



Giving and volunteering
in culturally and
linguistically diverse
and Indigenous
communities

Final report

June 2016

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Executive summary

Australia is a hugely diverse country. Australians speak more than 200 languages other than English at home, and come from more than 240 countries of birth. Over half a million people identified as Indigenous (Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander) in the 2011 Census.

Both culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Indigenous communities in Australia are strongly involved in volunteering and giving, yet there has been little recent research into volunteering and giving in these communities. The Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioned the Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) to conduct research into volunteering and giving in these communities in order to support the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership. The Partnership provides advice to Government on strategies for growing philanthropy and volunteering, corporate social responsibility and partnerships between business and community organisations.

Methodology and aims

The research took place from October 2015 to February 2016 in urban, rural and remote locations across Australia. The core features of the research were:

- A literature review
- Focus groups with 96 CALD community members and 44 Indigenous community members
- Forums and focus groups with CALD and Indigenous volunteers
- Consultations with 27 representatives of peak bodies and philanthropic organisations.

The main aims of this research were to:

- Gain insight into what the term 'volunteering' means within these communities
- Develop a better understanding of volunteering and giving within CALD and Indigenous communities
- Understand the challenges to participating in volunteering and giving in these communities, and identify enablers to growing volunteering and giving among these communities
- Better understand how the philanthropic sector engages with CALD and Indigenous communities.

Defining 'volunteering'

Difficulties in defining the term 'volunteering' were evident during the research. Participation in volunteering by people from CALD and Indigenous backgrounds includes a large amount of 'informal volunteering', and this contributes to the undercounting of their very significant contribution. Rather than 'informal' and 'formal' volunteering, Indigenous participants were more likely to identify working inside and outside community –

'community volunteering' – which was more fluid, flexible, local and responsive to community needs, as opposed to 'volunteering', which was seen by participants as being more official, structured, targeted and regular.

Recently, Volunteering Australia broadened its definition of volunteering to 'Time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain', to better capture informal volunteering and this goes some way to recognising the broad-based efforts of CALD and Indigenous communities.

Understanding volunteering and giving within CALD and Indigenous communities

CALD and Indigenous participants reported being involved in a variety of volunteering and giving activities, including childcare, care of older people, care for people with long term illness and disabilities, working with young people, participation in boards of management, involvement in sporting activities, providing food and goods and cash for those in need, fundraising and providing interpreter and translation services.

CALD participants described a variety of motivating factors for giving and volunteering, such as:

- *Cultural maintenance:* Participants consistently described volunteering as an inseparable element of their culture that needed to be passed on to their next generation and shared with other Australian communities. For many participants, maintaining cultural and linguistic traditions was an important element in many volunteering activities.
- *Religious and social ethics:* Many CALD participants described their culture of origin as one that placed a high religious or social value on the giving of personal time 'for the common good', though some participants described being motivated by social or political ethics.
- *Community wellbeing and connection:* Many participants described their own settlement experiences as having been difficult and said they were now motivated to volunteer and give in order to reduce the kinds of settlement trauma that many experience.
- *Meaning and personal satisfaction:* Many CALD participants described their participation in volunteering in altruistic terms, yet volunteering was also seen by many participants as providing meaning in life and self-esteem.
- *Employment opportunities:* Many CALD participants described a loss of career and a need to find new kinds of work in their transition to life in Australia. Volunteering was described by many participants as a way to update skills or acquire new ones.

Indigenous participants described a variety of motivating factors for volunteering and giving, including:

- *Responsibility for community wellbeing:* Participants noted that high levels of need in Indigenous communities meant there is an imperative to spend one's spare time helping others or giving to those in need. Many were not interested in volunteering or giving outside their community when their own communities faced daily struggles to survive.

- ❶ *Cultural maintenance and survival:* Sharing, giving and helping others are integral to Indigenous culture and play a key role in maintaining culture and traditions. Some voluntary activities relate specifically to cultural practices (e.g. organising funerals). Maintaining culture was also linked by participants to specific cultural and community activities, such as storytelling, dance and music.
- ❷ *Making a difference:* Being able to make a difference was a significant motivator for Indigenous participants in terms of both volunteering and giving. These were seen as an important part of 'giving back' to community and to those who have helped them or the community in the past.

Challenges to volunteering and giving

Volunteering and giving among CALD communities are constrained by a range of challenges, including:

- ❶ *Lack of time:* Many participants described their desire to volunteer outside their own community as being constrained by the more immediate need for caring for their own families and communities.
- ❷ *Burnout:* The level of demand placed upon community members was seen by some as connected to burnout, leading in some cases to withdrawal from volunteer activities.
- ❸ *Lack of English:* CALD participants often saw English language requirements as a barrier to volunteering outside their communities.
- ❹ *Potential for exploitation and racism:* Some noted that they were unappreciated by non-CALD workers and managers; others identified issues of exploitation, discrimination and racism.
- ❺ *Community vulnerability:* Participants noted that the financial demands on newly arrived migrants and refugees during settlement can be a barrier to giving.
- ❻ *Lack of transparency and flexibility:* Participants described a lack of transparency and flexibility in how donations are distributed by charitable organisations.

Indigenous participants identified a range of challenges to volunteering and giving, a number of which were the same as those identified by CALD participants, such as:

- ❶ *Lack of time:* Demands on time include employment, care of older people or people with disabilities, childcare, and supporting young people. Time was particularly noted as an issue for participants aged over 50 and for families with small children.
- ❷ *Burnout:* Many Indigenous community members volunteer in multiple ways – sitting on boards, looking after children – while still holding down a full-time job. Indigenous Elders were seen as particularly at risk of burnout.
- ❸ *Potential for discrimination and racism:* Many participants were wary of organisations where they may face racism or discrimination or be uncomfortable due to lack of cultural awareness on the part of staff and other volunteers.

Participants also identified challenges that are more specific to Indigenous communities, such as lack of transport, particularly in remote areas.

Enablers of volunteering and giving

CALD participants identified a number of factors that could enable involvement of CALD communities in fundraising and charity organisations. These include:

- Partnering between CALD community groups and broader Australian organisations
- Greater flexibility in volunteering options (e.g. less rigid timeslots)
- More systematic approaches to collecting and distributing funds, and
- Opportunities for work experience and skills development.

Indigenous participants identified a number of factors that could enable volunteering, including:

- Public acknowledgement and respect
- Partnership projects that benefit Indigenous communities
- Involving non-Indigenous people in Indigenous events (e.g. Sorry Day), and
- Offering opportunities for employment and skills development of Indigenous community members.

Increasing awareness of volunteer opportunities to CALD and Indigenous communities is more likely to be useful if it is done in the context of partnerships and targeted to the needs of particular groups; for example, young people and new and emerging communities are more likely to be interested in roles that may lead to building skills and employment. Flexibility in volunteering was also valued, particularly by young people.

Engaging with the philanthropic and not for profit sectors

The research found that most CALD and Indigenous community members would prefer to volunteer in settings where they are comfortable and where staff and other volunteers are culturally sensitive. Volunteer-involving organisations and philanthropic organisations would benefit from a focus on building the cultural competency of their organisations, staff and volunteers, in order to be able to work effectively and successfully with CALD and Indigenous organisations.

Stakeholder organisations interviewed as part of this research included philanthropic, volunteer-involving, CALD and Aboriginal organisations. Stakeholder organisations noted challenges in growing CALD and Indigenous volunteering in mainstream and community organisations, including:

- Volunteering organisations needing government support
- Building cultural capacity
- Addressing English language skills, and
- Developing culturally specific and appropriate promotion and outreach.

They also identified a range of enablers to address such challenges, including enhancing organisations' cultural competency, welcoming CALD and Indigenous volunteers, appreciating the value of a range of languages among volunteers, building partnerships among organisations, being more flexible in volunteering options, offering more acknowledgement of people's contributions, and communicating more effectively.

Opportunities arising from the research

This research found that volunteering and giving are integral to the cultural life of both CALD and Indigenous communities and form an essential component of civil, harmonious and healthy societies. The report identifies a range of opportunities arising from the research which build on the social capital provided through CALD and Indigenous volunteering and giving, as follows:

- Given the gap in research and evidence base relating to volunteering and giving in CALD and Indigenous communities in Australia, there are opportunities for further research in this area to build on the findings from this report.
- A variation in the way that data collections, including the ABS Census, ask questions about volunteering to include a clear definition of volunteering (and what it includes and excludes) could assist in more effectively collecting data in relation to CALD and Indigenous volunteering.
- It is very important for volunteer involving organisations to acknowledge CALD and Indigenous volunteers through, for example, the awarding of certificates or the making of formal announcements,
- There are opportunities for the Australian Government to support and encourage organisations to provide this acknowledgement – at both an individual and organisation level.
- There are opportunities to acknowledge CALD and Indigenous volunteers in the Australian Honours System.
- Support for partnerships and collaborations that promote better understanding, communication, relationship-building and culturally sensitive approaches among volunteer-involving organisations and philanthropic organisations, on one side, and CALD and Indigenous communities, on the other. This could be effective in building a more accessible and responsive not for profit sector for meeting CALD and Indigenous needs.
- CALD and Indigenous volunteering and community development projects have the potential to build relationships particularly with young people, enhancing social cohesion and strengthening community wellbeing. This is particularly important in communities where family functioning and social cohesion are at risk.
- Support should be given to long-term approaches and investments with Indigenous communities in order to ensure projects are realistic and achievable.

- Implementing cultural competency training for staff and volunteers would enhance the capacity of volunteer-involving and philanthropic organisations to work effectively with CALD and Indigenous organisations. This would make it more likely that they could attract and retain CALD and Indigenous volunteers and donors and enhance capacity to develop effective and culturally respectful partnerships and collaborative projects.
- Cultural competency and awareness training to provide philanthropic organisations with the skills they need to work more effectively with CALD and Indigenous communities and organisations, would be beneficial.
- Improving access to philanthropic funds for CALD and Indigenous communities could be achieved by simplifying application processes and forms and by providing additional support through the development and application process.
- Training and additional resources for CALD and Indigenous organisations should be provided so they can increase their participation in volunteering and philanthropy, for example, recruitment of volunteers, effective communication and marketing, networking, etc.
- The capacity of CALD and Indigenous boards of management and organisations should be increased so that they can work with philanthropic foundations; this may include assistance with application processes and training on policies and procedures related to philanthropy.
- Enhanced infrastructure and resources are required to support engagement in volunteering in CALD and Indigenous communities. Many CALD and Indigenous volunteer-involving organisations require better access to reimbursement of expenses, and volunteering expertise and networks.
- Promotion of the benefits of volunteering in relation to skills development and employment pathways, particularly for young people and new and emerging communities, is likely to be an effective way of engaging more volunteers from CALD and Indigenous communities.
- There should be promotion of the value and benefits of philanthropic projects that work with CALD and Indigenous communities and the provision of resources to support and develop successful projects, models and approaches in order to encourage the development of this sector.
- There is opportunity to access support from private sector, business and the philanthropic sector as well as from government.
- The development of specific strategies to encourage CALD and Indigenous participation in philanthropic and volunteer-involving organisations is likely to be effective. The strategy needs to address issues of organisational cultural competency, discrimination and racism, training and professional development and working in partnership - all key elements noted in this research. It may be useful to establish CALD and Indigenous Reference Groups to drive organisational change.

