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Final Report: Formative evaluation of the Australian Volunteers Program's thematic 'impact areas'

PREPARED FOR:
Australian Volunteers Program

About the authors

The Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) is an interdisciplinary research and consulting organisation at the University of Technology Sydney. ISF has been setting global benchmarks since 1997 in helping governments, organisations, businesses and communities achieve change towards sustainable futures.

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Acronyms

AIP	Aid Investment Plan
AVID	Australian Volunteers for International Development
CPP	Country Program Plan
DAC-CRS	Development Assistance Committee Creditor Reporting System
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
ISF	Institute for Sustainable Futures
MIS	management information system
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PO	Partner Organisation
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UTS	University of Technology Sydney

Executive summary

This formative evaluation was conducted by the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) in partnership with the Australian Volunteers Program from February to May 2019. The evaluation involved mapping the global footprint of the Australian Volunteers Program's activities as a basis to recommend strategic options for strengthening engagement in three impact areas: Human Rights; Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security; and Inclusive Economic Growth.

We developed ten evaluation questions to explore three areas of inquiry: 1) definitions of impact areas; 2) alignment of the program portfolio to impact areas; and 3) learning and recommendations. We drew on a mix of data sources including primary data (key informant interviews) and secondary data (documentation from the Australian Volunteers Program, DFAT policies, SDG framework and DAC-CRS coding; and the Australian Volunteers Program MIS database of 2018 volunteer assignments) to undertake qualitative and quantitative analyses.

We developed impact area definitions based on the triangulation of findings across multiple data sources, using these definitions to describe and communicate the impact areas, and to conduct a quantitative mapping of the volunteer portfolio. We selected relevant keywords and DAC-CRS codes to support the mapping process. Time and care were taken through an iterative mapping process to ensure these elements were correctly described to ensure accurate coding of the volunteer sample.

Mapping of the volunteer portfolio revealed that 62% of assignments aligned with at least one impact area. Of the 38% of the portfolio that did not align to an impact area, the vast majority were in the health and education sectors[1]. A greater number of the volunteer assignments aligned with Human Rights and Inclusive Economic Growth, compared with Climate Change.

There was some overlap of themes across impact areas, meaning volunteer assignments often aligned with more than one impact area. This highlights how the themes associated with the impact areas interlink, demonstrating that development connects and works across different sectors.

Results of the mapping were disaggregated by country, region, Partner Organisation category and gender of volunteer. These results are relevant to country and regional Australian Volunteers Program staff, and are pertinent in relation to the findings related to the country and regional alignment to AIPs and CPPs.

Our recommendation, based on the mapping process and primary data gathered through interviews, is not to attempt an increase in alignment of assignments with impact areas. Increasing alignment to the detriment of other key sectoral focuses (e.g. education and health), may affect the legacy of work with partner organisations.

Further recommendations have also been developed to support more effective measurement of contributions to impact areas, and also ways to strengthen engagement within the impact areas going forward. These are provided below.

Recommendation 1: Recognising a large portion of the volunteer assignments fall outside the three impact areas, the Australian Volunteers Program should not increase alignment efforts, and should not increase its focus on impact areas. The Australian Volunteer Program should however employ the three impact areas as a means to reflect on current practice, identify innovation, effective partnerships and utilise communications on the three impact areas for public diplomacy.

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[1] The Evaluation TOR noted that a large proportion of Australian Volunteer assignments are in the health and education sectors. While these could be classified as being human rights related, we have excluded them from the working definition. Doing so will allow a sharper focus on the specific human rights issues the Australian Volunteer Program contributes to. See earlier output for Evaluation for details on impact area definitions.

Recommendation 2: Further research is required to better understand Australian Volunteer Program's contributions to the three impact areas. Research should focus on PO contributions to sector-wide change, employing a theory of change and systems perpsective to understand multiple drivers and contribution to change. The methodology could be applicable to both impact area and other sectors such as health and education. This research would provide significant learning on contributions to impact areas to the Australian Volunteers Program and DFAT, relevant for future communications, strategic partnerships (with POs and Australian organisations) and public diplomacy efforts.

Recommendation 3: The Australian Volunteer Program should build on and strengthen existing engagement within the three impact areas. Approaches to strengthen engagement include:

- continue efforts to maintain long-term relationships with high profile and influential POs as a means to positively contribute to impact

- continue deliberate focus on the overlap between impact areas to maximise contribution (e.g. Climate Change and Inclusive Economic Growth);

- strengthen links between the Australian Volunteers Program and DFAT expertise, particularly in relation to climate change (see also recommendation 5)

- actively pursue new partnerships with Australian organisations with climate change expertise as a means to further support engagement and contributions to the Climate Change impact area (see also recommendation 5)

- improve efforts to communicate success stories within the volunteer program for public diplomacy and support for the Australian Volunteers Program

Recommendation 4: The Australian Volunteers Program should strengthen its staff and stakeholders (POs, DFAT Post, partner government) understanding of the purpose and objectives of the impact areas.

Strengthened understanding of the impact areas will:

- address inconsistent understandings of the purpose and function of impact areas both internally and with external stakeholders

- ensure engagement of the impact areas is considered together with other development priorities and strategies

- contribute to the effective assessment of the contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to impact areas.

Recommendation 5: In line with efforts to strengthen engagement in the three impact areas and recognising the lower proportion of the program portfolio that aligns with Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security, the Australian Volunteer Program should consider a variety of options to more effectively engage across this impact area. Strategic partnerships should be prioritised, for example improving links between the Australian Volunteers Program and DFAT's climate change expertise, strategic selection of local POs and Australian organisations working on climate change issues to ensure volunteer assignments are appropriately scoped and new relationships with influential POs are developed and maintained.

Recommendation 6: The Australian Volunteers Program should improve the quality of data in the MIS database to better monitor and measure contributions to the impact areas. For example, careful selection of DAC-CRS codes and SDGs, consistent approaches to describing Assignment Objectives (length and detail) and improved coding to gender and child-focused priorities.

Recommendation 7: The Australian Volunteers Program should use MIS data to routinely map the program portfolio (volunteer assignments and contribution to partner organisation development objectives) to impact areas. MIS data fields such as DAC-CRS Codes, SDG

targets, and keywords relevant to Assignment Title and Assignment Objectives should be used. Routine mapping should be monitored for ongoing improvements.

Recommendation 8: The Australian Volunteer Program should continue to ensure alignment of Country Program Plans to Aid Investment Plans in relevant countries, whilst also recognising the value and opportunity that flexibility offers to meeting emerging needs of DFAT Post and partner governments.

1. Introduction

This document is the final report for the *Formative evaluation of the Australian Volunteers Program's thematic 'impact areas'.* The evaluation was undertaken by the Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney (ISF-UTS) and the UTS Business School (Business School), and was carried out from February to May 2019.

As described in Section 3 below and outlined in the evaluation terms of reference (see Annex 1), the broad purpose of the evaluation was to map the global footprint of the Australian Volunteers Program's activities as a basis for recommending strategic options for strengthening engagement in three impact areas: Human Rights; Climate Change, Disaster Risk and Food Security; and Inclusive Economic Growth.

The report is structured as follows:

1. Introduction

2. Background

3. Evaluation purpose

4. Methodology

5. Findings

6. Conclusion

7. Annexes

2. Background

2.1 The Australian Volunteers Program

The Australian Volunteers Program is an Australian Government initiative which builds on the Australian Government's investment in international volunteers over the past 60 years. The current program replaced the Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program, which ran until 31 December 2017. The new program retains the core elements of AVID, while enhancing the program's reach, visibility and impact.

The Australian Volunteers Program is now managed by AVI, in a consortium with Cardno Emerging Markets Pty Ltd and the Whitelum Group. It is a five-year program with an estimated total budget of up to AU$190 million.

The Australian Volunteers Program matches skilled Australians with organisations across 26 developing countries to help these organisations to deliver on their own objectives. The Program uses international volunteering in a people-centred approach to capacity development. The Australian Volunteers Program is part of the Australian Government's people-to-people program portfolio, and it connects Australians to Australia's aid program and the region.

2.2 Impact areas and Global Program Strategy

The Australian Volunteers Program enables the Australian Government to multiply the impact of its resources and places Australian aid at the forefront of global volunteering. As noted in the evaluation's terms of reference (Annex 1), the Australian Volunteers Program Global Program Strategy 2018-2022 identifies three thematic priority impact areas that act as lenses to understand the Australian Volunteers Program and help the program demonstrate policy alignment with Australian Government priorities. The impact areas were informed by DFAT's Foreign Policy White Paper (2017). As detailed in this evaluation report, the Australian Volunteer Program is not limited to the three impact areas.

The thematic impact areas are[2]:

- **Human Rights**: The Australian Volunteers Program makes important contributions to support development objectives to promote and protect human rights.

- **Climate Change/Disaster Resilience/Food Security**: Acknowledging the rapidly changing and increasingly complex global environment, the program will increase the number and focus of volunteer placements in climate change, disaster resilience and food security.

- **Inclusive economic growth**: The program will support inclusive economic growth through a range of channels including private sector development, good governance, education and training, women's economic participation and youth engagement.

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[2] Australian Volunteers Program Global Program Strategy 2018-2022, Australian Government, 2019

3. Evaluation purpose

3.1 Evaluation objectives

The overall objective of the formative evaluation was to map the global footprint of the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio in three impact areas in order to: (i) establish a baseline; (ii) inform strategic options for strengthening engagement in the impact areas; and (iii) propose a methodology for demonstrating outcomes in impact areas.[3]

3.2 Key evaluation questions

The key evaluation questions focused on relevance, as defined in the Australian Volunteers Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework: 'How relevant is the program to partner country priorities, Australian aid priorities[4], and partner organisation priorities?'

The evaluation had three domains of inquiry (definitions of impact areas; alignment of program portfolio to impact areas; learning and recommendations), with key evaluation questions under each, as described below.

A. Definitions of impact areas

1. What are working definitions of the three impact areas to inform the mapping exercise (mapping the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio in the three impact areas)?

2. Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, to what extent do the impact areas overlap, and how might this be clarified?

3. Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, what are clearer impact area definitions?

4. What are qualitative case studies that illustrate contributions to impact areas?

B. Alignment of program portfolio to impact areas

5. To what extent does the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio align with the working definitions of the three impact areas?

6. To what extent does mapping of the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio to working definitions of the three impact areas align with (i) SDGs (ii) OECD-DAC codes?

7. To what extent do the Australian Volunteers Program Country Program Plans align with working definitions of the three impact areas?

8. To what extent do Australian Aid Investment Plans align with working definitions of the three impact areas?

C. Learning and recommendations

9. Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, should the Australian Volunteers Program increase efforts to align assignments with impact areas? If so, how should they do so, and what might be the consequences of better alignment?

10. Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, how can the Australian Volunteers Program better measure contributions to impact areas?

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[3] Evaluation purpose and key evaluation questions are set out in the Evaluation Inception Report
[4] Inclusive of outcomes in relation to gender equality, disability inclusion, private sector engagement, climate change, innovation and child protection.

4. Methodology

4.1 Evaluation approach

The methodology for this evaluation was underpinned by the following principles:

- ***Partnership and collaboration****:* Be transparent about partnership principles and practise and work as collaboratively as possible with the Australian Volunteers Program and the Evaluation Steering Group.

- ***Strengths-based approach:*** Acknowledge and value the existing assets, resources, competencies and practices of the various stakeholder groups relevant to the evaluation.

- ***Depth of inquiry:*** Engage with multiple stakeholders and stakeholder groups to triangulate research findings with document reviews and quantitative analyses to help gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact areas and a rich picture of the case studies.

- ***Flexibility and adaptiveness:*** Take a flexible and adaptable approach within the proposed methodology to enable interesting findings to surface.

Data underpinning the evaluation was both qualitative and quantitative. A mixed methods approach was adopted for the data analysis, drawing on varied data types to answer the evaluation questions. A tailored approach was taken to answer the evaluation questions, as described in Section 4.2.

The evaluation took place over six phases:

1. Scoping
2. Impact area definitions
3. Validate data set
4. Map scope and scale of work to impact areas
5. Illustrative case studies
6. Sense making and recommendations

4.2 Methods

Given the different types of evaluation questions, the varied nature of the data and the mixed methods approach, different data collection methods and modes of analysis were used.

Data collection

- MIS Dataset:

Quantitative data was sourced from the MIS dataset provided by the Australian Volunteers Program. The dataset comprised 811 assignments, and includes volunteers that were in-country between January and December 2018 with the Australian Volunteers Program. Specific fields within the MIS dataset used for analysis and disaggregation are set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Data fields for mapping and disaggregation

Data field	Mapping or Disaggregation
Assignment title	Mapping
Assignment Objective	Mapping
DAC and CRS codes	Mapping
Host Organisation (HO)/ Partner Organisation (PO) Sector 1	Disaggregation
HO/PO Sector Category	Disaggregation
Country	Disaggregation
Region[5]	Disaggregation
Length of assignment	Disaggregation
Gender of volunteer	Disaggregation

Qualitative data included the following primary and secondary sources:

- Key informant Interviews:
    - Phase 2: Articulate working definitions of impact areas (8 interviews)
    - Phase 5: Illustrative case studies (3 interviews)
- Document review:
    - Australian Volunteers Program Global Program Strategy (GPS)
    - GPS strategic guidance (Feb 2018)
    - SDG framework (goal and target levels)
    - Australian Volunteers Program Country Program Plans (26 countries)
    - Aid Investment Plans (all available)
    - DFAT Policy Context – global strategies and reference documents
    - End-of-assignment reporting (for case studies).

Data analysis

Analysis frameworks were developed separately for qualitative and quantitative data, due to the differences in data types and analysis processes required to answer unique

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[5] The six regions and the countries they contain are: **Asia Archipelago** (Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Philippines); **South Asia and Africa** (Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Tanzania, eSwatini, Lesotho); **Central and North Pacific** (Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Tonga, Samoa, Tuvalu); **East Asia** (Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Vietnam); **South Pacific** (Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati) and **Papua New Guinea.**

evaluation questions.[6] A summary is presented in Table 2 which illustrates the type of analysis used to answer the ten evaluation questions. The NVivo qualitative data analysis software was the primary tool used to analyse qualitative data, while the Python programming language was used to map, display and analyse the quantitative data. Since unique data analysis was used for each evaluation question, further details are provided below in the findings section to enable the reader to make sense of the mapping results.

Table 2: Data analysis frameworks

Evaluation Question	Data Source	Qualitative Analysis	Quantitative Analysis
Area of Inquiry 1: Impact area definitions			
1. **What are working definitions of the three impact areas to inform the mapping exercise (mapping the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio in the three impact areas)?**		✓	✗
2. **Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, to what extent do the impact areas overlap, and how might this be clarified?**		✓	✓
3. **Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, what are clearer impact area definitions?**		✓	✓
4. **What are qualitative case studies that illustrate contributions to impact areas?**		✓	✗
Area of Inquiry 2: Alignment of program portfolio to impact areas			
5. **To what extent does the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio align with the working definitions of the three impact areas?**		✗	✓
6. **To what extent does mapping of the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio to working definitions of the three impact areas align with (i) SDGs (ii) OECD-DAC codes?**		✗	✓
7. **To what extent do the Australian Volunteers Program Country Program Plans align with working definitions of the three impact areas?**		✓	✗
8. **To what extent do Australian Aid Investment Plans align with working definitions of the three impact areas?**		✓	✗

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[6] See earlier deliverable for the project – 'Inception Report' for detailed analysis frameworks and the semi-structured interview guide

Area of Inquiry C: Learning and Recommendations			
9. **Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, should the Australian Volunteers Program increase efforts to align assignments with impact areas? If so, how should they do so, and what might be the consequences of better alignment?**		✓	✓
10. **Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, how can the Australian Volunteers Program better measure contributions to impact areas?**		✓	✓

4.3 Limitations

There were some limitations that influenced how the research was undertaken and they may also influence how the findings are understood. Limitations and mitigation strategies are provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Limitations and mitigation strategies

Limitation	Mitigated strategy
Limited dataset of 811 assignments (2018 Volunteer Portfolio)	The smaller dataset enabled us to better quality check and peer review coding / mapping results. Results were interpreted according to the sample size. Where assignment numbers were low, we draw attention to the need to interpret results cautiously.
Gaps and inaccuracies in MIS data	We developed processes to mitigate this limitation e.g. by including the Assignment Objective and not including some fields that lacked adequate information / inconsistent use of fields in MIS data. In order to map the 'program portfolio' we identified Assignment Title and Assignment Objectives as relevant fields, prepared a list of keywords and developed a software program to objectively map assignments. Assignments, rather than partner organisations, were the primary focus of mapping, since MIS data relevant to partner organisations did not provide sufficient data to align partner organisations to impact areas.
SDG field missing from the MIS data	We instead examined the SDG goals at the target level and aligned them to impact areas.
Other discrepancies in MIS data	Volunteer assignments were coded with a DAC-CRS code by country managers, using a master DAC-CRS spreadsheet listing titles and descriptions. As part of the coding for this evaluation, we used this master-list to associate DAC-CRS codes with appropriate impact areas. A total of 10 assignments had DAC-CRS codes that were not present in the master-list and so were not allocated to an impact area. Given that this issue only affected a small number of assignments, this did not present a major problem. However, it does point to a broader issue with data integrity (see recommendations for a response to this issue).

5. Findings

This section presents the findings in relation to each of the 10 evaluation questions. Box 7 provides a summary of these findings (see p.30).

A) Definitions of impact areas

1) *What are working definitions of the three impact areas to inform the mapping exercise (mapping the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio in the three impact areas)?*

2) *Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, to what extent do the impact areas overlap, and how might this be clarified?*

3) *Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, what are clearer impact area definitions?*

The focus of the first three evaluation questions was to develop and refine definitions for the three impact areas. As such, these questions will be answered together below.

The following page presents an overview of the impact area definitions.

Impact area definitions had five key elements: a summary paragraph; sub-themes; keywords; DAC-CRS codes; and SDGs. These are described below.

Summary paragraph: was compiled by combining our understanding of the impact areas across the SDGs, DAC-CRS codes, keywords and sub-themes.

Sub-themes: set out the key issues within an impact area.

Keywords: were the words used to describe the sub-theme and code assignments to impact areas.

DAC-CRS codes: were the codes used to describe the sectors in which volunteer assignments were placed, and were assigned by Australian Volunteers Program Country staff. The evaluation team reviewed DAC-CRS codes and assigned them to impact areas. Further details are provided below for Question 6.

Box 1: Methods for Evaluation Questions 1-3

Developing working definitions for the three impact areas was the first activity of the evaluation. Document reviews and key informant interviews informed key elements of the working definitions. We presented full descriptions of the working definitions in an earlier evaluation deliverable.

The working definitions were used to map the volunteer program portfolio (MIS data) to the impact areas. They contained the 'rules' for coding or mapping to relevant impact areas. Within the working definitions, two elements were used to map volunteer assignments using the Australian Volunteers Program MIS data: 1) keywords and 2) DAC-CRS codes. Coding was completed using the Python programming language.

To employ the key words, the mapping process involved searching two fields within the MIS data for each individual assignment: Assignment Title and Assignment Objective. If any keyword for an impact area was found within either of these two fields, the assignment was coded to the impact area.

The mapping process was iterative, and we refined the working definitions, allowing for changes to be made to the impact area definitions (e.g. adding/removing keywords or DAC-CRS codes) in order to more accurately code the MIS data.

Assignments within the MIS dataset had pre-assigned DAC-CRS codes. The mapping process therefore involved searching for these codes. If a volunteer assignment had a pre-assigned DAC-CRS code that was also assigned to an impact area, then the assignment was coded to that impact area.

Assignments were coded to an impact area if they matched via keywords or DAC-CRS codes. They could match with keyword/s only, DAC-CRS codes only, or both. Results from this mapping process were analysed to assess the accuracy of the keywords and DAC-CRS codes, and revisions were made as noted in Table 4 below. Further details of the mapping results are provided below in response to Evaluation Question 5.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG targets were assigned to impact areas and aggregated to SDG goal level. Further details of this process and results were documented in an earlier deliverable of this evaluation and are also described below for Question 6.

