

2021-2025 FORUM STRATEGIC PLAN



INTERNATIONAL FORUM *for* VOLUNTEERING IN DEVELOPMENT
www.forum-ids.org

IMAGE: The Singapore International Foundation's Young Social Entrepreneurs (YSE) programme marked its 10th anniversary this year with an inaugural Study Visit and Overseas Workshop in China. Since 2010, YSE has groomed more than 1,000 changemakers spanning 30 nationalities, whose social businesses have positively impacted the lives of the communities they operate in. (Photo credit: Singapore International Foundation)

INTRODUCTION

Since 1964, Forum has been the leading global network for volunteering for development. With members across the world, Forum has built an evidence base for volunteering in development, demonstrated impact, strengthened practice, facilitated innovation and enabled recognition, including embedding volunteering in the 2030 Agenda.

Over time, Forum members have demonstrated the unique value of volunteering to enable lasting change and achieve sustainable development. The Forum network comprising practitioners, academics and partners have come together to share and collaborate, to evolve and innovate on ways of working to better impact and improve the lives of the world's most vulnerable people, and to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Forum supports its members by creating spaces for them to share knowledge and good practice, by framing conversations and debates, and through leading research and advocacy. This happens in working groups and webinars, at the annual IVCO Conference, and more recently through the Global Standard for Volunteering for Development, which is now central to Forum's work. The next phase of the Global Standard will focus on creating and sharing resources to support organisations that want to use the Standard to improve their practice. Much of Forum's advocacy work is carried out through our membership of the Volunteer Groups Alliance, which Forum established to consult with the United Nations.

With Forum members now actively supporting a range of volunteering modalities, including supporting volunteers in the Global South, this Strategic Plan reflects Forum's broader focus on volunteering for development, while retaining international volunteering for development at its core. In the next five years, Forum will continue to grow its global network with partners that support volunteering at the national, regional and local levels. In particular, we are committed to increasing the role of organisations from the Global South both in our network and through partnerships, and we will expand our membership to become truly global.

We launch this strategy at a time of unprecedented challenges and opportunities for our sector. It provides a framework to build on the achievements of the last 56 years, and to move forward in supporting our members and partners to harness volunteering for development to create lasting change. We look forward to working with our members to deliver this change.



James O'Brien
Executive Director



Heather Shapter
Chair, Forum Board of Directors

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

VISION

A global movement of volunteers working effectively for a world where no one is left behind.

Mission

As a global network of organisations involved in volunteering for development, Forum supports and promotes the work of its members through policy engagement, mutual learning and by sharing innovative and good practice.

Values

The Forum Charter outlines the principles, values and ethical behaviour underpinning volunteering for development.