1. Background

1.1 The research project

The Department of Social Services (DSS), on behalf of the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership (the Partnership), commissioned the Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) to conduct research into volunteering and giving in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Indigenous communities. The Partnership provides advice to Government on strategies for growing philanthropy, volunteering, corporate social responsibility and partnerships between business and community organisations. This will enhance understanding of giving and volunteering in CALD and Indigenous communities.

There has been very little recent research into volunteering and giving in CALD and Indigenous communities in Australia or the potential for growth in volunteering in these communities (Kerr, Savelsberg, Sparrow, & Tedmanson, 2001). This research enhances understandings of motivations and patterns of volunteering and giving in both CALD and Indigenous communities and provides evidence of challenges and barriers, as well as successful strategies to grow giving and volunteering in these communities. Understanding how cultural diversity interrelates with Australia's volunteering and philanthropic effort is critical to strengthening social cohesion and building social capital. The specific objectives of the research are to:

- Develop a better understanding of the patterns of giving and volunteering behaviour taking place within CALD and Indigenous communities in Australia
- Consider whether traditional definitions and measurements are adequate to capture the patterns of spontaneous and planned giving and volunteering within different CALD and Indigenous communities
- Understand the views and perceptions among CALD and Indigenous communities about giving and volunteering
- Gain insight into what the term 'volunteering' means within CALD and Indigenous communities
- Understand the extent to which stereotypes of traditional volunteering roles can be a barrier to encouraging people from CALD and Indigenous backgrounds to volunteer in formal volunteering settings
- Identify opportunities to grow giving and volunteering for and among CALD and Indigenous communities
- Identify opportunities to support volunteer-involving organisations to build accessibility into volunteering initiatives, and
- Better understand how the philanthropic sector engages with CALD and Indigenous communities to increase giving and volunteering.

1.2 Statistics on volunteering and giving

In 2014, 5.8 million people participated in voluntary work in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014). Philanthropy, charities, non-government organisations and the corporate sector all play a role in volunteering and giving and in producing social outcomes that cannot be achieved by governments alone.

In 2014, Australian charities had a total income of \$103 billion, of which donations and bequests comprised \$6.8 billion or 6.6% (Australian Charities and Not-for profits Commission, 2014). Giving by community members in Australia is significant, in 2012-13, donations, bequests and legacies from households in Australia amounted to approximately \$4 billion (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

Despite the fact that we know CALD and Indigenous community members make significant contributions through volunteering in both the wider community and within their own community groups, they are under-represented in formal volunteering data. In 2014, 31% of the Australian population aged 15 years and over participated in volunteering, while for people who spoke a language other than English at home the reported rate of volunteering was 23% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014). Women (34%) were more likely to volunteer than men (29%), and people in the middle age groups (35–44 years to 65–74 years) were more likely to volunteer than those in younger and older age groups (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014). This broad pattern existed for both males and females, though data segmented for CALD and Indigenous community members is not available.

In 2014, data showed that recent migrants were less likely than people born in Australia to have done voluntary work in the last 12 months (22% compared with 34%) and less likely to have cared for a person with disability, a long-term health condition or old age in the last four weeks (5.7% compared with 21%). Migrants who had been in Australia longer were more likely than recent migrants to have done voluntary work in the last 12 months (28%) and to have cared for a person with disability, a long-term health condition or old age in the last four weeks (18%) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

Overall, volunteers from CALD backgrounds participate in both formal and informal settings. A survey of Australian volunteers found that 72% of CALD volunteers were involved in informal volunteering and 21% were engaged in formal volunteering through a mainstream organisation, one study found (Volunteering Australia, 2007a). Fifty-six per cent of CALD volunteers surveyed were involved in both their own community and the broader community, and 39% worked exclusively in their own communities (Volunteering Australia, 2007a). The same study also found that participation was not limited to long-term CALD residents, with 16% of CALD volunteers surveyed having arrived in Australia in the last 10 years.

The contribution of CALD volunteers is significant, with a high level of community engagement; 49% of CALD volunteers surveyed spend one to two days a week volunteering within the formal sector and 31% contribute one to two days a week in the informal sector (Volunteering Australia, 2006). The evidence in relation to volunteering by Indigenous community members is limited, and existing research suggests that complex systems of kinship and family obligations in Indigenous communities are less likely to be captured in volunteer research and statistics (Petriwskyj & Warburton, 2007). However, one study did find that 13% of Indigenous people indicated they had volunteered in the previous 12 months (Yap & Biddle, 2012).

The non-Indigenous population in Australia is more likely to have reported being a volunteer than the Indigenous population (17% compared to 13%), and this has been noted as potentially due to the concept of volunteering included in the Census being a largely western one based around participation in structured activities and organisations (Yap & Biddle, 2012). The Census question asked was, 'In the last twelve months did the person

spend time doing voluntary work through an organisation or group?' (Yap & Biddle, 2012). When a wider range of activities was included in the definition of voluntary work, Indigenous Australians' participation rates were higher than those of non-Indigenous Australians, 26.9% and 19% respectively for those aged over 15 years (Smith & Roach, 1996).

While meaningful statistics for Indigenous volunteering are limited, Indigenous carers are disproportionately represented across the care community; for example, according to the 2011 Census, 13.3% of Indigenous Australians over 15 years were providing unpaid care to someone with a disability, a long-term illness or problems relating to old age, compared to 11.2% for non-Indigenous Australians (Yap & Biddle, 2012).

In Australia, research on volunteering has often focused on formal settings and has failed to capture the informal contributions of Indigenous people in a culture where reciprocity and family and community obligation are so important (Kerr, Savelsberg, Sparrow, & Tedmanson, 2001). Given that it is very difficult to quantify the contribution of Indigenous Australians in informal volunteering, a paper from the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) (*Indigenous Population Project Paper 4: Unpaid Work, Unpaid Care, Unpaid Assistance and Volunteering*) provides useful insights into levels of participation in care (Yap & Biddle, 2012). The paper's focus is on the demographic profile of the Indigenous population:

- Undertaking unpaid care of children
- Providing unpaid care for people with disability, long-term illness or old age
- Undertaking domestic work at home or other places, and
- Spending time doing unpaid voluntary work through an organisation or group.

The paper notes the substantial size of this unpaid economy and the importance of making visible this sector of the economy (Yap & Biddle, 2012).

1.3 CALD and Indigenous populations

In 2011, 548,370 people identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up 2.5% of the total Australian population (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Contrary to the common perception that most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in remote areas, the majority (79%) live in cities and non-remote regional areas. Just under half of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in regional areas (22% live in inner regional areas and 22% in outer regional areas) and just over one-third live in major cities (35%). Eight per cent (8%) live in remote areas, and 14% live in very remote areas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013a).

Australians speak more than 200 languages other than English at home, and come from more than 240 countries of birth. At the 2011 Census, 28% of Australia's total population were born overseas, and 15.7% were born in a non-English speaking country. In 2011 18% of Australians spoke a language other than English at home. 87% of the non-English speaking population reside in metropolitan cities, and 25% of the metropolitan population speak a language other than English at home (compared with 5% of regional and remote populations). Proportionally, NSW and Victoria have greater cultural diversity than other states and territories, with almost a quarter of the population of Victoria and NSW speaking a language other than English at home (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

2. Method

A broad mixed-methods qualitative approach was used for this research, comprising the following elements:

- A literature review and initial in-depth interviews to confirm the methodology
- 11 focus groups with 96 CALD community members from 13 cultural backgrounds
- Eight focus groups and four in-depth individual interviews with a total of 44 Indigenous community members
- A discussion forum with 8 existing volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Three focus groups with 15 existing Indigenous volunteers
- Consultations with 27 stakeholders, including representatives from peak bodies, business and philanthropic and volunteer-involving organisations, including in-depth interviews and an online discussion
- The development of case stories.

The study took place from October 2015 to February 2016. It was conducted in urban, rural and remote locations across Australia, as shown in Tables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3.

Table 2.1 – Discussions with CALD community members (n=96)

Language group	11 focus group discussions (8 people in each group)			Existing volunteers
	Young (18–28 yrs)	Family (29–49 yrs)	Mature (50+ yrs)	
Chinese	Female, Sydney	Male, Melbourne	Female, Melbourne	Discussion forum in Sydney (mixed group of 8 people)
Arabic-speaking – Christian		Male, Sydney		
Arabic-speaking – Muslim		Female, Melbourne		
Vietnamese	Male, Melbourne		Female, Sydney	
Greek			Female, Sydney	
Newly arrived Sudanese	Male, Brisbane			
Newly arrived Iraqi		Female, Melbourne		
Indian		Female, Melbourne		

Table 2.2 – Discussions with Indigenous communities (n=59)

Location	8 discussions groups (5 people in each group) and 4 individual in-depth interviews			3 groups (5 people in each group)
	Young (18–28 yrs)	Family (29–49 yrs)	Elders and older community members (50+ yrs)	
Urban				
Sydney, NSW	1 group (males & females)		1 group (males & females)	Existing volunteers
Darwin, NT	4 in-depth interviews with community members from Darwin and surrounding areas (males & females)			
Regional				
Shepparton, Victoria			1 group with males	Existing volunteers
Nowra, NSW	1 group (males & females)	1 group with males	1 group with females	
Remote				
Napranum, QLD	1 group with males 1 group with females			Existing volunteers

Table 2.3 Stakeholders interviewed during the research (n=27)

Aboriginal Advancement League, Victoria	Northern Australian Aboriginal justice Agency
Aboriginal Reference Group, Volunteering SA & NT (rep)	Philanthropy Australia
Adult Migrant Education Services	Australian Red Cross
Arab Council Australia	Settlement Council of Australia
Australian Communities Foundation	Settlement Services International
Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum	Smith Family
Australian Indigenous Chamber of Commerce	Swan Volunteer Resource Centre WA
CAGES Foundation	Telstra Foundation
CareerTrackers	Volunteering Australia
Centre for Multicultural Youth, Victoria	Volunteering WA
Co.As.It (Italian Language & Community Services)	Volunteering SA/NT
Diversity Council of Australia	Youth Action and Policy Coalition
Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia (FECCA)	Woor-Dungin
Generation One	

2.1 Facilitation and consultation approach

CIRCA's bilingual and Indigenous researchers facilitated the group discussions and interviews with CALD and Indigenous community members and volunteers. Consultations were held at venues that were known to participants (e.g. local community organisations).

2.2 Analysis

The qualitative research data was explored through thematic analysis identifying patterns of meaning across the group discussions and interviews in order to provide detailed findings. This was achieved through a process of data familiarisation, data coding, theme development and revision.

Note that this is a study of a range of CALD and Indigenous participants. There are differences in the experiences between cultural groups and among urban, rural and remote Indigenous communities. Given the size and nature of this research, it is not possible to meaningfully analyse individual cohorts and report on these differences. However, where differences are relevant, they have been identified, such as in the case of remote Indigenous communities.

