



# OXFAM AUSTRALIA 2023 VOLUNTEER IMPACT REPORT

October 2024



**OXFAM**  
Australia

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Cover image: Broome, Western Australia. Chloe and Maya have been volunteering with the Oxfam First Peoples Program since June 2023. In November, they had the opportunity to go on Yawaru Country and help support the Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Council Roundtable. Image: Aimee Han/Oxfam.

Acknowledgements: The authors would like to thank all people who assisted the Volunteer Engagement Program with the development of this report, including many members of Oxfam Australia's volunteer and staff cohort.

Oxfam acknowledges the support of the Australian Government through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) and the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

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About Oxfam: At Oxfam Australia, we believe all lives are equal and no-one should live in poverty. Together we challenge the systems that lead to inequality, while providing aid where it's needed most. With you, our partners and communities, we are changing the world for the better every day, to relieve and eliminate poverty.

The future is equal.

## FOREWORD

The Oxfam Australia Volunteer Engagement Program Team (VEPT) are pleased to present the 2023 Oxfam Australia Volunteer Impact Report. This is the ninth report produced by the team, which outlines the substantial ways volunteers, interns and secondees (collectively referred to as volunteers) make a difference at Oxfam Australia.

This year's report uses data, storytelling and program and non-program outcomes to show the time and effort volunteers have contributed. The resulting impact to Oxfam Australia, the communities we work with and volunteers themselves is significant.

Oxfam Australia is committed to engaging in best practice as it relates to the engagement of volunteers and the reporting of volunteer impact is an important way for us demonstrate this. On behalf of Oxfam Australia, we thank each volunteer for the time and effort that they provide to help us work towards realising a more equal world.

Volunteers have been an important part of our history and identity, and we are grateful for the contributions that so many compassionate people make in the Oxfam volunteer community.

## KEY FINDINGS



Volunteers across all programs contributed 22,176 hours of their time – that's a combined total over 2.5 years!



In 2023, we launched our Micro Volunteering Program – a new way for volunteers to complete short tasks across teams at Oxfam Australia. Read more about this program on page 9.



Volunteers made a difference by enhancing our capacity, building community and helping achieve organisation objectives.



Volunteers and staff said the impacts of volunteering include utilising skills to make a difference, helping to develop resources and helping with micro volunteering tasks.



Nine current Oxfam Australia employees were previously making an impact as a volunteer.



Volunteers contributed to all four pillars of our work (Climate, Economic, First Peoples, and Gender Justice). Find out more about how volunteers do this on page 5.

# VOLUNTEER IMPACT ON A PAGE

January - December 2023 (all programs)

AUD  
\$1,103,234

OR

13.2 full-time  
salaries

The estimated financial value of all  
volunteer contributions in 2023

9

Current employees  
were previously  
Oxfam Australia  
volunteers

(A few) outcomes from volunteering at  
Oxfam

AUD

**\$216,055**

Raised through  
volunteer-involving  
initiatives in  
2023



**37**

Volunteer roles



**74.1**

Combined years of service  
(office volunteers)



**22,176**

Volunteer hours\*

Oxfam's four volunteering programs\*\*

Office  
volunteering

32  
volunteers  
3,895  
hours

Micro  
volunteering

9  
volunteers  
83  
hours

Event  
volunteering

520  
volunteers  
3,579  
hours

Community  
volunteering

134  
volunteers  
14,619  
hours

Where were volunteers  
based? (all programs)



- \*Hours provided are a conservative estimate. The actual number of hours completed is likely higher
- \*\*Volunteers may participate in multiple programs which would explain a disparity in total volunteer numbers



# HOW VOLUNTEERING MAKES A DIFFERENCE AT OXFAM AUSTRALIA

OXFAM WORKS IN 90 COUNTRIES  
GLOBALLY TO HELP CREATE  
AN EQUAL FUTURE

WORKING WITH PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES, WE  
CHALLENGE THE SYSTEMS THAT LEAD  
TO INEQUALITY BY REALISING...