Working definitions of the impact areas presented in an earlier evaluation output were updated and clearer impact area definitions (including details across all five elements) are provided in Annex 2. The methods used to address Evaluation Questions 1–3 are presented in Box 1. Additional commentary on the understanding of impact areas across the interviewee sample is provided in Box 2.

Impact area definitions

Human Rights:

At its core, the Human Rights impact area pays special attention to marginalised groups and aims to secure human rights, improve access to, and civic participation in democratic processes. The Human Rights impact area promotes fulfillment of rights for particular marginalised groups including: women, gender and sexual minorities, people living with a disability, children, youth and indigenous people. Inclusive in the fulfilment of rights is the ability of marginalised groups to participate and thrive in society, have access to a protective legal and justice system, effective of social protection and access to information and communications.

Climate change:

The Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security impact area takes climate change and its impacts as the starting point. Responding to climate change impacts (including severe weather and disasters), adaptation and mitigation (including emissions reduction through renewable energy) are at the core of this impact area. Extending from this starting point are the resilience of agriculture and fisheries sectors and food security, all of which are directly affected by climate change. Environmental conservation is also included under this impact area, given the impact of climate change on the environment and that the preservation of healthy ecosystems provides a natural buffer to climate change. Furthermore, inclusion of environmental conservation under this impact area acknowledges that healthy ecosystems are more productive, and able to sustain livelihoods (linking to Inclusive Economic Growth).

Inclusive Economic Growth:

The Inclusive Economic Growth impact area centres around growing and embedding inclusivity and sustainability within developing economies. This includes supporting a strong enabling environment through good governance for private sector development, fair work practices and through vocational and technical training. The Inclusive Economic Growth impact area also highlights the need to support inclusion of women, youth and other marginalised groups typically excluded from full participation in the formal economy. Key to inclusive economic growth is the equitable sharing of economic benefits. This impact area includes specific sectors which contribute to poverty reduction and provide significant income generation within the countries the Australian Volunteers Program supports. These sectors include tourism, hospitality, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, which are often relevant to marginalised groups. The role of entrepreneurship and small-scale enterprises in developing economies are also recognised within this impact area, again for the relevance to marginalised groups.


Figure 1: Sub-themes, showing overlap, for the three impact areas

> **Box 2: Understanding of impact areas across interviewee sample**
>
> The three impact areas were relatively new at the time of the evaluation, having only been formalised in the Global Program Strategy, finalised in early 2019. The descriptive text on the impact areas in the Global Program Strategy is also brief. Hence, understandings of their meanings and proposed uses varied across those interviewed.
>
> For DFAT and some Australia Volunteer Program staff, the impact areas acted as lenses in which to view and aggregate assignments together to tell a story, e.g. as one interviewee said: *"to be able to tell a story in a way that's really relevant to policy priority."*
>
> There was consensus amongst the Melbourne-based Australian Volunteers Program staff and DFAT that narrowing the impact area definitions was needed so that they had meaning and were useful for telling a story, e.g. one interviewee noted: "*if you take a really broad definition of human rights then you probably have most of the portfolio under it – so I think narrowing it does make strategic sense*". However, this view was not shared across all Australian Volunteers Program staff.
>
> Regional Directors expressed different views and some of them believed all assignments should fit somewhere under an impact area. For example, one said: "*While these are the impact areas for the program, they're general enough that we can fit in the priorities from our partnering country"*.
>
> One Regional Director believed the purpose of the impact areas was to shape the program and had reservations about this*: "shifting that footprint or portfolio partner organisation too quickly or too significantly could be detrimental to the ability to have long-term sustainable partnerships for impact. So my feeling is that the way in which we look at these programs is slowly over time shifting the footprint of those partner organisations".* This interviewee saw the impact areas as necessitating a shift in the focus of the Program such that partner organisations would need to change over time.
>
> These findings highlight the need for improved communication across the program around the meaning and purpose of impact areas. This is discussed further under Evaluation Question 9.

Figure 1 shows the main sub-themes for the three impact areas. Notably, health and education are absent from the definitions. The TOR note that a large proportion of Australian Volunteers Program assignments are in the health and education sectors. While these could be classified as being human rights related, they have been excluded from the working definition. Informed by interviews conducted for this evaluation and document review, this allows a sharper focus on discrimination and vulnerability issues relevant to human rights. It is worth mentioning, that where a health or education assignment has specific links to an impact area sub-theme (e.g. a volunteer working on women's reproductive health, where women/gender is a key theme within the Human Rights impact area), the assignment is coded to Human Rights.

Figure 1 also shows areas of overlap for the three impact areas, which are consistent with development practice that recognises the value and opportunities provided by sector interlinkages. The overlap of impact areas pertains to issues and themes that are relevant across different sectors and is an indication of real-world complexity. Development programming should recognise connections between different sectors and development objectives, and a key theme of the SDG agenda is to prioritise interlinkages as a means of enabling sustainable development.

The overlap of impact areas highlights a layer of complexity associated with mapping assignments (i.e. assignments can map to more than one impact area). However, it also highlights an opportunity to contribute to progress beyond one sector. As the impact areas are operationalised within the Australian Volunteers Program, the value of, and opportunities provided by, interlinkages and overlaps will need to be communicated to key stakeholders.

Examples of areas of overlap include:

- Farming and fisheries (Climate Change + Inclusive Economic Growth)
- Environmental sustainability and conservation (Climate Change + Inclusive Economic Growth)
- Climate justice (Climate Change + Human Rights)

- Gender and climate change (Climate Change + Human Rights)

- Women's economic empowerment (Human Rights + Inclusive Economic Growth)

- Youth engagement in economic sectors (Human Rights + Inclusive Economic Growth)

Evaluation Question 3 focused on updated impact area definitions based on the iterative mapping process. Clearer impact area definitions were developed through changes in keywords and DAC-CRS codes. Some of the DAC-CRS codes that described categories that were too broad and not relevant to impact areas were removed. Some keywords that identified assignments unrelated to the impact areas were also removed. Additional keywords were added to overcome any correctly coded assignments that were lost through the removal of the broad DAC-CRS codes. These changes are described in Table 4. The updated list of keywords and DAC-CRS codes is provided in Annex 2, as part of the updated impact area definitions. No changes were made to the impact area definitions summary paragraphs, sub-themes, or to the inclusion of SDGs.

Table 4: Clarifying impact area definitions

Change made to impact area definition	Why?	How was this change made?	What was the result?
Removal of some DAC-CRS codes from impact area definitions	Some DAC-CRS codes had a large number of assignments coded to them. They captured too broad a range of assignments that were not related to the impact area.	Four DAC-CRS codes were removed from the impact area definitions. To account for this change, additional keywords were added to ensure assignments were not missed.	A more accurate coding process, e.g. removal of *"16010 Other Social Infrastructure & Services / Social Protection"* → had 55 assignments coded to it. 39 were only coded through DAC-CRS codes, 25 incorrectly.
Added keywords	Some of the key themes under the impact areas had specific words often used to describe the Assignment Title or Objective, e.g. for disability-related assignments we added "autism" and "deaf".	Keywords were added to the list for each impact area. These keywords were used to search within the fields of Assignment Title and Assignment Objective.	Additional assignments were correctly coded to impact areas. Without the addition of these keywords, these assignments were missed.
Removed keywords	Some keywords associated with impact areas picked up too many assignments that were unrelated to the impact areas.	Removed words such as: "child", "technology", "organisation"	Fewer assignments were coded to impact areas that fell outside the impact area definitions (e.g. generic child education and health).

4) What are qualitative case studies that illustrate contributions to impact areas?

Illustrative case studies were developed to highlight the contributions to an impact area in three countries. The selection of, and reasoning behind, the cases is provided in

Table 5 below.

Table 5: Rationale for case study focus

	Total assignments in country	Assignments aligned with *any* impact area	Assignments aligned with *specific* impact area	% of aligned assignments to *specific* impact area
South Africa: Human Rights	36	24	20	83%
Vanuatu: Climate change, disaster resilience and food security	74	51	20	39%
Nepal: Inclusive economic growth	25	15	10	67%

Case studies were developed for the three impact areas, and can be found in Annex 3. Case studies describe contributions to impact areas and highlight ways the Australian Volunteer Program can enhance engagement to impact areas in the future. Common themes emerged across the three case studies that were relevant to the three impact areas. These themes were:

- *Consideration of contextual factors relating to impact areas*: Case studies revealed the need to take account of cultural and geographical contextual factors relating to the impact areas. For example, contextual factors were particularly relevant in Nepal in relation to inclusive economic growth, given the decentralisation policy of the Nepali government and its requirement for volunteers to be placed with government partner organisations. In Vanuatu, contextual factors were important in relation to the Climate Change impact area, and the links to economic growth. The Country Manager ensured these contextual factors were considered in the POs selected to host volunteers.

- *The importance of developing long-term relationships with partner organisations*: Developing long-term relationships with partner organisations was considered by all Country Managers as being an effective way to maximise the volunteer program's impact, and the contributions of the impact areas. Long-term relationships enable partner organisations to develop the skills and processes required to effectively host volunteers. Longer-term relationships also maximised the chances for the partner organisations to build capacity and implement changes as a result of volunteer contributions. Country Managers spoke of the benefits of partner organisations hosting volunteers, on and off, for several years to allow them to operationalise the support provided by volunteer placements.

- *Selecting partner organisations of influence in order to achieve high impact*: The Country Managers across the three countries were cognisant of the fact that, for volunteer placements to have an impact, volunteers needed to be hosted by well-connected and influential partner organisations. As such, country staff developed relationships across government and non-government sectors in order to leverage the partner organisation's impact, and consequently, the volunteer program's contribution to impact areas.

B) Alignment of program portfolio to impact areas

5) To what extent does the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio align with the working definitions of the three impact areas?

Overall alignment to impact areas: 62% of the volunteer 2018 portfolio (505 out of 811 assignments) aligned with at least one impact area; 38% of assignments did not align with an impact area.

Of the total 811 assignments, 14% aligned with two or all three impact areas, (115 out of 811) as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Overarching findings from mapping
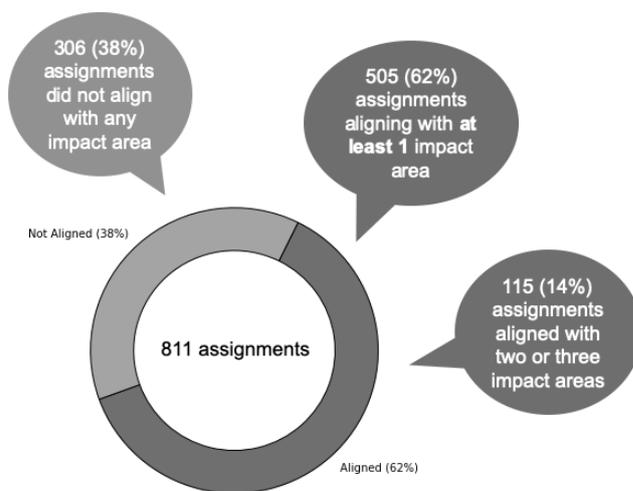
> **Box 3: Method for Evaluation Question 5**
>
> The Australian Volunteers Program portfolio for 2018 was mapped using the updated list of keywords (searching within the Assignment Title and Assignment Objectives) and DAC-CRS codes.
>
> Overall alignment to impact areas, and disaggregation by country, region, partner organisation category and gender of volunteer are presented below. Also presented is the program portfolio that does not align to impact areas.

Figure 3 below shows that more assignments aligned with Human Rights and Inclusive Economic Growth than with Climate Change.

Of the assignments that did align to an impact area:

- 254 were aligned with Human Rights

- 251 were aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth

- 121 were aligned with Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security.

Interestingly, the same proportion of the portfolio aligned to Human Rights and Inclusive Economic Growth (31%)[7]. Climate Change had the lowest number of aligned assignments. These results may be indicative of the emerging actions and responses associated with climate change, and uncertainty around how to specifically address climate change impacts through the volunteer program. The mapping results for Climate Change point to the need for greater understanding of the types of volunteer assignments and POs who can provide a response to climate change, disaster resilience and food security.

115 assignments (14%) map to more than one impact area, as shown in the Venn diagram.

- 56 are aligned to Inclusive Economic Growth + Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security

- 54 aligned to Inclusive Economic Growth + Human Rights

---

[7] Note that assignments can align to more than one impact area, so totals may not equal 100%.

- 17 aligned to Human Rights + Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security
- 6 aligned to all three impact areas.

Figure 3: Australian Volunteers Program impact area alignment

Human Rights (254, 31.3%)
Inclusive Economic Growth (251, 30.9%)

189

48

147

6

11

50

54

Climate Change (121, 14.9%)
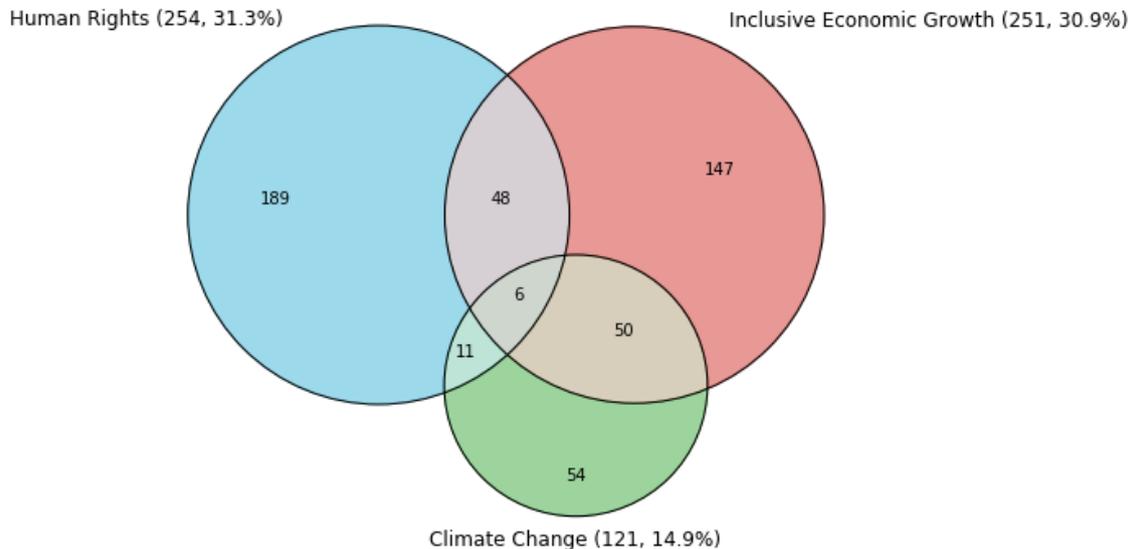
Country alignment to impact area: The overall pattern of alignment to impact area is reflected in country alignment, i.e. across the 26 countries, more assignments aligned with Human Rights and Inclusive Economic Growth, than with Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security. This is illustrated in Table 6.

Some countries had a more obvious focus on an impact area, for example:

- South Africa = Human Rights (83% of all aligned assignments)
- Sri Lanka = Inclusive Economic Growth (86% of all aligned assignments)
- Laos and Vanuatu = Climate Change (41% and 39% (respectively) of all aligned assignments).

Similarly, there was limited alignment of volunteer assignments to impact areas in some country contexts. Whilst no country had zero Human Rights assignments, Tuvalu, the Marshall Islands and Palau had zero Inclusive Economic Growth assignments and Sri Lanka, Swaziland and the Marshall Islands had zero Climate Change assignments (although note low total of overall assignments in these countries).

Table 6: Country alignment to impact area

Country	Human Rights (%)	Climate Change (%)	Inclusive Economic Growth (%)	Assignments Aligned	Total Assignments	Any Alignment (%)
Indonesia	36	28	58	69	122	57
Vanuatu	41	39	61	51	74	69
Fiji	56	24	53	45	73	62
Myanmar	42	18	50	38	56	68
Viet Nam	42	35	45	31	40	78
Cambodia	66	21	38	29	52	56
Solomon Islands	48	10	48	29	50	58
Timor-Leste	74	4	44	27	38	71
South Africa	83	13	8	24	36	67
Laos	53	41	65	17	26	65
Mongolia	76	18	24	17	24	71
Philippines	35	29	65	17	23	74
Papua New Guinea	38	25	56	16	36	44
Bhutan	33	33	53	15	19	79
Nepal	47	20	67	15	25	60
Samoa	57	29	36	14	25	56
Tanzania, United Republic Of	33	11	67	9	28	32
Tonga	38	38	50	8	15	53
Kiribati	57	14	43	7	10	70
Sri Lanka	43	0	86	7	11	64
Micronesia, Federated States Of	83	17	50	6	9	67
Tuvalu	75	25	0	4	5	80
Lesotho	67	33	67	3	3	100
Swaziland	33	0	67	3	5	60
Marshall Islands	100	0	0	2	4	50
Palau	50	50	0	2	2	100

> *Table 6 shows country alignment to impact areas.*
>
> *The first three columns are displayed as a heat map:*
> *Darker green = higher percentage alignment to impact area*
> *Lighter green to yellow = lower percentage alignment.*
>
> *The table is ordered using the 'Assignments aligned' column from highest to lowest. The percentages in the lower third of the table should be interpreted carefully given the low number of assignments to which they relate (see 'total assignments' column).*
>
> *Note that assignments can align to more than one impact area, so totals for each country may not equal 100%.*

Regional alignment to impact area: Table 7 shows at the regional level, Human Rights and Inclusive Economic Growth overall have higher proportions of aligned assignments than Climate Change, as seen in the overall alignment of assignments to impact areas.

The results also show a pattern where the breakdown is approximately 55% and 45% aligned to either Human Rights or Inclusive Economic Growth, and a smaller proportion (around 20%) to Climate Change. There is no significant variation of alignment to impact areas across the geographic regions.

Table 7: Regional alignment to impact area

Region	Human Rights (%)	Climate Change (%)	Inclusive Economic Growth (%)	Assignments Aligned	Total Assignments	Any Alignment (%)
East Asia	53	26	45	132	198	67
Asia Archipelago	45	22	56	113	183	62
South Pacific	45	28	55	87	134	65
Central & North Pacific	58	26	44	81	133	61
South Asia & Africa	54	17	47	76	127	60
Papua New Guinea	38	25	56	16	36	44

Partner Organisation alignment to impact area: Table 8 illustrates PO (in terms of the MIS data field 'Host Organisation Category') alignment to impact area, and highlights that:

- Human Rights assignments were predominantly with NGOs and International Agencies (which include UN agencies), with a smaller proportion with Government and 'Other'.

- Inclusive Economic Growth assignments were predominantly with Private Sector Organisations followed by Educational Institutions and 'Other'.

- Climate Change assignments were mostly aligned with 'Other', with Private Sector Organisations hosting the second-highest proportion of these assignments (however, note low actual numbers of assignments in this category).

Table 8: Partner organisation category alignment to impact area

Host Category	Human Rights (%)	Climate Change (%)	Inclusive Economic Growth (%)	Assignments Aligned	Total Assignments	Any Alignment (%)
NGOs	57	19	45	256	389	66
Government	46	33	49	144	240	60
Educational Institutions	34	9	68	47	92	51
Other	44	48	56	25	49	51
International Agency	62	24	48	21	24	88
Private Sector	9	36	91	11	15	73
None	100	0	0	1	2	50

Alignment to impact area by gender of volunteer: Figure 4 shows a higher proportion of female volunteers than male volunteers. Across all assignments, 63% of volunteers were female. Comparing all assignments to those aligned with an impact area, there were no major variations by gender of volunteer. The proportion of females was highest in the Human Rights impact area (75%).