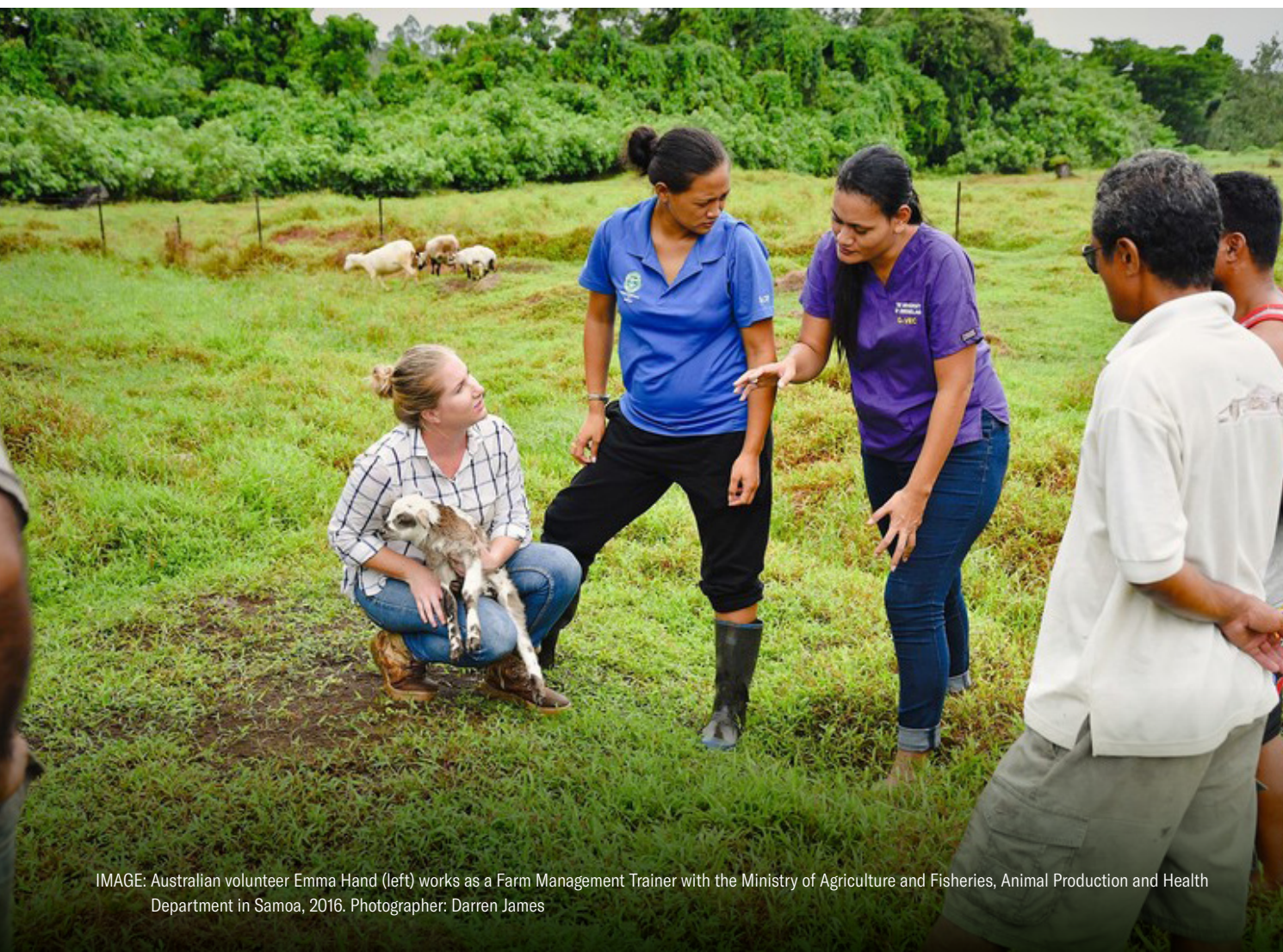


IMAGE: Australian volunteer Emma Hand (left) works as a Farm Management Trainer with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Animal Production and Health Department in Samoa, 2016. Photographer: Darren James

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Enabling effective knowledge generation and sharing to promote good practice.

Main outcomes

- Adoption of the Global Standard for Volunteering for Development.
- A robust body of knowledge for volunteering for development.
- Engaged Forum members sharing knowledge, innovative approaches and good practice.

Key initiatives

- Create an online library of good practice resources aligned with the four pillars of the Global Standard – Designing and delivering projects, duty of care, managing volunteers, and measuring impact. Support for members in using these resources.
- Create spaces, through the Forum Research, Practice, Policy, and Learning (RPPL) Group, for practitioners and researchers to share and collaborate on research.
- Host annual IVCO conferences with themes relevant to the SDGs, volunteering for development, and topics and trends identified through the IVCO Working Group and RPPL.
- Produce research aligned with each year's IVCO theme and sub-themes to inform discussions at the conference
- Coordinate research projects between Forum members, supporting collaboration between our members and the wider development and academic communities.
- Maintain libraries of research and other resources on the Forum website, on Forum's online platform, and through the RPPL Group Research Register.
- Engage Forum members via working groups and other spaces, for knowledge exchange and the contribution of skills to Forum.
- Host regular webinars on themes relevant to Forum members.

2. Improving measurement, visibility and recognition of the impact of volunteering for development.

Main outcomes

- Enhanced capacity across Forum members to measure and communicate the impact of volunteering for development.
- Enhanced understanding of the value of volunteering for development among key stakeholders including governments, donors, the wider development sector and the public.
- A strong Volunteer Groups Alliance, supported by Forum to promote and amplify the role that volunteers play in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Key initiatives

- Carry out and publish the annual Forum Basic Data Measurement Survey, which will move from measuring qualitative data to capturing the collective impact of Forum members.
- Contribute to the ongoing research and debate to improve the sector's ability to measure the contribution of volunteering to sustainable development.
- Publish opinion pieces on the value of volunteering, and connecting Forum's work to global events and trends.
- Support the Volunteer Groups Alliance to engage at the global and national levels on the SDGs in ways that reinforce national efforts.
- Effectively disseminate research generated by Forum members and others in relevant fora.
- Maintain Forum's website as a go-to site for research and good practice.

3. Building a vibrant and inclusive constituency in support of volunteering for development

Main outcomes

- A truly global network representing the full breadth of volunteering for development
- A range of spaces for collaboration, information sharing and discussion
- Recognition of Forum as the global voice for volunteering for development movement.

Key initiatives

- Expand the membership and leadership of Forum and become a truly global network, with a focus on expansion in the Global South.
- Launch and support Volunteering for Development Partners, a circle of organisations in the Global South whose volunteer work is focused primarily at the national and local level.
- Support Forum members to improve their practice in diversity and inclusion, through a Community of Practice, research, and convening.
- Diversify the Working Group structure to include informal groups and groups focused on specific tasks or areas including online volunteering and security and risk management.
- Based on the Global Standard and supporting resources, create a volunteering for development community of practice, and make spaces for peer support between Forum members, Volunteering for Development Partners, and the wider volunteering and development sectors.
- Create an online community for information sharing and collaboration
- Develop partnerships with other major volunteering-focused organisations.
- Build the brand of Forum as the global voice for international volunteering and volunteering for development.
- Increase the participation of staff and volunteers of Forum members and partners in Forum's activities.
- Develop and implement annual communication plans.

4. Strengthening the relevance and capacity of Forum

Main outcomes

- The ongoing financial sustainability of Forum.
- A responsive network that understands the needs and interests of its members, and provides value to them.

Key initiatives

- Develop aligned strategies for research, IVCOs, communication, advocacy and networking.
- Develop Forum's capability and capacity to diversify its funding to resource this Strategic Plan
- Secure donor funding for research, effective knowledge development and capacity building, and the Global Standard.
- An annual plan developed and agreed by the Forum Board at IVCO each year, drawing on input from the AGM and Forum Heads of Agency Meeting.
- A mid-term review of this Strategic Plan in time for IVCO 2023.



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