



**OXFAM AUSTRALIA VOLUNTEER IMPACT QUARTERLY REPORT:
JULY - SEPTEMBER 2019**

Prepared by the Volunteer Engagement Team – December 2019



Contents:

Executive Summary	3
Volunteers at Oxfam	4
Breakdown of Volunteer Impact	5
Volunteer hours.....	5
Roles of Volunteers within OAU.....	6
Example: Micro-desalination (Viability of Small-Scale Desalination).....	6
Volunteer feedback at OAU.....	7
Volunteer activities within OAU.....	8
Recommendations	9
Conclusion	10

Executive Summary

Volunteers continue to play an integral role at Oxfam Australia and have for long formed the backbone of the organisation. Volunteers and interns are engaged in a wide variety of roles within the organisation, and have contributed immensely to ensuring that Oxfam Australia can operate successfully. This is the first quarterly report undertaken by the Volunteer Engagement Team at Oxfam Australia which measures volunteer impact within the organisation. This report will assess the impact of volunteers at Oxfam Australia during the period of July – September 2019.

This report will first outline the demographical information pertinent to Oxfam Australia's current volunteers and provide insight to the diverse nature of the organisation's volunteer community. It will examine Oxfam's volunteer diversity by analysing five key indicators: gender, age, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteers, linguistic background, and the number of volunteers living with a disability. It will secondly determine the number of hours and sections of the organisation volunteers contribute to. It will show that despite a decrease in the total number of volunteer hours comparative to other quarters (due to the closing of retail operations and organisational change), volunteers continued to contribute a significant number of hours in a wide range of sections and teams of Oxfam.

It will thirdly outline the positions current volunteers contribute to the organisation. It will evidently conclude that volunteers continue to positively impact many sections of the organisation, though it should be noted that several sections, such as Oxfam Retail Shops have since ceased operations. This section will also contain an example of several recent projects volunteers and interns have been engaged in and outline their positive impact. It will fourthly move on to assess the levels of feedback provided by volunteers both at an organisational level and by unit/section. The data from this section indicates that on the most part, volunteers are largely satisfied within their roles, with over 78 percent of responses listed 'very good' over the quarter.

It will then assess the impact through the roles in which volunteers are engaged in and the activities volunteers engage in within the organisation by listing the activities volunteers have been engaged in, both as a part of their role as a volunteer but also exceptional to their voluntary commitment in support of Oxfam's objectives and strategy. This report will then conclude by making several key recommendations to enable further and more effective use of volunteers. It will conclude by determining that volunteers continue to make a positive contribution to Oxfam and the organisation's work in varying forms, but further measures should be taken to engage volunteers following the recent organisational change period and closing of retail operations.

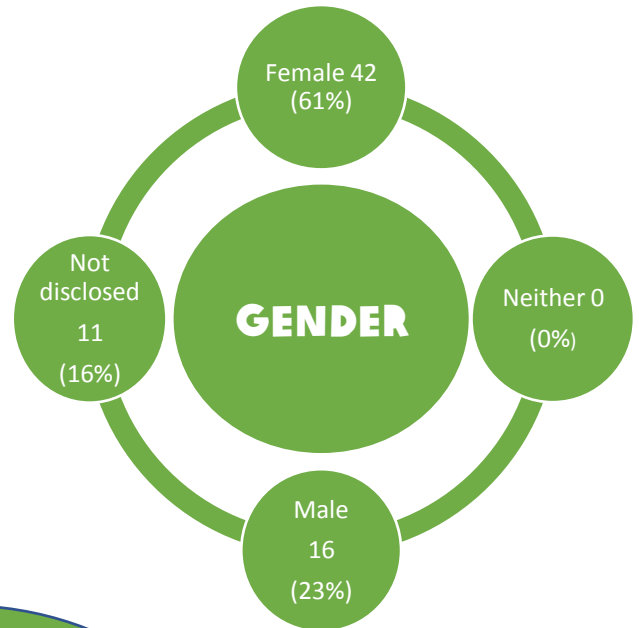
It will recommend that in order to engage volunteers more effectively, further initiatives from Oxfam staff should be undertaken to encourage volunteers to participate in activities pertaining to the organisation. It will also recommend that further resources and communications, both internal and external should be developed which highlight the positive impact of volunteers at Oxfam and the important work that they do.

