

# **VOLUNTEER IMPACT QUARTERLY REPORT**

## **JANUARY – MARCH 2020**

Prepared by the Volunteer Engagement Team – June 2020



Oxfam Australia's Supporter Services Team volunteer Sandra Edgar and staff member Ally Riches take a call from supporter "Michael the Magnificent". Photo: Keith Parsons/Oxfam Australia.

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# Executive Summary

The impact of volunteers and interns at Oxfam Australia continues to remain substantial with contributions made by volunteers continuing to affect the work of the organisation considerably.

This is the third quarterly report developed by the Volunteer Engagement Team which evaluates the impact of volunteers and interns at Oxfam Australia. This report will specifically analyse the impact of voluntary contributions made between January and March 2020.

Several additions have been made to the structure of this report from the previous reports to more effectively acknowledge the widespread contributions made by Oxfam Australia's volunteer workforce and to provide more succinct information which can be delivered to stakeholders.

New features in this report include a 'key findings' section, an update on the nature of remote volunteering within the organisation as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, a more detailed analysis of the social impact of volunteerism, and finally, a timeframe box in the recommendations section.

This report will outline the contributions made by volunteers in relation to the number of hours completed. It will then outline the demographical data pertaining to Oxfam Australia's volunteer workforce for this period in the form of an infographic. It will then highlight the widespread nature of Oxfam Australia's volunteer workforce by outlining the scope of roles which volunteers occupy.

In the second half of this report, an analysis of the satisfaction of Oxfam Australia's volunteer workforce will be conducted by evaluating the level of feedback provided by volunteers. It will move on to highlight the nature of financial and non-financial outcomes. This will be analysed in financial terms by determining the total financial value of the contributions made and in non-financial terms by highlighting tangible outcomes as well as evaluating the social impact of engaging.

The report will conclude by outlining several recommendations for consideration based on the outlined data to foster more effective volunteer engagement and enhance the impact and contributions made by the organisation's volunteer community.

## Key findings

- Volunteer hours have increased in every section during this quarter in comparison to hours which were recorded in the previous quarter for the same unit/section.
- The total number of volunteers has increased slightly across the organisation from the previous quarter.
- The total financial dollar value of volunteer contributions is \$43,777 which is roughly \$5,700 higher than in the previous quarter.
- 98.2 percent of all shifts were positive as indicated by volunteers through feedback provided.
- The demographical makeup of volunteers at Oxfam Australia remains relatively unchanged from previous quarters. A majority of volunteers are young people (aged 18-30) and are studying at a higher education institution.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the organisation and capacity for volunteerism significantly. Volunteers have been able to adapt to changes through remote volunteering, as well as the development of e-Commerce trading (Fair Trade Shop Perth).

# Volunteers at Oxfam Australia

## Volunteer hours at Oxfam Australia

Volunteers and interns at Oxfam Australia continued to be engaged in a variety of positions across the organisation which exemplifies the trend that the impact of volunteers is widespread. The total number of volunteers engaged within the organisation is similar to the previous quarter (29) and the number of hours recorded in the previous quarter (951) is also similar to the present quarter. There has been a slight increase in both the total number of hours as well as the total number of volunteers contributing hours.

Volunteers were engaged in nine sections/units compared to the previous quarter of twelve. Volunteer hours have increased in every section where hours were recorded in the previous quarter for that unit. A significant number of hours were recorded in the Melbourne Trailwalker/Fundraising & Resource Growth section which was anticipated in the lead up to Melbourne Trailwalker event originally planned for March but unfortunately cancelled due to COVID-19.

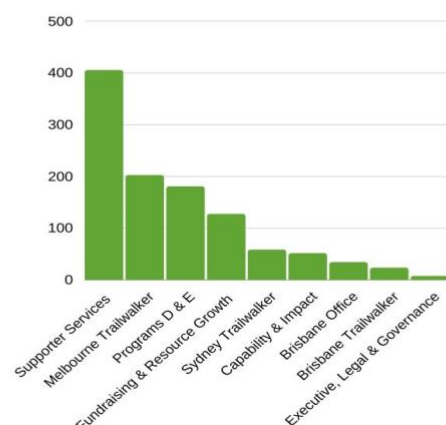
It must be acknowledged that the progression of the COVID-19 global pandemic inevitably impacted the total number of hours recorded for this quarter. This report will contain a detailed outline of Oxfam Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to the organisation's volunteer program.