2.3 Ethics

Ethics approval was obtained from Bellberry Limited Human Research Ethics Committee. Bellberry Limited is a national, private not-for-profit organisation providing streamlined scientific and ethical review of human research projects across Australia. Bellberry Limited aims to promote and improve the welfare of research participants and the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of research. Ethics approval for this research was also obtained from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) in order to ensure that Indigenous Australian communities were involved in the research, that their rights, culture and heritage were respected, and that they will share in the results of this work.

3. Key findings of the literature review

The literature review was part of the preliminary phase of this research. Key findings of the literature review are as follows:

• Limited research

There is limited literature examining volunteering and giving, the motivations for and patterns of volunteering, and the potential for growth in volunteering and giving in CALD and Indigenous communities in Australia. The available literature is insufficient to inform policy development, particularly in relation to current research in the Australian context.

• Barriers

Barriers to volunteering include people feeling overburdened with community commitments and existing community needs, transport issues and lack of English language skills. Lack of remuneration for expenses such as telephone calls, travel and uniforms is also seen as a barrier to volunteering. A perceived lack of cultural awareness in organisations and perceptions of racism and discrimination can be barriers to participation in both volunteering and philanthropy for some community members.

• Cultural factors

Voluntary contributions within CALD and Indigenous communities often go unrecognised due to the narrow definitions and understandings of volunteering.

Helping and sharing are concepts that are firmly entrenched in Indigenous Australian communities. While not labelled as 'volunteering', supporting family and community is interwoven with kinship responsibilities and is a fundamental part of self-fulfilment, in stark contrast to an individualised Western understanding of helping. An Australian study found that when a wider range of activities was included in the definition of voluntary work, Indigenous Australian participation rates were higher than those for non-Indigenous Australians.

While understandings of how language and cultural factors impact on volunteering rates is limited, cultural factors play a major role in attitudes to volunteering, and social responsibilities, duties and expectations commonly replace goodwill and benevolence as the drivers of social cohesion and community development for both CALD and Indigenous communities. What is viewed as volunteering and/or giving in one community may be seen as a community obligation or economic necessity in another cultural context.

There is considerable reciprocity, helping and supporting of communities, as well as informal volunteering, in both CALD and Indigenous communities. These commonly take the form of childcare, care of older people, care for people with long-term illness and disability, and domestic work for others. In particular, the complex systems of kinship and family obligations in Indigenous communities are unlikely to be documented in volunteer research, which rarely captures the significant contribution made

by Indigenous people to their communities, which are often poorly serviced by mainstream infrastructure.

Attitudes towards volunteering and giving vary across cultures, and it is important to understand how historical experiences impact on participation. For example, there is potential for Indigenous Australians to see volunteering as having paternalistic overtones due to the experience of colonisation and negative experiences with charitable and religious organisations.

Helping, sharing and enabling are concepts that are part of the cultural life of both CALD and Indigenous communities and provide a strong base for engaging these communities in volunteering. There is a range of engagement strategies available, including partnering with communities to develop volunteering opportunities that benefit those communities.

● **Preference for informal settings**

Participation in volunteering and giving by CALD and Indigenous people is far more likely to occur in informal, unstructured and unmanaged settings.

Both CALD and Indigenous community members tend to indicate a preference for informal and unmanaged volunteering, and for volunteering to be of benefit to their own communities. This is often related to feelings of comfort, trust and familiarity but is also a reflection of community need.

Volunteering outside the cultural group is often a result of an interest in skills-building, increasing employment opportunities and, particularly for new arrivals, a desire to engage in broader Australian life and to learn English.

● **Benefits**

The benefits of volunteering to the individual and the community in providing social cohesion, social integration, purpose and satisfaction in people's lives are well documented. Philanthropy, charities, non-government organisations and the corporate sector all play a role in volunteering and in producing social outcomes that cannot be achieved by governments alone.

There are also many benefits that accrue from recruiting volunteers from CALD and Indigenous communities, including enhanced organisational competence, increased support for a greater diversity of communities, program enrichment and increased cultural respect and awareness.

4. Understanding volunteering and giving

4.1 Definitions of volunteering

Until recently, Volunteering Australia defined volunteering as:

- An activity that takes place through not-for-profit organisations or projects and is undertaken to be of benefit to the community and the volunteer, of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion, for no financial payment, and in designated volunteer positions only (Volunteering Australia, 2009).

In July 2015, Volunteering Australia changed its definition of volunteering, following a review that included the release of an issues paper, national stakeholder information sessions and an online survey to gauge community views. The new definition is more inclusive, encompassing a wider range of volunteering activities and addressing the concerns in relation to 'informal' volunteering. Volunteering is now defined as:

- Time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain (Volunteering Australia, 2015).

The voluntary contributions of CALD and Indigenous communities have gone unrecognised primarily due to narrow definitions and understandings of volunteering (Kerr, Savelsberg, Sparrow, & Tedmanson, 2001). Participation in volunteering by people from CALD and Indigenous backgrounds includes a large amount of 'informal' volunteering, and this contributes to the undercounting of their very significant contribution to volunteering. However, this report found that there is a significant contribution by both CALD and Indigenous communities in 'formal' settings as well.

This report sometimes uses the term 'mainstream volunteering' in referring to volunteering organisations that are general in nature and not CALD or Indigenous specific. 'Informal' volunteering is generally seen by participants as volunteering outside organisational structures, and 'formal' volunteering is generally seen as volunteering conducted within organisations where volunteers are formally registered. The line between formal and informal is often blurred, depending on the views of individual participants.

Sharing, helping, supporting, giving and volunteering were found by this report to be integral to CALD and Indigenous cultures and to form the basis of many cultural and religious traditions. While the nature and naming of volunteering activities varied in form, size and structure across CALD communities and between CALD and Indigenous communities, 'time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain' was proffered by all groups as an essential component of civil, harmonious and healthy societies.

Many of the CALD and Indigenous participants in this research reported that they did not include their volunteering time, either 'formal' or 'informal', in their responses to the relevant question in the Census. The main reason for this was that these roles were seen as part of culture and tradition and not necessarily considered to be 'voluntary work'.

'We have that kind of support in the community but we consider it as culture. There might be a lot of things that we don't consider as 'voluntary' because our culture is just like that.'

South Sudanese man

4.2 Definitions of giving

Activities such as 'donating' and 'giving' fall under the term 'philanthropy', which is defined by Philanthropy Australia as 'the planned and structured giving of money, time, information, goods and services, voice and influence to improve the wellbeing of humanity and the community' (Philanthropy Australia, 2016).

In CALD and Indigenous communities, this kind of giving is part of traditional culture and concern for the wellbeing of the community. Participants explained that the giving or sharing of time, belongings, food and money was part of their culture and traditions (including religious traditions for some people) and included a responsibility for the health and prosperity of their communities. For most participants there was little distinction between giving, sharing and volunteering, as they were all seen as part of supporting one's community and/or people in need. In Indigenous communities the distinction was virtually meaningless.

'Volunteering and giving, it's about helping the community, giving back, time, helping out, sharing food, it's all the same.'

Greek woman

Traditions of 'giving back' and sharing were consistently referred to, and for most participants it was expected and accepted that you would share with those less fortunate or with anyone who has less or is in need.

'We inherit the responsibility, we keep our culture alive, that's why we are the oldest living culture on this planet. Our culture is built on caring and sharing, that's what has kept us strong over all the years.'

Indigenous participant

In remote Indigenous communities, very few participants saw the work they do as volunteering or the sharing they do as 'giving'.

It's the same as we've always done, sharing what you have, always looking after little kids, looking after old people, but that's often not recognised as volunteering, because it's a family responsibility and an obligation and you just do it and I'm sure that happens in many other societies as well.'

Indigenous man

4.3 CALD cultural contexts

CALD communities in Australia, including both longstanding and newly arrived communities of both migrants and refugees, maintain a myriad of networks of social support built on the principle of personal responsibility for collective wellbeing. This principle reflects communities' cultural ethics and attitudes and underpins individual and community activities that easily fall within current Australian definitions of volunteering and giving.

'Here you call it volunteering, we call it community.'

Sierra Leonean woman

In defining volunteering, CALD participants (regardless of whether they saw it as 'formal' or 'informal' or otherwise), consistently aligned with the new Volunteering Australia definition of 'Time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain'. The common good was largely seen by CALD participants to extend past the immediate family or household, and even one's religious, ethnic or cultural grouping.

'I am not only limited to my own community. I have a social responsibility to the Australian community and something that I owe to this country. I want to contribute back not only as an individual but representing my community, to work in the mainstream. In our home country being a Hazara was a crime and when we come here we have freedom ... it is something that you owe to this country that took you out of the danger. You have freedom, your identity, you can do within the law whatever you want to do, you feel you owe to this community, not just my own but the Australia-wide community, and I want to bring change.'

Hazara man

Rather than being considered remarkable, the response by individuals and groups to an evident human need was seen as a given that could not or should not be separated from the progress of everyday life at an individual and community level.

In many cases, a concept of shared community ethics across cultures – variously called *lei feng* (China), *tzu chi* (Taiwan), *seva* (India) or *philotimo* (Greece) – was seen as giving purpose to activities undertaken for the common good. The notion that 'what goes around, comes around' was a common thread, as was 'paying it back'. Participants in all discussions described a sense of duty they felt to help others in need as the result of the support they themselves had gained at moments of need. 'Paying it back' (or in many cases 'paying it forward') by supporting new communities was seen largely as a duty to be embraced in Australia and passed on to younger community members.

It was notable that while volunteering and giving undertaken in many of the CALD communities was considered as 'informal' by them, it was not disorganised. On the contrary, access to community networks linked to village, tribal, cultural and religious networks emerged as powerful enablers and structural supports. These community processes were typically understood by CALD participants to be operating outside formal volunteering structures, occurring through trusted community channels and traditional social networks without the need for formal structures. Many participants spoke about the two-way value of volunteering, benefitting the giver and the receiver.

'My daughter asked me one day 'Mum you are doing so many things, who are you actually working for? For Dad's workshop? For Centrelink? Who?' I said no, this is for here [points to her heart].'

Tibetan woman

Most participants said they regularly contributed to formal appeals or emergency responses to natural disasters such as the recent Nepalese earthquakes, or made regular donations to international organisations such as UNICEF. However, there was an additional layer: participants explained that the giving and sharing of time, belongings and money is vital for the wellbeing of their community, at home and during the experience of migration and settlement. Giving in this context included supporting local communities within Australia as well as communities in their country of origin.

4.3.1 Volunteering by another name

Reasons why the word 'volunteering' is not more typically used by CALD participants to describe their patterns of volunteering did not appear to be influenced by any single factor. In many cases participants saw their volunteering as part of religious or spiritual commitment.

Many participants saw little distinction between the volunteering that they routinely carried out for community and the myriad support they provide to family. In some cases CALD participants described what they called 'professionalism' as defining 'formal' volunteering, which they understood as different from the range of voluntary work they carried out. Others believed that work done for one's own community would not be considered as volunteering.

