

Australian Volunteers Program

MONGOLIA

2019-20 at a glance

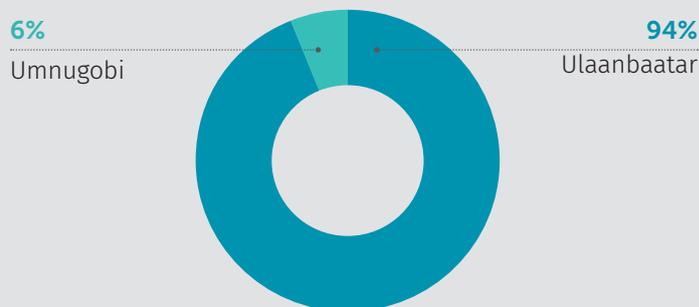
In 2019-20 the Australian Volunteers Program in Mongolia supported 39 volunteer assignments and 27 partner organisations, while fostering stronger connections between local and international partner organisations through major events and forums.*

Gender and age

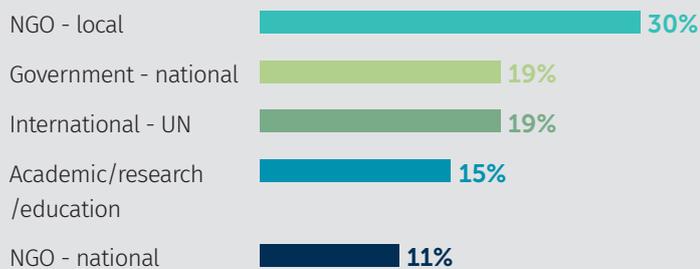
Women 85% Men 15%



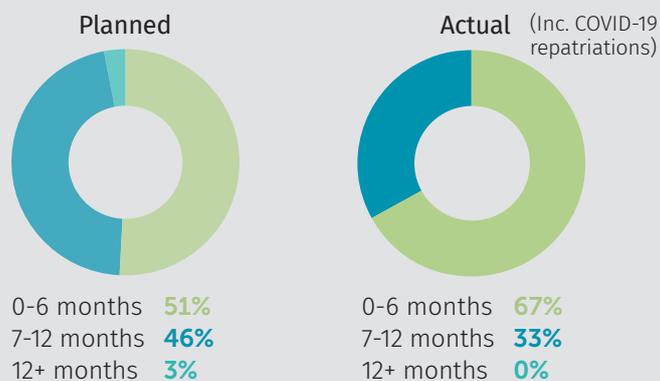
Location of assignments



Most common types of organisations



Duration of assignments



Volunteers' assessments against objectives



Partner organisations' assessment against objectives



* 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 2019-20 the Australian Volunteers Program in Mongolia worked with six new partner organisations, and continued to support development in Ulaanbaatar and Umnugobi.

The majority of Australian volunteers supported government bodies and international and local NGOs, predominately in the health, government and education sectors. Volunteers supported the delivery of the Australian Government's aid priorities in Mongolia, including supporting the health sector, improving education, eliminating violence against women and working to achieve gender equality.

Through several events the program built stronger engagement between volunteers, partner organisations, and sector and volunteering bodies. Representatives from 54 organisations attended five workshops on innovative volunteering, building partnerships, preparing partner organisations for volunteer placement, grant writing, and storytelling.

The program and volunteers joined 1000 people at a national forum on volunteering for the Sustainable Development Goals, which included a panel presentation from the Australian Ambassador to Mongolia and Australian volunteers.

The Innovative Volunteering Regional Partner Workshop brought together partner organisations from the disability and inclusive development sector from eight program countries in Asia to Ulaanbaatar. Workshop participants were supported by the program to identify and test new volunteering models and explore how creating connections between partner organisations could lead to better development outcomes.

Volunteers celebrated and promoted the value of international volunteering through local media opportunities, including Bardie Barclay-Sutton, who shared her personal and professional experiences with local TV broadcaster MNB World and news website gogo.mn.

Of the 39 assignments undertaken during 2019-20, 19 commenced during this period and four family members were supported to accompany volunteers.

As part of the program's response to COVID-19, 14 volunteers were repatriated from Mongolia in March, which meant several assignments ended early. Five volunteers continued to support their partner organisations following their repatriation through the program's new Remote Volunteering initiative.



Australian volunteer Laura McKenna (right) alongside her colleagues Urantseseg Ulziikhuu and Anudari Badrakh at Transparency International, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Photo: Teagan Glenane.

Spotlight on Umnugobi Polytechnic College

Well known for its dinosaur fossils and sand dunes, the remote town of Dalanzadgad in Mongolia's Gobi Desert has in recent years become the centre of Mongolia's rapidly growing mining industry.

The town is home to Umnugobi Polytechnic College (UPC), which provides 13 courses to over 700 students, many of which directly lead to careers in the resources sector. Since 2018 Australian volunteers have contributed to improving UPC's management, teaching and curriculum.

The UPC team recognised a need to improve their management capability and were excited to have Leonie Ligertwood join their team as a Management Mentor. Leonie brought experience from the Australian tertiary sector and helped the team improve their management practices.

With Leonie's input, UPC implemented regular management meetings, helping the team come together to better understand workplace gaps and UPC's future development needs. Leonie supported the establishment a new Student Services Department to improve the student experience and collaborated with the Quality Officer to develop a Quality Committee for oversight and monitoring, both of which significantly improved how UPC operates internally.

Leonie worked closely with the HR Manager to review the workplace structure and reporting lines, and update staff position statements following interviews and analysis. She also worked with the UPC team to successfully gain the internationally-recognised ISO 45001:2018 accreditation for their occupational health and safety management systems, a milestone achievement for the college.

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