

# Australian Volunteers Program

## MYANMAR

### 2019-20 at a glance

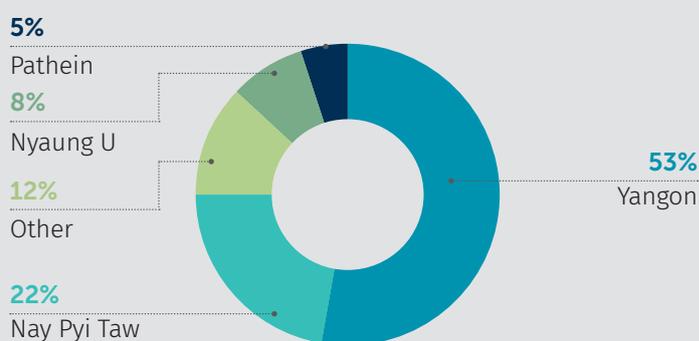
In 2019-20 the Australian Volunteers Program in Myanmar supported 67 volunteer assignments and 42 partner organisations, helping deliver the Australian Government's aid priorities in Myanmar, including education, governance, humanitarian response and economic growth.\*

#### Gender and age

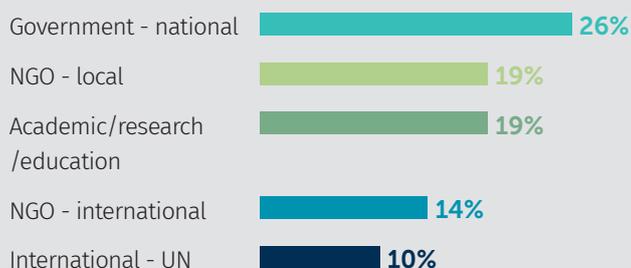
Women 43% Men 57%



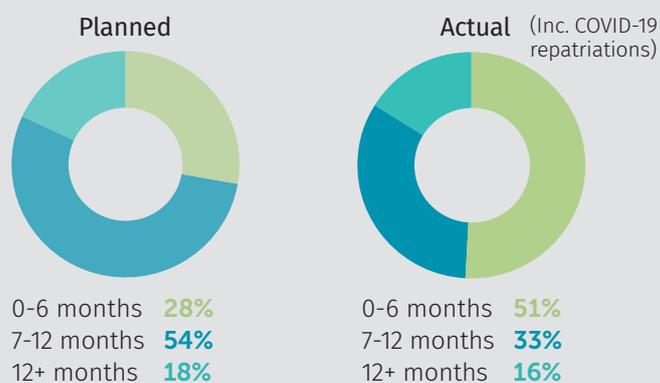
#### Location of assignments



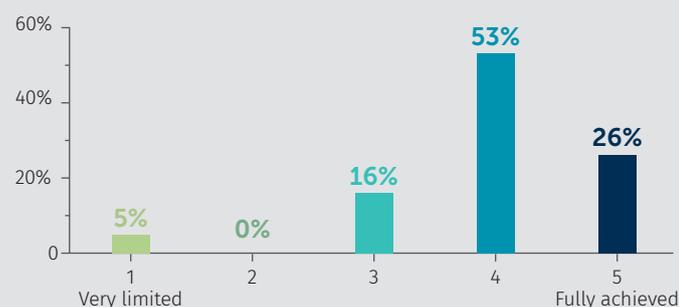
#### Most common types of organisations



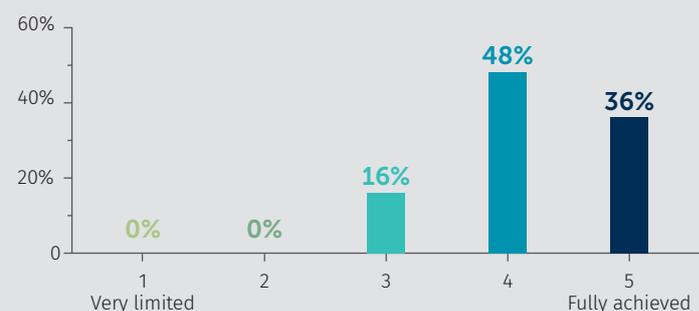
#### Duration of assignments



#### Volunteers' assessments against objectives



#### Partner organisations' assessment against objectives



\* The above data is drawn from reports completed by volunteers and partner organisations. Responses were not received from all volunteers and partner organisations, and not all respondents provided a response to every question.

In 2019-20 the majority of Australian volunteers in Myanmar supported government organisations, international and local NGOs and education institutions in regions across Myanmar, supporting them to reach their development goals.

During this period the program supported eight new partner organisations, including UNFPA and UNICEF, helping them address development challenges in education, agriculture, governance and human rights sectors.

Two Australian volunteers contributed to a joint project between Farmers Without Borders and the Australian Council of International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) with the Department of Agriculture in Nyaung U, and another two volunteers supported the Health Security Corps initiative. A volunteer was placed at UNICEF through the Child Safe Volunteering Hub, which helps promote responsible and child-safe volunteering and tourism in the Asia-Pacific region.

The program worked with partner organisations to improve child protection policies and practice, with 16 organisations attending training. Volunteers also took part in a volunteer-led forum to help enhance gender equality outcomes.

Volunteers and program staff celebrated and promoted the value of international volunteering at events celebrating International Volunteer Day. One event was hosted by the Australian Embassy, and another in partnership with other volunteer coordinating agencies, including UN Volunteers, Korea's KOICA and the UK's VSO.

Of the 67 assignments undertaken during 2019-20, 31 commenced during this period and eight family members were supported to accompany volunteers. Most assignments were planned to be between seven months and one year in duration, however, many were cut short due to the impact of COVID-19.

As part of the program's response to COVID-19, 28 volunteers and three accompanying family members were repatriated from Myanmar in March. Two of these volunteers continued to support their partner organisations following repatriation through the program's new Remote Volunteering initiative.



Australian volunteer English for Special Purpose Trainer Kathleen Magee with students at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. From left to right: Yaw Lwi, Kathleen Magee, Khwar Nyo Htay Ko, Wai Yan Soe, Khine Nwe Thinn Shein. Photo: Harjono Djoyobisono.

## Spotlight on the Department of Planning

The Department of Planning is an advisory body that assists the Myanmar Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI).

The Department works with multilateral and international organisations to prepare and coordinate project designs and proposals, documentation for regional and international missions, including those to ASEAN countries, and meetings and events such as policy dialogues and resource mobilisation.

The Department recognised that developing staff English language proficiency would improve communication, inter-departmental collaboration, and the free expression of ideas and contributions in policy and planning dialogues.

Between November 2018 and February 2020, two Australian volunteers made a significant impact in their roles with the Department of Planning, helping to improve the English language and communication skills of staff.

Volunteer English language trainer, Jennifer Gleeson, provided English classes to MOALI's officials, including general English classes and specialist classes such as speech writing, interpreting and meeting processes. Knowledge management coordinator, Graham Eagleton, ran lectures and motivated the participants in their language studies and helped them develop their communication skills.

Increased English language skills among staff means the Department of Planning has been able to more effectively carry out its work and participation in regional and international activities.

'In addition to the English language improvement, intra-departmental networking has been improved through language training workshops and seminars, because staff from different divisions came together in the training', said Dr Thanda Kyi, Deputy Director General of Department of Planning.

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