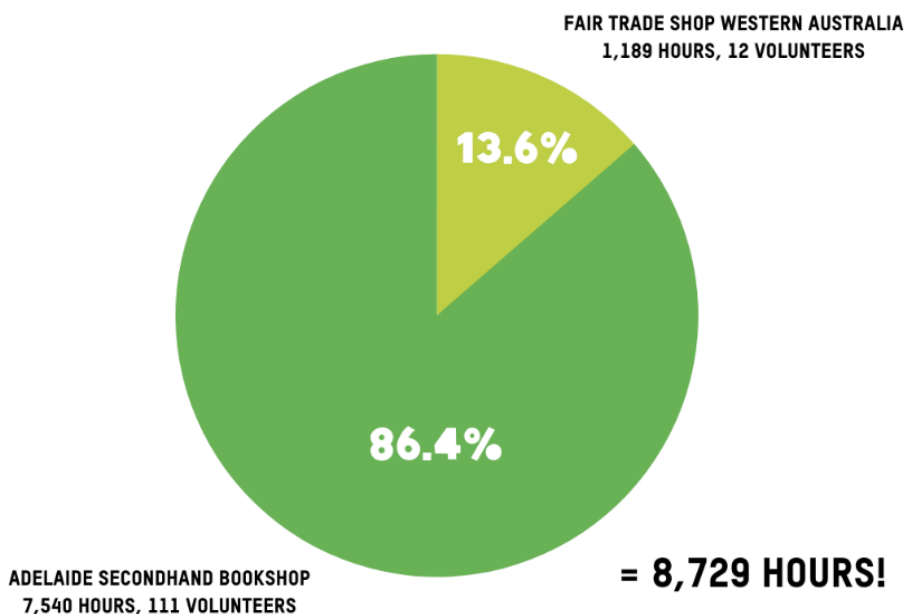
Graph 1

HOURS - OFFICE VOLUNTEERS



Graph 2

HOURS - RETAIL VOLUNTEERS



Positions held by volunteers

The map below outlines where individual volunteer roles were completed during the reporting period. Oxfam Australia operates a national volunteer program; volunteers were based in seven states and territories across the Australia (an increase of two compared to the previous reporting period). New volunteer roles were created in the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania.



**160
Volunteers**

**Impact value:
\$497,657***

**Volunteering at Oxfam
= the equivalent of 7.1
annual
full-time roles**

THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERISM AT OXFAM

**Volunteers have the power to significantly impact Oxfam, and the world.
The following section highlights the various ways volunteers make a
difference.**

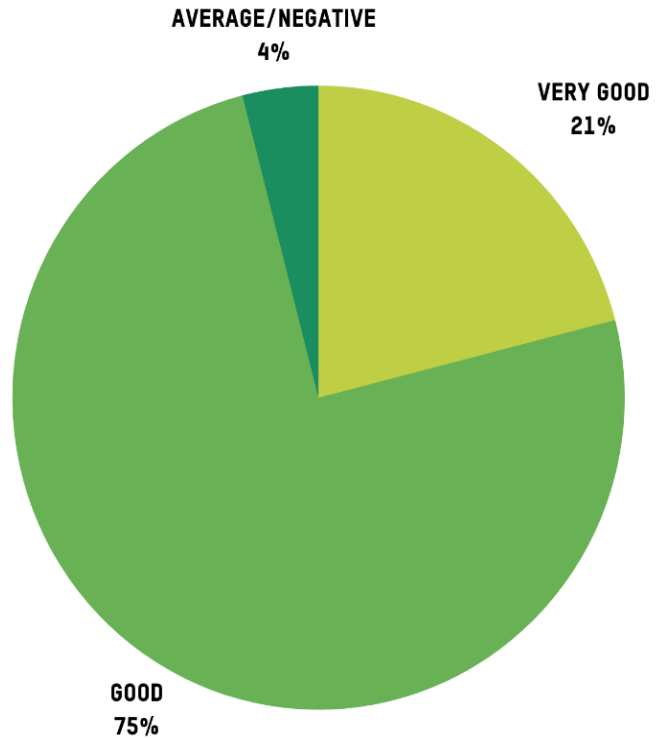
**Volunteers assist with
processing donations
and mail, creating documents,
web development, helping
other volunteers and
so much more as shared by
Oxfam's volunteer managers**

**The benefits of
volunteering include the
expansion of networks, the
ability to learn new skills
and giving back to the
community as mentioned by
Oxfam volunteers
themselves**

VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK

Volunteers are encouraged to share feedback on their experience at Oxfam following the completion of each shift. This graph shows that during the reporting period, volunteers indicated their experience as either 'very good' or 'good' **96 percent of the time**. This is an increase of 3 percent compared to the previous period.

It should be noted that this graph captures data from volunteers who have logged shifts and may not be a complete representation of the entire volunteer cohort.



**1 VOLUNTEER SHIFT
CAN ENABLE OXFAM TO PAY FOR 20
TREE SEEDLINGS THAT CAN ACT AS A
CARBON SINK AND HELP GREENHOUSE
GAS MITIGATION**



Credit/Copyright: Keith Parsons/Oxfam Australia



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN VOLUNTEER

REBEKAH PRYSTUPA



Rebekah joined Oxfam in late-2021, volunteering as a member of Oxfam Australia's RAP (Reconciliation Action Plan) Committee. Rebekah works alongside Fazal, aiding the committee with developing activities for Oxfam's workforce and supporters to participate in and demonstrate their commitment to reconciliation.