Volunteers at Oxfam

A total of 69 volunteers completed at least one hour in the roles during the third financial quarter of 2019. Oxfam is fortunate to possess an incredibly diverse volunteer community as statistics exemplify below.

LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS OF CURRENT VOLUNTEERS: 23 (33% OF VOLUNTEERS)

Telugu	Mandarin	Norwegian
Hindi	Tamil	Hakka
German	Kannada	Sinhalese
Spanish	Arabic	Teochew
Italian	Somali	Malayalam
Japanese	Bengali	Cantonese
Gujarati	Kiswahili	French



AGE

18-30: 47 (68.11%)
30-45: 7 (10.15%)
45-60: 1 (1.45%)
60+: 9 (13.04%)
NOT SPECIFIED: 5 (7.25%)

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER VOLUNTEERS: 1

VOLUNTEERS LIVING WITH A DISABILITY: 5

Breakdown of Volunteer Impact

Volunteer Hours:

Volunteers at Oxfam Australia are engaged in a wide variety of roles within the organisation and have made a significant contribution in relation to hours made. In general, a large proportion of hours committed by volunteers during this quarter were done so by Oxfam Shop Volunteers in Sydney and Adelaide followed by volunteers within Supporter Services and Programs Management. It should be noted that the number of total hours recorded for this quarter by volunteers is less than in previous periods. This is due to closing of retail operations during the first-half of 2019.

All three retail stores listed below have ceased operations during this quarter and as such, the number of hours or volunteers involved in this section of the organisation may be less comparative to other quarters. Another explanation would be as a result of the organisational change process which occurred through the year.

Below is a table which outlines the number of logged hours made by Unit/Team

Unit/Team	Hours	Volunteers
Oxfam Shop – Sydney	1,842	5
Oxfam Shop – Charles Street	572	26
Supporter Services (VIC)	562	8
Programs Management (VIC)	420	4
Sydney Trailwalker	266	4
Melbourne Trailwalker	233	4
Public Engagement – Advocacy & Campaigns (VIC)	215	3
Operations (VIC)	185	4
Major Gifts (NSW)	163	2
Perth Office	85	2
Oxfam Shop – Carlton	27	4
Brisbane Trailwalker	7	1
Sydney Office	6	1
Brisbane Office	5	1
Public Engagement – Communications (VIC)	4	1
Programs: Strategy & Advocacy (VIC)	2	1
Total	4,594	72

Note:

- Several volunteers may be engaged in multiple roles within the organisation simultaneously, which would explain the slight discrepancy in volunteer numbers
- Only hours logged by volunteers/volunteer managers are included – data from volunteers who failed to log hours of their commitment on Better Impact were not included and so the true number of volunteer hours may be higher.

The role of volunteers within OAU

Volunteers at Oxfam during the third quarter were engaged in a wide variety of roles. Volunteers made contributions in the following Sections/Units of the organisation:

- Administration Support
- Fair Trade Shop Assistant
- National Events Office Assistant
- Supporter Services
- Corporate & Community Engagement
- Volunteer Engagement
- National Event Volunteer
- Business Support Volunteer
- Fundraising Administration
- Micro-Desalination Research
- Microfinance and Gender Empowerment Research
- Schools Program Engagement
- Key Supporter Research Assistant
- Election Campaign Volunteer

Example: Micro-desalination (Viability of Small-Scale Desalination) Internship:

Two interns from Monash University worked under the supervision of Dr Saba Mebrahtu (Head of Research and Knowledge Translation and Program Lead – Oxfam-Monash Partnership - OMP) and Prof. Xiwang Zhang (Monash University) between July until October 2019. One intern undertook a comparative assessment of the OMP micro-desalination prototype with others that are available in the market in terms of performance and cost. Another intern worked in close coordination with Jimi Peters (National Program Lead First Peoples Program) and undertook a literature review on water quality and its impact on health and livelihood among selected indigenous communities in Australia. Both interns possessed good communication and interpersonal skills which allowed them to actively engage with key partners from Oxfam and Monash University. Their work served as part of the input towards the Oxfam-Monash fact sheet from the KMPG Hackathon held on 25 September, 2019. Saba spoke of the mutual benefit for both interns in Oxfam as a result of her experience. An internship at Oxfam provides a good opportunity for Masters Students to network with international development staff. Whilst hosting interns provides an opportunity for Oxfam to mentor and support the development of future practitioners and strengthen its partnership with the academic sectors towards evidence-building for impact.

Volunteer Feedback at OAU

Volunteer feedback is an important indicator to measuring the overall satisfaction of volunteers' commitment at Oxfam Australia and their level of impact. Volunteer feedback is obtained when volunteers log hours via their 'MyImpact' page on Better Impact alongside their total hours. The page allows volunteers to choose from one of five options which enquire about their experience for the duration of their shift. The data from this quarter indicates that volunteers are mostly satisfied, though certain Units/Sections of the organisation have performed better than others.

The first table outlines the total feedback from all volunteers, in all sections of the organisation where volunteers logged hours. The results below indicate that volunteers were mostly satisfied within their roles with only one or two exceptions.

Volunteer Feedback totals	Total Number	Percentage
Very Good	162	78.26%
Good	41	19.80%
Average	2	0.96%
Poor	1	0.48%
Very Poor	1	0.48%
TOTAL	207	100.00%

Note: Volunteers log hours for each individual shift and not their overall experience as a volunteer

The table below outlines the feedback recorded from volunteers within each individual section/unit. The results indicate that volunteers mostly recorded a result of 'very good' in many sections. Other sections of the organisation recorded a less positive result, but this may be because volunteers recorded data which equals 'good' more so than 'very good'. Very few responses overall (2) were less than average.

Volunteer Feedback Totals (by Unit/Section)	Total Number (Very Good)	Percentage	Total Responses
VIC – Public Engagement & Campaigns	26	100%	26
QLD – Brisbane Trailwalker	4	100%	4
NSW – Sydney Office	1	100%	1
VIC – Programs: Strategy & Advocacy	1	100%	1
NSW – Sydney Trailwalker	40	95%	42
VIC – Melbourne Trailwalker	25	74%	34
VIC – Programs Management	44	72%	61
VIC – Operations	17	61%	28
VIC – Public Engagement	1	50%	2
VIC – Supporter Services	3	38%	8
QLD – Brisbane Office	0	No data	0
NSW/ACT - Major Gifts	0	No data	0
WA – Perth Office	0	No data	0
VIC – Carlton Shop	0	No data	0
NSW – Sydney Shop	0	No data	0

Note: A low result may not be indicative of a volunteers overall experience or satisfaction of other Volunteers within the organisation due to the small amount of data contributed from that team

Volunteer Activities within OAU

Volunteers are engaged in a wide variety of activities both as part of their role as a volunteer within the organisation and as a supporter of Oxfam's work. Volunteers also regularly participate in other events, exceptional to their role in support of Oxfam. Volunteers during the third quarter participated in a range of events, which supported the work and objectives of Oxfam. Events where volunteers contributed throughout the duration of this quarter, include:

- NAIDOC March 2019 (July)
- Volunteering at the Sydney Trailwalker Event (August)
- Timor-Leste: The Power of the Vote Exhibition (September)
- Participation with OAU Staff in the Global Climate Strike (September)

Oxfam and Volunteer Managers should continue to encourage volunteers in engaging in activities which support the work of Oxfam. This promotes further engagement of volunteers, enables volunteers to build relationships and networks with other teams/sections of the organisation and encourages a more positive volunteering experience.



