

# Australian Volunteers Program in Philippines

In 2020-21 the Australian Volunteers Program in the Philippines supported eight volunteers and eight partner organisations, pivoting to remote volunteering to support partner organisations' development goals and COVID-19 response plans.

*'I've developed some lifelong friendships with my partner organisation. The assignment was the most wonderful experience, reminding me that the challenges of irrigation are global and will always require improvement.'*  
 – Remote volunteer

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

**8**  
 partner organisations

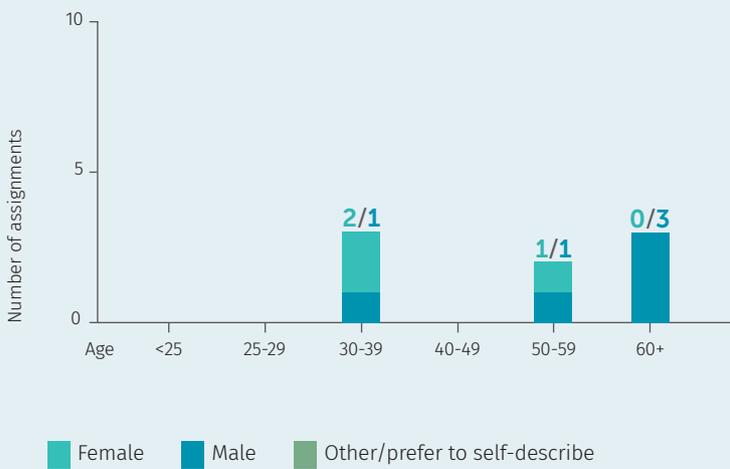
**2**  
 partner organisations with Impact Grants

**8**  
 volunteers

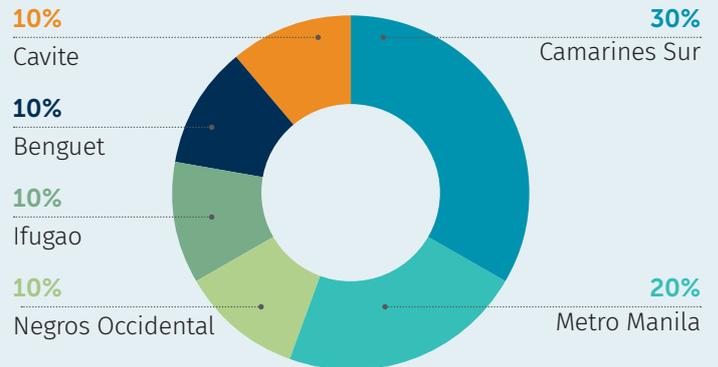
**9**  
 remote assignments

### Gender and age of volunteers

Women 45% Men 55%



### Location of assignments



### Most common types of partner organisations



### Most common professions of volunteers



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 the Philippines' local and national priorities.

During this period, the program supported eight partner organisations with most assignments in the province of Camarines Sur within the government and civil society sector. Assignments strengthened the support services of local government agencies in ICT and disaster risk reduction.

A long-term partnership with the Department of Education was initiated by the program to support the implementation of the Philippines' inclusive education framework. Ten assignments focused on disability inclusion and included training to support partner organisations to improve remote teaching and learning for students living with disability. The program delivered a webinar with partner organisations to share insights on inclusive education and highlight the contributions of Australian volunteers.

The program provided technical assistance to partner organisations to improve their IT capacity, mapping their digital capacity for remote assignments. Information sessions on remote volunteering were also delivered to garner interest.

The Australian Volunteers Program Impact Fund supported two partner organisations: The Welcome Home Foundation, which will strengthen food security by supporting the expansion of its current gardening curriculum, and The Stepping Stone Foundation Inc's Center for Excellence in Special Education, which will provide young people with training in barista, breadmaking, pastry and cooking skills so they can secure employment and support their families.

The program celebrated and promoted international volunteering in Philippines by sharing regular social media content with DFAT Post, including targeted content for International Volunteer Day.



Australian Volunteer Hazel Maglantay (Program Sustainability Enhancement Officer) sharing stories about her work in Gelacio I. Yason Foundation Family Farm School in Roxas, Oriental Mindoro. Photo: David Aguilar.

## Spotlight on Garchitorena

Garchitorena's local government is responsible for improving the welfare of residents, businesses and organisations, with the Office of the Mayor managing municipality projects and services. From 2019 to 2020, Australian volunteer, Rowan McIntyre, supported the Office of the Mayor to develop a sustainable livelihood plan and build stakeholder engagement capacity.

With Rowan's assistance, staff designed a stakeholder engagement approach based on open engagement, which involved community members participating at all stages of the plan's development. This included visits to villages to learn from and consult with communities, providing the opportunity for them to share ideas, co-design options and raise concerns.

The development of the sustainable livelihood plan was based on an integrated approach, using observations, mapping and interviews to understand community needs and goals. This ensured that the plan was aligned to its context and could be owned by the community. Staff understood that the success of the plan would be based on the effectiveness of engagement with communities.

The volunteer assignment demonstrated ongoing commitment to meaningful consultation, and community leaders and members now actively participate in the planning and decision-making for sustainable livelihood programs. Local government staff also understand the wealth of personal, environmental, and structural resources that their community has to offer.

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