



OXFAM AUSTRALIA VOLUNTEER IMPACT QUARTERLY REPORT

OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2019

Prepared by the Volunteer Engagement Team – March 2020



Photo credit: Keith Parsons OAU

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Executive Summary

Volunteers at Oxfam Australia continue to contribute significantly to the successful operation of the organisation. Volunteers and interns are engaged in a wide variety of roles within the organisation and continue to meaningfully impact Oxfam's work in many different areas of the organisation. This is the second quarterly report developed by the Volunteer Engagement Team which assesses the impact of volunteers at Oxfam Australia. This report will specifically analyse the impact of volunteers at Oxfam between the October-December 2019.

This report will outline both demographical data relating to current volunteers at Oxfam Australia as well as data relating to the impact of contributions volunteers make to the organisation. It will do so by first looking at the total number of hours at an organisation and sectional level. It will determine that, due to a decline in the total number of volunteers and hours, which can be explained by factors such as the recent closure of Oxfam Trading and the organisational change process, volunteers on average completed a similar number of hours in their role. It will then examine the financial outcomes provided to the organisation as a result of volunteers' commitment to Oxfam's work. It will outline this both in financial and non-financial terms, and the outcomes that volunteers enable Oxfam to achieve through its work.

This report will also outline the roles volunteers currently undertake within the organisation to highlight the scope in which volunteers impact the organisation. It will then outline the level of feedback provided by volunteers, which is important to understanding the satisfaction of volunteers in their role and it will provide a case study which highlights the positive engagement volunteers have on the organisation.

This report will finally prescribe several key recommendations for implantation in order to further enable effective volunteer engagement and impact within the organisation. It will also provide several reflections and conclusions from the data analysed.

Volunteers at Oxfam

Volunteer hours

Volunteers at Oxfam continued to be engaged in a wide variety of roles within many sections of the organisation, this exemplifies the significant contribution volunteers continue to make. In general, there has been a decline in the total number of volunteer hours at an organisational level. This has been due to the finalisation of the closure of Oxfam Shop and as a result of the organisation change process.

At a sectional level however, the total number of hours completed has not been impacted in such a significant manner, volunteer hours in the Brisbane and Sydney offices for example were higher during this period in comparison to the previous quarter. Volunteer hours during the previous quarter were also higher following the Sydney and Brisbane Trailwalker events. Supporter Services and Programs (Management & Accountability) recorded the highest total number of hours for this quarter and the Brisbane office and Fundraising & Resource Growth recorded the lowest.

Below is a table which outlines the number of logged hours contributed to each individual section/unit.

| Unit/Team | Hours | Volunteers |
|---|--------------|-------------------|
| NSW – Sydney Trailwalker Event | 25 | 1 |
| NSW/ACT – Major Gifts | 19 | 1 |
| NSW/ACT – Sydney Office | 30 | 1 |
| QLD – Brisbane Office | 14 | 1 |
| VIC – Corporate Services | 27 | 2 |
| VIC – Fundraising & Resource Growth | 14 | 1 |
| VIC – Melbourne Trailwalker | 84 | 7 |
| VIC – Programs: Management & Accountability | 113 | 2 |
| VIC – Programs: Development & Effectiveness | 48 | 2 |
| VIC – Public Engagement & Advocacy | 44 | 2 |
| VIC – Supporter Services | 464 | 8 |
| WA – Fair Trade Shop | 69 | 1 |
| Total | 951 | 29 |

Source: Better Impact

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

Infographic:

AGE

- 18-30: 15 (56%)
- 30-45: 2 (7%)
- 45-60: 1 (4%)
- 60+: 7 (26%)
- NOT SPECIFIED: 2 (7%)

KEY FACTS & FIGURES

- Total volunteer hours: 951
- Total volunteers: 27
- Total volunteer roles filled: 29
- Sections/units with at least one volunteer role filled: 12

VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK

100% of volunteers indicated positive feedback with each individual shift

VOLUNTEER DEMOGRAPHICS

- Gender of volunteers: Female (61%); Male (23%); Not disclosed (16%)
- Number of linguistic backgrounds: 11
- Percentage of volunteers living with a disability: 2.7%