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[8] As part of the analysis process, we aggregated the field 'Host Category' within the MIS data as follows:
- Government = Government Local, Government National, Government Provincial/State; NGOs = NGO-International, NGO-Local, NGO-National, NGO-Regional, + Religious organisations;
- Private Sector = Small Business Enterprise; International Agency;
- Educational Institutions;
- Other = "Other"(i.e. those coded to 'Other' in the MIS data), Auxiliary to Government, Semi-Government/Statutory Authority, Research Institute - Government, Research Institute – Other.
- Note that our "Other" category is made up of: "Other" (12 assignments), Auxiliary to Government (12 assignments), Semi-Government/Statutory Authority (13 assignments), Research Institute – Government (9 assignments), Research Institute – Other (3 assignments)

Figure 4: Alignment of assignments to impact area by gender of volunteer
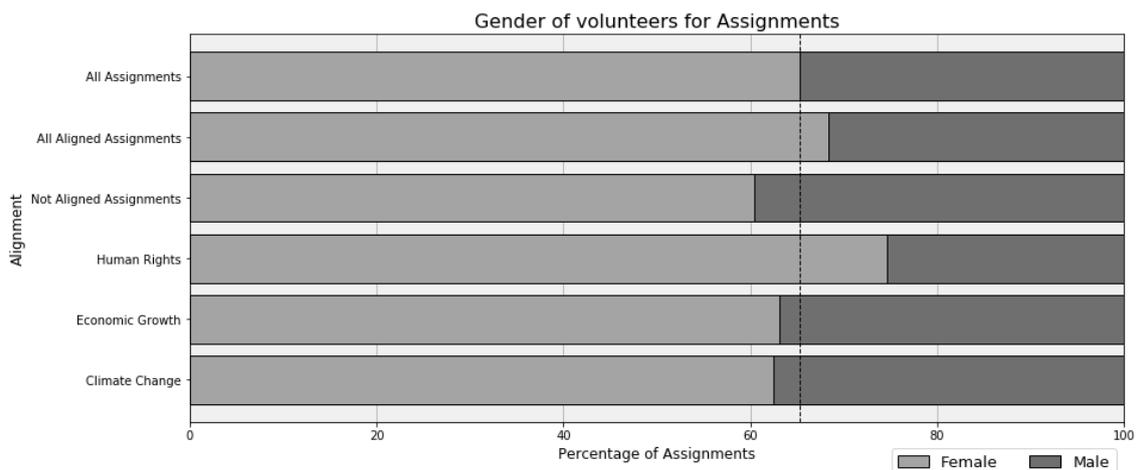
Figure 4 shows the gender breakdown of volunteers for all 811 assignments within the dataset. This figure displays a gendered breakdown across: all assignments; all aligned assignments to any impact area, not aligned assignments and across the three impact areas.

Assignment length and impact area: The length of volunteer assignments was also assessed across the three impact areas. The results, displayed in Figure 5, show most assignments lasted one year regardless of impact area. The most variation was in length for Human Rights assignments, and least variation in length for Climate Change assignments.

Figure 5: Assignment length and impact area
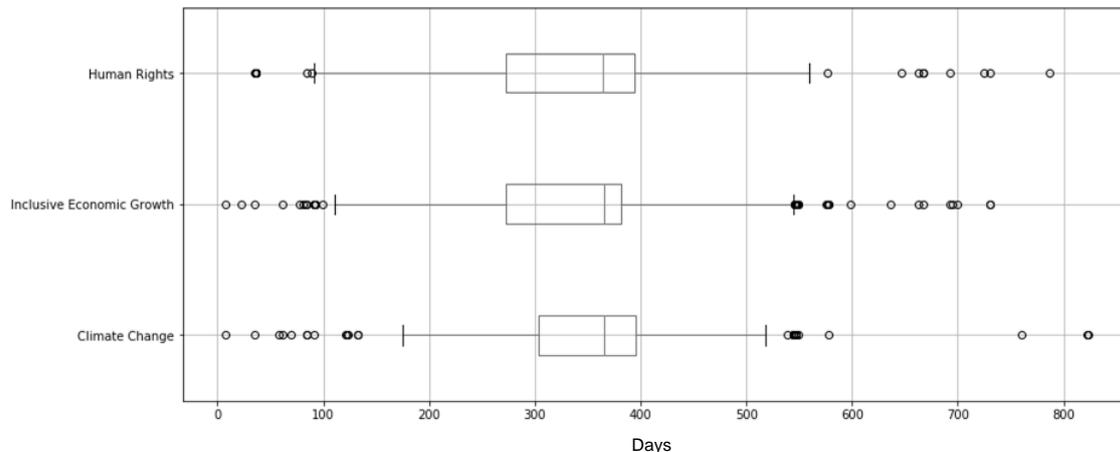
Figure 5 shows the assignment length of volunteers for all 811 assignments within the dataset. This figure shows that the median time taken for assignments is approximately one year while the majority range between 300 and 400 days. There is little practical difference between assignments aligned to the different impact areas.

Assignments not aligned to impact areas: The highlighted rows in Table 9 show that of the assignments that did not align to impact areas, most fell within the health and education sectors. Together, these two sectors comprised 34% of the total volunteer portfolio. This highlights the large proportion of the program portfolio operating outside the impact areas.

Table 9: Assignments not aligned to impact areas – DAC codes

Sector	Aligned (%)	Not Aligned (%)	Assignments Aligned	Total Assignments
151 Govt & Civil Society, general	76%	24%	139	184
120 Health	35%	65%	51	144
160 Other Social Infrastructure & Services	67%	33%	85	126
111 Education, level unspecified	55%	45%	57	104
311 Agriculture	85%	15%	34	40
410 General Environmental Protection	86%	14%	32	37
250 Business & Other Services	70%	30%	19	27
114 Post-secondary education	40%	60%	8	20
332 Tourism	90%	10%	18	20
700 Humanitarian aid	61%	39%	11	18
130 HIV/AIDS	62%	38%	8	13
112 Basic education	50%	50%	5	10

Table 9 displays the results of mapping the volunteer portfolio against the three-digit DAC code. The table only considers DAC codes which had 10 or more assignments coded to them.

The percentages of aligned and non-aligned assignments are displayed in the right-hand columns using the heat-map:

Darker green = higher percentage alignment to impact area
Lighter green to yellow = lower percentage alignment.

The four rows highlighted in yellow represent sectors where at least 45% of assignments did not align to an impact area.

6) To what extent does mapping of the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio to working definitions of the three impact areas align with (i) SDGs (ii) OECD-DAC codes?

Linking SDGs to impact areas: All 17 SDGs aligned with at least one impact area, as illustrated in Table 10. Goals 1 and 2 aligned with all three impact areas, while eight of the goals (3, 7, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16 and 17) aligned with only one impact area. The remaining seven goals (4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12 and 14) aligned with two impact areas.

It is worth noting that SDGs have up to 19 targets (e.g. goal 17). A previous deliverable for this evaluation provided mapping of the SDGs at target level to impact area (see Annex 2 for a summary of this mapping). Since we coded at the target level, following this process meant that if even only one of these targets aligned with an impact area, the whole goal was said to align with the impact area. For example, Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation) has eight targets, and only two aligned with an impact area (both Inclusive Economic Growth). Overall this target level mapping to impact areas revealed that out of the total 175 SDG targets:

- 79 SDG targets did not map to an impact area

- 83 targets mapped to one impact area

- 12 targets mapped to two impact areas, highlighting the overlap between two impact areas at target level

- One target (target 2.3) mapped to all three impact areas, highlighting overlap across all three impact areas.

> **Box 4: Method for Evaluation Question 6(i)**
>
> The full list of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets were examined and assigned to one or more impact areas if they aligned with the themes associated with the impact area definitions. Two evaluation team members undertook this task independently, then compared results and discussed any discrepancies to arrive on a final list. This process ensured a consistent and accurate approach to coding SDG targets to impact areas.
>
> Results of the mapping to SDGs are found in Table 10.

Table 10: Linking SDGs (goals) to impact areas

Linking SDGs (Goals) to Impact Areas	Human Rights	Climate change, food security and disaster resilience	Inclusive Economic Growth
Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	green	green	green
Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	green	green	green
Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	green	pink	pink
Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	green	pink	green
Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	green	pink	green
Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	green	green	pink
Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	pink	pink	green
Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	green	pink	green
Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	pink	pink	green
Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries	pink	pink	green
Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	green	green	pink
Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	pink	green	green
Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	pink	green	pink
Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	pink	green	green
Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	pink	green	pink
Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	green	pink	pink
Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	pink	pink	green

The approach used to align volunteer assignments with SDGs in future will differ to the approach described above because the newer monitoring tools already requires individual assignments to be coded to one or more SDG at target level. This is undertaken at the country level. The future approach has the potential to be more accurate, given each individual assignment is coded to SDGs. And the coding will be able to draw on the impact area definitions to further support accurate coding of assignments to SDGs. If undertaken by Country Program staff, accuracy will, however, depend on the level of knowledge they have of the SDGs.

DAC-CRS codes and impact area alignment: Table 11 shows that there is a long list of DAC-CRS codes from the master-list that were aligned with each impact area: 22 for Human Rights (HR), 48 for Climate Change (CC) and 46 for Inclusive Economic Growth (IEG). It also shows that DAC-CRS codes picked up large numbers of assignments that were not picked up from our keyword search. This highlights the importance of the DAC-CRS codes in the mapping process, i.e. if we relied on keywords only, we would miss 71 HR assignments, 31 CC assignments and 39 IEG assignments.

DAC-CRS codes were therefore very important for aligning assignments to impact areas. In many instances assignments were aligned to impact areas using DAC-CRS codes only.

> **Box 5: Method for Evaluation Question 6(ii)**
>
> We examined the master-list of all 223 DAC-CRS codes to assess their alignment to the three impact areas. We looked across DAC and CRS descriptions as well the additional notes that provide extra detail. This process was undertaken individually by two team members, with results cross-checked and clarified.
>
> All assignments within the MIS dataset had pre-assigned DAC-CRS codes. The mapping process therefore involved searching within the MIS data for the pre-assigned DAC-CRS codes. If a volunteer assignment had a pre-assigned DAC-CRS code that was also assigned to an impact area, then the assignment was coded to that impact area.

Table 11: DAC-CRS codes and impact area alignment

	Human Rights	Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security	Inclusive Economic Growth
Number of DAC-CRS codes (master-list) aligned to impact area	22	48	46
Number of volunteer assignments aligned to impact area using DAC-CRS codes only	71	31	39

Discrepancies and data quality issues associated with the DAC-CRS codes somewhat hindered the quality of the mapping. Ten assignments were allocated a DAC-CRS code that was absent from the master-list. Hence, we recommend improving the DAC-CRS coding process, for example by ensuring all Country Managers have the most recent DAC-CRS master-list to code assignments. This finding also points to the importance of accurate Assignment Titles and Assignment Objectives that use appropriate wording to reflect the volunteer's role and associated tasks and expectations. In particular, the Assignment Objectives field varied greatly in terms of length, indicating inconsistencies in the data quality. Again, this relates to the need to improve the quality of the MIS data to enable a more robust and legitimate dataset.

7) *To what extent do the Australian Volunteers Program Country Program Plans align with working definitions of the three impact areas?*

8) *To what extent do Australian Aid Investment Plans align with working definitions of the three impact areas?*

Questions 7 and 8 assessed the extent of alignment of two key documents – Aid Investment Plans (AIPs) and Country Program Plans (CPPs) for the Volunteer Program's 26 countries – to impact areas following the process described in Box 6.

Across all AIPs and CPPs for the three impact areas:

- Across the 26 countries, 72% of the documents **fully aligned** with an impact area

- Across the 26 countries, 19% of the documents **somewhat aligned** with an impact area

- Across the 26 countries, 9% of the documents **did not align** with an impact area

- There were eight cases (32%) where the degree of alignment was the same for the AIPs and the CPPs across the three impact areas

- There were 17 cases (68%) where the degree of alignment differed between the AIPs and the CPPs.

Table 13 presents the results for alignment to AIPs and CPPs across the three impact areas. The Human Rights impact area had the most cases of the same degree of alignment between AIPs and CPPs out of all three impact areas (22 of 25). An example of an AIP fully aligning with the Human Rights impact area was Cambodia's AIP. This document referred to electoral reform and supporting the disability sector. It also stated the priorities of building the legal system and community policing with a special focus on addressing gender-based violence, as well as improving reproductive, maternal and neonatal health, particularly for vulnerable women.

Box 6: Method for Evaluation Questions 7 and 8

Evaluation Questions 7 and 8 followed the same analytical process, as they sought to understand the degree to which two documents (Country Program Plans (CPPs) and Aid Investment Plans (AIPs)) aligned with the three impact areas. A second part of analysis focused on the degree of alignment between these two documents for each country.

The CPP and AIP documents for all 26 countries were assessed using a systematic content analysis approach to identify alignment to the three impact areas according to the scale in Table 12. Documents were examined to ascertain their degree of alignment according to the criteria described in Table 12.

Table 12: Criteria for analysing AIPs and CPPs

Rating scale	Systematic criteria for rating
Fully align	Uses the same language from the impact area working definitions as provided in the impact area definitions under the sub-headings "Australia's aid objectives" (for AIPs) and "Australian Volunteers Program Priorities" (for CPPs)
Some-what align	Does not specifically mention the impact areas as part of the Australian Aid objectives (for AIPs) or Australian Volunteers Program Priorities (for CPPs) but includes mention of the impact areas elsewhere in the document. Alternatively, the impact area working definitions are alluded to, but language is vague (e.g. see Nepal CPP with regards to local governance).
Did not align	No mention of the impact areas or any of the themes they contain (as per definitions).

The Climate Change impact area had 10 cases where the degree of alignment differed between the AIPs and CPPs. This included two countries where the AIP was somewhat aligned with the Climate Change impact area, but the CPP was fully aligned. For example, in the Samoa AIP, Australian development programs in Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security are not explicitly described, but later the document states "Across all our investments we will address … climate change resilience. Australia will also continue to support Samoa to prepare for, and respond to, natural disasters." The Samoa CPP names addressing the cross-cutting issue of climate change as a key program priority.

At the regional level, in the Central and North Pacific region, using our systematic approach and definitions of alignment, there were three CPPs that did not align at all with the Climate Change impact area. East Asia also had a low alignment to the Climate Change impact area, with the CPPs for Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam somewhat aligning to Climate Change, and for Mongolia and Myanmar there was no alignment at all. This finding again highlights the emerging nature of climate change action within the Australian aid program and the Australian Volunteer Program.

The Inclusive Economic Growth impact area had 11 cases where the degree of alignment differed between the AIPs and CPPs. There was no clear pattern by region. In eight countries, the AIPs were fully aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth but the CPPs were somewhat aligned. An example of a CPP somewhat aligning with Inclusive Economic Growth was Lesotho, which under the CPP Program Priorities refer to assignments which are "improving trade policy capacity" and "implementation of growth enhancing domestic reforms".

Table 13: AIP and CPP alignment to impact area*

Region	Country	Human Rights		Climate change		Inclusive Economic Growth	
		AIP	CPP	AIP	CPP	AIP	CPP
Asia Archipelago	Indonesia	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Timor Leste	2	2	1	2	2	2
	Philippines	2	2	2	2	2	2
South Asia and Africa	Nepal	1	2	2	2	2	1
	Bhutan		2		2		2
	Sri Lanka	2	2	0	0	2	2
	South Africa	2	2	2	1	2	1
	Tanzania	2	2	2	2	2	2
	eSwatini (Swaziland)	2	2	2	1	2	1
	Lesotho	2	2	2	1	2	1
Central and North Pacific	Fiji	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Federated States of Micronesia	2	2	2	1	1	2
	Palau	2	2	2	0	1	2
	Republic of the Marshall Islands	2	2	2	0	0	0
	Tonga	2	1	0	0	2	2
	Samoa	2	2	1	2	2	2
	Tuvalu	2	2	2	2	1	2
South Pacific	Vanuatu	2	1	2	1	2	2
	Solomon Islands	2	2	1	1	2	2
	Kiribati	2	2	2	2	2	1
East Asia	Cambodia	2	2	1	1	2	1
	Laos	2	2	0	1	2	1
	Mongolia	2	2	0	0	2	2
	Myanmar	2	2	0	0	2	2
	Vietnam	2	2	1	1	2	1
Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea	2	2	2	2	2	2

* Note: Bhutan was excluded from AIP analysis because it did not have an AIP

Table 13 displays the results of the AIP and CPP analysis for the 26 countries, grouped by region. The three impact areas are seen across the top, with results of alignment for AIPs and CPPs for each country. Each document was assessed in terms of its alignment to the impact areas and colour coded and numbered as follows:

0 / pink = no alignment
1 / yellow = some alignment
2 / green = full alignment

Table 14 shows additional statistical information regarding the degree of alignment of AIPs and CPPs to impact areas. It shows the numbers of AIPs (out of a total of 25, given Bhutan did not have an AIP) and CPPs and their alignment to impact area, as well as these figures expressed as percentages. It shows that out of all the impact areas, Human Rights had the most cases of full alignment (96%), followed by Inclusive Economic Growth (84%), with 60% of AIPs fully aligning with Climate Change. The lower alignment with Climate Change

is unsurprising given the emerging nature of this issue and challenges associated with implementing climate change action on the ground, at a volunteer assignment scale.

Table 14: AIP and CPP alignment to impact area (statistics)

	Human Rights				Climate Change				Inclusive Economic Growth			
	AIP	AIP % countries	CPP	CPP % countries	AIP	AIP % countries	CPP	CPP % countries	AIP	AIP % countries	CPP	CPP % countries
Fully align	24	96	24	92	15	60	11	42	21	84	17	65
Some-what align	1	4	2	8	5	20	9	35	3	12	8	31
Did not align	0	0	0	0	5	20	6	23	1	4	1	4

The interpretation of the findings for Questions 7 and 8 should take account of four factors. Firstly, in each country, the Australian Volunteers Program provides DFAT with the opportunity to focus on areas not prioritised within the AIP. The Australian Volunteer Program is considered a discretionary program whereby DFAT Post may wish to place volunteers with POs as a means of supporting emerging development priorities. The volunteer program has this flexibility and DFAT does not expect full alignment with its AIPs, and Post often makes use of this by placing volunteers in sectors for strategic purposes. This provides some explanation for instances where the degree of alignment differs between AIPs and CPPs.

Secondly, another explanation of the differing alignment between AIPs and CPPs is host government requirements. Some governments may change their development strategies during the AIP and CPP period. They may also only allow volunteers to work in specific sectors, or within specific PO categories (e.g. only NGOs, or only Government). This influences the outcomes of the AIP and CPP analyses.

Thirdly, CPPs were developed at a time when some AIPs were due for renewal. The preparation of the two documents was not always linked, and as such, development priorities had shifted. This is reflected in the differing degrees of alignment for some impact areas.

Lastly, CPP's were first developed in June 2018, prior to the formalisation of the impact areas which occurred in early 2019. There is therefore an opportunity for the Australian Volunteers Program to update CPPs to account for the impact areas. This would have the added benefit of assessing the contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to the Foreign Policy White Paper priorities, through the impact areas.

Box 7: Summary of findings

Impact area definitions: Impact area definitions were developed based on the triangulation of findings across multiple data sources. Interviewees reported differing views regarding the intended use of the impact areas, highlighting the need for improved and consistent understanding across Australian Volunteers Program staff.

Impact area definitions were used to describe and communicate the impact areas. They were also used in the quantitative mapping of the volunteer portfolio. Keywords and DAC-CRS codes were used to conduct the mapping process. Time and care were taken through an iterative mapping process to ensure these elements of the definitions were correct in order to ensure accurate coding.

Mapping of the volunteer portfolio: The approach used to map the MIS data provided the means to routinely (and largely automatically) map assignments in the program portfolio to impact areas. DAC-CRS codes and keywords within Assignment Title and Assignment Objectives were used to map the Australian Volunteer Program to the three impact areas.

Alignment to impact areas: 62% of assignments aligned with at least one impact area. Of the 38% of the portfolio that did not align to an impact area, the vast majority were in the health and education sectors. A larger number of volunteer assignments aligned with Human Rights and Inclusive Economic Growth (31% of the 811 assignments mapped to each of these impact areas) than with Climate Change (15%). The smaller number of assignments aligned with Climate Change was indicative of the emerging nature of climate change and uncertainty around how to develop volunteer assignments to address the needs of partner countries.