| Unit/Team  | Hours        | Volunteers |
|--|--------------|------------|
| <b>Supporter Services (VIC)</b>                        | 405          | 6          |
| <b>Melbourne Trailwalker Event (VIC)</b>               | 202          | 15         |
| <b>Programs: Development &amp; Effectiveness (VIC)</b> | 180          | 2          |
| <b>Fundraising &amp; Resource Growth (VIC)</b>         | 127          | 2          |
| <b>Sydney Trailwalker Event (NSW)</b>                  | 58           | 2          |
| <b>Capability &amp; Impact (VIC)</b>                   | 51           | 4          |
| <b>Brisbane Office (QLD)</b>                           | 34           | 1          |
| <b>Brisbane Trailwalker Event (QLD)</b>                | 23           | 2          |
| <b>Executive, Governance &amp; Legal (VIC)</b>         | 7            | 1          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>1,087</b> | <b>34</b>  |

Note:

- Volunteers may be engaged in multiple roles within the organisation simultaneously, which would explain a discrepancy in volunteer numbers.
- Only hours logged by volunteers/volunteer managers are included and may not be a whole representation of the total hours committed by volunteers or interns.
- Corporate Services has become Capability & Impact since the previous quarter.
- For the purpose of more detailed reporting, data from each of Trailwalker events are reported as separate to the Fundraising & Resource Growth section.

Volunteer Hours: January - March 2020



## COVID-19 and its impact on volunteering at Oxfam Australia

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the globe significantly since January 2020, and has led to consequential physical, societal and financial impacts for a significant proportion of the world's population. COVID-19 has also impacted organisations and the work that they do significantly, including Oxfam Australia and the wider Oxfam confederation.

One report by the Centre for Social Research & Methods at the Australian National University has highlighted the experience of volunteers during the early stages of the COVID-19 global pandemic.<sup>1</sup> The report found that of those surveyed, 65.9 per cent of volunteers had stopped volunteering as a precaution to minimise COVID-19 transmission, which equates to 12.2 million hours per week nationally. This decline has affected the amount and possibly the quality of services which are provided by volunteers and the organisations they contribute to. This pandemic also has the potential to impact the community on a societal level in relation to social cohesion.

At an organisational level, the impact of this pandemic has been significant. Oxfam Australia temporarily closed all office locations on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March, with other independent groups affiliated to Oxfam Australia such as the Oxfam Secondhand Bookshop in Adelaide and the Fair Trade Shop in Perth also temporarily ceasing operations during this period. Such actions were necessary for the safety and wellbeing of all volunteers and staff and to contribute to lowering the spread of COVID-19, but the consequences of such actions have been severe with 90 percent of Oxfam Australia's volunteer workforce temporarily suspending their hour's commitment to the organisation.

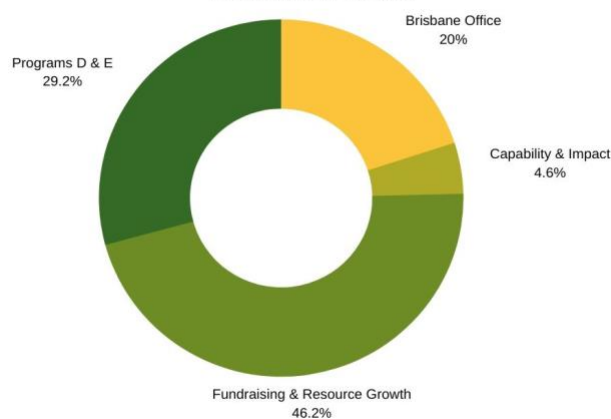
Since the working from home period commenced, 12 volunteers and interns have been able to continue volunteering remotely. Volunteers also contributed 54 hours of their time up until the end of this quarter completing a range of tasks within the Programs, Capability & Impact and Fundraising & Resource Growth sections.

A special mention is due for the volunteers who independently operate the **Fair Trade Shop in Perth**, who after suspending in-store trading developed an e-Commerce store which was launched in April and has enabled the store to offer its stock Australia-wide.