Climate Justice



Economic Justice



First Peoples Justice



Gender Justice

VOLUNTEERS HELP US WORK TOWARDS AN EQUAL FUTURE BY

- Helping to enhance our organisational capacity
- Supporting resource development
- Supporting Oxfam at events as part of Straight Talk
- Assisting teams with desktop research
- Helping to advocate for an equal future by raising awareness and engaging with the community

Images above (left to right): Ivan Utahenua/Oxfam, Keith Parsons/Oxfam, Jillian Mundy/Oxfam, M. Nugie and Andito Wasi/Oxfam. Oxfam acknowledges the support of the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).



## 3 hours of volunteering

Can enable Oxfam to support two women from the provinces in Cambodia to attend three days of training in climate resilience and river protection, helping them to speak up on issues that affect them and their communities. Image: Patrick Moran/Oxfam. Oxfam acknowledges the support of the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).



## 1 shift of volunteering (on average)

Can enable Oxfam to provide eight families in Timor-Leste with gardening tools, so that they can grow their own food, supporting themselves with nutrition and income. Image: Patrick Moran/Oxfam.



## 10 weeks of volunteering

Can enable Oxfam to run one round of Women's Transformative Leadership training for women in the Rohingya refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Image: Fabeha Monir/Oxfam. Oxfam acknowledges the support of the Australian Government through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP).

# How does volunteering impact Oxfam? Volunteer and staff perspectives

Volunteer impact can take many forms. We asked volunteers and staff at Oxfam how voluntary contributions make a difference.

Volunteering at Oxfam has deepened my understanding of how behind-the-scenes efforts drive meaningful change, strengthening my commitment to making a tangible difference in my community.

**Current office volunteer**

A volunteer in our team has been volunteering with me for several months now. They have been working through a suite of CRM (customer relationship management) system documentation and preparing it to be published to the CRM user group. This work has been incredibly valuable to me. Our team's volunteer has diligently worked through each document, learning the CRM function and editing each document so that they are in a fit state to be published.

They have been doing a great job! We have regular catch-ups, and they have been great to work with. They are conscientious and generous with their time, considering they are still working and have another volunteer job.

**Staff member who supports an office volunteer**

Volunteers are a key part of Oxfam Australia's workforce and contribute a wide range of expertise and support. Such impacts include the strategic governance work of Oxfam Australia's board members to the highly valued operational support provided by the volunteers who assist with more operational activities including donor support, administrative projects, capability development and advocacy projects.

The energy, commitment and creativity of volunteers have hugely beneficial impacts on our culture as well as on more tangible outcomes that contribute to achieving our vision.

**Staff member who supports an office volunteer**

Our three volunteers, who collectively have 39 years of service and experience between them, continue to amaze us with their dedication and support. They are an integral part of our team, and we are so fortunate to have them in our corner.

**Staff member who supports three office volunteers**

Big thanks to all volunteers who have been helping Oxfam staff in different areas. I also had the pleasure to work with two amazing volunteers. They have been super-generous with their time and their skills in helping me with completing a task that required a lot of admin work.

**Staff member who supported a micro volunteering task**

Volunteering with Oxfam as a Social Engagement Volunteer has deepened my understanding of global inequalities and empowered me as an individual to contribute to meaningful change and have better understanding of diverse cultures and issues.

This experience has enhanced my communication and organisational skills, empowering me to post/write about marginalised groups more effectively.

**Current office volunteer**

# OFFICE VOLUNTEERING

Office volunteers support Oxfam Australia across all sections in our organisation and in a range of roles, from administration and research to assisting us with current projects and initiatives. We are grateful for the skills, time and energy that office volunteers provide in support of Oxfam.

## In 2023

- 32 volunteers supported Oxfam Australia in an office volunteer role.
- Volunteers completed roles in every section of our organisation.
- Office volunteers completed 3,895 hours of their time across all teams (up 980 hours compared to 2022).