Country-level alignment to impact area reflects the overall patterns of alignment to impact area. That is, across the 26 countries, more assignments aligned with Human Rights and Inclusive Economic Growth than with Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security.

Regional-level alignment followed the same pattern as for country-level alignment, with approximately 55% and 45% of assignments aligning with either Human Rights or Inclusive Economic Growth, and a smaller proportion (around 20%) aligning with Climate Change. There was no significant variation of alignment to impact areas across the geographic regions.

Gender and assignment length disaggregation revealed no significant findings. Results did show a higher proportion of female volunteers across the volunteer portfolio. Across all assignments, 63% of volunteers were female. The proportion of females was highest in Human Rights (75%). Most assignments lasted one year regardless of impact area. There was most variation in length in Human Rights assignments, and least variation in length in Climate Change assignments.

All 17 **Sustainable Development Goals** aligned with at least one impact area, as illustrated in Table 10. Goals 1 and 2 aligned with all three impact areas, while eight of the goals (3, 7, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16 and 17) aligned with only one impact area. The remaining seven goals (4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12 and 14) aligned with two impact areas.

Data quality relating to **DAC-CRS codes** is key for ongoing understanding of impact area coverage. DAC-CRS codes were examined to assess their alignment with each impact area. Of the master-list of 223 DAC-CRS codes, 22 aligned to Human Rights, 48 aligned to Climate Change and 46 aligned to Inclusive Economic Growth. DAC-CRS codes were very important for aligning assignments with impact areas. In many instances, assignments were aligned to impact areas using DAC-CRS codes only. Discrepancies and data quality associated with the DAC-CRS codes somewhat hindered the quality of mapping. This finding informs the recommendation to improve the DAC-CRS coding process.

Alignment of AIPs and CPPs: Across all AIPs and CPPs for the three impact areas, and across the 26 countries, there was strong alignment to the impact areas: 72% of documents 'fully aligned' with an impact area; 19% 'somewhat aligned' with an impact area and 9% 'did not align' with an impact area. The Human Rights impact area had the most cases of the same degree of alignment between AIPs and CPPs out of all three impact areas (22 of 25). The Climate Change impact area had 10 cases where the degree of alignment differed between the AIPs and CPPs. The Inclusive Economic Growth impact area had 11 cases where the degree of alignment differed between the AIPs and CPPs. The differences in AIP and CPP alignment were indicative of the flexible and adaptable nature of the volunteer program, and the ability of DFAT Post and the Australian Volunteer Program to respond to emerging needs through volunteer placements.

Recommendations: Our recommendation, based on the mapping process and primary data gathered through interviews, is to not increase efforts to align assignments with impact areas. Increasing alignment would result in losing out on a legacy of work with partner organisations which has resulted in significant development gains, including in the health and education sectors. Further recommendations have also been developed to strengthen the Australian Volunteer Program utilisation of the three impact areas and to effectively measure contributions to impact areas in future.

	Human Rights	Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security	Inclusive Economic Growth
Countries with the highest proportion of aligned assignments[9]	South Africa, Timor-Leste, Federated States of Micronesia and Mongolia	Laos, Tonga, Vanuatu, Vietnam, and Bhutan	Sri Lanka, Nepal, Tanzania, Philippines, Laos, and Vanuatu
Most common keywords (Assignment Title and Objectives)	Women, gender, disability, equal, youth and rights.	Environment, agriculture, farm, conservation, climate change, fish and resilience.	Business, tourism, finance, enterprise, farm and hospitality.
The most frequently allocated DAC-CRS codes	15160 Government & Civil Society-general – Human Rights 15170 Government & Civil Society-general - Women's equality organisations and institutions 16010 Other Social Infrastructure & Services – Social Protection	41010 General Environment Protection - Environmental policy and administrative management 31120 Agriculture – Agricultural Development 31161 Agriculture – Food Crop Production	25010 Business & Other Services - Business Policy and Administration 33210 Tourism - Tourism policy and administrative management 16010 Other Social Infrastructure & Services – Social Protection

[9] Where total assignments in the countries were >5

AIPs	CPPs	Impact areas	SDGs	DAC-CRS codes
24 out of 25 (96%) AIPs fully aligned with Human Rights **1 out of 25** (4%) AIPs somewhat aligned with Human Rights	**24 out of 26** (92%) CPPs fully aligned with Human Rights **2 out of 26** (8%) CPPs somewhat aligned with Human Rights	**Human Rights**: Prioritises marginalised groups (women, gender & sexual minorities, people with disabilities, children, youth and indigenous people). Aims to secure human rights, improve access to, and civic participation in democratic processes. Promotes the ability of marginalised groups to participate and thrive in society, access to a protective legal and justice system, effective of social protection and access to information and communications.		**22 out of 223** DAC-CRS codes aligned with Human Rights (10%) Most commonly assigned DAC-CRS codes for assignments aligned with Human Rights were: • 15160 Human Rights • 15170 Women's equality organisations and institutions • 16010 Social Protection
15 out of 25 (60%) AIPs fully aligned with Climate Change **5 out of 25** (20%) AIPs somewhat aligned with Climate Change **5 out of 25** (20%) AIPs not aligned with Climate Change	**11 out of 26** (42%) CPPs fully aligned with Climate Change **9 out of 26** (35%) CPPs somewhat aligned with Climate Change **6 out of 26** (23%) CPPs not aligned with Climate Change	**Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security**: Takes climate change (including severe weather and disasters), adaptation and mitigation (including emissions reduction through renewable energy) as the starting point. Promotes resilience of agriculture and fisheries sectors and food security. Includes natural environment which acknowledges that healthy ecosystems are more productive, and able to sustain livelihoods.		**48 out of 223** DAC-CRS codes aligned with Climate Change (22%) Most commonly assigned DAC-CRS codes for assignments aligned with Climate Change were: • 41010 Environmental policy and administrative management • 31120– Agricultural Development • 31161 Food Crop Production
21 out of 25 (84%) AIPs fully aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth **3 out of 25 (12%)** AIPs somewhat aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth **1 out of 25 (4%)** AIPs not aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth	**17 out of 26 (84%)** CPPs fully aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth **8 out of 26 (12%)** CPPs somewhat aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth **1 out of 26 (4%)** CPPs not aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth	**Inclusive Economic Growth**: Centres around growing and embedding inclusivity and sustainability within developing economies. Supporting a strong enabling environment, good governance for private sector development, fair work practices and vocational and technical training. Highlights inclusion of women, youth and other marginalised groups typically excluded from full participation in the formal economy. Equitable sharing of economic benefits is a priority.		**46 out of 223** DAC-CRS codes aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth (21%) Most commonly assigned DAC-CRS codes for assignments aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth were: • 25010 Business Policy and Administration • 33210 Tourism policy and administrative management • 16010 Social Protection

C) Learning and recommendations

9) *Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, should the Australian Volunteers Program increase efforts to align assignments with impact areas? If so, how should they do so, and what might be the consequences of better alignment?*
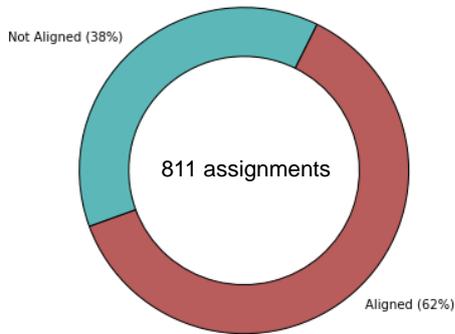
Findings for Question 5 highlighted that while 62% of the volunteer assignments aligned with one or more impact area, the remaining (large) portion of the volunteer portfolio fell outside the three impact areas (38%).

This 38% focused primarily on health and education – important sectors where Australia's aid is valued by partner country governments and POs. Country staff have developed programmatic approaches to create impact and positive change over time through placing volunteers with particular POs relevant to these sectors. The selection of sectors and POs where volunteers are placed is the result of factors driven by DFAT (through AIP and DFAT Post priorities) and the host country government, which are beyond the three impact areas.

We therefore recommend that the Australian Volunteers Program does not increase efforts to align assignments with impact areas. Increasing alignment would potentially result in losing a legacy of work and future development gains in health and education sectors.

While in some countries alignment to some impact areas is low (for example 4% alignment to Climate Change in Timor-Leste), volunteer assignments have been developed based on strategic thinking around specific needs at the country level, and they are the result of Country Managers and Regional Director's working with POs and DFAT Post over time. Furthermore, the volunteer program should, through CPPs, align with the AIPs of each country (as well as local DFAT Post priorities), rather than the impact areas.

Some Regional Directors raised concerns relating to the possibility of increasing alignment to impact areas. One Regional Director noted:

> *The big consequences [of increasing alignment to impact areas] is – are we really meeting the needs of our partner organisations in country? A lot of the work we do is according to the needs of our partner organisations. If we're really going to be trying to align more towards our impact areas, is it really reflecting the work that our partners want us to support them?*

Finally, our recommendation to not increase alignment of assignments to impact areas is also supported by DFAT. They also noted in their interview that: *"The assignments and the focus areas are driven at country level."*

As noted in the next section, we recommend that the Australian Volunteers Program increase its staff and stakeholders (POs, DFAT Post, partner government) understandings about the impact areas, and how they fit with other development priorities and strategy directions.

10) Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, how can the Australian Volunteers Program better measure contributions to impact areas?

This section provides brief recommendations informed by the mapping exercise and provides terms of reference to inform summative evaluations of outcomes and of the contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to the three impact areas (See Annex 4).

Recommendation 1: Recognising a large portion of the volunteer assignments fall outside the three impact areas, the Australian Volunteers Program should not increase alignment efforts, and should not increase its focus on impact areas. The Australian Volunteer Program should however employ the three impact areas as a means to reflect on current practice, identify innovation, effective partnerships and utilise communications on the three impact areas for public diplomacy.

Recommendation 2: Further research is required to better understand Australian Volunteer Program's contributions to the three impact areas. Research should focus on PO contributions to sector-wide change, employing a theory of change and systems perpsective to understand multiple drivers and contribution to change. The methodology could be applicable to both impact area and other sectors such as health and education. This research would provide significant learning on contributions to impact areas to the Australian Volunteers Program and DFAT, relevant for future communications, strategic partnerships (with POs and Australian organisations) and public diplomacy efforts.

Recommendation 3: The Australian Volunteer Program should build on and strengthen existing engagement within the three impact areas. Approaches to strengthen engagement include:

- continue efforts to maintain long-term relationships with high profile and influential POs as a means to positively contribute to impact

- continue deliberate focus on the overlap between impact areas to maximise contribution (e.g. Climate Change and Inclusive Economic Growth);

- strengthen links between the Australian Volunteers Program and DFAT expertise, particularly in relation to climate change (see also recommendation 5)

- actively pursue new partnerships with Australian organisations with climate change expertise as a means to further support engagement and contributions to the Climate Change impact area (see also recommendation 5)

- improve efforts to communicate success stories within the volunteer program for public diplomacy and support for the Australian Volunteers Program

Recommendation 4: The Australian Volunteers Program should strengthen its staff and stakeholders (POs, DFAT Post, partner government) understanding of purpose and objectives of the impact areas.

> *"While these are the impact areas for the program, they're general enough that we can fit in the priorities from our partnering country"* Regional Director, interviewee.

Strengthened understanding of the impact areas will:

- address inconsistent understandings of the purpose and function of impact areas both internally and with external stakeholders (as exemplified in the quote on the right)

- ensure engagement of the impact areas is considered together with other development priorities and strategies

- contribute to the effective assessment of the contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to impact areas.

Recommendation 5: In line with efforts to strengthen engagement in the three impact areas and recognising the lower proportion of the program portfolio that aligns with Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security, the Australian Volunteer Program should consider a variety of options to more effectively engage across this impact area. Strategic partnerships should be prioritised, for example improving links between the Australian Volunteers Program and DFAT's climate change expertise, strategic selection of local POs and Australian organisations working on climate change issues to ensure volunteer assignments are appropriately scoped and new relationships with influential POs are developed and maintained.

Recommendation 6: The Australian Volunteers Program should improve the quality of data in the MIS database to better monitor and measure contributions to the impact areas. For example, careful selection of DAC-CRS codes and SDGs, consistent approaches to describing Assignment Objectives (length and detail) and improved coding to gender and child-focused priorities.

Recommendation 7: The Australian Volunteers Program should use MIS data to routinely map the program portfolio (volunteer assignments and contribution to partner organisation development objectives) to impact areas. MIS data fields such as DAC-CRS Codes, SDG targets, and keywords relevant to Assignment Title and Assignment Objectives should be used. Routine mapping should be monitored for ongoing improvements.

Recommendation 8: The Australian Volunteer Program should continue to ensure alignment of Country Program Plans to Aid Investment Plans in relevant countries, whilst also recognising the value and opportunity that flexibility offers to meeting emerging needs of DFAT Post and partner governments.

6. Conclusion

This formative evaluation has provided insights into the impact areas of Human Rights; Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security; and Inclusive Economic Growth and how they apply to the Australia Volunteer Program.

Mapping of portfolio: The results of the mapping exercise of 2018 volunteer assignments highlight that whilst most assignments (62%) aligned and could be described as contributing to these impact areas, a large percentage (38%) fell outside of these impact areas. The evaluation found that whilst the impact areas provided an effective lens through which to describe the contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to development outcomes, they should not be the only means used to tell that story. Through our mapping exercise, document reviews, and consultations with key stakeholders we have concluded that the impact areas should only be one of the ways used to describe the Australian Volunteers Program's contribution.

Impact area definitions: This evaluation has identified a range of ways to describe each of the three impact areas. Informed by the Global Program Strategy document and brief paragraph descriptions, the evaluation has prepared more detailed descriptors drawing on key informant interviews, DAC-CRS codes, keywords and SDG targets. These definitions can be used on an ongoing basis by the Australian Volunteers Program to monitor its contribution to the three impact areas.

Improved data and clearer communications around impact areas: The evaluation highlights the need for accurate MIS data to ensure that contributions to the impact areas can be accurately assessed. This in turn requires more communication about the purpose and function of the impact areas, particularly amongst Australian Volunteers Program staff. Recognising that the impact areas are still relatively new, informed by the findings of this evaluation, the Australian Volunteers Program will need to inform its staff and stakeholders about the impact areas and how they can be used in conjunction with other development priorities and strategy frameworks.

Multiple frameworks for describing and understanding impact areas: The impact areas, and our approach to mapping, provide an effective means of making sense of the Australian Volunteers Program's contribution to development outcomes, drawing in measures and criteria from multiple frameworks such as DAC-CRS codes and SDGs as well as Australian aid development priorities. The application of the impact areas will require nuanced understanding and application, recognising the broad and long-lasting contribution of the Volunteer Program to development objectives as it works with partners across multiple country and regional contexts.

Recommendation to not increase alignment to impact areas: This evaluation sought to (i) establish a baseline; (ii) inform strategic options for strengthening engagement in the impact areas and; (iii) propose a methodology for demonstrating outcomes in impact areas. We have identified a rich source of evidence to inform the baseline across multiple fields of disaggregation and through our findings and case studies, we have identified the value of using the impact areas as a thematic lens through which to view the Australian government's aid priorities. However, given the high proportion of assignments that do not align with impact areas, particularly those related to education and health, we recommend the Volunteer Program does not increase alignment to impact areas at the expense of other development priorities. Demonstrating the contribution of volunteer assignments with POs to impact areas will be an important next step in operationalising the impact areas for both internal and external audiences.

Suggested approaches to strengthen engagement across impact areas: Three Case Studies focusing on the impact areas provided a source of evidence upon which to reflect on ways the Australian Volunteers Program could strengthen its engagement across the impact areas. While the Case Studies highlighted how the program already undertakes

actions that support strong engagement, we also suggest ways to improve engagement. These include strategic communications of success stories for public diplomacy and support for the volunteer program, strengthening the links between volunteer program and DFAT expertise (especially in relation to climate change), and active pursuance of partnerships with Australian organisations with climate change expertise. Such actions would provide the volunteer program with improved ability to contribute to effective change within the impact areas.

7. Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of Reference - Formative evaluation of the Australian Volunteers Program's thematic 'impact areas'

1.   Introduction

The Australian Volunteers Program seeks qualified consultants/consultancy firms to conduct a formative evaluation of the program's three thematic impact areas to inform the strategic direction of the global program and to support the longer-term measurement of outcomes within the impact areas.

This RfQ is for the first phase of research only, relating to the formative evaluation to be conducted in FY 18/19. It is the intention of the program that this research be followed up over the subsequent three years with summative evaluations in each of the impact areas, and that the research partners who conduct the formative evaluation will be the preferred suppliers for later work.

2.   Background and Context

2.1.   About the Program

Since the 1960s, the Australian Government has, through its aid program, supported Australians to volunteer in developing countries. International volunteering promotes cultural understanding through people-to-people linkages and is a means of promoting both public diplomacy and development outcomes.

The latest chapter of the Australian Volunteers Program (formerly AVID) commenced on 1 January 2018 as a $190m Australian Government investment in 26 countries, over a period of five years. The Australian Volunteers program is managed by AVI, in a consortium with Cardno Emerging Markets Pty Ltd and the Whitelum Group. The program continues to match skilled Australians from all walks of life with organisations overseas to help these organisations to deliver on their own objectives. The program uses international volunteering as a people-centred approach to capacity development.

Over the next five years, the Australian Volunteers program aims to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Partner organisations (POs) are supported by Australia to achieve their own development objectives;

2. Australian volunteers gain professionally and personally; and

3. The public and governments in Australia and overseas better appreciate the value of volunteering.

By successfully achieving these outcomes, the Australian Volunteers program will have contributed to the following broader development and diplomacy goals:

1. The Australian Government is achieving its development objectives;

2. Australians becoming more globally literate and connected; and

3. Australian aid is perceived positively in Australia and internationally.

In 2017-18, around 1,100 volunteers will be supported across 26 countries. The duration of overseas assignments varies between one and 24 months. Assignments are in a range of sectors, and are designed to be inclusive and address cross-cutting issues including gender equality, disability inclusion and indigenous inclusion.

2.2. Global Program Strategy

The Australian Volunteers Program enables the Australian Government to multiply the impact of its resources and places Australian Aid at the forefront of global volunteering. This strategy identifies three thematic priority impact areas that act as lenses, helping the program to demonstrate policy alignment with Australian Government priorities. While the program is not limited to these three thematic areas, they demonstrate how the program can multiply the impact of Australian Aid.

Our thematic impact areas are:

- Human Rights: The Australian Volunteers Program makes important contributions to support development objectives to promote and protect human rights.

- Climate Change/Disaster Resilience/Food Security: Acknowledging the rapidly changing and increasingly complex global environment, the program will increase the number and focus of volunteer placements in climate change, disaster resilience and food security.

- Inclusive economic growth: The program will support inclusive economic growth through a range of channels including private sector development, good governance, education and training, women's economic participation and youth engagement.

Over the coming years, these thematic areas will influence activities across the program – from developing assignments and identifying partner organisations, to collecting data and sharing stories about program achievements.

3. Evaluation Purpose and Users

3.1. Rationale

The Australian Volunteers Program supports a wide range of development initiatives through its people to people approach to capacity development. This presents a challenge for assessing developmental outcomes at the global level. The impact areas provide thematic lenses through which the program can have a more focused view on developmental outcomes achieved by partner organisations. The impact areas themselves are broad in scope and not clearly defined. Much of the work partners carry out under the program does not obviously fall into the impact areas, or cuts across the impact areas (for example a large proportion of assignments are in the health and education sectors). But to date, the program has not carried out any mapping to see how assignments align with the three impact areas, and has not collected any baseline data relating to partner organisation's work in the three areas.

3.2. Purpose

The overall objective of this formative evaluation is to map the global footprint of the Australian Volunteer Program's activities in the three impact areas so as to provide a baseline and recommendations to the Australian Volunteers Program about a) strategic options for strengthening engagement in those areas and b) a proposed methodology for demonstrating outcomes in the impact areas.