<https://thefairtradeshop.square.site/>



Volunteer Hours during OAU office shutdown period  
Data from: 18/03/2020 - 31/03/2020



• Data only from office shutdown period during the January - March quarter

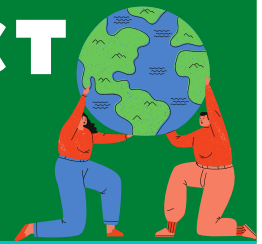
### Volunteer roles working from home (over the entire period):

- Corporate & Community Engagement Volunteer
- Volunteer Web Developer
- Climate Specialist Volunteer
- Volunteer Finance Consultant
- Social Engagement Volunteer
- Supporter Services Regular Volunteer
- Key Supporter Research Assistant
- Social and Economic Empowerment Design Toolkit Internship

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Biddle, Matthew Gray, *The experience of volunteers during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic* (Canberra: Australian National University, 2020), 3, [https://csmr.cass.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/docs/2020/5/The\\_experience\\_of\\_volunteers\\_during\\_the\\_early\\_stages\\_of\\_the\\_COVID-19\\_pandemic\\_0.pdf](https://csmr.cass.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/docs/2020/5/The_experience_of_volunteers_during_the_early_stages_of_the_COVID-19_pandemic_0.pdf).

# VOLUNTEER IMPACT

JANUARY-MARCH 2020



## DEMOGRAPHIC

| AGE           |    | GENDER        |    | WORKING STATUS    |    |
|---------------|----|---------------|----|-------------------|----|
| 18- 30        | 17 | FEMALE        | 18 | PART OR FULL TIME | 12 |
| 30 -45        | 5  | MALE          | 12 | STUDENT           | 16 |
| 45- 60        | 3  | NEITHER       | 1  | NOT WORKING       | 6  |
| 60 +          | 6  | NOT SPECIFIED | 2  | RETIRED           | 3  |
| NOT SPECIFIED | 2  |               |    | NOT SPECIFIED     | 8  |

**98% OF VOLUNTEERS RATED THEIR EXPERIENCE AS POSITIVE**

**"Great to finally get on the phone and talk to some of our Trailwalkers!"**



**Volunteer contributions totalled**

**\$43,777 this quarter.**

**What does this mean in terms of Oxfam programs?**

### 1 VOLUNTEER HOUR



- Can provide a farmer in Timor-Leste skills to grow crops
- Can provide necessary equipment to a community health worker in Zambia

## SOCIAL IMPACT

**Building social, knowledge, financial & bonding capital:**

Financial capital: Renumeration costs saved through volunteer contributions means more resources for other critical work.

Knowledge capital: Through the delivery of a high quality research paper relating to Oxfam campaigns such as 'Families Together'



### 1 SHIFT



- Can provide WASH training to 10 people in Fiji for 2 days

### 10 SHIFTS



- Can support advertising in a local newspaper to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples who live in remote areas with Oxfam programs.

## Positions held by Volunteers

Volunteers were engaged in a wide variety of roles throughout the organisation. This quarter saw volunteers contributing hours in each of Oxfam Australia's Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane offices, as well as the Fair Trade Shop in Perth. Volunteers were engaged in nine different sections/teams of the organisation. The majority of volunteers were involved with the Trailwalker event in all three offices. This quarter also saw the engagement of a volunteer in the finance team, several intern placements in the Legal and Programs sections. The organisation also engaged several volunteers to assist with transitioning to Oxfam Australia's new CRM software and Compass.

Below is a list of the positions held by volunteers and interns during this quarter:

- CareerTrackers Internship Program
- Volunteer Finance Consultant
- Social and Economic Empowerment Design Toolkit Internship
- Event Administration Support Volunteer (Melbourne Trailwalker)
- Customer Service Volunteer – Oxfam Trailwalker Events
- Supporter Services Volunteer
- Corporate & Community Engagement Volunteer
- Volunteer Administration Assistant
- Fundraising Administration Volunteer – Oxfam Trailwalker Events
- Oxfam Trailwalker Brisbane Event Support Volunteer
- Melbourne Law School Public Interest Law Initiative Internship
- CRM Database Migration Specialist Volunteer
- Compass Migration Technical Officer Volunteer
- Administration Support Volunteer – Oxfam Trailwalker Events
- Volunteer Web Developer
- IT Support Volunteer

## Volunteer position example: Key Supporter Research Assistant / Events Volunteer Team Assistant (Brisbane Office)

Oxfam Australia's volunteers contribute their time and skills in many locations across the country including in the Brisbane office. Roshini Mohan, Key Supporter Coordinator for Queensland, Northern Territory, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory spoke with the Volunteer Engagement Team on the impact of volunteers who contribute their time and skills in Brisbane.