Rebekah's interest to join Oxfam stems from her studies; 'I study political science and justice and hope to continue studying political theory in the future. During my studies, I learnt about Indigenous affairs and issues, along with the need for reconciliation. However, with the world in lockdown and my studies being almost entirely online, I felt very disempowered to do anything which is what makes being a remote Reconciliation Action Plan Committee member so beneficial'.

In her spare time, Rebekah likes to spend time socialising and catching up with friends, in addition to studying, working, and reading. Her favourite genre is political theory. Rebekah has also been working on independent writing and hopes to publish some work of her own in time.

Two things have stood out so far in Rebekah's experience with Oxfam: the first being on the impact she's made working remotely with just a laptop in-hand at home, 'It really shows how the face of social change is changing, with e-campaigning and online justice becoming more and more prevalent, and I'm really excited to be a part of that'.

She also highlighted the connections she's made at Oxfam: 'This opportunity has allowed me to meet so many and interesting people. I've even interacted with people whose work I've studied at university, so it's really interesting to see the inner workings of that'.



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN VOLUNTEER



FAZAL ULLAH

Fazal joined Oxfam in October 2021, also volunteering as a member of Oxfam Australia's RAP (Reconciliation Action Plan) Committee.

Fazal's role involves working alongside Rebekah, attending RAP Working Group meetings, assisting with minute-taking as well as the development and promotion of activities for staff, volunteers, and supporters to participate in to demonstrate their commitment to reconciliation.

Fazal is a final-year International Development student, and is passionate about human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of local communities. When asked why Fazal chose to volunteer at Oxfam, 'I chose to volunteer at Oxfam because of organisation's strong commitment to First Nations People's rights in Australia. Also, Oxfam's great work on women empowerment in South Asia always inspired me to join the organisation in volunteer capacity'.

When not volunteering, Fazal usually spends time studying as well as working at an animal rights organisation as a campaign team member, 'When I am not volunteering, working or studying, one would find me reading books, going for walks, and meeting friends. I watch United Nations' daily press briefings to keep myself updated with what's happening in the world. Also, I attend Persian language classes on weekends.'

Fazal says the best experience of being an Oxfam volunteer so far has been 'working with our wonderful First Nations team, working with them, and learning from them is my best volunteer experience'. Thanks, Fazal!



VOLUNTEER WEB DEVELOPER

LUCAS YUEN



Lucas is an international student from Hong Kong who has been studying in Australia for four years.

One unit in his university course has given him an opportunity to collaborate with a local IT company. In that project, he noticed the tremendous differences between the academic environment and the real world which made him eager to gain experience in a formal organisation and learn more about best practices of web application.

Lucas started volunteering for Oxfam in October 2021, assisting with website development and improvement of existing technology. This supports the IT team to rebrand their services and leads to better people administration.

'Volunteering at Oxfam has a huge positive impact on me! Holding a degree doesn't make you sufficiently competitive in the job market if you are ambitious and therefore volunteering is a great way to gain the lead while giving back to the community. I have encountered many new challenges which only adds to the fun and I can learn from them steadily.

I am able to make connections with great people in the IT industry. I always enjoy having discussions with my managers as it keeps me moving forward. The IT team and volunteers have a positive relationship which allows everyone to hone their skills. The team is highly accessible when difficulties emerge and can provide useful advice constantly and I am very grateful to them'.

Volunteers make a difference to Oxfam in a variety of ways throughout the organisation. We asked volunteer managers how volunteers impacted their teams and Oxfam over the last six months.

Having a CRM Data & Research Volunteer join the team last year was a positive experience. The work they did has been used multiple times especially by our development team members. It was a complicated project and our volunteer did an amazing job to understand it in the first place and then writing it up in a well organised and easy to understand document.



- CRM Team

SST Volunteers continue to make a positive impact within our team, whether it be helping process hundreds of returned mail, donations or just being able to catch up every week!



- Supporter Services Team

HOW VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE AT OXFAM

Having a volunteer to help our team has been immensely rewarding. They help our team with a lot of administration and record keeping that would fall by the wayside and keep us from the core tasks.

I highly recommend having a volunteer helping the team. It doesn't matter how tough a day is, they brighten the day, ease pressure and helps us get a new perspective - that if volunteers believe in the work that we do - then we must be doing something right.

- Philanthropic Partnerships Team



Having volunteers increases the Web Team's ability to explore new technologies. Also, to test assumptions and helps us build the foundation of future applications.



- Web Team

Conclusion

This was the seventh report produced by the Oxfam Australia Volunteer Engagement Team which measured and acknowledged contributions made by volunteers across the agency. Despite the continued challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, volunteers at Oxfam continued to demonstrate resilience and dedication.

The data in this report contained several positive trends compared with the previous reporting period, this was exemplified through increased volunteer hours, the number of roles and the level of positive feedback. The geographical reach of Oxfam Australia's volunteer program expanded to include roles based in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. Furthermore, the demographical make-up of Oxfam Australia's volunteer community changed, with a more significant proportion of young people (aged 18-29) completing volunteer roles compared to previous reporting periods.

Three volunteer profiles illustrated that volunteering has had a range of benefits such as social connection and the ability to network and enact change. Contributions made by volunteers continued to remain impactful, and crucially, exemplified that a strong and thriving volunteer program is fundamental to Oxfam working toward achieving its vision of a just, sustainable, and equal world without poverty.



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Australia