'Voluntary work is a very wide term to describe a whole range of things that people do, to help out, from the small thing like going to classroom to help children read, to much bigger things like working with the SES in natural disasters. If you do it with no expectation of personal gains, you gave your time and effort for free, that's volunteering.'

Vietnamese woman

Many CALD participants understood 'volunteering' as a restrictive term, leading to many volunteering activities remaining largely invisible. Participants understood volunteering to be participation in a formal capacity usually in a large organisation, unlike the volunteering they participated in which was seen as more likely to be informal and connected to smaller community organisations or projects. Community volunteering was often understood as 'informal', even when that pattern of volunteering was highly organised, structured and ongoing.

'In the Census and the general social survey which they do every couple of years, there is a question on volunteering and the way that it's asked, it is really skewed, its more about formal volunteering and we know the CALD communities do informal volunteering – if there was acknowledgment, those questions would change and they would be talking about it in the sense that everybody in Australia can answer that question and it can be captured properly and get true data on what is happening.'

Sierra Leonean woman

4.4 Indigenous cultural contexts

4.4.1 Defining volunteering

Most Indigenous community members are regularly involved in activities that would be recognised as volunteering, such as caring for the elderly, providing transport to medical appointments, participating in boards of management, organising and working at events, or helping out at a local school. However, these activities are not necessarily seen as volunteering but are more often viewed as something that is an essential part of being a human being and part of an Indigenous community.

'It's not thought of as volunteering, Kooris always help, it's natural, you can rely on Kooris to help out, it's just the way people are.'

Indigenous woman

Indigenous participants were more likely to see volunteering as being involved in a structured role in an organisation like the Salvation Army or the Rural Fire Service. The myriad of support roles provided in the community were more likely to be defined as 'giving back to the community' or 'helping out'. Many participants saw no distinction between volunteering and the giving of time, or giving back, to the community.

'Our culture is built on caring and sharing, we inherit the responsibility, we keep our culture alive.'

Indigenous woman

Community members noted that they 'volunteer' for a wide range of reasons, including community need, cultural obligation, helping others, giving back, providing role models for children, and also because it provides satisfaction and makes the volunteer feel good and happy.

'It has to be good for your health, I have seen people who volunteer look, sound and behave and are better people generally.'

Indigenous man

While many official definitions of volunteering do not include immediate family, this distinction is meaningless for many Indigenous people, for whom family does not fall neatly into categories of 'immediate family', 'nuclear' and 'extended'.

'If you are looking after a big mob of kids and some might be your own kids, or your sister's kids, is this volunteering? You're feeding them, getting them to school, it's not paid.'

Indigenous woman

4.4.2 Impacts of colonisation

Indigenous community members also reflected on the impacts of colonisation and discrimination on connection to country, belonging, identity and poor health and education outcomes. These were seen as leading to mistrust and suspicion between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. It was also noted that some Indigenous people may be uncomfortable in non-Indigenous organisations and may prefer to volunteer within their communities.

'Volunteering is what outsiders and whitefellas do, you have to feel comfortable, have that trust, not be shamed, it has to be welcoming, if you're not comfortable, then you won't go back.'

Indigenous man

4.4.3 Remote communities

Remote communities face additional challenges, with fewer people, less resources and limited access to services. Both volunteering and giving therefore are essential to addressing the challenges faced by community members.

'I think it's very difficult for many Aboriginal people particularly those who live in remote areas and who come from a poor baseline of services available to them to be thinking about volunteering or to be giving to external people ... because they are already living in overcrowded houses, they already don't have jobs, they already don't have a regular income and they are already sharing what they have with community.'

Indigenous woman

4.4.4 Part of everyday life

Indigenous participants who volunteered in organisations saw 'formal' volunteering as primarily being about having policies and procedures in place and being registered as a volunteer and 'following their approach' rather than it being based 'on your own values and humanity'. Indigenous participants consistently expressed a preference for a more personal and less structured approach to volunteering.

'It's just something we do, we don't recognise it as volunteering, it's our obligation, we pitch in, it comes natural to Aboriginal people.'

Indigenous woman

Helping people was seen as something people do every day or whenever they can, as part of the way they live their lives. Providing assistance was not seen as an expectation but as something that people want to do to ensure their communities function and people are cared for.

'You might mow the grass for an uncle, chop some wood, or drop off some fish you've caught to the old people.'

Indigenous man

Furthermore, in communities where there is limited access to cars and no public transport, picking up Indigenous hitch-hikers provides an essential transport service that allows getting people to medical appointments, work and school.

'When you see an Aboriginal person on the side of the road you always pull over and pick them up and take them where they need to go, even if it's out of the way. Kooris help Kooris.'

Indigenous man

Summary of Chapter 4

The informal contributions of CALD and Indigenous community members in both giving and volunteering to support their communities appears to be significantly underestimated, unsupported and unrecognised. Volunteering, helping, sharing and giving are all integral to the cultural life of both CALD and Indigenous communities and were perceived throughout the research as an essential component of civil, harmonious and healthy societies. These activities were seen as a normal part of everyday life that did not have or need a title such as 'volunteering'.

There was little distinction between giving, sharing and volunteering, as they were all seen as part of supporting community and/or people in need.

Formal volunteering and giving outside communities was typically understood by CALD and Indigenous participants as structured and pre-determined, whereas spontaneous volunteering and giving within communities was seen as fluid, flexible and responsive to community needs.

The research suggests that traditional definitions and measurements are inadequate to capture the extent of spontaneous and planned giving and volunteering within CALD and Indigenous communities. CALD and Indigenous volunteering support community wellbeing by providing important services and supports, and in many cases fill a significant gap in service provision to these communities.

5. Volunteering and giving in CALD communities

5.1 Introduction

A combination of traditional practice, cultural attitudes, individual duty and shared responsibility for community explain the high levels of volunteering reported by CALD participants in this research.

'In my community we have been doing it for a long, long time now and I recall my dad was doing that when we were back home, not only to our own community but people were coming over and staying at our place while they were passing through our village and that's what I learned from him and when I came to Australia, even though I was very new, I started very quickly volunteering.'

Hazara woman

Patterns of giving in CALD communities largely matches patterns of volunteering. The giving and sharing of money and material wealth was seen by participants as central to the principle of personal responsibility for collective wellbeing.

'Giving – *quyên góp, đóng góp* – means giving money for charitable causes, or for worthy causes similar to the normal meaning of giving or donating in the mainstream community. Here in Australia, a lot of Vietnamese [do] fundraising for Vietnam, for orphanages, for the restoration of temples, and assistance to disabled veterans.'

Vietnamese woman

Most CALD participants saw giving as the duty of everyone – individuals, families, community groups – at all levels of material wealth.

'If someone is very poor, or if someone is very rich, they do not participate less in giving.'

Indian woman

What to give (goods, money) and how much to give were seen as directly linked to the giver's level of material wealth and the depth or urgency of need of the receiving individual, community or project.

'It's part of our cultural values that if you have a fortune, you're widely expected to share a significant portion of it with not only family members, but extended family, relatives, clan, friends and community in general.'

South Sudanese man

CALD participants described a variety of motivating factors for volunteering and giving that included:

- Cultural maintenance
- Religious and social ethics
- Settlement and community wellbeing
- Humanitarian response to crisis
- Community connections and reducing social isolation
- Meaning and personal satisfaction
- Themes specific to volunteering only, included access to employment opportunities and opportunities for skills development.

5.2 Cultural maintenance

Maintaining linguistic, social and cultural traditions emerged in all CALD group discussions as an important motivation for both volunteering and giving. Voluntarily participating in activities that support cultural traditions and connection was seen by many as an essential element in successful settlement in a new culture.

'That volunteering word is about community-building, you're making people feel like they belong to something. So apart from individual assistance that is provided, if it's part of community events or cultural things or social acts, it's that identity thing – I am part of something that is bigger than me. You know, we speak the same language or we are the same religion or the same cultural group, it's that connection.'

Sierra Leonean woman

Many CALD participants described individual financial support given by community members to projects that helped maintain traditional social structures and relationships. The support for culture- or language-specific community centres was significant, contributing to community wellbeing and self-worth.

'We bought the community centre with our own money – we fundraised and bought a property which has become a central point for the whole community ... it is not only one person, it's the whole community, and when they come there they feel it's their own home. Everyone is part of that community, they feel they have something, the young people, their parents, they wanted to have something, they got their goal.'

Hazara man

At the same time, participants consistently described volunteering as an inseparable element of their culture that needed to be passed on to their next generation and shared with other Australian communities. The support of traditional cultural activities such as music and dance and the teaching of those traditions to younger generations was a focus for giving in many communities. Financial support to cultural activities was seen by many participants as an opportunity to link with other CALD communities and broader Australian communities, and to increase recognition and understanding of their own communities. The ethos of multiculturalism was seen by many CALD participants as an integral and positive aspect of Australian life, one which their own communities had a duty, willingness and capability to support.

Active participation in volunteer activities that extended past the needs of one's own community was seen by many participants as a way to share their identity with the broader Australian society.

'We serve both Chinese and non-Chinese communities such as visiting elderly people in nursing homes. We hope to promote Chinese people and culture to the mainstream society and enhance mutual understanding between Chinese and non-Chinese businesswomen in Australia.'

Chinese woman

This kind of volunteering was seen by many participants as a practical way to break down the kinds of ethnic or religious stereotypes that were seen to divide communities – an opportunity to build bridges across potential cultural divides.

'They [men in a men's crisis centre] were shocked when a group of Muslim women, covered up, came to volunteer with them. We give them blankets every winter and provide food for them in North Melbourne, forty men in a refuge. The men all know us now and eat with us and are so grateful for our assistance. But they were shocked when we first turned up. Now they ask us to come on Eid and do a celebration with them.'

Arabic-speaking Muslim woman

5.3 Religious and social ethics

While Australia continues to be largely secular, many CALD participants come from non-secular societies or places where religions plays a major role in daily life. Volunteering, or taking part in a communal responsibility for the care of others, was seen by participants across CALD communities as directly linked to religious ethics that inform daily life in their country of origin.

Religions represented in the participant groups include Buddhism, Taoism, Mandaeanism, Islam and Christianity. Many participants had close connections with religious organisations and, while they did not speak specifically about religion in relation to giving, they spoke about the links between religion, helping, sharing and giving.

Many religions have defined practices of giving; for example, Muslim communities may give back through al-zakat (almsgiving), which requires people to give a prescribed portion of their income to those in need. Some religions operate forms of tithing by which members give set amounts to the church, commonly 10%, while other religions have more flexible approaches.

'Buddhism emphasises on being kind and helping every alive being on earth.'

Chinese man

Many CALD participants described their culture of origin as one that placed a high religious or social value on the giving of personal time 'for the common good'. The application of their religious and social ethics through volunteering was partially motivated by the psychosocial need of CALD participants to maintain their cultural values throughout their migration process.

'The women do lots of volunteer work around their churches ... it is not a duty they told me but more for a love of their religion and keeping of their culture and traditions.'