## Roles completed

- Volunteer Web Developer
- Oxfam Generalist Volunteer (Micro Volunteering Program)
- First Peoples Program Policy Support Volunteer
- Supporter Services Regular Volunteer
- Legal Project Support Volunteer
- CRM Support Developer
- Key Supporter Research Assistant Volunteer
- Sustainability Framework Support Volunteer
- Internal Communications Support Volunteer
- Social Engagement Volunteer



Broome, Australia: Beautlyn is a volunteer with the Programs team and in November she had the opportunity to go on Yawuru Country and help support the Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Council Roundtable. Image: Aimee Han/Oxfam.

## Impact in Action: Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Council Roundtable Meeting

On 1-2 November 2023, more than 100 women came together for the Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Council Roundtable on Yawuru Country (Broome WA), including more than 80 Kimberley Aboriginal women. This event was also attended by Oxfam Australia volunteers, including Beautlyn (pictured) who assisted the First Peoples Program team and the council to ensure that the Roundtable ran smoothly.

Oxfam Australia's Straight Talk Lead, Rebecca Harnett, said the volunteers contributed significantly to the success of the Roundtable and that the First Peoples Program was grateful for their support in the leading up, during and following the event.

## How office volunteers impact Oxfam Australia

Volunteers enhance our operational capacity

Volunteers utilise their skills to support us with our projects and work

Volunteers make our organisation a more vibrant and exciting place to be

Volunteers bring unique perspectives to help us work towards a more equal future





# VOLUNTEER PROFILE

## HILAL MUSAGHAZI

### VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT PROJECT SUPPORT VOLUNTEER (VIC)

Volunteering at Oxfam Australia as a Volunteer Engagement Project Support Volunteer has been a pivotal experience for me, blending personal growth with professional development. This opportunity came at a crucial moment in my life, when I was eager to rebuild my career aspirations following significant personal challenges that interrupted my education journey. I officially started my role in November of 2023. My role consists of providing support to the Volunteer Engagement Program Team in implementing Oxfam Australia's 2023-2028 National Volunteering Strategy through ad hoc tasks and research. Currently, I am working on improving Oxfam's volunteering experience.

During high school, my mother had significant health complications which impacted my schooling years as I had to provide full-time care whilst being responsible for my younger sister. Being the eldest daughter, I felt it was my duty to ensure my mother's full recovery, alongside ensuring my sister was given full priority. This meant that I had to let go of my future career goals and instead focus on my sister. In these past couple of years, I fell behind on my education, lost close relationships and became reclusive from the outside world. It was only last year when my mother made significant improvement, I finally managed to find a little time to myself, and I made the decision that it was better late than never to dedicate this time to my future career goals.

Outside of my time at Oxfam, I mostly focus on providing care to my mother and sister alongside completing my bachelor's degree in communications and marketing at Deakin University. However, when I have the time, during religious celebrations throughout the year, alongside my father, I give back to my communities in Australia and Pakistan, through fundraising for families who face financial hardships. I particularly focus on improving children's education, women in domestic violence cases, and individuals who face health complications and need surgeries. As a result, my decision to apply for this role stemmed from a deep-seated desire to gain practical experience in a professional setting, while contributing to a cause I deeply believe in. Oxfam's mission to alleviate global poverty and injustice resonates profoundly with me, making my role both fulfilling and purposeful. My best experience is working with my volunteer manager. Under their mentorship, I have been able to cultivate essential professional skills. They have helped me enhance my project management skills in planning and execution of volunteer engagement projects. Likewise, they have introduced me to new people of different backgrounds and experiences in Oxfam's impactful work.

As a result, I have been able to improve my communication and speaking skills. These learning opportunities will undoubtedly serve me well in my future career endeavours. Overall, my experience at Oxfam has been transformative. Not only has it deepened my understanding of volunteer engagement but has also reinforced my commitment to social justice and community empowerment. I was welcomed with kindness and mentorship, and I have gained insights into what it's like to work as a team and individually. I am grateful for the opportunity to have contributed to Oxfam's impactful work and look forward to applying the skills and insights gained to my future endeavours in making a positive difference in society. Image Credit: Heidi Demond/Oxfam.