Roshini manages two volunteers who assist as a Key Supporter Research Assistant and as an Events Volunteer Team Assistant. Roshini spoke of how volunteers in the Brisbane office assist with day-to-day tasks, utilise their skills and bring colour and life to the office. "Volunteers help out and make our jobs so much easier. They help to reduce the burden of administrative jobs that are very essential but also take time away from the core work. They also facilitate us to complete jobs that get put on an 'if we had more hours in the day wish list', like research". The completion of these tasks allows more time to be dedicated to building relationships and engaging donors to support Oxfam's work.

Roshini also highlighted the commitment and dedication of volunteers in Brisbane and how their contributions make a difference in the Brisbane office, "I enjoy working with volunteers. Their commitment and dedication to our work inspires me and makes me work harder. Their warmth, good cheer and life stories add colour to the close-knit unit which is the Brisbane office". It is apparent that the contributions of volunteers are well-valued by the team in Brisbane with Roshini summarising, "For the time and help they provide, we can only promise that we will treat them well, make them feel a part of our little office community, and share our morning teas and team lunches with them. Volunteers help inspire us to be better at our jobs and work harder towards Oxfam's vision for a just world without poverty".

## Volunteer feedback at Oxfam Australia

Measuring feedback from volunteers and interns is an important indicator in determining the satisfaction both of volunteers' roles and their experience at Oxfam. Feedback is provided by volunteers and interns following the conclusion of each shift and this data is aggregated across the entire organisation and analysed by the Volunteer Engagement Team through a monthly volunteer program review, and this quarterly report. Volunteers submit feedback via the 'MyImpact' portal through Better Impact. Volunteers create an hours log for their contribution as well as input feedback in the form of a general rating (from very good to very poor), as well as comments which are optional.

The first table indicates the total feedback provided by volunteers in all sections and units across the organisation. The data from this quarter indicates that volunteers were satisfied with their experience with 98.2 percent of volunteers expressing feedback which was either 'very good' or 'good'. When a volunteer submits feedback, which is below 'good,' it is followed up with a member of the Volunteer Engagement Team to determine any grievances which may have arisen.

| Feedback Totals          | Total Number | Percentage     |
|--------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Very Good                | 85           | 76.57%         |
| Good                     | 24           | 21.63%         |
| Average                  | 1            | 0.90%          |
| Poor                     | 1            | 0.90%          |
| Very Poor                | 0            | 0.00%          |
| <b>Total (responses)</b> | <b>111</b>   | <b>100.00%</b> |

Source: Better Impact

- Volunteers log hours for individual shifts and not their overall experience as a volunteer.
- Results may not be a whole indication of volunteers' satisfaction as submitting feedback is encouraged but submitted voluntarily.
- Figures exclude Oxfam Trailwalker volunteers and volunteers not based in an OAU office.

The next table below outlines the same data recorded but at a sectional/unit level. This table records the total number of 'very good' responses out of all responses recorded both as a number and as a total percentage out of all responses. The results suggest that the experience of volunteers has been one which has been extremely positive overall. Volunteers who contributed hours within the Sydney Trailwalker Team and within the Executive, Governance & Legal section are overall the most satisfied with their experience as an Oxfam volunteer or intern.

| Volunteer Feedback Totals (by Unit/Section) | Total Number (Very Good) | Percentage | Total Responses |
|---|--------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Sydney Trailwalker Event (NSW)              | 10                       | 100.00%    | 10              |
| Melbourne Trailwalker Event (VIC)           | 48                       | 92.30%     | 52              |
| Programs: Development & Effectiveness (VIC) | 3                        | 16.66%     | 18              |
| Fundraising & Resource Growth (VIC)         | 13                       | 72.22%     | 18              |
| Supporter Services (VIC)                    | No data                  | No data    | No data         |
| Capability & Impact (VIC)                   | 8                        | 88.88%     | 9               |
| Brisbane Office (QLD)                       | No data                  | No data    | No data         |
| Brisbane Trailwalker Event (QLD)            | 2                        | 66.67%     | 3               |
| Executive, Governance & Legal (VIC)         | 1                        | 100.00%    | 1               |
| <b>Totals</b>                               | <b>85</b>                |            | <b>111</b>      |

Source: Better Impact

- A low result may not be indicative of volunteers' overall experience or satisfaction within the unit/section collectively due to the small amount of data contributed from that team.
- Figures exclude Oxfam Trailwalker and volunteers not based in an OAU office.
- For the purpose of more detailed reporting, data from each of the Trailwalker events are reported as separate to the Fundraising & Resource Growth section.
- Corporate Services has become Capability & Impact since the previous quarter.