Iraqi Christian woman

Both Muslim and Christian religions also have a sense of duty towards family, neighbours and community. Community fundraising for villages and towns in their country of origin, where there may be war and poverty, is common. For many, when they are asked to donate by members of their religion they are obliged to give what they can.

'In Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, *dāna* or *seva* is the practice of cultivating generosity. It is seen as a form of giving to an individual in distress or need. According to cultural values one should sacrifice one's time and resources for the benefit of others without expectation of anything in return.'

Indian woman

Participants also spoke about collecting donations or distributing donations to those in need through religious organisations. People also spoke of giving across religions to respond to crises such as the cyclone, Typhoon Haiyan, in the Philippines in 2013.

Some CALD participants described being motivated by social or political ethics, rather than religion, in their activities to support the common good.

'The *lei feng* spirit in 1960s China was perceived as being equivalent to the notion of volunteerism and community service in Australia today. Selflessly volunteering and contributing to the collective was the Communist spirit of a New China.'

Chinese-speaking researcher

5.4 Settlement and community wellbeing

Participants across CALD communities, including those with a longstanding presence in Australia and those from emerging communities, described being regularly called upon to assist community members.

'My volunteer work is informal. It is part of my duty and you don't think about it, you just do it. Assisting elderly, single mothers, taking people who don't have cars shopping, taking to community events, doing their paperwork for them because they don't have English language. Giving them information to assist in their settlement process, all these things we just do as part of our life.'

Arabic-speaking Muslim woman

Many participants described their own settlement experiences as having been difficult and said they were now motivated to volunteer and give in order to reduce the kinds of settlement trauma that many experience.

'[It's] so hard for newly arrived people. There are so many things I tell them ... the majority is volunteering work like going to hospitals with them or immigration office to change their name or date of birth or go to TAFE and help them out ... lots of other things. Someone will call me and say "I am nearly giving birth, what do I do?"'

Tibetan woman

Negotiating Australian systems is a major challenge during the settlement process. Participants noted that it was the duty of community members to help newly arrived members deal with unfamiliar systems such as Centrelink payments, compliance regulations, housing issues, education, banking, health, taxation and employment.

Many CALD participants reported memories of the many kinds of support that they received from volunteers during their journey and settlement in Australia. They repeatedly described their reasons for volunteering and giving as being linked to 'paying it back' or 'giving back'.

'I feel that Australia has been good to us, opened its arms to accept us, so now that I have time, I want to repay that debt ... show our gratitude, so I help with cultural activities with councils. I also feel that we are lucky to be here, to have more than enough. We have to remember the people less fortunate than us.'

Vietnamese woman

In other cases it meant 'paying forward' or giving to other communities facing hardship. Most CALD participants saw this type of response as a responsibility as extending past the needs of one's own community to all Australian communities, regardless of race, age or religion.

'They want to help as much as they can. Many have been in situations when they came to Australia, when they needed charity and assistance themselves and they mainly want to pay back.'

Arabic-speaking Muslim woman

Part of the settlement experience includes a sense of duty towards family, friends and communities a new migrant has left behind. Supporting community members who remained in their country of origin or were currently in a state of transition was reported by almost all CALD participants as an ongoing demand for giving.

'Everyone around the table has come from a country that is currently having war, or had war or conflict. So supporting family and community overseas is a great expectation.'

Arabic-speaking Muslim woman

Most CALD participants had come to Australia in order to build safer lives socially, psychologically and economically. In many cases this has meant leaving behind other family and community who continue to live in unsafe and underprivileged circumstances and denied access to the full range of human rights expected in civil society.

'They can't afford to go to Kabul to study. So we formed a group and started raising money from the community, starting at one dollar sending it back home to Pakistan or Humanitarian response to crisis Afghanistan families who can't afford their child's higher education. So we were covering the cost that the parents can't afford.'

Hazara woman

Many CALD participants described taking part, individually or through community groups, in volunteer activities to support large charities such as UNICEF or national events such as Clean Up Australia Day. Reasons for doing so were linked to the same sense of personal responsibility for collective wellbeing that motivated participants to volunteer in their own community groups.

'In my community there's a couple of volunteer groups who make a point of volunteering outside of our community – so Clean Up Australia Day is a big one. In Sierra Leone in the war the government made every Saturday a cleaning day, you couldn't leave the house until after 12.00 o'clock you had to clean the whole place. And people wonder why is Australia doing it once a year, we used to do it every day.'

Sierra Leonean woman

It was this kind of activity that was seen by most CALD participants as 'volunteering', or what some called 'formal volunteering'.

Similarly, attitudes to giving among participants were linked to traditional social and religious ethics and a belief in 'giving back'. These attitudes were the background to a high level of support expressed by participants for giving to charitable causes. Giving was also seen as a way to promote a positive image of CALD communities to the broader Australian population.

'They also give money to appeals for bushfire, for institutions like hospitals, and when done in partnership with the Vietnamese community in Australia, or through SBS Radio, then the contribution of Vietnamese-Australians are recognised.'

Vietnamese woman

The majority of CALD participants reported supporting a variety of major national and international fundraising charities. Giving to appeals following humanitarian crises and giving to regular fundraising charity appeals such as the annual Salvation Army doorknock were strongly supported.

'Every month I sent \$42.00 to UNICEF and also send money overseas for cancer patients.'

Indian woman

Participant story – raising funds for Typhoon Haiyan

'Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines about three years ago; it was a devastating calamity. Our community in Australia is very close-knit, and we rally together and help out when we need to. But probably because of the hugeness of this calamity, different CALD communities were moved by what was happening and wanted to partner with us to do something to help the Filipino people.

'Seven communities contacted us and said "Now is our payback time". This was people like the Vietnamese, for example, who'd been helped by the Philippines during the Vietnam War. We met with a Vietnamese community organisation and they started fundraising for us. They organised street dancing and performances, where lots of the Vietnamese community gathered, and our community provided the volunteers who were ready to pass around the buckets. They organised a fundraising concert with Vietnamese stars, singers and dancers and traditional Filipino performers too and they raised about \$70,000. And other communities helped, the Indian community and Uruguayan communities, Spanish-speaking communities and others. We got permission from Sydney Trains to do fundraising in the Sydney train network and raised a lot of money there, and businesses also got involved.

'They were looking for a community leader or a group in the Philippines that they could trust to hand the money or goods over to the people. And there were others from different walks of life who wanted to give money. They'd ask us: "If we give you the money, how sure are we that this money will go to the people who need it?" So I told them that we would not give the money to the big organisations, because they usually deduct 25% for administration. I said that instead we would organise a mission of volunteers to go there personally and deliver the services that were needed and the money and goods that were collected. And that's what we did. We had a seven-person team. We found good organisations to link up with, ones that had a really good track record of delivering services to the people. It was very successful – the money and goods were delivered to the right people and got distributed and used.'

Australian Filipino community leader

5.5 Community connection and reducing social isolation

Social isolation was identified by CALD participants as a risk for individuals and communities in transition. Emerging and newly arrived communities were seen as being at risk, and women as being at even higher risk.

Bringing people together to help individuals and groups feel cared for and connected with their own and broader communities was identified by participants as a strong motivator for volunteering and for a focus for giving.

'When they come here they find different ways of doing things ... they fall into cracks and spend time on train stations and commit crimes and don't know what to do. And if they are neglected by the community then you find them in jails and having offences they don't know what to do about it. But if you've got these kids and the community helping the kids together to develop, you tend to mitigate the fighting – a cohesive community.'

South Sudanese man

In the case of communities with a longstanding presence in Australia, the need for volunteering was typically connected by CALD participants to supporting the needs of older community members, many of whom speak little or no English and are socially isolated. Community networks such as religious structures or village or tribal associations were identified as direct avenues of support for older people.

Actively participating in religious festivals, community programs such as language-teaching, or caring for older community members was cited by participants as central to maintaining traditional community relations, language, social relationships, beliefs and practices. These activities were also seen as supporting the health of older community members and as providing meaning and connection for the volunteers.

Maintaining or rebuilding connections with young people, despite challenges that arise during settlement in a new culture (such as challenges to traditional parental authority), was seen by many CALD participants as an important focus. For example, sport forms a particular focus for volunteer activities that allows community and family members to reconnect with young people.

Sporting activities also provide newly arrived communities with opportunities to build connections with other CALD communities and the broader Australian community, enhancing opportunities for cultural exchange and social cohesion. Football clubs, basketball programs, surf life saving and athletics activities were all cited as opportunities for young people and adult mentors to strengthen community connections.

In combination with volunteering, giving financial and other material support for culture specific community centres was seen as reducing the social isolation of individuals and communities and strengthening community cultural traditions.

'And the ladies have been great asset to that [building a community centre]. They sold their jewellery, they gave their jewellery for the community.'

Hazara man

5.6 Meaning and personal satisfaction

Many CALD participants described their participation in volunteering in altruistic terms – a personal commitment to caring for their fellow human beings that was an essential aspect of living. Yet volunteering was also seen by many participants as providing meaning in life. In the face of the loss of status that the migrant and refugee experience often imposes, volunteering offers avenues for increasing personal self-esteem and carrying out meaningful work.

'For me it is a rewarding job, I am not getting paid for that but helping people in need, specifically refugees and asylum seekers, I find what I am doing is something really like a treasure – I enjoy that and it's as if I am getting very precious things.'

Iraqi Mandaean woman

In many cases this altruism was linked by the participants to ideas of 'karma', or a belief that giving is a two-way process.

'In Arabic there is a saying, if you give in your right hand, you receive in your left hand.'

Iraqi Mandaean woman

For many participants, the opportunity to give back and repay the support they had received during their journey to Australia and settlement, was a source of significant personal satisfaction.

'With St Vincent de Paul we all get help from them when we first come here, so it's natural we have to pay the debt and help them help others.'

Vietnamese woman

5.7 Access to employment opportunities and skills development

Many CALD participants described a loss of career and a need to find new kinds of work in their transition to life in Australia. Taking part in organised voluntary activities provides many participants with a level of satisfaction they might previously have found in paid work. In addition, volunteering was described by many participants as a way to update skills or acquire new ones.

'Helping others with whatever they need ... I am learning new skills and things as well, as part of committees. And other people have skills I don't have and it helps me improve my skills'.

Iraqi Christian man

Connecting with Australian employment networks and learning about Australian employment systems and attitudes was seen as an important benefit for CALD volunteers. This was particularly noted by the CALD participants who gave their time to mainstream organisations. Participants valued larger, organised volunteer agencies because they give them training, guidelines, boundaries and experience they may not get elsewhere.

Many younger CALD participants described a wide range of broader community volunteering activities they took part in as an avenue to skills acquisition.

'Like I was in high school and I was involved in many organisations like UN, World Vision, Youth Parliament. So it helps build skills as well.'

South Sudanese man

5.8 CALD volunteering and giving activities

5.8.1 Meeting community needs

CALD participants reported being involved in a range of volunteer and giving activities, including community-building and networking, maintaining culture and language, and supporting younger and older people in need. Participants talked of responding to the needs of longstanding CALD community members, the settlement needs of new and emerging communities, and the needs of the broader Australian community and the international community, including needs in their country of origin.