OAU Staff and Volunteers attending the Global Strike for Climate 20 September, 2019. Photo: Keith Parsons OAU

Recommendations

Based on the above information, below are a set of recommendations in order to encourage further volunteer engagement and satisfaction in Oxfam Australia's current and prospective volunteers.

1. Encourage greater levels of volunteer participation in Oxfam activities in order to encourage greater levels of volunteer engagement.

Statistics show that the more volunteers are involved with an organisation, the more likely they are to be satisfied in their role. Oxfam should encourage increased participation of volunteers in activities and communicate these to volunteers. This may entail (when appropriate), inviting volunteers to team/staff events.

2. Further communications and resources should be promoted to encourage further volunteer engagement, as well as participation and awareness of volunteer activities within the organisation.

Increased communications (both internal and external) should be undertaken by Oxfam pertaining to the impact of volunteers with the organisation. This may include adding volunteer related news/information/activities to internal communications (Watch This Space), more frequent communications on days of significance for volunteers (International Volunteer Day for example).

3. Work to address volunteer grievances in relation to poor feedback results in a more timely manner

Currently, volunteers can approach managers when they have a grievance or submit feedback at the conclusion of their volunteer commitment when they fill in the Volunteer Exit Survey. Volunteer Managers should be more proactive in encouraging volunteers to submit feedback more often and provide a platform to voice concerns before either the issue further degrades or a volunteer departs the organisation. In order to achieve this, volunteer managers may wish to establish regular scheduled check-in's to discuss volunteers' commitment and impact in the organisation. This will also provide the Volunteer Engagement Team with a more accurate indication of the current status of volunteers and their impact in their role.

Conclusion

Oxfam continues to see strong levels of engagement of volunteers, who are critical to the success of the organisation. This level of engagement has resulted in a positive level of impact in relation to Oxfam's volunteer community through the work that they complete in their capacity as volunteers in their role and through their continued support to the objectives and strategy of the organisation. This report was first compiled by the Volunteer Engagement Team which outlined that impact of volunteers within the organisation. It analysed volunteers' commitment during the third quarter of 2019 (July-September), and concluded that while the total number of hours and volunteers has declined comparative to other quarters due to varying reasons, the level of volunteer impact remains positive.

This report first outlined demographical data pertaining to current volunteers at Oxfam Australia. The data indicated Oxfam's volunteer community is incredibly diverse in nature, which is a strength to the organisation. It then outlined the impact of volunteers in relation to the number of hours volunteers committed. The data in relation to this indicated that volunteers completed a lower number of hours comparative to previous quarters, due to the closing of Oxfam's retail operations, but volunteers continued to make significant hours contributions particularly in the Sydney and Melbourne Trailwalker events, and the Program Management and Supporter Services units in Victoria. It thirdly outlined the roles volunteers completed within the organisation during this period. This section exemplified the diverse nature of volunteer roles within the organisation, and the work that volunteers complete.

It fourthly analysed the level of feedback which volunteers contributed as a result of their commitment at Oxfam. It determined, that on the whole, most volunteers were very satisfied within their current role, with only a small percentage indicating that this was not the case. Units/Sections which performed best in this regard included Public Engagement and Campaigns in Victoria, Sydney Trailwalker and the Sydney Office. This report then listed the activities volunteers were engaged in for the duration of the third quarter. The data recorded from this section indicates that volunteers have been engaged in a wide variety of activities, including the 2019 NAIDOC March and the September Climate Strike. Such support and participation by volunteers in these events reinforces to strong engagement volunteers have with Oxfam as an organisation.

This report finally provided a set of recommendations based on the above data, which encouraged further communication of volunteer information and promotion of volunteer activities to the organisation and to volunteers. It also recommended that volunteers should continue to be included in a range of Oxfam events and initiatives in order to retain engagement. The level of impact volunteers contribute to Oxfam continues to remain significant as the data above has indicated. Volunteer Managers should continue to work toward ensuring that this level of impact is maintained through initiatives which encourage greater communication and recognition of the important work volunteers complete.

END OF REPORT