## Impact of Volunteerism (financial, non-financial & outcomes)

The value of volunteers at Oxfam is immense and the organisation could not operate to the extent it does without the contributions of volunteers and interns all across Australia. At Oxfam Australia, volunteer impact in terms of financial value as well as non-financial outcomes such as social impact is measured to determine the widespread scale of contributions from the volunteer community.

### Financial

Volunteers and interns contribute a significant number of hours every year which enable Oxfam to further its work around the world as a result of remuneration saved. Below is a table outlining the total financial impact for this quarter. As a result of the total number of volunteers increasing from the previous quarter, the total dollar value of this quarter is roughly \$5,700 higher than the previous quarter.

| Number of volunteer roles | FTE (full-time equivalent roles) | Dollar value |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 34                        | 0.6 (annually) / 2.4 (quarterly) | \$43,777     |

Source: Better Impact

- Based on Salary Category 5A.
- Data is not inclusive of non-office based volunteers.

### Non-financial: Outcomes (Programs)

The contributions of volunteers and interns enable Oxfam Australia to dedicate further resources to vital projects across the organisation, which is set out below in the form of dollar value handles.

#### One volunteer hour:

- Will help Oxfam to support a farmer in Timor-Leste to gain the skills needed to grow sustainable crops that will provide for their families and help them earn an income.
- Can allow Oxfam to equip a community health worker in Zambia with work boots, protective clothing, hand sanitiser, a water bottle, hat and umbrella in order to effectively complete their work.

#### One office volunteer shift (on average):

- Can provide training to ten individuals on water, sanitation and hygiene issues in a rural Fijian community for two days.
- Can allow Oxfam to support paralegal centres to increase their support for women and girls who have experienced violence in Indonesia.

#### Two office volunteer shifts (on average):

- Can enable Oxfam to provide a water tank for one household for harvesting rainwater in Nepal.
- Can enable Oxfam to provide 100 Sri Lankan farmers with training on weather index-based insurance systems to help them safeguard their livelihoods from the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events.

#### Ten volunteer shifts (on average):

- Can help pay for advertisements in a local newspaper to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples who live in remote areas with Oxfam programs.

### Outcomes: Supporter Services

This report also would like to highlight the contribution of the Supporter Services volunteers. This unit, in particular, achieved the highest number of volunteer hours for this quarter:

- Batches: 67
- Database amendments: 437
- Incoming Mail (Return to sender): 25
- Phones (Message bank): 180

## Social and knowledge capital as indicators to measuring impact

The impacts of volunteerism can importantly also be measured through a range of non-financial indicators exceptional to financial capital. The analysis of social indicators is in many regards equally as important as is financial indicators in an organisation such as Oxfam Australia, which works around the world to empower communities and foster societal change. This being said, measuring tangible outcomes as a result of social capital within organisational settings is difficult and therefore reported on infrequently by volunteer-involving organisations.

A 2012 Volunteering Australia report highlights the social impacts of volunteerism through the lens of societal inclusion. The report states that volunteerism provides volunteers in Australia with a sense of belonging to their community, opportunities to use their skills, to make a difference to the organisation's work and to learn and develop.<sup>2</sup> The report emphasises that volunteerism both fosters social inclusion as a result of volunteers engaging with population's that experience barriers to societal and economic participation but also facilitates a situation whereby volunteers themselves are not socially excluded.<sup>3</sup>

The benefits of social capital can also be used to describe the impact of volunteerism in relation to fostering a community of people who are likely to create positive outcomes for the organisation's they work for, in relation to the roles volunteers play as in being 'ambassadors' of a cause they inherently care about. Bonding capital can be described as the reinforcement of social ties between known groups or individuals, thus strengthening these values and attitudes further.<sup>4</sup> These ideas in sum result in a higher likelihood of the creation of a community which is more highly engaged with the mission, values and work undertaken by an organisation.

