

# Australian Volunteers Program in Mongolia

In 2020-21 the Australian Volunteers Program in Mongolia supported 13 volunteers and 11 partner organisations, with remote volunteering allowing expansion into the Zavkhan and Uvs provinces.

*'I was extremely inspired by my partner organisation. Despite all the lockdowns due to COVID-19, they were always available, supportive and motivated. I've learnt so much from them.'*

– Remote volunteer

## In 2020-21 in Mongolia, the program supported:

**11**  
partner organisations

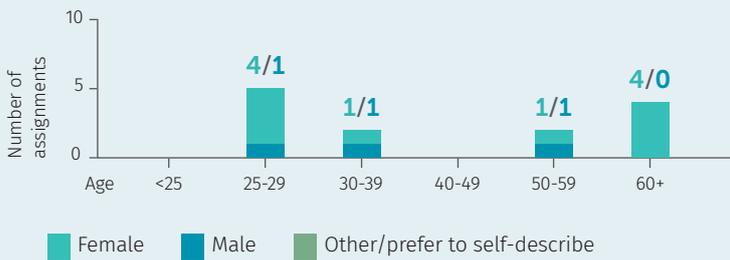
**5**  
partner organisations with Impact Grants

**13**  
volunteers

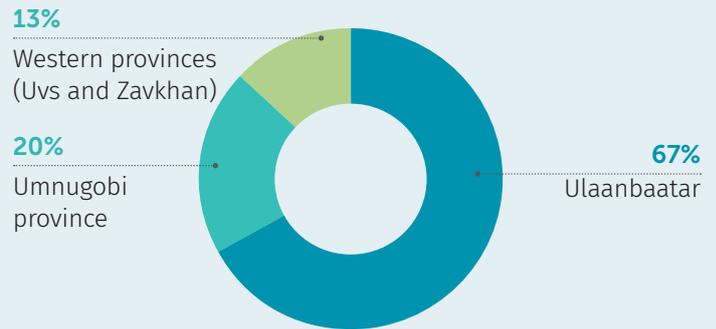
**15**  
remote assignments

### Gender and age of volunteers

Women 85% Men 15%



### Location of assignments



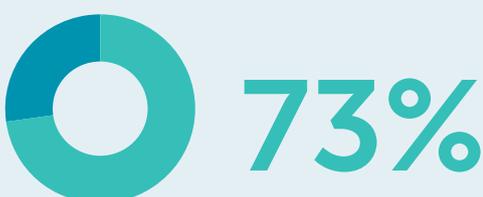
### Five most common types of partner organisations



### Five most common professions of volunteers



**73% of partner organisations were satisfied or very satisfied with the volunteer assignment**



**90% of volunteers were satisfied or very satisfied with the program**



\* The above data is drawn from reports completed by volunteers and partner organisations. Responses were not received from all volunteers and partner organisations, and not all respondents provided a response to every question.

In 2020-21, in accordance with Australia's COVID-19 Development Response Plan, the Australian Volunteers Program supported partner organisations to implement their response and recovery efforts, aligned with Mongolia's local and national priorities. Most partner organisations in Mongolia shifted to remote working and all 15 volunteer assignments supported during this period were conducted remotely.

The program started working with five new partner organisations during this period, and the shift to remote volunteering allowed the program to expand into the Zavkhan and Uvs provinces. Most partner organisations worked in education and government and civil society.

The program delivered online workshops, activities and resources, including a session to increase partner organisations' understanding of child protection and knowledge of better practices on gender equality, women's empowerment, and preventing sexual exploitation.

Five partner organisations received small grants through the Australian Volunteers Program Impact Fund, including MonFemNet National Network, Press Institute of Mongolia, Arts Council of Mongolia, Save the Children Japan (Mongolia Office) and Zavkhan School of National University of Mongolia. These grants will support the development of artists' leadership skills, improving literacy and numeracy skills, helping entrepreneurs to grow their businesses, and increasing awareness of gender stereotypes.

The program recognised International Volunteer Day with an online workshop with 23 partner organisations, which included presentations on gender equality, as well as the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.

Through our innovation initiative, the program is supporting the Network of Mongolian Volunteer Organisations (NMVO), a group of over 20 organisations, to develop a user-friendly online platform for all volunteering-related activities in Mongolia. The platform will become a hub for volunteer organisations, allowing people to find and follow volunteer-led projects.



Australian volunteer, Susan Wilson (left) with colleague Khulan. M, Media and Communications Manager (right) in Ulaanbaatar. Susan volunteered as an Advocacy and Communications Advisor for Save the Children. Photo: Teagan Glenane.

## Spotlight on The Asia Foundation

Between 2018 to 2021, Australian volunteers Zach Conn, Christopher Lasek and Katrina Mattingley supported The Asia Foundation to improve capacity in communication, advocacy, emergency response and outreach. Despite COVID-19, the Foundation continues to benefit from volunteer assignments tailored to its goals and changing needs.

Zach volunteered in Mongolia as an Environmental Project Officer until he was repatriated to Australia due to the impacts of COVID-19. Zach then embarked on a remote assignment assisting staff to create guidelines for COVID-19 prevention and control in Ulaanbaatar schools. Staff combined Zach's recommendations with Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Action Mongolia's research into World Health Organisation guidance and produced facility level practical processes.

Christopher volunteered remotely with the Foundation's Urban Governance Project, providing training for staff at the Ulaanbaatar Training and Research Centre. He mentored staff to develop communication plans, manage social media and presence online, and supported staff to build capacity in strategy, planning, social media, stakeholder engagement and crisis communications.

Katrina volunteered as a Waste and Climate Change Project Support Officer, assisting staff to undertake lifecycle assessments for waste management and training stakeholders on how to use this method as a decision-making tool. Katrina also developed a waste reduction pilot to encourage early adopters and a summer camp program on the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle.

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