# MICRO VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM

Oxfam Australia's micro volunteering program engages volunteers to complete short, ad hoc tasks across our organisation. Micro volunteers contribute their time flexibly at a time that works best for them either in-person or online.

## Why is micro volunteering impactful?

- Volunteers can make a difference cumulatively by completing short-term tasks across teams
- Micro volunteering enables volunteers to learn new skills more easily
- Enables more flexibility for volunteers and organisations
- Opportunities are accessed by people at a time and place of their choosing



## Task completed by micro volunteers in 2023

- Creating merchandise packs
- User-experience testing
- Assistance with minute-taking
- Completing desktop research
- Reviewing documents
- Assistance at events
- Visual resource design
- Reviewing training material



# VOLUNTEER PROFILE

## MOISES RICAPA

### TOLEDO

#### GENERALIST VOLUNTEER (MICRO VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM) (VIC)

I started my role as a volunteer in June 2023. Throughout this year, I have been fortunate to work with diverse teams and contribute to various initiatives, from user-experience testing to supporting fundraising events. Each role has reinforced my dedication to the sector and has given me valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of working within NGOs. This year has been incredibly rewarding, and I continue to be inspired by the impact that dedicated individuals and organisations like Oxfam can have on improving lives and communities around the world.

I am a Peruvian student who is currently pursuing the Master of Public Policy and Management at the University of Melbourne. I began my career in the non-governmental sector in Peru while I was completing my Bachelor's degree in business administration. Driven by a deep passion for social justice and the desire to contribute to meaningful change, I started to get more interested in social development and the way my skills could impact the lives of people in need, which brought me to Australia to pursue a master's degree in 2023.

Recognising the importance of combining practical experience with academic knowledge, I started to look for some volunteering opportunities that allowed me to continue developing my skills to tackle poverty. I was fortunate to find Oxfam Australia and my role allowed me to gain deeper understanding of complex social issues and effective solutions through its Micro Volunteering Program. I decided to join this program due to its flexibility because it let me to choose the activities in which I am most interested and for which I have availability.

Among the many fulfilling experiences I have had at Oxfam so far, one particularly memorable experience was to support the Philanthropic Partnerships Team in an event that was attended by Oxfam Australia Key Supporters as part of the 2024 Melbourne International Comedy Festival Gala. Witnessing firsthand the dedication and responsibility with which Oxfam treats its key supporters gave me a broad overview of the importance of building strong relationships to secure funding and support for upcoming projects. This experience not only enhanced my organisational and communication skills but also deepened my appreciation for the collaborative efforts required to drive impactful change.

When I am not performing my volunteering activities at Oxfam or studying, I usually spend my time playing soccer at the university. This activity provides me an excellent opportunity to connect with fellow students, build teamwork skills, and develop a strong sense of community on campus.

Volunteering with Oxfam Australia has been immensely rewarding, and I am continuously inspired by the organisation's commitment to tackling poverty and injustice. I encourage anyone who is interested in making a positive impact, even with limited time, to consider joining the Micro Volunteering Program. Image: Supplied.

# EVENT VOLUNTEERING

Oxfam Australia is grateful for the efforts of 520 volunteers who supported us at our major events in 2023. Event volunteers assisted Oxfam in a range of ways, from helping walkers at event checkpoints, utilising their skills in allied health or helping us raise funds in the community.



## Melbourne Trailwalker 2023

241 volunteers – 1,790 hours – supported 423 teams walking for an equal future.

In March 2023, Oxfam Trailwalker Melbourne volunteers once again turned out in big numbers to support walkers completing their 33km, 55km and 100km treks. Volunteers supported participants out on the trail, at our checkpoints and in our allied health stations throughout the weekend – what a mighty effort!

Image: Aimee Han/Oxfam.

## Sydney Trailwalker 2023

270 volunteers – 1,742 hours – supported 547 teams walking for an equal future.