VOLUNTEER FINANCIAL IMPACT

- Total dollar value: \$38,037
- FTE: 0.6 roles (annually)
- Based on the contributions of 29 volunteers between October-December 2019

POSITIONS FILLED BY OAU VOLUNTEERS

- Event Administration Support (Trailwalker)
- Key Supporter Research Volunteer
- Compass Migration Technical Officer
- Business Support Volunteer
- Schools Public Health Intern
- Corporate & Community Engagement
- What She Makes Campaign Company Engagement Volunteer

IMPACT OUTCOMES

2 volunteer shifts: Can enable an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman to fly to Canberra to meet with parliamentarians and develop her political and engagement skills.

1 month of volunteering (on average): Can provide garden tool kits for 50 women and small-scale farmers, so they can grow fresh and nutritious food all year round in Pakistan.

SECTIONS/UNITS WITH THE MOST SATISFIED VOLUNTEERS:

- NSW – Sydney Trailwalker (100%)
- VIC – Fundraising & Resource Growth (100%)
- VIC – Programs: Development & Effectiveness (100%)

VOLUNTEER HOURS BY SECTION (TOP 5)

- VIC – Supporter Services (464)
- VIC – Programs: Management & Accountability (113)
- VIC – Melbourne Trailwalker (84)
- WA – Fair Trade Shop (69)
- VIC – Programs: Development & Effectiveness (48)

The role of volunteers within OAU

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

- Compass Migration Technical Officer Volunteer
- Event Administration Support (Trailwalker)
- Supporter Services Volunteer
- Analyst Support Volunteer: Institutional Funding
- Administration Support Volunteer
- Customer Service Volunteer (Trailwalker)
- Program Data Administration and Quality Assurance Support Volunteer
- Company Engagement Volunteer: What She Makes Campaign
- Schools Public Health Intern
- Corporate & Community Engagement Volunteer
- Key Supporter Research Volunteer
- Business Support Volunteer
- National Events Office Assistant Volunteer (Trailwalker)
- Micro-desalination Intern

Example: CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program

Oxfam Australia was fortunate to host two interns from the CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program during the later months of 2019. This is the third round of CareerTrackers internships Oxfam Australia has supported. CareerTrackers supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by linking them with paid 12-week internships with participating organisations.

Isabelle (Bella) McMahon completed her third internship at Oxfam Australia and worked with Sarah Rogan to arrange logistics for a speaker's tour involving three Bangladeshi women coming to Australia for the What She Makes Campaign. Xena Jammias completed her internship under the guidance of Sari Baird in the legal team. Xena also completed work alongside the First Peoples' Program team.

Both Sarah and Sari spoke highly of the work completed both Bella and Xena. Sari and the legal team valued their experience in hosting a CareerTrackers intern in their team as a 'reciprocal learning experience' and spoke of the unexpected and wonderful sense of family and belonging that had been fostered between Xena and the team. Sarah spoke of how Bella's skillset was well suited to the role and Bella indicated that the away days with the team was a highlight.

In future intakes both managers expressed that they would like to see greater and more widespread involvement from the relevant teams supporting interns in order to foster a more holistic and meaningful work placement experience. Overall, this particular internship intake proved to be incredibly enriching for both interns and the organisation.

Volunteer feedback at OAU

Volunteer feedback is an important measure to indicating the overall satisfaction of volunteers in their role and enables volunteer managers to better their programs. At Oxfam Australia, feedback is provided by volunteers at the conclusion of each shift. Volunteers submit feedback via the 'MyImpact' portal on Better Impact alongside the total number of hours completed. Volunteers have the option of choosing from one of five options which measure their experience.