Finally, evaluating knowledge capital can also be a useful tool for organisations to measure the non-financial impact of volunteerism. This idea is exemplified in the sense that volunteers can utilise skills and qualifications in an organisation, particularly if they are niche in nature and these skills cannot usually be supported by engaging a paid staff member in an organisation. Knowledge capital may also be utilised in relation to explaining the impacts of skills and knowledge gained by volunteers through contributions made to an organisation. Previous studies have concluded that this form of knowledge capital has enhanced the development of good workplace practices,<sup>5</sup> and employment prospects.<sup>6</sup>

### Example:

A volunteer or intern who contributes hours at an Oxfam Australia office may undertake research and complete a report on the effects of family separation on refugee resettlement and social inclusion. Outcomes which may occur as a result:

- The delivery of a high-quality research paper which will assist Oxfam Australia, stakeholders and the wider public in developing knowledge relating to the Families Together campaign. (Knowledge Capital).
- Contributions invested by the volunteer or intern allows Oxfam Australia to invest resources in other critical areas of the organisation as a result of remuneration saved. (Financial Capital).
- Fosters connection between the volunteer or intern and the organisation and may encourage a greater level of engagement and support for the organisation. (Social Capital).

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<sup>2</sup> Volunteering Australia, *State of Volunteering in Australia: 2012* (Canberra: Volunteering Australia, 2012), 9, <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/State-of-Volunteering-in-Australia-2012.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Volunteering Western Australia, *The Economic, Social and Cultural Value of Volunteering to Western Australia* (Perth: Volunteering Western Australia), 83, [https://www.volunteeringwa.org.au/assets/downloads/vwa-report-book\\_web.pdf](https://www.volunteeringwa.org.au/assets/downloads/vwa-report-book_web.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Jane Janey, Janet Tuckwiller, Lynne Lonquist, "Skill Transferal Benefits from Volunteer Experiences" *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 20, no. 5, (1991): 76, Complementary Index.

<sup>6</sup> Kathleen Day, Rose Ann Devlin, "The payoff to work without pay: volunteer work as an investment in human capital: *The Canadian Journal of Economics / Revue Canadienne d'Economique*, 31, no. 5 (1998): 1180, JSTOR.

# Recommendations

Based on the above data, the following recommendations are prescribed as suggestions for consideration in order to foster further levels of engagement and satisfaction of current and prospective volunteers at Oxfam Australia.

| Recommendation:   | Timeline:  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>1. Visibility of the Volunteer Engagement Team, as well as the volunteer program generally should be enhanced as demand for volunteer services will increase following the end of the office shutdown period.</b></p> <p><u>Justification:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The visibility of the Volunteer Engagement Team is currently at a reasonable level within the organisation, but further incentives should be undertaken to enhance this as well as the volunteer program more generally as it is envisaged demand for volunteer services will increase following the end of the shutdown period.</li> </ul> <p><u>Deliverables:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further alignment with key staff within the organisation who engage volunteers regularly. Possibly through the implementation of previously discussed ideas of ‘paper bag lunches’ or key staff volunteer information sessions.</li> <li>Continued visibility should be maintained through internal communications/other communications platforms including organisation-wide emails and Workplace.</li> <li>Alignment with similar VIO’s (Volunteer Involving Organisations) in the INGO sector, including with other Oxfam Confederation organisations.</li> </ul> | <p>Deliverables evaluated following the end of every quarter. Mindful that certain deliverables may be more attainable than others due to the recent organisational restructuring.</p> |
| <p><b>2. Greater emphasis should be placed on evaluating, recognising and fostering the social and other non-financial impacts of volunteerism at an organisational level.</b></p> <p><u>Justification:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The social and other non-financial impacts of volunteering for an organisation such as Oxfam Australia as equally as important as measuring financial or data outcomes. Greater emphasis should be placed on recognising the level of social outcomes which exist through internal communications, continued evaluation of outcomes in reporting and the development of further research and planning into how social impact outcomes can be fostered.</li> </ul> <p><u>Deliverables:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater consideration of social impacts and achievements of volunteerism possibly through internal communications/social media/Workplace/volunteer news (recognition).</li> <li>Continued monitoring and reporting of social impact outcomes (evaluation).</li> <li>Further research into social impact and outcomes conducted as well as the development of a planning document which will evaluate social impact outcomes at an organisational level (fostering).</li> </ul>          | <p>Deliverables evaluated by end of 2020.</p>  |