Specific objectives of the formative evaluation are to:

i. Assess the proportion of the total program portfolio (in terms of numbers of Partner Organisations) that contribute to the three impact areas

ii. Assess and describe the alignment of the program portfolio (based on use of the SDGs and/or OECD-DAC codes used to classify assignments) with the three impact areas. To be disaggregated by country, region and by partner type as a minimum

iii. Assess and describe the alignment of the program's country program plans, Australian Aid Investment Plans, and choice of partners (both Partner Organisation in country (POs) and Australian Organisations (AOs), with the impact areas

iv. Provide illustrative, qualitative examples of the different types of assignments and partners supported through the program that contribute to the impact areas

v. Suggest clearer working definitions of the impact areas to guide the program

vi. Explore the extent to which there is a common theory of change that underpins the program's and/or PO's approach to achieving development outcomes within the impact areas and, where possible, seek to describe this and key assumptions made

vii. Provide options to the program and DFAT Australian Volunteers Service (AVS) as to if, and how, the program could better align its efforts and/or strengthen the quality of programming in support of the impact areas to increase impact, weighing up the potential consequences on areas of work that don't fall under the impact areas.

viii. Provide realistic and feasible recommendations as to how the program can better measure achievement of outcome 1 using the impact areas as thematic lenses (see section on longer-term research below).

The 'program portfolio' is defined as the entire collection of current POs supported by the program and assignments attached to them.

3.3. Key Evaluation Questions

It is expected that detailed evaluation questions to support the achievement of the evaluation objectives listed above will be developed collaboratively between program staff and the service provider during the inception phase.

Such questions are likely to include:

a. To what extent does the current (FY18/19) program portfolio align to the three impact areas?

b. How accurate, and how useful, is the current coding of assignments using DAC codes and the SDGs, and how should this be adapted in the future?

c. What assumptions is the program making in the alignment of partner priorities, Australian aid priorities and the impact areas, what evidence is there to support such assumptions and/or how might they be tested?

d. How can the concept of the impact areas be harnessed by the program to further support the program's achievement of its outcomes?

e. What are the areas of thematic overlap between the three impact areas and how might they usefully be clarified?

f. What program achievements might be left out of the impact areas?

In addressing these questions, the results of the formative evaluation will speak directly to one of the program's key evaluation questions[10] relating to relevance: 'How relevant is the program to partner country priorities, Australian aid priorities[11], and partner organisation priorities?'

3.4. Longer-term research

Details provided in this section of the Terms of Reference will not be part of the contracted work in FY18/19 but are provided to indicate the program's vision for a longer-term

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[10] As given in the program's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (2017/18)
[11] Inclusive of outcomes in relation to gender equality, disability inclusion, private sector engagement, climate change, innovation and child protection.

approach to measuring outcomes within the impact areas. It is an expected output of this ToR that in providing recommendations as to how the program can better measure achievement of outcome 1 using the impact areas as thematic lenses, the contractor will develop this vision into a detailed proposed methodology. The contractors who conduct the formative evaluation will be the preferred suppliers for later work subject to performance review.

Following on from looking at the breadth of the portfolio in FY18/19, the program then intends to look more in-depth over subsequent years of the program, moving from a formative evaluation to a series of summative evaluations. These summative evaluations will contribute evidence to program mid-term and external evaluations that are not part of the scope of this ToR. A review of the current footprint of the program now will be followed-up with separate studies on each of the three priority areas in turn. For example, following on from the baseline in FY18/19, more evaluative 'deep dives' could be conducted in subsequent years (e.g. Inclusive Growth in FY20, Climate Change in FY21, Human Rights in FY22) when there will be more scope for exploring development outcomes under the program. Each of these 'deep dives' would be based on a similar analytical framework and methodology to enable comparability between them (and the baseline) and provide efficiencies and opportunities from learning from one to the other. The methodology for these to be developed but likely to include mixed-methods research in a sample of countries. This approach, with its longitudinal dimension, may also allow other research questions regarding, for example, approaches to partner capacity building, to also be examined.

Subsequent phases of the impact areas research (after FY18/19) will turn to key evaluation questions relating to effectiveness, particular in relation to the first outcome of the program: 'Partner organisations are supported by Australia to progress their developmental objectives'.

It is hoped that this approach will enable the program to develop a stronger research partnership with the contractors over multiple years. The budget for subsequent years will need to be discussed based on proposed methodology and subject to agreement with DFAT but, for the purposes of planning only, could be estimated as in the order of $80,000 annually.

3.5. Primary Audience and Evaluation Users

Whilst the evaluation will have a diverse audience base within the Australian Volunteers program, the primary internal users within the Australian Volunteers program are:

The Country Management Team and Partnership teams. The evaluation will help the teams in Melbourne and Regional Directors to:

- Better understand the thematic scope of the existing portfolio

- Understand how the current portfolio aligns with the impact areas

- Consider options for recruiting and supporting partners working in a range of thematic areas

- Consider options for operationalising the global program strategy and utilising the concept of impact areas to achieve end of program outcomes

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team. This evaluation will help the MEL team to:

- Review the coding structure of assignments (using DAC codes and SDGs) and consider options for improvement

- Have a quantitative baseline as to the current alignment to be reviewed over time

- Consider options for future summative evaluations using the impact areas as lenses to assess program effectiveness

The evaluation may also support the Public Diplomacy team in identifying illustrative case studies of partners working in the impact areas. In addition, the evaluation is also likely to inform DFAT AVS by providing assurances as to the alignment of the program priority with Australian Aid Investment Plans, and clarifying understanding of the impact areas and their strategic utility.

4. Scope

What's in:

There is an assumption underlying the program logic that there is a strong alignment from: Volunteer skills → assignment objectives → partner organisation's developmental objectives → country plans → DFAT Aid Investment Plans → Impact Areas → contribution to SDGs. In addressing the ToR objectives, when examining the alignment between the 'program portfolio' and impact areas, this specifically relates to alignment from the level of partner organisation and up. Where achievable descriptive statistics related to numbers of assignments may be included.

It is anticipated that the mapping and analysis will be based on existing project documents and MIS data that will be made available to the service providers. This will need to be contextualised and analysed based on a strong understanding of the program, to be gained through interviews with a range of stakeholders.

A decision will need to be made during the inception phase about the scope of the evaluation, relating to the data available and time frame used. The primary interest of the evaluation will be a baseline of the current Australian Volunteers Program (data from January 2018 to January 2019). Data from a longer historical period under the previous AVID program could also be included in the analysis if there is a specific case for doing so.

It is expected that the mapping of the alignment of the program portfolio with the impact areas will be disaggregated to the level of region and country (there are 26 countries in the program). Other options for useful disaggregation of data (e.g. by partner type) will be explored, but the smallest unit of quantitative analysis will be the 'partner organisation', not the assignment or volunteer. Illustrative, qualitative analysis from a small sample of relevant assignments will be in scope.

In FY 18/19, a separate gender analysis is being conducted of the program. The formative evaluation of the impact areas will draw on this work without seeking to duplicate it.

What's not:

The formative evaluation will be a largely desk-based exercise, utilising existing data supported by interviews with key stakeholders. No additional quantitative data collection is expected, unless a clear justification can be provided during the course of the evaluation. No travel to implementing countries outside of Australia is planned.

Volunteers and individual assignments will not be used as units of analysis beyond recoding the numbers of volunteers/assignments per impact area. In mapping the alignment of assignments to impact areas, it will not be required to disaggregate according to the age, sex or other characteristic of the volunteer carrying out the assignment.

While recommendations for the future evaluation of the impact areas is in scope, conducting any such future research will not form part of any initial contract and so is out of scope.

5. Approach

The Australian Volunteers Program welcomes suggestions for approaches to the work that meet the objectives of this ToR within the budget and time frame available. For the purposes of planning, it is initially expected the process will include the following:

- Inception workshop with the Research Steering Group to clarify understanding of the ToR, detailed evaluation questions and proposed methodology and workplan

- A background literature review of key program documents and DFAT policies

- Interviews with key stakeholders (in Melbourne and remotely with Regional Directors and in-country management teams, and DFAT Australian Volunteers Service), to understand the program and impact areas

- Draft detailed working definitions of each impact area to support data collection and analysis in consultation with stakeholders

- Develop conceptual framework for analysing existing program MIS data and develop any additional data collection tools needed (e.g. semi-structured interview guides)

- Analyse internal program MIS data to map out the scope and scale of current work (as coded against SDGs and DAC codes) against the three impact areas

- Review a relevant country plans, partnership plans, assignment descriptions, and DFAT Aid Investment Plans, and a sample of additional related MEL documents as relevant

- Organise phone/skype conversations with a sample of program staff and/or partner organisations working under the three impact areas to gain a better understanding of their work

- Discuss initial findings of the formative evaluation with key stakeholders to support sense-making and the development of recommendations

- Discuss with the Program team, Regional Directors, and DFAT strategic options for increasing program effectiveness aligned with the impact areas

- Discuss with the MEL team options for improving how the program can demonstrate impact in the over the course of the program

- Draft and finalise based on feedback received an evaluation report with recommendations

6.   Timing, Budget and Outputs

The evaluation will be delivered no later than **31 May 2019** by an external service provider and has an indicative budget of AUD **$60,000** (exclusive of GST).

An indicative timeframe is:

- Contractor selection and contracting to be completed – end January 2019

- Inception meetings – early February

- Research and data analysis – February to April

- Reporting – May

Key deliverables for the evaluation are:

1.   Inception workshop in Melbourne with key program stakeholders to review and clarify the ToR and agree on expectations for the process and final report

2.   Inception report, briefly outlining methodology, data analysis plan and framework, ethical considerations, stakeholder engagement, key milestones and timeline.

3.   Sense-making workshop facilitated in Melbourne with the research steering group to review findings and how they are best interpreted and communicated.

4.   Draft report of no more than 30 pages (excluding annexes) based on agreed structure will summarise the methodology and address the evaluation objectives, likely including visual representation of the mapping exercise, and prioritised recommendations on a) strategic options for strengthening

engagement in the impact areas and b) a proposed methodology for demonstrating outcomes in the impact areas.

5. Final report that will seek to incorporate feedback provided by the Evaluation Steering Group and DFAT AVS and that meets DFAT M&E Standards

7. Management Arrangements

The evaluation will be managed by the Australian Volunteers program MEL Manager with the support of a dedicated Evaluation Steering Group. It is anticipated that the contracted team would meet initially weekly (either in person or via telephone) with the evaluation manager to discuss progress and facilitate access to the organisation.

Roles and responsibilities are below:

Stakeholder	Main areas of responsibility
Evaluation Contract Manager MEL Manager	Ensuring the evaluation approach is technically sound and answers the objectives of the ToR. Managing the contractual relationship with the evaluation team. Convening the Steering Group and ensuring key stakeholders are engaged as required in the process.
Evaluation Steering Group	Provide guidance and advice from the perspective of evaluation use and technical input from the group members' individual areas of responsibility. The Steering Group will provide feedback on evaluation products including the evaluation plan and draft products, and will assist with facilitating access to key documents and informants.
Contracted evaluation team	The evaluation team will work cooperatively and closely with Australian Volunteers Program throughout the evaluation. The team will be responsible for delivering evaluation products in accordance with terms of the contract and the agreed evaluation plan, to an acceptable standard of quality. (DFAT M&E Standards) The evaluation plan and reports will be assessed for quality (particularly around methodology and use of evidence to support findings and recommendations) by the Australian Volunteers program prior to payments being made on related contract milestones.

8. The Evaluation Team

The Australian Volunteers Program welcomes proposals from any consultant(s), consultancy firm or research organisation that can meet the objectives of this ToR and meets the minimum requirements outlined below.

Given the diverse thematic areas under consideration, and the potential for an on-going research partnership beyond the scope of this specific ToR, the program would particularly welcome proposals from teams that can flexibly field a range of skills and bring in relevant expertise during subsequent phases as necessary.

The **Team Leader** is responsible for managing the evaluation team members, for producing high quality outputs, delivering on the contractual requirements and producing accessible evaluation reports that are fit for publication.

The Team Leader must have at least 10 years' experience in evaluation or research and can demonstrate delivering on assignments of a similar nature.

It is expected that the team will possess, in aggregate, the following skills and attributes:

- Expertise in at least two of the thematic impact areas

- Experience working in international development programming and/or volunteering

- Understanding of DFAT's policy priorities and aid programming

- Expertise in conducting methodologically rigorous research and evaluations (design, management, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis)

- Proven experience in producing high quality evaluation/research reports – which have clear recommendations, are plain English and accessible to a range of audiences

- Well-developed communication and interpersonal skills with a proven ability to communicate effectively with a wide variety of stakeholders in a government, the international development context and working with diverse groups

- A track record published evaluation and research is an advantage.

9.   Professional Guidelines and Ethics

It is expected that the evaluation will be undertaken in accordance with the **AES Guidelines for Ethical Conduct of Evaluations** and the **ACFID/RDI guidelines for ethical research in evaluation and development**. Products will meet the **DFAT standards for monitoring and evaluation**.

The Evaluation Team will be required to sign a **confidentiality agreement**, and will be cognisant that the produced material is the **intellectual property of the Australian Government.** All materials must be treated sensitively and maintain strict confidentiality of all data, information and documentation provided or obtained during the course of the project.

Annex 2: Updated impact area definitions

The following tables provide the updated impact area definitions, inclusive of the summary paragraphs, sub-themes, keywords, SDGs (goals and targets) and DAC-CRS codes.

Impact area definition: Human Rights
Summary Paragraph:
At its core, the Human Rights impact area pays special attention to marginalised groups and aims to secure human rights, improve access to, and civic participation in democratic processes. The Human Rights impact area promotes fulfillment of rights for particular marginalised groups including: women, gender and sexual minorities, people living with a disability, children, youth and indigenous people. Inclusive in the fulfilment of rights is the ability of marginalised groups to participate and thrive in society, have access to a protective legal and justice system, effective of social protection and access to information and communications.
Sub-themes
- Gender Equality (Women's and girls' rights and participation; Women's sexual and reproductive Health; Maternal health; Ending violence against women; Equal access to financial and economic resources (IEG); Gendered climate change impacts (CC)) - Disability inclusion - Protecting and promoting child and youth rights - Infant and child health - Child protection - Young people's rights - Youth engagement (IEG) (Ensuring participation of marginalised groups and protection of their rights, including for Indigenous people; LGBTQI+ and gender minorities; Vulnerable groups and Minority groups) - Social protection and poverty reduction for poor and vulnerable communities (Inclusive economic empowerment (IEG)) - Inclusive participation in democratic processes (Participation in government and governance; Civic participation in democratic processes; Public access to uncensored information and communication (IEG); Peace-building) - Promotion of law and justice (Strong legal frameworks; Justice within the correctional sector; Climate justice (migration, forced relocation and human mobility (CC)); 0Worker's rights and labour laws (IEG)

Keywords	SDGs (goals and targets)	CRS	DAC Description	CRS Description
Gender	Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	11250	Basic Education	School feeding
Woman	Targets: 1.3, 1.4, 1b	12240	Basic Health	Basic nutrition
Women	Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	13020	Population Policies/Programmes & Reproductive Health	Reproductive health care
Girl	Targets: 2.2, 2.3	13030	Population Policies/Programmes & Reproductive Health	Family planning
Maternal	Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	13081	Population Policies/Programmes & Reproductive Health	Personnel development for population and reproductive health
Equal	Targets: 3.1, 3.2, 3.7	15130	Government & Civil Society-general	Legal and judicial development
Deaf	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	15150	Government & Civil Society-general	Democratic participation and civil society
Blind	Targets: 4.5, 4.7, 4a	15151	Government & Civil Society-general	Elections
Autistic	Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	15152	Government & Civil Society-general	Legislatures and political parties
Autism	Targets: 5.1, .52, 5.3, .54, 5.5, 5.6, 5b, 5c	15153	Government & Civil Society-general	Media and free flow of information
Mobility	Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	15160	Government & Civil Society-general	Human rights

Special education	Targets: 6.2	15170	Government & Civil Society-general	Women's equality organisations and institutions
Inclusive Education	Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	15180	Government & Civil Society-general	Ending violence against women and girls
Disability	Targets: 8.7, 8.8	15190	Government & Civil Society-general	Facilitation of orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility
Disabilities	Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	15210	Conflict, Peace & Security	Security system management and reform
Disabled	Targets: 11.2, 11.7	15220	Conflict, Peace & Security	Civilian peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution
Special needs	Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	15230	Conflict, Peace & Security	Participation in international peacekeeping operations
Child Protection	Targets: 16.2, 16.3, 16.7, 16.9, 16.10, 16b	15261	Conflict, Peace & Security	Child soldiers (prevention and demobilisation)
Infant		16010	Other Social Infrastructure & Services	Social Protection
Youth		16064	Other Social Infrastructure & Services	Social mitigation of HIV/AIDS
Juvenile		16070	Other Social Infrastructure & Services	Labour Rights
Indigenous				
LGB				
Marginal				
Vulnerable				
Minority				
Refugee				
Migrant				
Rights				
Democracy				
Democratic				
Inclusive Participation				
Civil Society				
Civic Participation				
Access to Information				
Peace				
Justice				
legal framework				
correctional				
Union				
Land Loss				
Forced Migration				
Relocation				

Impact area definition: Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security

Summary Paragraph:
The Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security impact area takes climate change and its impacts as the starting point. Responding to climate change impacts (including severe weather and disasters), adaptation and mitigation (including emissions reduction through renewable energy) are at the core of this impact area. Extending from this starting point are the resilience of agriculture and fisheries sectors and food security, all of which are directly affected by climate change. Environmental conservation is also included under this impact area, given the impact of climate change on the environment and that the preservation of healthy ecosystems provides a natural buffer to climate change. Furthermore, inclusion of environmental conservation under this impact area acknowledges that healthy ecosystems are more productive, and able to sustain livelihoods (linking to Inclusive Economic Growth).

