

MEDIA RELEASE



MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Hon Julie Bishop MP

MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE PACIFIC

Senator The Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells

5 December 2016

RECOGNISING OUR VOLUNTEERS ON INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY

On International Volunteer Day we thank all our volunteers for their contribution to delivering Australia's aid program.

Australian volunteers overseas strengthen our efforts to build sustainable economic growth and reduce poverty in the Indo-Pacific region. They share their skills and knowledge to support the achievements of local governments, NGOs and other organisations in developing countries.

In 2015-16, 1,345 volunteers were on assignments across 29 countries, helping to build enduring people-to-people links with communities in our region.

The Australian Government has supported international volunteering for more than 60 years. The [Returned Australian Volunteers Network](#) enables volunteers to stay connected to each other and to Australia's aid program.

To recognise the contribution of volunteers, the Australian Government hosted 250 participants at its inaugural conference for returned volunteers on 3–4 December in Melbourne.

The conference enabled returned volunteers to connect with each other and share the knowledge and experience they obtained during their international development activities.

Participants met inspiring speakers, including comedian and author Anh Do; adventure athlete, lawyer, social entrepreneur and National Crusader for the League of Extraordinary Women, Samantha Gash; and renowned Australian plastic surgeon who volunteers each year with Operation Smile and the Mercy Ships, Dr David Chong.

Foreign Minister's Office:

Rachel Obradovic 0478 488 874

International Development Minister's Office: Carolyn Jack 0436 411 375