Voluntary participation noted by participants included:

- Care of older people, including in residential aged care and hospitals
- Care of children
- Sporting activities and organisations, including working with young people
- Cultural activities, including festivals, arts and crafts and language classes
- Interpreter and translation services in communities
- Providing food and resources to those in need
- Advocacy on behalf of their communities, and
- Participating in projects, committees, and management and advisory roles.

5.8.2 Building and supporting community organisations

Establishing and managing community organisations was reported as a major demand on CALD volunteering time. Organisations often operate in a religious context, through a tribal or village affiliation, or through a civic or national connection. They were seen by participants as supporting essential aspects of community wellbeing such as access to social services, social connections, support of intergenerational relations and cultural maintenance, including language.

In many cases these organisations build on traditional community relationships – family, religious, village – and provide support to vulnerable community members such as the aged, single parents, new arrivals, refugees and people seeking asylum. In addition to the services they provide, community organisations are an important psychosocial support and source of social connection on which members can build meaningful lives and make connections to their community and the broader population.

Advocacy was also noted as a key role for many of the CALD participants who are involved in building support for their communities through participation in a range of projects, community-based and mainstream committees, boards and advisory bodies.

Many participants said they take part in volunteering activities through formal structures established through their communities. These structures may be established through religious bodies, sporting clubs, or community, clan or village connections. Strong community links and clearly identified aims focusing on specific goals were noted by participants as a productive way to build connections across communities.

Youth activities such as football were noted as bringing participants from various communities together around something they all know and care about. Parents go along and mingle while young people play sport and meet people from the broader community, including other migrant communities. Activities like 'Midnight Football' in Marrickville has united women across CALD communities who all have an interest to support young people by cooking meals for them and giving them a productive alternative to wandering the streets.

'[We] set up Nile Football Academy to develop young kids to come in and play football while making friends ... once we connect them with soccer, they play the game, they enjoy it and some go on and play football in the future. We teach them to keep healthy and to deal with conflict, we take them out to games and we show them how the feeling of togetherness will get you there. The parents get to spend some time with their kids. Now you've got fathers coming to the game and they enjoy it.'

South Sudanese man

5.8.3 Settlement support for new and emerging communities

CALD communities provide a high level of volunteer support to newly arrived community members so they can access essential services through government and non-government providers. Much of this is provided through established community organisations, yet many participants described individuals who were so well known and trusted by their community that they were regularly approached for help outside of any organisation. This was particularly so in situations of urgent need, such as approaching a deadline for immigration issues.

'They will contact me via my husband ... or turn up the day before and say "It's due tomorrow". As a community member you don't have any choice but to help.'

Hazara woman

The nature of the need varies according to factors such as visa and/or residence status, age, and family and social connection. Settlement supports for which CALD volunteer assistance is frequently required include:

- Centrelink – filling in forms, supporting face-to-face contact with Centrelink staff, and understanding compliance
- Housing – finding and securing rental properties and/or understanding rental agreements
- Education – understanding education systems, enrolling and supporting children in school, and finding education pathways
- Employment – accessing job-seeking and workers' rights services, as well banking and taxation systems
- Health – understanding and negotiating the health system.

People seeking asylum were noted by participants as having additional needs for volunteer assistance with such things as legal advice, immigration advocacy, education and training, and particularly with access to low-cost or no-cost English language tuition and employment-linked training.

5.8.4 Interpreting and translating

Participants noted that there are ongoing needs for translation and interpreting in many CALD communities and that these services are often provided by volunteers. Within longstanding communities, volunteer support is regularly provided for older community members who have limited English language skills. People in aged care were noted as having a high need for volunteer interpreting and translating services.

There is also a high demand from new and emerging communities. This is directly related to accessing support services (as described above) and requires volunteers to have good language skills and a good understanding of Australian systems.

Participants described a significant demand for volunteer support to produce high-standard English translation of documents and legal statements in immigration application processes.

'People applying for temporary protection visas have a thick application to fill, low literacy and no-one to assist them with their visa application. They contact me ... it's very important to do it well.'

Hazara woman

Participant story: Sierra Leone Funeral Fund

'Our community has been here for 25 years or so, but back in 2005 there was the first death here. The gentleman had liver cancer; he died very suddenly and left his wife and four young kids. They had no other family here and so the community just rallied. Traditionally, when there is a death the family's responsibility is to mourn, and all the other things are looked after by the community who is not family.

'So our Sierra Leone community in Sydney formed a funeral committee to plan the funeral and organise paying for it. It's a cultural thing for us that the whole community comes to pay respects. It doesn't matter if you don't know the person, you still have to go and pay your respects. It's the responsibility of the whole community, so a group of five people formed a committee to take responsibility. They worked out where the community lives in Sydney and gave people what they called collection zones – there was the Canterbury Bankstown block, the Auburn Parramatta block and the Blacktown Mt Druitt block. They were responsible for collecting money from every single family in every zone. There was lots of community debate about what the amount should be, who should pay what. It was decided on \$50 per family if there were adults working, and \$55 for singles who were working. So everyone was donating money, but not only that – people were coming to the funeral house bringing food, because rice is a really big food to cook at those times, and so people would also come to the house to cook for the guests.

The committee raised about \$37,000 so they paid for the funeral, but they were also able to pay off the gentleman's debts and give some money to the wife and family. And the wife said she wanted to bring his relatives, so she used some of the money towards the tickets for her husband's brothers and sisters to come and there was an interest-free loan organised to cover the rest of the tickets. After that, the funeral committee became a permanent thing in the community to organise funerals, and the volunteers who collected the money all stayed on to continue that. So now it is part of the community.

Sierra Leonean community member

Summary of Chapter 5

Giving and sharing of time, belongings and money in CALD communities provides vital support for communities within Australia and in countries of origin. Particular support is provided during migration and settlement. Cultural and traditional beliefs around individual duty and personal responsibility for collective wellbeing are the basis for high levels of volunteering. Patterns of giving match patterns of volunteering, irrespective of financial status.

Community networks linked to village, tribal, cultural and religious networks are powerful enablers and structural supports for volunteering and giving in CALD communities. Rather than being considered formal, these community processes typically operate outside formal volunteering structures and management, occurring through trusted community channels and traditional social networks without the need for the imposition of formal volunteering structures.

CALD community members commonly reported being involved in activities to support settlement needs, community-building and networking (including supporting community organisations), maintaining language and culture, and translating and interpreting.

Motivating factors for volunteering and giving include:

- Religious and social ethics
- The psychosocial need of CALD communities to maintain their own cultural values throughout the migration process
- Promoting community connections to reduce social isolation for individuals and communities in transition
- Responding to the various immediate practical and human needs of community members during migration and settlement
- Humanitarian responses to crises both in Australia and overseas
- Meaning and personal satisfaction, particularly in the face of the loss of status that migration and refugee experiences often impose
- Access to employment opportunities and skills development through Australian employment networks.

6.Challenges and enablers in CALD volunteering and giving

6.1 Challenges in volunteering

6.1.1 Lack of time

Meeting demands linked to the migration experience (finding work, doing training, learning or improving English), in addition to other demands that arise in everyday life, was seen by CALD participants as reducing the time they had available for volunteering. Many participants described their personal desire to volunteer outside their own community as being constrained by the more immediate need for helping in their own communities.

Caring for one's own family was also seen by some CALD participants as limiting their volunteering time. Several commented that women already carry out a large amount of work in the home and for the good of the family and that this lessened their capacity or willingness to undertake volunteering. In addition, some participants believed that lack of access to paid employment was a factor in women's participation in volunteering.

'I always think it is unfair because so many women who volunteer would also like to have paid work. Often women can't get paid jobs so they end up volunteering for years and years.'

Arabic-speaking Muslim woman

6.1.2 Burnout in communities with high needs

A high level of volunteering was reported among all the CALD communities that were consulted, and was seen by CALD participants as a necessary community response to support needs within those communities. Participants described being called upon, regardless of their own knowledge or experience, to provide almost every kind of support that newly arrived people may need.

The level of demand for assistance, advice and advocacy placed upon established community members by less experienced community members was seen by some CALD participants as directly connected to 'burnout', leading in some cases to complete withdrawal by community members from volunteer activities. The risk of burnout was seen as a particular challenge for volunteering in new and emerging communities.

'The girl volunteering with the food bank I volunteer at who is coordinating it is totally burnt out and she said it took over her life. And that is what happened to me, it takes over your life.'

Arabic-speaking Muslim woman

Many CALD participants who are recognised as trusted helpers in their community described being approached regularly for assistance from community members attempting to deal with Australian systems. This might include help to write immigration appeals, deal with real estate agents or manage children's schooling. Providing

this kind of support was seen as an unavoidable duty at the same time as it was described by some as potentially overwhelming.

A further contributing factor to burnout is a lack of training in volunteering and a lack of debriefing. Many participants described working with people with high emotional needs, saying that the lack of appropriate debriefing and the corresponding risk of vicarious trauma was a challenge and potential barrier to volunteering.

6.1.3 Lack of English

While many CALD participants expressed a strong interest in taking part in volunteering activities outside their own community, they often saw English language requirements as a barrier. There was no indication that participants with low levels of English knew much about volunteer opportunities in the broader community or how they might access information about these.

'I don't know where to start. I don't know where to find such information. My English is so poor and how can I communicate with others? Will those organisations let me volunteer for them?'

Chinese woman

6.1.4 Potential for exploitation and racism in volunteer work

Members of longstanding CALD communities noted that they were involved in caring for an ageing population with low levels of English. Some noted that they were unappreciated and insufficiently supported by non-CALD paid workers and managers. Others described feeling abused, exploited or undervalued when undertaking volunteer work. Some participants reported that this was more likely to happen when volunteering was undertaken outside their own cultural and/or language groups

'I just want to say that often volunteers get exploited and their rights need to be protected and respected.'

Arabic-speaking Muslim woman

Cultural insensitivity, discrimination and racism were identified by participants as issues of concern for some CALD volunteers, and a need for cultural awareness training in mainstream organisations and services was noted. Lack of understanding by paid workers about the role of CALD volunteers and lack of support for them in mainstream organisations was also seen as a significant challenge and one that deterred CALD volunteers from volunteering outside their own community organisations.

'There was a feeling of being downgraded or used by the staff. The volunteer was recruited to run the Seniors Group but they got her to do the crappy work – she was used by them.'

Greek woman

6.2 Challenges to giving

6.2.1 Community vulnerability and hardship during settlement

Participants noted that the financial demands on newly arrived migrants and refugees during settlement can be a barrier to giving. However, it is worth noting that in the longer term the same hardships and limitations on giving that were experienced by CALD participants during settlement contributed to 'giving back' or 'paying back', described as a powerful motivation for continued giving by more established CALD communities.