Sub-themes
- Addressing climate change impacts (Gendered climate change impacts (HR); Adaptation; Mitigation (see below for more specific energy related themes)) - Disaster resilience (Disaster and humanitarian response (climate/disaster related, not man-made); Disaster risk reduction and management; Inclusive disaster response (focus on women, children, youth, marginalised)) - Renewable energy (Clean energy research, technology and infrastructure; Carbon capture and storage; Energy efficiency Energy transition (from fossil fuel to renewable)) - Agriculture (IEG) (Traditional farming methods; Resilient traditional livelihoods; Commercial farming (IEG)) - Food security (IEG) (Sustainable food production; Food affordability; Fisheries (IEG); Biosecurity) - Forestry (IEG) - Conservation (Wildlife management for healthy and productive environments (IEG); Ecosystem conservation, preservation and protection (IEG)) - Human security (Climate justice (migration, forced relocation and human mobility (HR)); Regional security) - Water conservation and resource management (Water policy and governance (IEG))

Keywords	SDGs (goals and targets)	CRS	DAC Description	CRS Description
Climate Change	Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	14010	Water Supply & Sanitation	Water sector policy and administrative management
Global Warming	Targets: 1.5	14015	Water Supply & Sanitation	Water resources conservation (including data collection)
Adaptation	Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	14040	Water Supply & Sanitation	River basins development
Mitigation	Targets: 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2c	23110	Energy Policy	Energy policy and administrative management
Sea Level Rise	Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	23183	Energy Policy	Energy conservation and demand-side efficiency
Drought	Targets: 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6	23210	Energy generation, renewable sources	Energy generation, renewable sources - multiple technologies
Flood	Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	23220	Energy generation, renewable sources	Hydro-electric power plants
Cyclone	Targets: 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7a, 7b	23230	Energy generation, renewable sources	Solar energy
Resilience	Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	23240	Energy generation, renewable sources	Wind energy
Humanitarian	Targets: 11.5, 11b	23250	Energy generation, renewable sources	Marine energy
Disaster Response	Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	23260	Energy generation, renewable sources	Geothermal energy
Disaster Risk	Targets: 12.3, 12c	23270	Energy generation, renewable sources	Biofuel-fired power plants
Natural Disaster	Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	23350	Energy generation, non-renewable sources	Fossil fuel electric power plants with carbon capture and storage (CCS)

Extreme Weather	Targets: 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13b	23410	Hybrid energy plants	Hybrid energy electric power plants	
Sustainable Food	Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	23620	Energy distribution	District heating and cooling	
Food Affordability	Targets: 14,2, 14.3, 14.4, 14.5, 14.6, 14a, 14b, 14c	23630	Energy distribution	Electric power transmission and distribution	
Commercial Crop	Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	31110	Agriculture	Agricultural policy and administrative management	
Fisheries	Targets: 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.8, 15.9	31120	Agriculture	Agricultural development	
Fish		31130	Agriculture	Agricultural land resources	
Aquaculture		31140	Agriculture	Agricultural water resources	
Biosecurity		31150	Agriculture	Agricultural inputs	
Renewable		31161	Agriculture	Food crop production	
Solar		31163	Agriculture	Livestock	
Wind		31164	Agriculture	Agrarian reform	
Hydropower		31165	Agriculture	Agricultural alternative development	
Clean Energy		31166	Agriculture	Agricultural extension	
Energy Technology		31182	Agriculture	Agricultural research	
Energy Infrastructure		31191	Agriculture	Agricultural services	
Biogas		31192	Agriculture	Plant and post-harvest protection and pest control	
Carbon Capture		31210	Forestry	Forestry policy and administrative management	
Energy Efficiency		31220	Forestry	Forestry development	
Energy Transition		31282	Forestry	Forestry research	
Sustainable energy		31310	Fishing	Fishing policy and administrative management	
Traditional Farming		31320	Fishing	Fishery development	
Agriculture		31382	Fishing	Fishery research	
Agricultural		31391	Fishing	Fishery services	
Forestry		41010	General Environment Protection	Environmental policy and administrative management	
Crop		41030	General Environment Protection	Bio-diversity	
Soil		41082	General Environment Protection	Environmental research	
Pastoral		43060	Other Multisector	Disaster Risk Reduction	
Farm		43071	Other Multisector	Food security policy and administrative management	
Farming		43072	Other Multisector	Household food security programmes	
Farmer		43073	Other Multisector	Food safety and quality	
Permaculture		72010	Emergency Response	Material relief assistance and services	
Animal Husbandry		72040	Emergency Response	Emergency food assistance	
Agroforestry		72050	Emergency Response	Relief co-ordination and support services	
Afforestation		73010	Reconstruction Relief & Rehabilitation	Immediate post-emergency reconstruction and rehabilitation	

			74020	Disaster Prevention & Preparedness	Multi-hazard response preparedness
Ecosystem					
Environmental					
Conservation					
Preservation					
Wildlife					
Productive Environment					
Species Loss					
Environment Policy					
Migration					
Natural Resource Management					
Human Mobility					
Forced Relocation					
Regional Security					
Water Conservation					
Water Policy					
Land Loss					
Forced Migration					
Relocation					
Climate Justice					

Impact area definition: Inclusive Economic Growth				
Summary paragraph:				
The Inclusive Economic Growth impact area centres around growing and embedding inclusivity and sustainability within developing economies. This includes supporting a strong enabling environment through good governance for private sector development, fair work practices and through vocational and technical training. The Inclusive Economic Growth impact area also highlights the need to support inclusion of women, youth and other marginalised groups typically excluded from full participation in the formal economy. Key to inclusive economic growth is the equitable sharing of economic benefits. This impact area includes specific sectors which contribute to poverty reduction and provide significant income generation within the countries the Australian Volunteers Program supports. These sectors include tourism, hospitality, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, which are often relevant to marginalised groups. The role of entrepreneurship and small-scale enterprises in developing economies are also recognised within this impact area, again for the relevance to marginalised groups.				
Sub-themes:				
- Private sector development (Enterprise development (particularly small scale, SMEs); Entrepreneurship; Sustainable and effective industry bodies (e.g. Chamber of Commerce); Cooperatives; Access to markets; Diversification of income sources - Business partnerships; Supply/value chain) - Good governance (including public institutions) (Effective Taxation; Safe and fair labour and work practices; Worker's rights and labour laws (HR); Public-Private partnerships; Aid for Trade and Fair Trade policies; Data collection and statistics - Water policy and governance (CC); Public access to uncensored information and communication (HR)) - Inclusive income generation (Women and youth participation in private sector/business (HR); Income equality - Youth engagement in economic sectors and skills development (HR); Inclusive economic empowerment (HR); Inclusive financial services & credit including insurance, microfinance and credit co-operatives) - Participation in the formal economy (Vocational and technical training; Technology and promotion of innovation; Financial literacy; Equal access to financial and economic resources (HR)) - Sustainable and inclusive economic growth within key sectors (e.g.: Tourism (including ecotourism); Hospitality; Agriculture (CC); Fisheries (CC); Forestry (CC); Handicraft production; Environmental sustainability (CC))				

Keywords	SDGs (goals and targets)	CRS	DAC Description	CRS Description
Business	Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	11330	Secondary Education	Vocational training
Private Sector	Targets: 1.4	11430	Post-Secondary Education	Advanced technical and managerial training
Social enterprise	Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	15110	Government & Civil Society-general	Public sector policy and administrative management
Economic growth	Targets: 2.3	15111	Government & Civil Society-general	Public finance management (PFM)
Enterprise	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	15112	Government & Civil Society-general	Decentralisation and support to subnational government
Entrepreneur	Targets: 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4b	15113	Government & Civil Society-general	Anti-corruption organisations and institutions
Chamber of Commerce	Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	15114	Government & Civil Society-general	Domestic revenue mobilisation
Cooperative	Targets: 5a, 5b	15125	Government & Civil Society-general	Public Procurement
Diversification	Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	15142	Government & Civil Society-general	Macroeconomic policy
Commerce	Targets: 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.8, 8.9, 8.10, 8a, 8b	15210	Conflict, Peace & Security	Security system management and reform
finance	Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	16020	Other Social Infrastructure & Services	Employment creation
financial	Targets: 9.3, 9c	16070	Other Social Infrastructure & Services	Labour Rights

Commercial	Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries	16080	Other Social Infrastructure & Services	Social Dialogue
Good governance	Targets: 10.2, 10.3, 10.4	24010	Banking & Financial Services	Financial policy and administrative management
Tax	Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	24030	Banking & Financial Services	Formal sector financial intermediaries
Labour Law	Targets: 12b	24040	Banking & Financial Services	Informal/semi-formal financial intermediaries
Worker's Rights	Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	24050	Banking & Financial Services	Remittance facilitation, promotion and optimisation
Public-Private Partnership	Targets: 14.7, 14b	25010	Business & Other Services	Business Policy and Administration
Value Chain	Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	25020	Business & Other Services	Privatisation
Supply Chain	Targets: 17.1, 17.4, 17.11, 17.19	25030	Business & Other Services	Business development services
Trade		25040	Business & Other Services	Responsible Business Conduct
Aid for Trade		31162	Agriculture	Industrial crops/export crops
Fair Trade		31163	Agriculture	Livestock
Data Collection		31164	Agriculture	Agrarian reform
Statistic		31165	Agriculture	Agricultural alternative development
Water Policy		31166	Agriculture	Agricultural extension
Local Government		31191	Agriculture	Agricultural services
Women's empowerment		31193	Agriculture	Agricultural financial services
Women's Participation		31194	Agriculture	Agricultural co-operatives
Youth empowerment		31210	Forestry	Forestry policy and administrative management
Youth Participation		31310	Fishing	Fishing policy and administrative management
Income Generation		31320	Fishing	Fishery development
Income Inequality		31382	Fishing	Fishery research
Economic Empowerment		31391	Fishing	Fishery services
Economic Resources		32110	Industry	Industrial policy and administrative management
Skills Development		32130	Industry	Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) development
Financial Services		32140	Industry	Cottage industries and handicraft

Credit			32161	Industry	Agro-industries
Insurance			32210	Mineral Resources & Mining	Mineral/mining policy and administrative management
Microfinance			33110	Trade Policies & Regulations	Trade policy and administrative management
Credit Co-operative			33120	Trade Policies & Regulations	Trade facilitation
Remittance			33130	Trade Policies & Regulations	Regional trade agreements (RTAs)
Economy			33140	Trade Policies & Regulations	Multilateral trade negotiations
Tourism			33150	Trade Policies & Regulations	Trade-related adjustment
Vocation			33210	Tourism	Tourism policy and administrative management
Vocational			43050	Other Multisector	Non-agricultural alternative development
Technical training					
Ecotourism					
Hospitality					
Agriculture					
Crop					
Agricultural productivity					
Fisheries					
Aquaculture					
Handicraft					
Cottage Industry					
Farm					
Farming					
Farmer					
Horticulture					
Export Crop					
Animal Husbandry					
Biotechnology					
Forestry					
Agroforestry					
Innovation					

Annex 3: Case studies

Case Study 1: Human Rights

Case Study 2: Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security

Case Study 3: Inclusive Economic Growth

Case Study 1: Human Rights

Introduction

This case study illustrates the *Human Rights* impact area of the Australian Volunteers Program in South Africa. We describe contributions to the impact area, and suggest ways to further enhance engagement in relation to Human Rights.

The Human Rights impact area for the Australian Volunteers Program focuses on securing human rights and improved access to, and civic participation in, democratic processes for marginalised groups. These groups include women, gender and sexual minorities, people living with a disability, children, youth and indigenous people. Inclusive fulfilment of rights is the ability of marginalised groups to participate and thrive in society, have access to a protective legal and justice system, effective of social protection and access to information and communications.

Figure 1. Map of South Africa and location of the 20 Human Rights assignments

This case study focuses on the work of the Australian Volunteers Program in South Africa. Of particular interest is human rights-focused work on: gender and women's rights; sexual health rights; rights of people living with a disability; and inclusion of migrants and children. This case study was informed by an interview with the Country Manager for South Africa, and end-of-assignment reporting (particularly drawing on feedback from POs). South Africa was selected for the case study based on: 1) the **high number** of assignments that aligned with Human Rights in South Africa, and 2) South Africa's **high proportion** of assignments aligning with Human Rights. The geographical locations of assignments aligned with Human Rights are presented in Figure 1, which shows volunteers were placed in five cities across South Africa, the most being in Johannesburg with nine volunteers.

Summary of mapping volunteer assignments to the impact area of Human Rights in South Africa (2018)

- Twenty assignments in South Africa were aligned with Human Rights (out of a total of 36 assignments).

- Of these 20 assignments aligned with Human Rights:

    o One assignment was also aligned with the impact area of Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security.

    o None of the Human Rights assignments aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth.

- The most common DAC-CRS code for assignments aligned with Human Rights in South Africa was 15160 (Government & Civil Rights / Human Rights). In total, there were six different DAC-CRS codes for Human Rights in South Africa.

- The keywords most used within the Assignment Title were 'indigenous' and 'gender', and keywords within the Assignment Objectives were 'rights', 'migrant', 'disability', 'justice' and 'gender'.

- Partner organisations who hosted volunteer assignments aligned to the Human Rights impact area are listed below, with the number of volunteers hosted included in brackets:

- African Centre for Migration & Society (2)	- Malamulele Onward (1)
- African World Heritage Fund (1)	- Positive Vibes South Africa (1)
- Cape Town Child Welfare Society (1)	- SECTION27 (2)
- Eco Children (6)*	- Sexual Violence Research Initiative (1)

| - Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action (2) | - Sonke Gender Justice (1) |
| - Institute for Security Studies (1). | - South African Human Rights Commission (1). |

* Note that volunteer assignments with Eco Children were part of the Classic Wallabies Indigenous Exchange which involved volunteers designing an Eco Village project. The volunteers are Indigenous Australians, and assignments were coded to Human Rights due to the key word "Indigenous" in the Assignment Title, rather than due to the specific focus of Human Rights issues. This highlights the complexities and limitations around impact area definitions and processes of coding using Assignment Title and Objectives.

South Africa is located within the South Asia and Africa region for the Australian Volunteers Program (along with Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, eSwatini and Lesotho). Development challenges described in the DFAT Sub-Saharan Africa Aid Investment Plan (2015–2019) are skills shortages, poor enabling environments for business and governance, food insecurity and low agricultural productivity, humanitarian crises, and gender and other inequalities.

Focus on Human Rights

Human Rights is a significant focus of South Africa's Australia Volunteer Program. The deliberate focus on Human Rights reflects the country's history and struggles for equality, as well as the focus on Human Rights across the African continent.

Photo credit: Matthew Willman

The Volunteer Program works with partners who support and empower racial minority groups, women and sexual minorities, as well as working to address challenges around child protection. The South Africa Country Manager noted:

Gender equality and women's empowerment are cross-cutting themes within our country, there is still much struggle within these issues. Women in rural areas are still looked down on for lack of education. Our programs focus on women that are also in remote areas to try and empower them using the skills that are not really learnt in schools.

Learning about Human Rights and the contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program in South Africa

This case study highlights different types of contributions to human rights and how the Australia Volunteer Program achieved them. Four different pathways can be identified. We also draw on these learnings and provide suggestions for enhanced engagement within the Human Rights impact area.

1. Strategic selection of well-connected partner organisations (POs). A recent change in South African government policy means that volunteers are now only placed with non-government organisations (NGOs). The Volunteer Program targets well connected civil society organisations to partner with to maximise the volunteers' impacts, and typically avoids grassroots NGOs. Therefore, the Volunteer Program creates leverage by focusing efforts on higher-profile and better-networked NGOs, as noted by the Country Manager:

We get one partner organisation that has various networks, where other organisations benefit from, for instance, one volunteers work in one organisation impacting several organisations that are partnering with them. It is more impactful and valuable that way.

An example of working with bigger, more influential POs to create high impact is an assignment focused on empowerment of women and fighting abuse on sex workers. The

volunteer, who had experience working with the Australian Federal Police worked to sensitise the issue of the rights of women sex workers within the PO and beyond. The volunteers approach was recognised by national authorities, as it gained significant traction and broader national attention, as described by the Country Manager:

> *It went big, into the police department... So I guess if we're trying to talk about human rights – any office of authority is a good place to start. People listen and pay close attention.*

End-of-assignment reporting described how a volunteer supported their PO to positively influence national policy on LGBTQI+ issues by working with a strategically selected organisation. Another end-of-assignment report described how a well-connected PO working on law and social justice was able to improve its marketing and fundraising capacity, thereby increasing its ability to work towards achieving its goals of structural change and improved accountability and equality. The Australian Volunteers Program might consider improving their own communications around this type of contribution to Human Rights, given the significance it has to the LGBTQI+ community in South Africa.

Another example of the contribution of the Australia Volunteer Program to Human Rights was a volunteer placed in the South Africa Human Rights Commission, whose role was focused on monitoring and evaluation. This volunteer supported staff through capacity building in report writing, documenting evidence and following up cases. This work improved outcomes on issues such as child protection and unfair dismissals. End-of-assignment reporting from the PO described how the volunteer's support and capacity building led to an enhancement of products developed by the Commission, and also "*influenced behavioural change in those around her. This resulted in solution-driven reactions and better delivery.*" Furthermore, the volunteer was able to strengthen relationships and enhance the reputation of the PO, enabling sustained and deepened relationships with organisations of significance to the PO, and as the PO's end-of-assignment report notes: "*As a result, it is likely that these stakeholders will remain both cooperative and supportive of the work of the PO.*" This highlights the volunteer's contributions to the wider sectoral environment in which the South Africa Human Rights Commission is situated.

2. Maintaining consistent relationships with POs over time. POs are selected to host volunteers, and may do so with different individual volunteers for a number of years. While this may not necessarily mean the PO is always hosting a volunteer (there may be breaks in volunteer placements), the idea is continuity in capacity development over time. As described by the Country Manager:

> *An example would be the Nelson Mandela Foundation. We started working with them in 2014, we've had two volunteers and we're getting a third volunteer at the moment... Already that's a long time that we've been with them. We don't necessarily stop working with them after the three, four years, what we say is, "Let's put on hold, allow the organisation to utilise the learnt skills, meet their networks for further partnerships, come back another time when there's a new needed skill." …*

This example provides evidence of the Australian Volunteer Program's existing strong engagement within the Human Rights impact area in South Africa. Maintaining close relationships with well-connected POs provides the means to positively influence and shape progress across the sector going forward.

3. Working with POs that have a regional focus. The reasoning behind the regional focus is to maximise impact across communities and across the southern African countries in which the program operates as, the Country Manager explained:

> *Some countries in Africa are interlinked, we have organisations whose focus is regional … The volunteers may not necessarily work in Mozambique but their training and skills go beyond South Africa if their host organisation covers projects out of South Africa*

This regional focus is consistent with the prioritisation of well-connected and networked POs, and also the bigger-picture focus on human rights across Africa, as earlier described by the Country Manager. It also indicates well thought through selection of POs for strong engagement in the sector.

The African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS) is an example of a well-connected regional PO which hosted two volunteers in 2018. End-of-assignment reporting for these assignments highlighted the volunteers' contributions to developing regional partnerships and supporting ACMS in expanding their roles, both nationally and regionally, on issues such as promoting gender equality and empowering women, disability inclusion, and child safeguarding particularly in relation to migration.

4. Maintaining close relationships with key stakeholders. Australian Volunteers Program staff work to maintain a good relationship with DFAT Post, the Australian High Commission and the Government of South Africa. This enables the volunteer program to be responsive to emerging needs. A degree of flexibility and adaptability in the volunteer program's focus ensures the needs of all stakeholders (from both the South African and Australian sides) can be considered. One of the main challenges of working in the Human Rights impact area in South Africa are cultural sensitivities and a lack of openness when talking about issues associated with human rights. The historical legacy of human rights abuses, segregation and discrimination is embedded in South African culture, and as a result, talking about human rights is a major challenge and not the norm for many people. The Country Manager explains:

> *Considering our culture, people don't often talk about [human rights] issues. One of them would be child abuse. We have a volunteer that's working with a children's welfare whose role is on quality assurance and M & E. Our country has child abuse issues reported, yet barely followed up and issues that are not reported are vast. We have a good placement of someone who has the skill to mentor on reporting and ensuring there is adequate monitoring and evaluation, ensuring cases are well followed up in an efficient manner. Empowering local staff also means sensitising on embarrassing topics that are considered taboo and making them topics of open discussions without discrimination.*

As the Country Manger noted, overcoming this challenge means working with POs over time to create a shift in how human rights issues are perceived (i.e. so that they are no longer seen as shameful). The volunteer program builds the capacity of POs by maintaining good relationships to enable effective communication, through training, and also by ensuring volunteers understand this historical and cultural context through pre- and post-departure cultural briefings and support from in-country staff. The Country Manager noted that volunteers needed to adapt to a culture in South Africa where people are not direct and information around sensitive topics such as human rights may be withheld, which is different to Australian culture: *"Culturally speaking, Africans are not too direct, they have a way of speaking their mind and it takes a while to understand that, which can be a culture shock to our Australian colleagues, we all eventually get to an understanding."*

Strengthening engagement in Human Rights impact area

The examples above highlight how the South Africa volunteer program demonstrates strong engagement in the Human Rights impact area through maintaining close relationships with key stakeholders, including the well-connected POs hosting volunteers. Engagement may be enhanced by improving communications around success stories, both within South Africa for public diplomacy, but also in Australia to encourage greater support for the volunteer program more broadly.

Links and contribution to Australian Government focus on human rights

The focus of the Australia Volunteer Program on Human Rights is in line with the DFAT Sub-Saharan Africa *Aid Investment Plan* which focuses on leadership and human capacity development, the empowerment of women and girls, and improvement in gender equality outcomes.

Key areas of focus for partner organisations are gender equality and women's empowerment, violence against women and girls, education (including science education), youth, good governance, empowering people with a disability, human rights (including for LGBTIQ+), and environmental management.

Volunteer assignments in South Africa have contributed to human rights and Australian Government priorities. For example:

DFAT's Indigenous people's strategy 2015–2019. Six out of 20 assignments aligned to the Human Rights impact area in South Africa were part of the Classic Wallabies Indigenous Exchange project with the objectives of developing and designing an Eco Village project alongside staff of the Eco Children partner organisation.