The first table indicates the total feedback from volunteers in all sections and units. The data from this period indicates that volunteers are overall satisfied with their experience with just under 90 percent indicating that their experience was 'very good'. This is a positive result as for this period there were no negative responses recorded.

| Volunteer Feedback totals | Total Number | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Very Good | 56 | 88.89% |
| Good | 7 | 11.11% |
| Average | 0 | 0.00% |
| Poor | 0 | 0.00% |
| Very Poor | 0 | 0.00% |
| Total (responses) | 63 | 100.00% |

Source: Better Impact

- Volunteers log hours for each individual shift and not their overall experience as a volunteer
- Figures exclude Oxfam Trailwalker Volunteers not based in an OAU office

The second table outlines the feedback recorded from volunteers at a sectional level. This table only records the total number of 'very good' responses out of all responses recorded. The numerical results suggest that the vast majority of volunteers have indicated a 'very good' experience which is a positive result.

| Volunteer Feedback Totals (by Unit/Section) | Total Number (Very Good) | Percentage | Total Responses |
|--|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| NSW – Sydney Trailwalker | 4/4 | 100.00% | 4 |
| NSW/ACT – Major Gifts | No data | No data | 0 |
| NSW/ACT – Sydney Office | No data | No data | 0 |
| VIC - Corporate Services | 9/11 | 81.82% | 11 |
| VIC – Fundraising & Resource Growth | 2/2 | 100.00% | 2 |
| VIC - Melbourne Trailwalker | 18/20 | 90.00% | 20 |
| VIC – Programs: Management & Accountability | 16/17 | 94.12% | 17 |
| VIC – Programs: Development & Effectiveness | 3/3 | 100.00% | 3 |
| VIC – Public Engagement: Advocacy & Campaigns | 4/6 | 66.67% | 6 |
| VIC – Supporter Services | No data | No data | 0 |
| WA – Fair Trade Shop | No data | No data | 0 |
| Totals | | | 63 |

Source: Better Impact

- A low result may not be indicative of a volunteers' overall experience or satisfaction of other volunteers within the organisation due to the small amount of data contributed from that team
- Figures exclude Oxfam Trailwalker Volunteers not based in an OAU office

Volunteer impact at OAU

Financial impact

Impact contributions by volunteers can be measured in financial (monetary) outcomes which enable Oxfam to further its work as a result of remuneration saved from volunteerism within the organisation. Below is a table outlining how volunteerism within Oxfam possesses a positive financial impact.

| Number of volunteer roles | FTE | Dollar value |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 29 | 0.6 (annually) | \$38,037 |

Source: Better Impact

- Based on Salary Category 5A
- Does not include non-office based volunteers

Outcomes: Programs

The contribution of volunteers enables Oxfam to dedicate further resources to the work of its programs. Below are set of current examples volunteer hours have enabled the organisation to undertake as a result of hours completed:

- **1 volunteer hour**
 - Can enable Oxfam to provide seeds, tray and other accessories for a small-scale farmer to start their own family food garden in Pakistan.
 - Can provide training of community members on water and sanitation, including the training of women on hand pump chlorination and repairing water systems in India.
- **1 office volunteer shift (on average)**
 - Will enable a group training session for 30 people to learn about clean water, sanitation and safe hygiene practices in Papua New Guinea.
 - Can help a women's group in Indonesia to develop awareness of their rights and help them apply this knowledge in lifting themselves out of poverty.
- **2 office volunteer shifts (on average)**
 - Can enable an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman to fly to Canberra to meet with parliamentarians and develop her political and engagement skills.
- **1 month of volunteering in an Oxfam Australia office (on average)**
 - Can provide garden tool kits for 50 women and small-scale farmers, so they can grow fresh and nutritious food all year round for their families in Pakistan.

Outcomes: Supporter Services

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

- Batches: 382.50
- Database amendments: 828.00
- Incoming Mail (Return to sender): 460.00
- Outgoing Mail (Welcome letters): 2.50
- Phones (Message bank): 335.00

Non-financial impact

Volunteerism can also enable non-financial impact within an organisation. One Volunteering Western Australia report highlights that exceptional to financial capital, volunteerism also possesses human, knowledge, social and symbolic capital benefits.

- Human capital: volunteers can impart human capital to an activity through the utilisation of their own skills and knowledge.
- Knowledge capital: relating to the information and skills of volunteers, and also their experience with group processes and on-the-job learning.
- Social capital: the norms and social relations embedded in the social structures of societies that enable people to coordinate their actions to achieve desire goals.
- Symbolic capital: can be accrued as a means of fulfilling ones self-worth (promotion of aspiration/productivity) and can be used as a means for motivation.