6.2.2 Lack of transparency and trust

CALD participants described placing a high value on giving, and most said they provide financial support and donations to trusted community organisations. In contrast, a perceived lack of trustworthiness was noted as the major barrier to giving by CALD communities outside their own communities. Participants repeatedly described what they saw as a lack of transparency in how donations were distributed by fundraisers and a lack of trust that donations would go to intended recipients.

'Yes, I am fussy where I give my money. I think you have to be careful. I say I would like to know where the money is going and who is in charge of getting this money. Sometimes they say we will send you photos and I say I don't want the photos, I trust you but tell me exactly where the money is going.'

Newly arrived Iraqi woman

Many participants expressed a fear that some charities spend excessive amounts of funds on organisational costs rather than on the intended recipients. These were observations unique to the notion of giving; that is, they marked a clear distinction with volunteering.

'When I know the money is going direct to help people I tend to give more. I worry that some money we donate goes to admin costs, because I have heard about that.'

Arabic-speaking Iraqi woman

6.2.3 Inflexibility in allocation of philanthropic funds

In relation to giving, some CALD participants identified an attitude of inflexibility on the part of (unspecified) charitable organisations and funding bodies regarding allocation of funds.

They spoke particularly of difficulties accessing funding for projects with a single community, ethnic or tribal focus, rather than a general focus on CALD communities. Participants saw this kind of support as essential for targeted projects to be successful and also for the cultural survival of some communities in their early years of settlement.

6.3 Enablers for volunteering and giving

Participant story: giving back

'At our Hazara volunteer association we started a visa support program in consultation with council and TAFE. People could not afford to pay a lawyer to fill in the application. So we gathered volunteers and TAFE students to fill in the application forms, which take three hours to do.

'Up until we started this, I never calculated a dollar value [of the work we did], but I sat back and evaluated my work and put a dollar sign on it. We have assisted 100 clients, and the average payment that they'd pay to a migration agent or lawyer is \$3,000–\$4,000. We fill the application and send it back to the Refugee Advice & Casework Service, so it's that figure times 100. But we never consider the dollar sign, it's that we're passionate and we feel the huge need in the community and they can't go anywhere else.'

Hazara man

6.3.1 Community connections, partnerships and networks

For many CALD participants, volunteering and giving (called by many names) was seen as a valued cultural tradition maintained during the migration experience. CALD community networks and a tradition of volunteering for the common good were seen as enablers for volunteering and giving.

'In Greek we call it *philotimo* – kindness without return.'

Greek participant

Supporting CALD community organisations to consolidate, enhance or extend this commitment to volunteering was seen as a practical and effective enabler. Suggestions for support included formal recognition of participation in volunteering, provision of volunteering training, and participation in volunteer-involving peak bodies and conferences.

CALD participants identified benefits that derive from community groups partnering with broader Australian organisations such as local councils, philanthropic agencies and service providers. They saw viable partnerships not as ones where practices or decisions imposed on a community group by a charitable organisation but where there is a genuine partnership around decision-making and the practice of giving.

'In the Karen community there were 20 young people that wanted to play soccer so I started to volunteer as coach because to pay a coach is very expensive, and I had a licence. Last year we [successfully] applied for a grant. So now we can pay hiring fees, pay for the change rooms, buy our uniforms, and we also have support from STARTTS¹ to pay for our insurance. So the community is growing – so the coaching is volunteering and the charitable organisations work in partnership.'

Karen man

Many CALD participants saw possibilities for increasing or consolidating forms of charitable giving through mobilising their own community organisations in partnership with other community organisations.

More networking, meeting more people, talking to them, maybe talking about it at community functions or church, places of work, and social media.

Iraqi woman

6.3.2 Flexibility

Some CALD participants saw the higher level of flexibility evident in community volunteering as a potential enabler for increasing CALD volunteering in mainstream organisations.

'The language barrier is real. Also, when you want to volunteer for Australian organisations, there is a lot of red tape, a lot of paper work in English you need to sign. I once applied to volunteer with the Red Cross, and they make me sign so many documents.'

Vietnamese woman

Some CALD participants described the strict volunteer requirements of some organisations, and noted that many young people are not able or willing to lock into rigid ongoing timeslots. More flexibility about how people agree to volunteer their time, even to the extent that some volunteering might take place on a casual basis, was seen as an enabler for young people to take on a greater role in volunteering.

Participants noted that increasing access for non-English speakers would provide benefits to mainstream organisations by increasing diversity and giving CALD community members the opportunity to take part in volunteering outside their own community. Support to manage administration processes such as undertaking police checks or filling in forms was also seen as necessary for increasing the participation of CALD volunteers.

6.3.3 Trust and transparency

CALD participants overwhelmingly described evidence of trustworthiness and transparency as essential for their support of any giving process. This was linked to what they described variously as 'purity' or 'professionalism' in

¹ Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors

organisations. A professional organisation was understood to have systematic approaches to collecting, reporting on and distributing funds.

'I heard Australian organisations are very professional. They carefully select voluntary workers, requiring applicants to get a police check or working with children check, etc. They mean business!'

Chinese woman

Participants repeatedly identified 'knowing where the money is going' as a direct inducement to supporting one particular charity over another.

"I would want to know, whether I donate \$5 or \$10 or \$20, that all of my money will get to where I want to help, who I want to help, and not dropping off along the way"

Vietnamese woman

National organisations that were repeatedly identified as trustworthy included the Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul and the Australian Red Cross. International organisations that CALD participants singled out as recipients of giving included UNICEF, World Vision and Médecins Sans Frontières. Alternatively, participants identified organisations that supported people in their country of origin as their preferred charities.

Most CALD participants were confident of the trustworthiness of small organisations with whom they had direct community links. However, in some cases they saw 'Australian' charities as more safe or reliable channels for giving than small community organisations that they believed may have hidden political undercurrents or competing community agendas.

In terms of donating their time, many CALD participants described trust and transparency as reasons for choosing to volunteer with mainstream organisations such as the Salvation Army or St Vincent de Paul.

6.3.4 New technology

The use of new technology was not frequently raised in discussions with CALD participants, with any interest in it generally limited to younger participants (under 30). Some participants, however, were aware of their communities using social media to share information and promote opportunities for giving, and some described successfully using online searches to ascertain the level of trustworthiness of organisations seeking funds. Community and ethnic media were noted by some CALD participants as important avenues for information about appeals for giving.

'When things happen in Australia like a disaster or big fire, like Black Saturday, the Vietnamese SBS Radio has raised money to contribute to the donation.'

Vietnamese woman

6.3.5 Acknowledgement (volunteering only)

Many of the CALD participants who talked of a long-term commitment to volunteering also expressed a desire to be thanked or acknowledged. Receiving informal and formal acknowledgement of voluntary work was highly valued and seen as a key enabler for continued or increased participation.

'Volunteering there, I feel like a princess. I am appreciated, loved, cared for and just love the work and the people.'

Arabic-speaking Muslim woman

Some CALD participants extended the need for acknowledgement from individuals to whole communities, seeing the promotion of volunteering by their communities as a way to reduce racist or other negative stereotyping. This kind of acknowledgement was linked to a positive process of building connections between communities and raising the overall profile of CALD communities more broadly.

'CALD communities are contributing as much or maybe even more than some Australians. Acknowledging the different kinds of things that CALD communities do to help adds to a more positive discussion of what multiculturalism is and how we contribute.'

Sierra Leonean woman

6.3.6 Work experience (volunteering only)

Many CALD participants said that experiencing an Australian workplace was a valuable aspect of volunteer work and an important motivator or enabler. Volunteer placements that allow for work experience linked to their professional background or that provide an opportunity to list Australian work experience on a résumé was an important benefit of volunteer activities.

'We have younger people who volunteer to get experience and social skills that will help them when they do get paid work.'

Arabic-speaking Muslim woman

Participants saw work experience as an incentive and therefore likely to be an enabler for CALD volunteering. Many identified the level of professionalism in the way volunteer placements are managed as an important motivator.

'They like to be in an organised volunteer agency because it gives them training, guidelines, boundaries and experience they may not get otherwise.'

Iraqi woman

Participating in volunteer programs was also valued by participants as an opportunity to experience Australian work culture and attitudes. Work expectations in Australia vary in many ways from those in their country of origin. Learning about the Australian work context by taking part in volunteer activities was seen to provide valuable insights to support work-readiness.

'There are many highly qualified people in our community who can't get jobs in their fields and they are willing to do volunteer work to gain local skills and experience.'

Iraqi woman

Summary of Chapter 6

The personal desire expressed by some CALD participants to volunteer outside of one's own community was constrained by the level of more immediate need for help that was evident in their communities.

The high level of demand for assistance, advice and advocacy from vulnerable CALD community members places considerable pressure on established community members. This pressure is felt in terms of time, practical knowledge, experience to provide support, and the emotional toll of providing support in an environment where there are limited opportunities for appropriate debrief and structural support.

Other barriers include poor English-language proficiency and concerns about organisational capacity to navigate the formal volunteering structures imposed by mainstream organisations, as well as perceptions about the lack of cultural capacity of these types of organisations.

There is a strong desire for involvement in volunteering and giving activities that produce practical tangible outcomes responsive to community needs. There are perceptions that some philanthropic organisations lack flexibility to target specific communities or issues, and that this discourages involvement; the activities of mainstream organisations are not always viewed as those likely to have the greatest impact or to reflect the greatest community need.

Given this, effective partnerships between volunteer-involving organisations, philanthropic organisations and CALD communities that adopt genuine, respectful two-way engagement processes are a key enabler for growing volunteering and giving in CALD communities.

CALD community members were more likely to support, trust and engage with volunteer-involving organisations that were flexible in their requirements and were transparent in their processes. Formal and informal acknowledgement of volunteering effort was also highly valued.

Gaining work experience in an Australian workplace context and developing English language skills were also motivating factors for volunteering.

7. Volunteering and giving in Indigenous communities

7.1 Introduction

A combination of cultural traditions, concerns for health and wellbeing, and survival of culture and language inform Indigenous participation in volunteering and giving. There is enormous diversity in the Indigenous population, and it is important to acknowledge that diversity in these research findings. Most of the Indigenous participants saw very little difference between volunteering and giving; it was all seen as being available to assist the community with time, financial support or just being with someone in need.

While most Indigenous participants focused on volunteering inside their communities, there were many examples of participation in the broader Australian community. Patterns of volunteering and giving in Indigenous communities reflect the value placed on giving and sharing, particularly in response to significant need in Indigenous communities. Many participants volunteered both inside and outside their community and tended to decide what to be involved in based on a mixture of community need (e.g. helping Elders), things they might be interested in (e.g. football or health), and activities their children might be involved in (e.g. drama or sport).

Participants often described 'giving' in terms of time or goods such as food and clothes, since money was often scarce. However, they also talked of community fundraising activities, often associated with specific projects or needs, as well as smaller donations made to mainstream charities. Giving was largely seen as a responsibility of all community members, including those with less material wealth.

Indigenous participants described a variety of motivating factors for volunteering and giving, including:

- Responsibility for community wellbeing
- Cultural maintenance and survival
- Making a difference, giving back and feeling good.