Development for all 2015–2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia's aid program: A paediatric occupational therapist with Malamulele Onward assisted in developing a community-based children's disability worker program in rural sites and delivering therapy services to children with cerebral palsy and training their caregivers.

***DFAT's Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy* 2016:** A gender specialist with the Institute of Security Studies ensured that gender received appropriate attention within the organisation, and in its work in Africa. An Evaluation and Sustainability Specialist with Sexual Violence Research Initiative; a Research and Advocacy Support Officer with Sonke Gender Justice; and a Policy Advisor with Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action also supported gender equality outcomes.

Case Study 2: Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security

Introduction

This case study illustrates the *Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security* impact area of the Australian Volunteers Program in Vanuatu. Contributions to the impact area are described, as well as suggested ways to strengthen engagement in relation to Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security.

The Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security impact area for the Australian Volunteers Program has multiple dimensions. It takes climate change and its impacts as its starting point. Responding to climate change impacts (including severe weather and disasters), adaptation and mitigation (including emissions reduction through renewable energy) are important contributions. Extending from this starting point is the resilience of the agriculture and fisheries sectors for food security. Both sectors are directly affected by climate change. Environmental conservation is also included in this impact area, given the impact of climate change on the environment and given that the preservation of healthy ecosystems provides a natural buffer to climate change. Furthermore, inclusion of environmental conservation under this impact area acknowledges that healthy ecosystems are more productive, and more able to sustain resilient livelihoods.
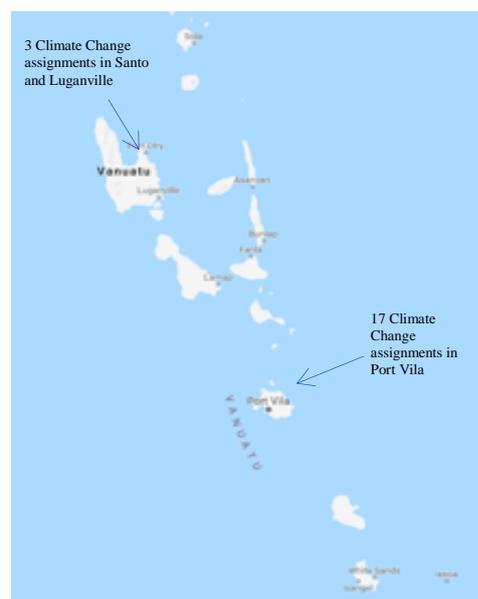
Figure 2. Map of Vanuatu and location of the 20 Climate Change assignments

Photo credit: Darren James

This case study focuses on key themes within this impact area: climate change, agriculture, resilience and conservation. It is informed by an interview with the Country Manager for Vanuatu, and end-of-assignment reporting (particularly drawing on feedback from POs). The Australian Volunteers Program in Vanuatu was selected based on: 1) the **high number** of assignments in Vanuatu that aligned with this impact area, and 2) the **high proportion** of assignments in Vanuatu that aligned with this impact area. Figure 2 shows the geographical location of the placement of volunteers working on assignments aligned with this impact area in Vanuatu. Volunteers were placed in Santo and Luganville in Vanuatu's north (three volunteers), and in the capital, Port Vila (17 volunteers).

Vanuatu is located within the South Pacific region of the Australian Volunteers Program (along with Solomon Islands and Kiribati). Development challenges noted in the Vanuatu Aid Investment Plan (2015–2019) included poverty; lack of access to basic services, land and employment opportunities; lack of access to justice; gender inequality and violence against women and children; climate change and frequent natural disasters.

Summary of mapping of volunteer assignments to the impact area of Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security in Vanuatu (2018)

- Twenty assignments in Vanuatu were coded to Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security (out of a total of 74 assignments)

- Of the 20 assignments coded to Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security:
    - five were also coded to Human Rights
    - nine were coded to Inclusive Economic Growth.

- The most common DAC-CRS code for Climate Change in Vanuatu was 74010 (Disaster prevention and preparedness) followed by 141010 (Water sector policy and administrative management). In total, there were 16 different DAC-CRS codes for Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security in Vanuatu.

- The keywords most often used within the Assignment Titles and Assignment Objectives were 'farm', 'resilience', 'conservation', 'environmental', and 'humanitarian'.

- Partner organisations hosting assignments aligned with Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security are listed below, with the number of volunteers hosted included in brackets:

- CARE International (5)
- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (3)
- Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation (1)
- Department of Forests (1)
- Department of Livestock (1)
- Department of Tourism Vanuatu (1)
- Fondation Suzanne Bastien Gallery (1)

- Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (1)
- Shefa Provincial Government (1)
- Tanna Coffee Development Company Ltd (1)
- The Vanuatu Environmental Science Society (1)
- Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-Hazards Department (1)
- Vanuatu Skills Partnership (1)
- Wan Smolbag Theatre (1)

Learning about Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security and contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program in Vanuatu

Several features of the Australian Volunteers Program in Vanuatu contributed to the impact area of Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security. They are described below, along with suggestions for enhanced engagement within the Climate Change impact area.

1. Strong overlap between the Climate Change and Inclusive Economic Growth impact areas. Of the 20 assignments coded to Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security, nine were also coded to Inclusive Economic Growth. These assignments focused on agriculture, forestry and ecotourism – issues relating to both impact areas. In recognition of the importance of the issues relating to climate change and the links to supporting Vanuatu's economy, the focus of volunteer assignments has been on addressing both these issues, as described by the Country Manager:

> *They [volunteers] have been involved with environment, disaster management, fisheries – we haven't at the moment had any with fisheries but in the past there have been, agriculture, and definitely with forestry.*

End-of-assignment reporting from a volunteer placed within the Department of Tourism, as an Agritourism Development Officer, described how the role required straddling the support of sustainable income sources and the protection of the environment. In the role, the volunteer in the 'farm-to-table' pilot worked alongside the Department of Industry, the Department of Agriculture and the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, aiming to improve the supply of fresh produce to hotels, restaurants and island bungalows and to cater for the growing demand for authentic, quality food experiences. The volunteer described their ability to work across sectors: "*tapping into new markets they [Department of Tourism] didn't consider were available to them*". This highlights the intersection between environment,

agriculture, business and building sustainable livelihoods – key elements of the Climate Change and Inclusive Economic Growth impact areas.

The dual focus on both climate change and inclusive economic growth is likely of interest to DFAT given the mention of both these issues in the Foreign Policy White Paper. The volunteer program's approach in Vanuatu could be an interesting communications piece that exemplifies ways in which positive engagement across both these areas can occur simultaneously.

2. Strategic partnerships with a wide range of active Partner Organisations. Australian volunteers in Vanuatu were placed with POs from across government (e.g. the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development) and NGOs, both local (e.g. the Wan Smolbag Theatre) and international (e.g. Care International). The selection of POs was based on the focus of the PO, its ability to host volunteers and its level of influence in the sector.

An example of high-impact volunteer placements was volunteer contributions to Vanuatu's recent government policy on banning plastic bags. Plastic bags comprise a large portion of Vanuatu's pollution and pose a significant threat to marine life. Given Vanuatu's reliance on healthy marine environments to attract tourists, this issue relates to the Climate Change and Inclusive Economic Growth impact areas. As described by the Country Manager:

> *Last year, or last two years, Vanuatu has banned plastic bags and that is an effort that involves people from the environment unit, from international NGOs from small localised NGOs and special NGOs that were set up to try and prevent plastic being used. So that is something that in the Pacific, Vanuatu is the first country to do this… Well we had volunteers working in [Vanuatu government's] Environment Unit, SPREP [Secretariat of the Pacific Community] … So it was a group of people from different fields all working together to achieve it.*

The quote above highlights that the volunteers were able to contribute to a joint effort to change policy around plastic bags. The Country Manager described high level government support, as well as a French NGO set up exclusively to support the ban: "*So it was a group of people from different fields all working together to achieve it.*"

Volunteer assignments contributing to the plastic bag ban in Vanuatu were aligned to the Climate Change impact area due to their links to environmental conservation. Conservation was included under this impact area because healthy environments are more resilient to the impacts of climate change. These assignment's links to Climate Change are less direct than others (e.g. Climate Change Officer in government, for example), highlighting that the definitions for all impact areas contain grey areas and coding the volunteer portfolio is complex.

3. Well-matched Volunteer and partner organisation. Other enablers of high-impact volunteer assignments mentioned by the Country Manager included having a PO with enthusiasm and energy around the volunteer's work, and this being matched by the volunteer's own enthusiasm. Having volunteers with prior volunteering experience, and having stable and consistent supervision from the PO, also contributed to high-impact assignments:

> *The Vanuatu, VESS (Environment Science Society), it's only a relatively new small NGO and they're achieving quite a few things. I think mainly because the people all feel strongly, the people who run the organisation, are on the board and that, feel strongly about protecting the environment, and tend to get volunteers that feel passionate about it as well.*

4. Long-term engagement with Partner Organisations. The Australian Volunteers Country Manager noted the benefits of a PO hosting multiple volunteers over time, and within this approach including periods with no volunteers. These breaks allowed the PO to practise and implement the skills the volunteer had passed on:

And sometimes it's good for the people [volunteers] they [POs] work with to have a time to themselves so that they [POs] can practice what they've learnt ... Because you can work with people doing things and you think, yes you know how to do it, and then when you're on your own it's not always as easy as you thought it was. So sometimes it means that they can then fine tune what the next volunteer comes in and helps them with.

Having an ongoing program of volunteers within a PO was highlighted as a means of creating positive impact, as described below by the Country Manager. This suggests that to create impact within an impact area, a number of volunteers over time are needed. This may be particularly pertinent for the Climate Change impact area, given the often-uncertain local impacts relating to climate change, and therefore unclear actions required to address them:

Yes, and sometimes it [capacity building and change creation] just doesn't happen with one volunteer either. You might need a series of volunteers over a few years that build on and then you get to the stage where to organisation manages to get funding to run without the volunteer helping them, gets extra staff and they don't need a volunteer anymore. Which is fantastic, but it doesn't usually happen with just one volunteer.

5. Alignment to DFAT priorities. The Country Manager also noted the importance of listening to DFAT's priorities in terms of volunteer placements:

We try and place as many volunteers as we can in the priority areas for DFAT.

The focus of Vanuatu's volunteer program was also aligned with DFAT's Aid Investment Plan (AIP) for Vanuatu. The AIP for Vanuatu is strongly aligned to climate change and disaster resilience, particularly acknowledging the country's vulnerability to disasters such as tropical cyclones. Volunteers have been placed in positions to support improved disaster resilience, for example the Resilience and Response Support Officer with Care International. As reported in the end-of-assignment report from the PO, in this role, the volunteer supported Care's Resilience Team by facilitating training, community mobilisation, developing and reviewing assessment forms and research. These efforts will support the PO into the future, enhancing civil society's resilience to disasters and climate change in Vanuatu.

Challenges of volunteering for Climate Change in Vanuatu

One reason for low-impact volunteer assignments in the Climate Change impact area is a general lack of recognition of the importance of responding to climate change. As stated by the Country Manager, given their modern lifestyles, even people in Port Vila, Vanuatu were removed from the felt reality of climate change impacts. This demonstrates an opportunity for greater communication of the ways in which the Australian Volunteer Program is already engaging in climate change and environmental issues in Vanuatu, including contributions to the plastic bag ban. This story is an important one to tell given the significant outcome for Vanuatu and the Pacific on waste and environmental policy.

Additional challenges were personality clashes between the volunteer and their PO counterparts, instability of supervisors and counterparts within the PO (or lack of supervision), and volunteers taking on their role as if it were a job, instead of a process of capacity building and skills exchange.

Finally, the Country Manager noted the challenges that a volunteer may face if they were the first a PO has ever hosted as the first volunteer often encounters challenges as the organisation prepared for their inclusion.

Strengthening engagement in the Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security impact area

As mentioned, the volunteer program has strong engagement through its dual approach to Climate Change and Inclusive Economic Growth. Improving this engagement will likely

come with improvements in understanding of climate change as a critical issue affecting Vanuatu. Actions to further strengthen engagement in this impact area may include upskilling and improving the awareness of Australian Volunteer Program staff, and ongoing engagement with well-connected POs and other organisations working in the climate and disaster resilience sector. Furthermore, working with experienced Australian organisations and creating stronger relationships with the DFAT Climate Change branch may also support stronger engagement.

Links and contribution to Australian Government focus on climate change

In Vanuatu's *Aid Investment Plan,* Objective 3 is the most relevant to this impact area, as it states community safety and resilience will be improved through supporting Vanuatu to be more resilient to the impacts of natural disasters and helping Vanuatu respond to natural disasters.

The *Australian Aid Policy* notes that climate-related disasters are becoming more severe and frequent in the Asia-Pacific region. Disaster preparedness, risk reduction and social protection help build community resilience. The Australian Volunteers Program contributed to addressing these issues, with two Resilience and Response Officer assignments with CARE International in Vanuatu to strengthen internal and external systems and increase the impact of their resilience program.

The Australian **2017 Foreign Policy White Paper** notes that Australia supports basic food security and investment of development assistance in agriculture and fisheries. Of the 20 assignments in the climate change impact area, five were in agriculture and food security. For example, an Agricultural Extension officer supported the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to strengthen the knowledge of the extension team and their capacity to utilise information and technology in order to increase farm production, profitability and food security.

DFAT's *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy 2016 notes* that in the aftermath of natural disasters, rates of sexual and gender-based violence increase. The strategy's objective of enhancing women's voices in decision-making and leadership is relevant in the impact area of climate change, disaster resilience and food security. The Communications Officer with CARE International in Vanuatu aimed to build community awareness on gender and disaster resilience, consistent with DFAT's focus on this priority in Vanuatu.

Case Study 3: Inclusive Economic Growth

Introduction

This case study illustrates the *Inclusive Economic Growth* impact area of the Australian Volunteers Program in Nepal. Contributions to the impact area are described, as well as suggested ways to strengthen engagement in relation to Inclusive Economic Growth.

The Inclusive Economic Growth impact area in the Australian Volunteers Program is focused on growing and embedding inclusivity and sustainability within developing economies. This includes supporting a strong enabling environment through good governance for private sector development, fair work practices and vocational and technical training. The Inclusive Economic Growth impact area also highlights the need to support the inclusion of women, youth and other marginalised groups typically excluded from full participation in the formal economy. Key to inclusive economic growth is the equitable sharing of economic benefits.

Figure 3. Map of Nepal and location of the 10 Inclusive Economic Growth assignments

This case study is informed by one interview with the Country Manager, the Country Program Officer and the Recruitment Officer for Nepal, and end-of-assignment reporting (particularly drawing on feedback from POs). This impact area includes sectors which contribute to poverty reduction and provide significant income generation. These sectors include tourism, hospitality, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, which are often relevant to marginalised groups. The role of entrepreneurship and small-scale enterprises in developing economies is also recognised within this impact area, particularly in relation to marginalised groups.

Photo credit: Teagan Glenane

Within the broad scope of Inclusive Economic Growth, this case study focuses on the economic empowerment of women and youth, private sector development and micro-entrepreneurship. This case study was selected on the basis of: 1) the **high number** of assignments in Nepal that aligned with this impact area, and 2) the **high proportion** of all assignments in Nepal aligning with this impact area.

The geographical locations of assignments aligned with Inclusive Economic Growth are presented in Figure 3, which shows volunteers were placed in three broad locations in Nepal: Kathmandu, Rampur (Chitwan District) and Kavrepalanchok District.

Summary of mapping volunteer assignments to the impact area of Inclusive Economic Growth in Nepal (2018)

- Ten assignments in Nepal were coded to Inclusive economic growth (out of a total of 25 assignments).
- Of these 10 assignments coded to Inclusive Economic Growth:
  - 3 were also coded to Human Rights
  - 2 were coded to Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security.
- The most common DAC-CRS codes for Inclusive economic growth in this country were 15112 (Government & Civil Society, Decentralisation and support to subnational government) and 32110 (Industry, Industrial policy and administrative management). In total, there were 7 different DAC-CRS codes for Inclusive Economic Growth in Nepal.
- The most common keywords within the Assignment Title and Assignment Objectives were 'tourism', 'business', 'entrepreneur', 'agriculture', 'financial' and 'skills development'.
- Partner organisations who hosted volunteer assignments aligned to the Inclusive Economic Growth impact area are listed below, with the number of volunteers hosted included in brackets:

- Agriculture and Forestry University (1)	- Kirtipur Municipality (1)
- Budhanikantha Municipality (1)	- Ministry of Industry –Cottage and Small Industries Development (2)
- Dhulikhel Municipality (2)	
- Federation of Nepalese Cottage and Small Industries – Bhaktapur (1)	- National Micro Entrepreneurs Federation Nepal (1)
	- Saksham Yuwa Nepal (1)

Learning about Inclusive Economic Growth and contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program in Nepal

This case study illustrates the value of strategic and long-term engagement with partner organisations and details four features of the Australian Volunteers Program in Nepal that have contributed to Inclusive Economic Growth. We draw on these learnings and provide suggestions for enhanced engagement within the Inclusive Economic Growth impact area.

1. Long-term focus on inclusive economic growth, responsive to local priorities. Inclusive Economic Growth has been a focus of the Australian Volunteers Program for some time, as noted by the Country Manager:

> *Economic development has been the focus of the [Volunteer] Program since very long. Economic development or micro-enterprise and job creation has been a core objective of the Australian development program in Nepal.*

The focus was deliberate and aligns with the Aid Investment Plan (AIP) for Nepal which also prioritises economic growth. This intentional and long-term focus demonstrates strong existing engagement relating to Inclusive Economic Growth. The Volunteer Program staff had also been with the program for considerable time, which further supports a solid basis and understanding of the dynamics of working with volunteers in Inclusive Economic Growth placements.

The Nepali government recently introduced a policy requiring volunteers be placed with government partner organisations (POs). This is a complete shift from past practise which directed volunteers to NGO and federation placements. The Country Manager explained:

> *[Nepal's] AIP also talks about economic development and enterprise promotion, economic development, job creation, and of course that is one of the responsibilities of the municipalities also. So municipalities are interested in seeing how they can promote a local economy through agriculture, enterprise development, micro enterprises.*

> *And we worked mostly with NGOs, most of our volunteers were all placed in NGOs. But now we have done a complete shift. And we're working with the local government. It's going to provide us unlimited scope, you know? To make up a really good contribution to the development of Nepal.*

This change in approach to POs provides the volunteer program with an opportunity to further strengthen engagement across the Inclusive Economic Growth impact area, this time with government as POs. New relationships with government at different scales (subnational to national) can be built, with the past experience working with NGOs and federations within the same sector.

2. Strategic engagement with partner organisations (POs) to contribute to sector-wide change. The strategic placement of volunteers within specific POs has a high-level, systems focus. This deliberate approach taken by the Nepal Country staff prioritises working with organisations at the policy or systems level, rather than at the grassroots level, in order to strengthen systems and the ways in which they work to create lasting, meaningful change. The Country Program Officer explained:

> *Most of these assignments were, I think, focused on developing systems and tools as a monitoring evaluation database, marketing… So instead of working with the micro-interpreters in the field, they [volunteers] were more working with the higher-level federation, or government agencies in Kathmandu. So talking about developing system for the database, monitoring evaluation marketing, those are areas where volunteers have worked, and I think they have done a good job.*

This approach aimed to support the system or sector in which the PO was based, to create a strong impact from the top-down, to local community level. In an end-of-assignment report, one volunteer outlined their experience working with the Ministry of Industry (MoI) – Cottage and Small Industry Development as a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. This volunteer's aims were to achieve targets for women's inclusion in micro-enterprise development and through this, to increase the wellbeing and social inclusion of women and girls. By developing a system to track how, and to what extent, these gender-focused targets were being met, the volunteer was contributing to improving women's contributions to Nepal's economic growth. Moreover, this assignment adds significant strategic value because of its placement in an influential and important government agency. Again, this demonstrates strong and deliberate engagement across the Inclusive Economic Growth sector.