We're grateful for the support and assistance of 270 volunteers for their assistance at Oxfam Trailwalker Sydney in August 2023. Volunteers braved the winter weather at all hours over the weekend to support Trailwalkers completing the ultimate adventure.

Image: Heidi Demond/Oxfam.



## Melbourne International Comedy Festival Gala event

9 volunteers – 46 hours – 27 years in partnership with the MICF.

Oxfam volunteers were once again supporting the Melbourne International Comedy Festival Gala, an event which has proudly been supporting Oxfam for 29 years! Volunteers support this event by fielding questions and queries from patrons, handing out programs, and assisting with fundraising activities on the night.

Image: Ivor Vaz/Oxfam.



## How do event volunteers make a difference?

Provide encouragement and support to walkers out on their 100, 55 or 33km treks

Support us by raising awareness and funds out in the community

Help Oxfam enhance our community-building and engagement work



# COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERING

Oxfam Australia acknowledges the contributions made by volunteers from across the community: 134 dedicated people in 2023 gave their time as a member of an Oxfam Community Group, and through their collective efforts, helped spread awareness and raised funds for Oxfam and our projects.

## Oxfam community groups

- Local supporter groups which support Oxfam and our work.
- Community volunteers support Oxfam by raising awareness and funds for our work.
- Volunteer group members contributed nearly 15,000 hours of their time in 2023.
- Oxfam Groups support community building for volunteers who would like to work towards an equal future.



Adelaide, Australia: Bob and Paulette are the co-chairs of the Adelaide Charity Books Committee. The Bookshop has been supporting Oxfam and our work for more than 50 years. Image: Aimee Han/Oxfam.

### Adelaide Charity Books (Oxfam Bookshop Adelaide, South Australia)

Adelaide Charity Books (otherwise known as the Oxfam Bookshop) is an Adelaide institution. The group, which is completely staffed by dedicated community volunteers has been supporting Oxfam Australia and our work for more than 50 years. Many of the bookshop's volunteers have made a long-term contribution to Oxfam and our work.

The shop has more than 20,000 titles, including fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, sheet music and CDs/DVDs which have been donated from members of the Adelaide community. The shop also established an online store where the public can browse and make purchases.



Perth, Australia: Fair Trade Shop volunteers Olivia (right) and Ben (left) with Oxfam Australia Volunteer Engagement Lead, Jordan Steiner (centre). Image: Supplied/Oxfam.

### Oxfam Group Fair Trade Shop Perth, Western Australia

The Oxfam Group Fair Trade Shop was established in 2007 and is staffed by a dedicated team of 16 volunteers. The shop stocks a variety of fair trade and ethical items for members of the community to purchase and is open six days a week.

The group also raise awareness of fair trade principles and Oxfam's work through regular community-engagement initiatives throughout the year. The shop sees many customers from the local community come in to have a browse and a chat. The team know many people by name and over the years the shop has become a bit of a local institution, now having 5,000 followers on social media!





# VOLUNTEER PROFILE

## OLIVIA BOULUD

### FAIR TRADE SHOP VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR (WA)

Having moved from France to Western Australia 16 years ago, Olivia Boulud has been supporting Oxfam as a volunteer with the Fair Trade Shop in Perth for more than five years. The Fair Trade Shop is a community group which supports Oxfam and our work through fundraising activities and community engagement.

Olivia came from the film industry but also has a heart linked to anything social justice. Prior to being involved with the shop, Olivia supported the Perth Trailwalker team as an admin volunteer in Perth's former Oxfam office, in the lead-up to each event.

Olivia is the Fair Trade Shop Volunteer Coordinator and primarily supports the group's 16 volunteers with their engagement, as well as a range of other tasks such as processing sales and ordering stock. Volunteers attend shifts in pairs or small groups. Olivia has been working alongside fellow volunteer Ben, who has been volunteering at the shop for the same time. Each shift, they communicate on updates, check emails, set up the shop so that it looks good for the people walking past. The building used to be a bank, so they make the store look as attractive as possible.