It is difficult to accurately measure the exact extent to which these various forms of capital translate into tangible outcomes within an organisational context, but the promotion of these forms of capital do encourage greater levels of motivation, knowledge-acquisition, retention, productivity and aspiration among the organisation's volunteers and staff.

Recommendations

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

1. Volunteer Managers should be encouraging volunteers to log hours and feedback fields on Better Impact more regularly so that the organisation can develop a more accurate understanding on the true impact of volunteers.
 - In order to obtain accurate data, volunteers should be logging hours and providing feedback in order to develop an accurate understanding of their true impact in the organisation. Whilst many volunteers and managers are compliant in this regard, reminders are necessary in order to ensure hours reporting occurs in some areas of the organisation. The Volunteer Engagement Team should work with volunteers and their managers to ensure that hours are being logged and develop regular communications with managers if there are being logged on a volunteers' behalf.
2. The Volunteer Engagement Team should further promote correct recruitment and induction processes with volunteer managers to ensure that it is completed in a correct and compliant manner.
 - The Volunteer Engagement Team has recently encountered several instances where volunteer managers have not followed procedure in the recruitment or induction process. This can thus affect the correct promotion of effective policies relating to correct recruitment but also in relation to the satisfaction of volunteers who may have a negative experience as a result of this. VET should continue to work volunteer managers to ensure that all recruitment and induction processes are completed in the correct manner. This could be possibly in the form of a 'one-pager' checklist or through online/face-to-face training.
3. Further steps should be taken to shape perceptions of volunteer managers so to view volunteers as inclusive members of the workforce and as an active members of their unit/section
 - The majority of volunteer managers are effective in ensuring some form of recognition is provided to volunteers for their contribution to the organisation, but further steps should be taken to ensure that volunteer managers better incorporate volunteers as members of their teams/units. This may be achieved by encouraging volunteers to attend meetings, activities within the team, and further reminding volunteers managers of the value of recognising volunteers, working on ways to change the mindset possibly in the form of online or face-to-face training.
4. Further steps should be taken to highlight the financial and non-financial impact of volunteerism at Oxfam
 - Further communications on platforms such as Watch this Space/Workplace should be encouraged by both VET and for volunteer managers. Increased communications will allow further engagement and recognition of volunteers to occur and is an effective measure to engage both volunteer managers and volunteers.

Conclusion

Oxfam Australia continues to see strong engagement from volunteers across the organisation. In recent months, the total number of volunteers and hours completed has declined, but the impact volunteers contribute continues to be significant. This is the second quarterly report to measure the overall impact volunteers have on the organisation. This report determined that despite challenges which have recently impacted volunteers' ability to make a contribution to the same degree as in other quarters, it argued nonetheless that volunteer impact between October-December 2019 remained significant.

This report first outlined the demographical data relating to volunteers in relation to the number of hours completed at a sectional and organisational level. It then measured the impact of volunteers at Oxfam through analysing the number of roles, the scope of volunteer roles, and the level and quality of feedback provided. This data indicated that whilst the number of hours had decreased, the level of feedback remained consistently positive. This section also analysed the impact of volunteers through the analysing of the CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program as a case study.

The report measured the effectiveness of volunteer impact using financial and non-financial indicators. It determined the financial impact of volunteers is significant with the total hours all volunteers have completed is equitable to 0.6 full-time equivalent positions (annually) for this quarter. It also analysed the non-financial impacts such as the enabling of greater levels of human, social, knowledge and symbolic capital, which possesses the ability to enable greater forms of motivation, aspiration, productivity and knowledge-growth in the organisation.

This report finally prescribed a set of recommendations and conclusions to act upon in order to more effectively promote volunteer engagement within the organisation. It concluded by recommending that further steps should be taken by both the Volunteer Engagement Team and by volunteer managers to ensure hours and feedback is provided, to ensure that recruitment and induction processes are completed correctly, to promote a further sense of inclusion into the workforce, and to also further highlight both the financial and non-financial impacts of volunteerism. The Volunteer Engagement Team should continue to work with volunteer managers on a regular basis to ensure an effective relationship is maintained in order to further enhance engagement of Oxfam's volunteers.

END OF REPORT