The selection of POs was driven by Nepal's AIP and DFAT's priority areas relating to economic growth. As noted by the Country Program Officer:

> *Let's say if the Ministry of Industry is the DFAT part of the micro-entrepreneur job creation program, then obviously you have the Ministry, or it's Departments. Then you have the micro-entrepreneurs' group working within that project and their federation... You would go with the related agencies that are working, that are partners of that particular program.*

Strategic engagement with POs means volunteers contribute to a broader change agenda beyond their specific assignment. An example was provided in assignment reporting documentation, where a volunteer worked in the role of Urban Planner with Dhulikhel Municipality alongside "*the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Finance Department and senior management across the organisation to prioritise and fund the Implementation of the IUDP*" (Integrated Urban Development Plan). As documented in the mid-term assignment review, the volunteer was well aware of the need to contribute to sector-wide capacity building in order to support inclusive economic growth through effective urban planning.

Furthermore, potential POs working in Inclusive Economic Growth need to demonstrate to the Australian Volunteers Program a direct link to this change agenda if they are to be included under the Volunteer Program:

> *So we are not going out to find another NGO which was doing something on economic development and placing a volunteer there unless there was a direct link with the bigger program the government was implementing… So that makes it more viable or successful for the Volunteer Program, you know? A volunteer working in isolation with a small organisation somewhere has limited potential to make a bigger impact.*

An example of a high-impact volunteer placement was a volunteer's contribution to the promotion of skills and employability of youth. This example was provided by the Country Manager as high impact because they worked effectively with the PO to achieve an expansion of the youth program's coverage to new areas of Nepal. This meant more youth participants in the program who could access training and support.

3. <u>Willingness of POs to try something new and a positive attitude on the part of volunteers supports success.</u> A key enabler of the achievement of impact is the willingness of PO counterparts to try new approaches – as described by the Country Program Officer:

> *For the promotion of skills and employability of youth, a key factor of success was their [PO staff] willingness to try new approaches, find new ways of doing things, trying to put in systems and processes so that the organisation could work better, effectively, going forward.*

Another enabler to high impact is the nature and personality of the volunteer. The Country Program Officer noted that it was important for the volunteer to have the ability to build constructive relationships and to have a positive attitude. Cross-cultural awareness was also highlighted as important. This concept was noted by a volunteer in the end-of-assignment reporting: *"constructive criticism, advice or recommendations need to be delivered tactfully to maintain good relationships."*

Another important enabler is that volunteers come with different experiences and mindsets, which can provide new ideas to the Nepali POs:

> *The volunteer will ask you a different question… from a different angle, and hopefully you can work together to come up with something more innovative, more practical, more feasible, and help you implement that. So it's all idea, innovation, changes, you know?*

This enabler is exemplified through a volunteer working as an urban planner, and describing (in the mid-term review report) similar challenges faced by local governments in their home state of Victoria. The volunteer reported: "*Despite the cultural differences, there are many similarities in Nepal that Victoria had to grapple with in settling its systems up. There is enormous opportunity to apply some of that experience here in Nepal and build real capacity for a brand-new cohort of urban planners entering local government context.*" This highlights the volunteer's ability to bring in experience from elsewhere and apply it to the Nepali context.

Challenges of volunteering for Inclusive Economic Growth in Nepal

Reaching marginalised groups in isolated areas is a challenge associated with working in the Inclusive Economic Growth impact area in Nepal, as noted by the Country Program staff:

> *I mean, to really reach out to women, marginalised groups, and of course in geographically isolated areas. And really getting programs down to that level is a challenge, even for the government or agencies working on inclusive economic development. So I think that's where more focus needs to be done on all parts of actors involved in development.*

The Volunteer Program was aiming to address this challenge by expanding volunteer placements outside the Kathmandu Valley. Previous restrictions from the Australian Government (for security reasons) had recently been lifted to allow more remote placements.

Strengthening engagement in the Inclusive Economic Growth impact area

This case study has highlighted the ways in which the volunteer program already has strong engagement in Inclusive Economic Growth impact area, resulting from intentional and long-term relationships with POs. Further work to strengthen the influence and contributions to Inclusive Economic Growth include to pursue strategic relationships with government as POs, given the new government policy which requires volunteers to be placed with government POs.

Links and contribution to Australian Government focus on inclusive economic growth

Objectives 1 and 2 of the *DFAT Nepal Aid Investment Plan 2016–2020* are particularly relevant to the Inclusive Economic Growth impact area, with its focus on employment for women and "exploring opportunities to move beyond income and livelihoods to enterprise development, including working with the private sector to support SMEs" and "will help sub-national levels of government to improve service delivery and economic governance which will contribute to inclusive local economic development and poverty reduction".

In Budhanikantha and Kirtipur Municipalities, volunteer assignments promoted sustainable tourism to create jobs and promote local culture and products.

Two volunteers were placed with Dhulikhel Municipality to strengthen programs in economic and business development in agriculture, and to strengthen integrated urban development planning.

DFAT's *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy* **2016** sets three priority areas of promoting women's leadership, economic empowerment, and ending violence against women and girls. Assignments in Inclusive Economic Growth focus on economic empowerment through micro-entrepreneurship and income generation for the poor. For example, the role of the Environmental-Business Adviser at the Federation of Nepalese Cottage and Small Industries Bhaktapur was to promote entrepreneurship skills development, enhance market promotion activities and strengthen awareness of environmentally sustainable business practices. Another volunteer in the role of Product Marketing Officer supported the National Micro Entrepreneurs Federation Nepal to develop the capacity of the partner organisation to support micro entrepreneurs in product marketing, assist with brand development and improve market linkages. While the assignments are not gender-focused, they do have an inclusive approach and all volunteers are expected to implement strategies that relate to promoting gender equality. The strategies also aim to be disability inclusive and child safeguarding.

Annex 4: Terms of reference for deep dive evaluations

Australian Volunteers Program's thematic 'impact areas' summative evaluations

Deep Dive Learning of the Australian Volunteers Program's contribution to Impact Areas

Terms of Reference[12]

1. Introduction

The Terms of Reference for the "Formative evaluation of the Australian Volunteers Program's thematic 'impact areas'" sets out the Australian Volunteers Program's plans to carry out longer-term research to measure outcomes within the impact areas.

The Terms of Reference note:

> Details provided in this section of the Terms of Reference will not be part of the contracted work in FY18/19 but are provided to indicate the program's vision for a longer-term approach to measuring outcomes within the impact areas. It is an expected output of this ToR that in providing recommendations as to how the program can better measure achievement of outcome 1 using the impact areas as thematic lenses, the contractor will develop this vision into a detailed proposed methodology. The contractors who conduct the formative evaluation will be the preferred suppliers for later work subject to performance review.

> Following on from looking at the breadth of the portfolio in FY18/19, the program then intends to look more in-depth over subsequent years of the program, moving from a formative evaluation to a series of summative evaluations. These summative evaluations will contribute evidence to program mid-term and external evaluations that are not part of the scope of this ToR. A review of the current footprint of the program now will be followed-up with separate studies on each of the three priority areas in turn. For example, following on from the baseline in FY18/19, more evaluative 'deep dives' could be conducted in subsequent years (e.g. Inclusive Growth in FY20, Climate Change in FY21, Human Rights in FY22) when there will be more scope for exploring development outcomes under the program. Each of these 'deep dives' would be based on a similar analytical framework and methodology to enable comparability between them (and the baseline) and provide efficiencies and opportunities from learning from one to the other. The methodology for these to be developed but likely to include mixed-methods research in a sample of countries. This approach, with its longitudinal dimension, may also allow other research questions regarding, for example, approaches to partner capacity building, to also be examined.

> Subsequent phases of the impact areas research (after FY18/19) will turn to key evaluation questions relating to effectiveness, particular in relation to the first outcome of the program: 'Partner organisations are supported by Australia to progress their developmental objectives'.

This document sets out Terms of Reference for summative evaluations for the impact areas, informed by the earlier formative evaluation TOR and findings of the formative evaluation. An approach is offered to inform future detailed evaluation design and planning (as part of first phase of the evaluation).

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[12] This Terms of Reference has been prepared to response to Key Evaluation Question 10: "Informed by learning from the mapping exercise, how can the Australian Volunteers Program better measure contributions to impact areas?"

2. Background and context

The Global Program Strategy for the Australian Volunteers Program sets out three impact areas to which the Australia Volunteer Program contributes. As described in the formative evaluation findings, these impact areas are understood as just one lens through which to assess contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program. For example, contributions to other sectors such as health, education and technology are also valued as a result of the Australian Volunteers Program. The three impact areas are:

Human Rights: At its core, the Human Rights impact area pays special attention to marginalised groups and aims to secure human rights, and to improve access to, and civic participation in, democratic processes. The Human Rights impact area promotes fulfillment of rights for particular marginalised groups including: women, gender and sexual minorities, people living with a disability, children, youth and indigenous people. Inclusive in the fulfilment of rights is the ability of marginalised groups to participate and thrive in society, have access to a protective legal and justice system, and to have access to effective social protection and information and communications.

Climate Change/Disaster Resilience/Food Security: The Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Food Security impact area takes climate change and its impacts as its starting point. Responding to climate change impacts (including severe weather and disasters), adaptation and mitigation (including emissions reduction through renewable energy) are at the core of this impact area. Extending from this starting point are the resilience of agriculture and fisheries sectors and food security, all of which are directly affected by climate change. Environmental conservation is also included under this impact area, given the impact of climate change on the environment, and given that the preservation of healthy ecosystems provides a natural buffer to climate change. Furthermore, the inclusion of environmental conservation under this impact area acknowledges that healthy ecosystems are more productive, and are more able to sustain livelihoods (linking to Inclusive Economic Growth).

Inclusive Economic Growth: The Inclusive Economic Growth impact area centres around growing and embedding inclusivity and sustainability within developing economies. This includes supporting a strong enabling environment through good governance for private sector development, fair work practices, and vocational and technical training. The Inclusive Economic Growth impact area also highlights the need to support the inclusion of women, youth and other marginalised groups typically excluded from full participation in the formal economy. Key to inclusive economic growth is the equitable sharing of economic benefits. This impact area includes sectors which contribute to poverty reduction and provide significant income generation within the countries the Australian Volunteers Program supports. These sectors include tourism, hospitality, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, which are often relevant to marginalised groups. The role of entrepreneurship and small-scale enterprises in developing economies is also recognised within this impact area, again for its relevance to marginalised groups.

3. Evaluation purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the outcomes and contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to the three impact areas.

This objective relates to the first outcome of the program: 'Partner organisations are supported by Australia to progress their developmental objectives'.

4. Evaluation scope

The scope and focus of the evaluations will be informed by a number of sampling decisions.

Impact Area Focus: Annual evaluations will be conducted relevant to each of the three impact areas. The sequence of the three impact areas is proposed by the Australian Volunteers Program:

Year 1 (FY20): Inclusive Economic Growth

Year 2 (FY21): Climate Change / Disaster Resilience / Food Security

Year 3 (FY22): Human Rights

As appropriate, a sub-theme relevant to an impact area might be an area of inquiry (depending on the country focus, and the development objectives of the partner organisations), or a broader area of inquiry which includes multiple sub-themes within an impact area may be chosen.

Country-level analysis: A country-level analysis will be carried out of each impact area to consider the contribution to the portfolio of partner organisations and their development objectives relevant to the specific impact area within a country context.

The precise sample will be confirmed with the Australian Volunteers Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team, but it is proposed that a country is selected on the basis of providing best learning about the impact area.

For example, a country with highest proportion / highest number of assignments in impact area.

Partner organisations / assignments: Within a country context, partner organisations will be identified relevant to the impact area and the sample for inclusion will be identified. Priority for inclusion will be informed by the following criteria: assignments from 2018 onwards, single to multiple assignments within one partner organisation, relevant partner organisation staff available who have been supervisors or had working relationships with Australian Volunteers.

5. Key evaluation questions

The evaluation questions are informed by the OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance[13] and will form into five domains of inquiry: Relevance; Effectiveness; Efficiency; Impact, and Sustainability. The evaluation questions are also informed by the Australian Volunteers Program MELF Framework.

Relevance

1) To what extent has the Australian Volunteers Program been suitable for supporting partner organisations to progress objectives in [IMPACT AREA] in [COUNTRY]?[14]

Effectiveness

2) To what extent and in what ways have partner organisations progressed their development objectives?[15]

3) To what extent and in what ways has the Australian Volunteers Program contributed to progress achieved?[16]

4) Were there contextual factors that helped or hindered progress overall?

Efficiency

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[13] https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm
[14] See MELF Key Evaluation Question 6
[15] See MELF Key Evaluation Question 1: *outcomes (intended and unintended, positive and negative) of the program for partner organisations, development in partner countries)*
[16] See MELF Key Evaluation Question 2

5) To what extent has the Australian Volunteers Program operated in an efficient way and contributed to progress in [IMPACT AREA] in [COUNTRY]?[17]

6) To what extent has the program been able to learn and improve its approaches to managing a volunteering program, including through innovation and trialling new approaches?[18]

Impact

7) What longer-term changes have partner organisations contributed to in [IMPACT AREA] in [COUNTRY]?

Sustainability

8) To what extent is there an indication of ongoing benefits attributable to the support of the Australian Volunteers Program to partner organisations in [IMPACT AREA] in [COUNTRY]?

6. Evaluation Approach

The evaluations seek to learn about the contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to development objectives in relation to each of the three impact areas. An important aspect of the evaluation is to situate the contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program support in relation to the broader country context and development issues.

It is expected the evaluation will employ a number of approaches as outlined below. The evaluation approach will be detailed in an Evaluation Design / Plan prepared in the first phase of the evaluation and agreed to by an Evaluation Reference Group.

Theory of change – to discern the contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to development outcomes (within an impact area), recognising the contribution of volunteer assignments to partner organisations achievement of development objectives, and in turn partner organisations contributions to broader development outcomes in the country

Contribution analysis – to discern causal linkages and infer causality of the Australian Volunteers Program to outcomes achieved in the impact areas

Systems thinking – to situate the Australian Volunteers Program portfolio (partner organisations and assignments) within the broader country context, to make sense of contribution within broader development

Mixed methods – to ensure a 'deep dive' learning and assessment of outcomes and contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to the three impact areas the evaluation will employ:

- Social network analysis
- Key informant interviews and focus group discussions with multiple stakeholders
- Focus group discussion (FGD) at a returned volunteer debrief for volunteer assignments aligned to that specific impact area
- Australian Volunteers Program monitoring
- Partner organisation monitoring
- Country data / statistics (to situate learning within country context).

The evaluation will draw on the program logic set out in the MELF (December 2017), with a focus on the first program outcome *"**Partner organisations are supported by Australia to progress their development objectives".*** As noted in Box 1 below, the Australian Volunteers Program seeks to support development outcomes *"by strengthening partner organisation capacity (staff skills and capability, improving systems and contributing to improved organisational processes), partner organisations will be able to progress their*

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[17] See MELF Key Evaluation Question 4
[18] See MELF Key Evaluation Question 5

development objectives". This program logic will be assessed within the evaluations to identify contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to impact areas.

Box 1: MELF Program Logic – Outcome 1

A. **Partner organisations are supported by Australia to progress their development objectives.** The Australian Volunteers program will partner with a range of organisations to help strengthen their capacity to deliver on their development objectives. The nature of partnership implies that both the partner organisations and the Australian Volunteers program have shared objectives and both parties benefit from, and contribute to, the partnership.

The program supports a strong link between development objectives in partner countries, Australia's development priorities, and the selection of partner organisations. (See Figure 1 below).

Figure 1   Relationship between Partner Organisation selection and development objectives

The logic states that if partner organisations have a strategic rationale for participating in the program[1] and provide a safe and productive working environment for the volunteers, the volunteer will have a good experience and strengthen capacity within the partner organisation. By strengthening partner organisation capacity (staff skills and capability, improving systems and contributing to improved organisational processes), partner organisations will be able to progress their development objectives.

The program will support partner organisations to progress their development objectives by:

- Establishing relevant (to country priorities) and diverse partnerships, both in Australia and overseas, with a range of organisations (community based organisations, private sector, government organisations, academic institutions, peak bodies, etc.).
- Establishing and regularly reviewing Partnership Plans[2] which set out how partners and the Australian Volunteers program will work together to resource capacity needs that support partners to deliver on their development outcomes.
- Raising awareness in Australian Organisations, potential partner organisations and within DFAT (post, state offices and Canberra) of the benefits of volunteers and the approaches of the Australian Volunteers program.
- Trialling and offering different volunteering approaches to strengthen organisational capacity (e-volunteering, multiple assignments, cluster assignments etc.).

The proposed approach to learning about contributions to the impact areas outlined above could also be transferred to learning about other sectors. For example, given the large proportion of the volunteer program that focuses on health and education, our proposed methodology could equally be applied to learn about contributions to these sectors.

7. Phases and evaluation key deliverables

It is expected that the evaluation will be carried out through a sequence of phases and importantly these phases will support the development of a robust approach to impact evaluation which will be refined and applied for each impact area across a three-year period.

1) Preparation of Evaluation Design / Evaluation Planning

a) Inception meeting with Australian Volunteers Program staff (MEL Team, Melbourne-based and in-country staff)

2) Document review relevant to Australian Volunteers Program in-country context / focus of impact area

3) In-country data collection / analysis / sense making

a) Stakeholder consultations

b) Social network analysis

c) Contribution analysis / sense making with in-country Australian Volunteers Program staff

4) Sense-making workshop with Australian Volunteers Program staff (MEL Team, Melbourne-based and in-country staff)

5) Preparation of draft and final Evaluation Reports

6) Refinement of Evaluation Design

It is proposed that key deliverables for each of the (three) impact area evaluations will be:

1) Evaluation Design / Plan

2) Sense-making workshop / Presentation of emerging findings

3) Draft Evaluation Report

4) Final Evaluation Report

5) Refined Evaluation Design / Plan

It is expected that the sequential nature of the annual evaluations will enable learning from one impact area evaluation to inform a refined approach for subsequent evaluation activities. It is expected that through the use of the evaluation approach in subsequent years a robust evaluation approach with transferrable set of methods will be developed that could be used by the Australian Volunteers Program for future evaluations of the impact areas or other areas of focus of the Program, such as the health or education sectors.

8. Evaluation audience and end-users

The impact area evaluations will have a diverse audience base and will support outcomes of learning, accountability and public diplomacy.

Internal audiences and interests within the Australian Volunteers Program include:

Regional Directors and Country Management Teams

- Better understand contribution to impact areas.
- Consider options for developing partnerships with new organisations and supporting existing partner organisations in order for the Australian Volunteers Program to contribute to outcomes in impact area.

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Team

- Better understand theory of change for the Australian Volunteers Program's contribution to impact areas.
- Have a baseline assessment that can be reviewed over time.
- Consider options for refinement of ongoing monitoring and evaluation.
- Have a robust impact evaluation approach that could be used across multiple focus areas within the Program.

Volunteers

- Better understand contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to the Australian Aid Program.
- Better understand contribution of partner organisations to development outcomes.

External audiences and interests include:

DFAT

- Better understand contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to the Australian Aid Program.
- Use the evaluation findings in a broad range of communications (public diplomacy)

Partner organisations

- Better understand contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to the Australian Aid Program.

- Better understand contribution of partner organisations to development outcomes.

- Use of evaluation findings in a broad range of communications.

Country governments

- Better understand contribution of the Australian Volunteers Program to the Australian Aid Program.

- Better understand contribution of partner organisations to development outcomes.

- Use of evaluation findings in a broad range of communications.

9. Professional guidelines and ethics

It is expected that the evaluation will be undertaken in accordance with the AES Guidelines for Ethical Conduct of Evaluations and the ACFID/RDI guidelines for ethical research in evaluation and development. Products will meet the DFAT standards for monitoring and evaluation.

The Evaluation Team will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, and will be aware that the produced material is the intellectual property of the Australian Government. All materials must be treated sensitively, and team members must maintain strict confidentiality of all data, information and documentation provided or obtained during the project.