After five years, Olivia is still happy to keep investing her time and energy in this role. Over time, the team has grown and through this role, Olivia uses her shifts as an opportunity to connect with people in the shop and in the community.

**"I love it here for many reasons. It's a space where I get to meet like-minded people, not just volunteers but also customers. I get to meet people who know about Oxfam's work (most of them) and want to come and support Oxfam by shopping with us."**

Olivia's best experience volunteering so far has been the journey working with the group of volunteers involved at the Fair Trade Shop. "It has been really enriching, not just the one moment; I love it when everyone gets together to celebrate and have some food, relax and get to know each other, talk more and connect."

The Fair Trade Shop has been a prominent feature of the Bayswater community since 2007. The shop stocks a wide range of fair trade and ethically sourced items from around the world. The store also engages with the local community through events, to raise awareness of Oxfam and our work.

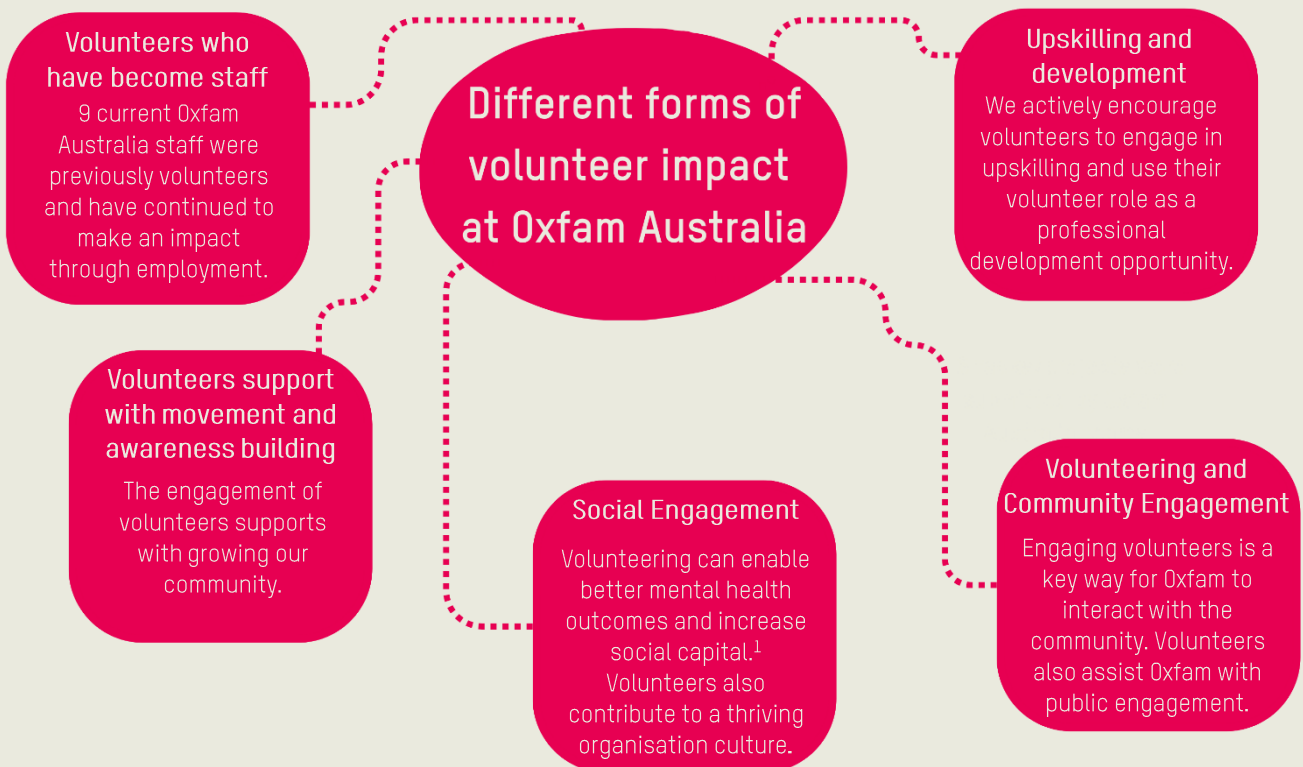
Everyone in the group would like to spread the word about the shop. Many people are yet to know it exists, but those who do, love it. Volunteers also love the shop and its vibe. They think it is exceptional and according to Olivia and it cannot be found anywhere else. Image: Jordan Steiner/Oxfam.