| Recommendation:  | Timeline:   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>3. Greater emphasis should be placed on developing a ‘community of volunteers.’ Both through fostering an online presence and through more in-person engagement at an office and organisational level.</b></p> <p><u>Justification:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater emphasis placed on fostering community will likely improve volunteers’ experience, perceptions of the organisation, satisfaction and retention.</li> </ul> <p><u>Deliverables:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased focus on social media and communications in relation to building an online community. Consider developing an online formalised communications plan which will consider how to foster a volunteer community. (online).</li> <li>Volunteer Engagement Team to consider developing a plan on volunteer community development through in-person events and gatherings with consideration for resource constraints. (in-person).</li> </ul>  | <p>Online-focused deliverables evaluated by the end of August, when volunteer recruitment is likely to have recommenced.</p> <p>In-person-focused deliverables to be evaluated three months following the end of the office shutdown.</p> |
| <p><b>4. The development of a post-office shutdown volunteer engagement plan should be developed in anticipation of the full office shutdown period concluding before the end of 2020.</b></p> <p><u>Justification:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Volunteer Engagement Team should develop a proactive plan as further information about returning to work is provided so to provide volunteers with up to date information and to be proactive to any issues which may occur surrounding this.</li> </ul> <p><u>Deliverables</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The delivery of a detailed and up-to-date plan developed by the Volunteer Engagement Team with key information pertaining to post-office shutdown work practices and arrangements.</li> <li>Report to include information pertaining to work for home arrangements, accommodation arrangements (Sydney/Brisbane based volunteers).</li> </ul>  | <p>Plan to be developed over time as further information becomes available.</p>   |
| <p><b>5. Further planning and consideration should be undertaken to develop a remote volunteering program.</b></p> <p><u>Justification:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The post-lockdown period will likely see a demand for virtual volunteering roles to continue, particularly among the student cohort which is the volunteer program’s largest demographic. Virtual volunteering programs may also enable the possibility for volunteer opportunities to become accessible (pending eligibility and checks) for volunteers not based in Melbourne, Sydney or Brisbane.</li> </ul> <p><u>Deliverables:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued support of virtual volunteering positions for the foreseeable future.</li> <li>Volunteer Engagement Team to develop a plan which will outline a set of guidelines for virtual volunteering and consider how virtual volunteering will meet the needs of Oxfam Australia.</li> <li>Volunteer Engagement Team to work with staff to encourage virtual volunteering alongside in-person volunteering. (long-term objective).</li> </ul> | <p>Deliverables evaluated at the conclusion of each quarter.</p>  |

# Conclusion

The impact of volunteers across the organisation at Oxfam Australia continues to remain substantial, both in relation to the financial and non-financial outcomes as well as concerning the scale and nature of contributions. The data outlined in this report is evidence of this fact and as volunteerism continues to make a substantial impact on the organisation, it is apparent that now more than ever a strong volunteer program is needed to foster and enable change in these unprecedented times.

This report first outlined the contributions made by volunteers in relation to the number of hours. This figure has risen slightly from the previous quarter, but declined significantly as a result of the office-wide shutdown which was triggered in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst much of the organisation has been affected substantially as a result of this pandemic, remote volunteering has continued with a small number of volunteers contributing hours from home.

The following section explored the demographical data of Oxfam Australia's volunteer community through an infographic, highlighting the diversity of the organisation's volunteers. The data exemplified that the demographics remain consistent with other quarters, with the largest age demographic (51 percent) identified as being under 30 years old. The following section continued to highlight the diversity of volunteers in the organisation in relation to the variety of positions held with volunteers and interns holding positions within nine different sections and units nationally.

Volunteer feedback was explored in the next section with over 98 percent of feedback provided by volunteers was positive.

The penultimate section investigated the impact of volunteers concerning financial and non-financial outcomes. The total value of financial contributions was higher during this quarter compared to the previous quarter due to increased numbers of volunteers and hours. This section also explored the non-financial impacts of volunteerism within the organisation, and finally, the scope of social and knowledge impact.

The report concluded by prescribing a set of recommendations based on the data outlined in earlier sections. Recommendations emphasised the importance of raising the profile of volunteers and the Volunteer Engagement Team and adapting to changes in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overall, this report will conclude that the contributions of volunteers and interns at Oxfam Australia remain significant, as well as the volunteer community continuing to be resilient and adaptive. It is important decision-makers in the organisation to be mindful of this fact as the organisation moves forward as well as remaining aware of the importance of fostering a positive experience for volunteers, so that the contributions made by the organisation's volunteer community will remain impactful and substantial.

**End of Report**

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