

# More details on the Australian Volunteers cuts

By Ashlee Betteridge

Courtesy of an email sent to returned volunteers from Scope Global, we now have much more information on the cuts to the Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program—and our [earlier hunches](#) have been proven correct. Volunteering opportunities in Africa will be nearly completely eliminated, and the number of volunteers supported will drop to roughly pre-scale-up (2010-11) levels.

According to the email:

*Scope Global has been working closely with DFAT and the other AVID delivery partners on revisions to the program, which will ensure that approximately 1400 Australian volunteers can be supported this financial year.*

In 2013-14, there were just over 2000 AVID volunteers, so the cut to numbers is a clean 30 per cent—the same percentage cut that AVID's budget faced.

The email also provides details on where these volunteers will be going. The list of destinations has condensed greatly.

*The AVID program will have a greater focus on the Indo-Pacific region, with anticipated volunteering opportunities in the following countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Cambodia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Indonesia, Laos, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Nepal, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Vanuatu and Vietnam.*

Consequently Scope Global, the largest of the AVID partners, has closed its Africa offices in Ethiopia, Ghana and Kenya. It notes though that “the AVID program will continue to be delivered in Tanzania and South Africa through Australian Volunteers International (AVI)”.

The email also sheds a little more light on [Red Cross’s departure from the AVID program](#) (Red Cross has also updated its webpage [with more details](#)).

*Australian Red Cross (ARC) in close consultation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has made the decision to integrate international volunteering within its broader humanitarian and development partnership with the Australian Government. This change will enable the ARC to align its volunteering work directly with the humanitarian and development objectives of the Red Cross movement in the Indo-Pacific region.*

The email [again](#) mentions the move to consolidate in-country management of the program, so that multiple AVID partners are not commonly operating in the same country: “An important management change this financial year is to move to a single AVID partner operating in most countries”.

And in welcome news for those who had hoped to volunteer, it seems that the current volunteer recruitment freeze will end in August.

## About the author/s

### Ashlee Betteridge

Ashlee Betteridge was the Manager of the Development Policy Centre until April 2021. She was previously a Research Officer at the centre from 2013-2017. A former journalist, she holds a Master of Public Policy (Development Policy) from ANU and has development experience in Indonesia and Timor-Leste. She now works as a development consultant.