# RECOGNISING AND ENABLING VOLUNTEER IMPACT AT OXFAM AUSTRALIA

Oxfam Australia is committed to ensuring that we engage in meaningful recognition of volunteer contributions across our organisation. Below we highlight how we have engaged in volunteer recognition activities during 2023.

## Recognising different forms of volunteer impact

At Oxfam Australia, we recognise that there are many ways that volunteers make a difference to our organisation and in the community:



## 2023 volunteer awards

In 2023, Oxfam Australia held its first annual Volunteer Awards to recognise outstanding volunteer contributions. The awards, which were held during our International Volunteer Day celebration, were an opportunity to acknowledge the contributions volunteers have made more widely across the organisation during 2023.

## National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

Oxfam Australia's Volunteer Engagement Program Team (VEPT) complete a self-assessment against National Standards for Volunteer Involvement each year as part of our commitment to enabling impactful volunteering. Oxfam Australia is pleased to report that we passed all four indicators as it relates to standard 7 (volunteer recognition).

1. McDermott, J (2021) *Evidence Insights: Volunteering and Mental Health*, Volunteering Australia <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/Evidence-Insights-Volunteering-and-mental-health-Final.pdf>.



# STAFF PROFILE

## RIMI DEY

### OXFAM AUSTRALIA OPERATIONS LEAD (AND FORMER OXFAM VOLUNTEER)

Volunteers at Oxfam make a difference in many ways. Oxfam Australia currently engages nine employees who started their time at Oxfam as volunteers. Rimi Dey is Oxfam Australia's Operations Lead and has shared her journey from volunteer to Oxfam employee as part of this year's Volunteer Impact Report.

"I am currently the Operations Lead at Oxfam, where I oversee the management of facilities and various other projects. My journey with Oxfam began as a volunteer at the Bourke Street store of Oxfam Trading in Melbourne. From there, I quickly progressed to the role of store manager, managing both the Chadstone Store and later the store at the head office in Carlton. When the shops closed, I transitioned to Oxfam Australia, where I have held various roles.

In my previous role as a retail volunteer, I learned a lot about working in a retail environment that also operated as a social enterprise. Since I had never worked in retail before and was very shy, it was an interesting experience to talk to customers. I picked up many retail skills such as customer service, balancing cash tills, visual merchandising, stock-taking, and opening and closing procedures. Additionally, I learned about the work of Oxfam and the stories behind the products and producer partners. I also gained insights into Fair Trade and learned about the dark side of the cocoa and coffee industries and the politics behind them.

Some of the positive outcomes of this experience were that I learned all about retail management and picked up a new skill set, which eventually led me to a permanent job as a store manager. I enjoyed volunteering because every day at the shop was fun. I loved stock delivery days because it was exciting to see all the new products, learn their stories, and, with my eye for visual merchandising, dress up the windows and shop displays.

I also made many new friends and gained a lot of people skills. Additionally, I could connect my efforts to helping our producer partners. Knowing that selling a product here would significantly impact an artisan's life in another country and contribute to improving their lives made my work meaningful. This way, I was actively contributing to Oxfam's mission of tackling poverty.

I would highly recommend and encourage anyone wanting to volunteer at Oxfam. It's a great place to learn about our work, and the people here are inclusive and kind. They would pick up a lot of valuable skills. It's inspiring to see all the work that Oxfam does and meet the interesting people who are doing amazing things.

Since I was new to retail and quite shy and introverted, it was a safe space to experiment, make mistakes, and open up to people. The encouragement and support from everyone have been invaluable to my development." Image: Heidi Demond/Oxfam.



**OXFAM**  
Australia

The future is equal