7.2 Responsibility for community wellbeing

Community members noted that high levels of need and serious lack of resources in Indigenous communities meant there is an imperative to support others by spending one's spare time helping others or giving to those in need. Providing support to others was seen as a central part of cultural survival and ensuring the wellbeing of communities. It may mean helping Elders to get to a medical appointment, driving a bus around to take children to school, or providing a meal to neighbours, but the aim is to ensure the community survives and thrives.

'I have a passion to help improve the wellbeing for our mob, especially for the women and children.'

Indigenous woman

Many community members were not interested in volunteering or giving outside their community when their own communities faced daily struggles to survive. Indigenous volunteering and giving in communities was seen as meeting basic needs for health, education and safety. Many participants commented that most Indigenous communities in urban, rural and remote locations would not be able to operate without the large amount of volunteering and giving that happens on a daily basis. Participants also expressed a concern that Indigenous communities, particularly remote communities receive very little help from outside and so are often forced back upon their own very limited resources.

'We have to look after ourselves, no one else is looking our way, we have to help the old people and the young ones.'

Indigenous man

Participants noted limited resources as an even greater challenge for participants in remote communities, where access to services is limited, transport is an ongoing challenge, communities can be physically isolated for long periods of time, and populations are smaller.

'In remote areas there's a big difference out there, the big deficit of infrastructure and services and support that we in town take for granted. You know I think nothing of running down to the corner shop and buying some milk and bread if I run out. But in a lot of remote areas you can't always run down the shop and buy milk and bread. They mightn't have it and you probably can't afford it.'

Indigenous women

Participants reported that Indigenous people are often required to respond to crises; for remote communities this may mean environmental crises such as floods or fires or community issues such as youth suicide or domestic violence. These challenges often require significant resources which are not available or fully supported by government. Initiatives such as school buses or breakfast programs may only be partially funded and may rely on Indigenous volunteers to do the driving or prepare the food.

'The whole thing of being a volunteer is that you are "sticking your hand up" to help. You aren't doing it because of any expectations. You don't get any rewards out of it; you are just doing something because someone needs something.'

Indigenous woman

In remote communities, smaller populations often means that the burden falls to a smaller number of people. In this context there is little distinction between giving and volunteering.

'Honestly if we don't do it then it's not going to happen. It's often the same people doing it a lot of the time, people who have the capacity to help, to give, I suppose we need to work on creating more volunteers in the community.'

Indigenous woman

It was also noted that this supporting role often falls to women in Indigenous communities – mothers and grandmothers – often providing support to children and young people. The women participants were happy to take on this role, which they saw as very important; they reported feeling a sense of satisfaction in helping their communities.

Participant story – Indigenous Food Run, Sydney

'Food is so important, and it can be hard to come by for many Aboriginal people in our community. If it wasn't provided by the Indigenous Food Run, then so many people would go without. We all know that health and wellbeing depend on access to fresh, healthy food, but for some of our mob this is a luxury.

'The Indigenous Food Run grew out of a need to look after older people who were spending all their money on rent and had no money left for food so they were going without. It started small, with volunteers from the Aboriginal Children's Service holding a regular dinner night for the elderly. Now the food is provided by OzHarvest, a food rescue organisation that collects surplus food from fruit and vegetable markets, supermarkets, hotels, wholesalers, catering companies and restaurants.

'Volunteers pool resources, organise the containers and pack the food. They also use their own cars, pay for petrol and drop off the food, as well as spending time talking with people when they deliver the food. The community lets the volunteers know who might need the food, and it's shared out as fairly as possible. The people who get the food are battlers – they might be elderly, have a disability, be a single parent or just be having a tough time. They are mainly Aboriginal people, but if someone is non-Aboriginal and hungry, they'd always be helped out. The food run often delivers food to over 100 people every week.

'The food run also provides a broader service, it breaks down isolation – people are very happy to have visitors, to have some connection with the outside and to their community. People look forward to the visits – it keeps them going, lets them know that they are not alone, that other people care.

'With the volunteers, it's often the people who have had the knocks in life that help out. They're helping other people worse off than themselves; that also helps their self-esteem and their belief in others.

Aboriginal community worker

7.3 Cultural maintenance and survival

Sharing, giving and helping others are integral to Indigenous culture and play a key role in maintaining culture and traditions. Cultural survival and cultural maintenance were seen by Indigenous participants as an important motivator for both voluntary work and giving.

'Everyone volunteers for something, whether it is sport or politics. You learn from a young age, watching your family contribute and you grow up and you do that too – it's an obligation but it's good for your self-worth.'

Indigenous man

Some voluntary activities relate specifically to cultural practices, including organising funerals, spending time with Elders and learning from them, and helping young people grow up and sharing culture with them. Maintaining culture was also linked by participants to specific cultural and community activities, such as storytelling, language, painting, weaving, sculpture, dance, song, music and performance, often involving older people sharing skills, knowledge and stories with younger people.

Funerals can involve a lot of work for the whole community, and this is particularly so in remote communities. There are cultural practices that might involve the whole community or sections of it, and there will be important cultural protocols involved.

Participants also highlighted looking after the land as an important responsibility for remote communities –one which is done on a voluntary basis and which consumes a lot of time for local people. The responsibility of Elders in maintaining cultural knowledge and practices and handing those down to younger people in communities was also noted.

'You know, it's a responsibility. They'll go out weeding, and get rid of the feral cats that are killing the native species, preserving the land and getting it back to what it can be and caring for the land in a spiritual way too.'

Indigenous woman

The importance of participation in sport was also frequently raised, with many participants being involved in sporting activities within communities as well as through mainstream sporting organisations. Sport was seen as an important part of cultural life for Indigenous communities and particularly in providing role models for young people.

Participating in events – organising and serving food, running stalls, speaking, providing entertainment and childcare, etc. – is a significant volunteering activity for many Indigenous community members. Events such as National Aborigines Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, Yabun Festival and local festivals were noted as culturally important, requiring significant effort on behalf of everyone in a community. Participants talked of participating for a range of reasons, including both cultural obligation and having an enjoyable time.

Participants commented that Indigenous people are often involved in general events (e.g. White Ribbon Day) at the local level or events organised through non-government organisations around healthy lifestyles, drug and alcohol issues and domestic violence. These events are seen as important in sharing Indigenous culture and supporting issues that help communities to 'grow strong kids'.

'The thing about being blackfellas, when there is a big event that's in our own area, there's a sense of yes you're going to chip in, like when there's NAIDOC events or Yabun is coming up, the organisers call for volunteers. Without that, they don't really have an event.'

Indigenous man

Mentoring was seen by Indigenous participants as a significant role they fulfil, very important for community life and growth. At the same time, some expressed concern that a lot of volunteer work Indigenous people do goes unrecognised by non-Aboriginal people and governments.

'We don't see it as volunteering, mentoring, being on boards, but also I don't think that non-Aboriginal people value or respect our work like they do in their organisations.'

Indigenous man

Being politically active is an important part of Indigenous cultural survival, with many people having spent their lives working for change. There is an expectation within communities that Indigenous people will be culturally aware and also aware of Indigenous history. Some participants noted that it was a form of volunteering to work for justice, to fight prejudice, to improve the wellbeing of communities, and to work to give young Indigenous people a future.

'They went marching because they wanted change, and you as an individual can't do that, but as a group you can change things because there's strength in numbers. For example, land rights, stolen generation, Charlie Perkins and the Freedom Rides – it's for the cause, they wanted change, and they made change.'

Indigenous young person

The issue of choice in volunteering and giving was raised in consultations with Indigenous participants. Many noted that people will just come to them and ask for help, and if they are in need there is a cultural obligation to help them. This is a reciprocal arrangement by which people can rely on other members of their community for help when they need it. On the negative side of this same coin, 'humbugging' – where people are harassed or forced into sharing money with extended family – can be a problem in remote Indigenous communities. This often impacts on older people who are less able to resist and are also likely to feel more responsibility to help.

Volunteering I would do for anyone regardless but giving is something different, it has a different layer, it has a cultural context. I have an obligation to give to my kin, my extended mob, and I couldn't honestly sustain that for anyone outside of that. That's my obligations, my birthright and responsibilities."

Indigenous man

Most participants said they were likely to give directly to those who need it or are less fortunate. Giving primarily occurs within Indigenous communities, participants noted, as people can clearly see the need for giving to those around them. Many participants noted that very little is thrown away and that things are always handed on to others, including clothes, furniture, appliances, school uniforms and food.

'I saw a homeless person when I was sitting in a chicken shop in Newtown and I couldn't eat in front of him. I knocked on the window and I told the man to come in and I told him to pick whatever he wanted and I shouted him a feed. How could I sit in front of him and he's out there freezing and starving. If I didn't have the money I would share my food with him and that's a part of giving.'

Indigenous man

Some participants noted that the Indigenous community is in such need that it *is* in fact their charity. This is particularly the case in remote communities, where money and other resources are so scarce that any sharing or giving beyond the immediate community is unlikely.

'You help because people don't have enough resources to do it themselves, and in our communities that's most of the time.'

Indigenous woman

Some participants reported giving to charities that they had observed helping their communities, such as the Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul, the Royal Flying Doctor Service or the Australian Red Cross. Giving to other charities tends to be related to personal experiences (e.g. Surf Life Saving because the family are surfers, or SIDS & Kids as a result of personal experience with illness and death).

Women were often cited by participants as the people most responsible for organising giving as they were usually the ones who knew who was in need and what could be given.

'Mum knows when the kids have grown out of clothes, so she organises all that.'

Indigenous young person

7.4 Making a difference, giving back and feeling good

Being able to make a difference was a significant motivator for Indigenous participants in terms of both volunteering and giving. These were seen as an important part of 'giving back' to community and to those who have helped them or the community in the past. Indigenous participants noted that they give time, food, clothes and money, although money is given less often due to limited resources.

'I think it's about giving back. Some people feel that they are luckier than others so they try to make the contribution back to the community, for your own self-worth. It makes you feel better to give up a few hours to help others.'

Indigenous man

Overwhelmingly, participants felt that they would prefer to volunteer for Indigenous organisations. The main reasons given for this were a desire to feel comfortable, a preference for being with people from the same cultural group who understand them and their culture, and feeling that they can trust the people around them and that the organisations are culturally competent.

'It's important the Kooris support Koori families. They know things, they are most trusted and can provide the right support.'

Indigenous woman

Indigenous participants noted they are already doing a significant amount of voluntary work but that there is a sense that this voluntary work is not adequately recognised or supported and that assistance with funds for expenses and/or access to training would be appreciated.

'Aboriginal people, all these aunties, already doing it ... I think that's where the giving and the volunteering is, they've gotta be supported. Like training on how to care for a frail aged or disabled person ... and just training people to fix stuff in their home because waiting for a repairperson to come out to remote areas can be a very long wait, don't hold your breath.'

Indigenous woman

Raising funds to support particular causes, projects or needs is a common practice in Indigenous communities. Fundraising might be organised for families in need due to illness, tragedy and funerals, or for specific community projects such as sport or youth focused projects. Some participants reported organising fundraising activities such as raffles, trash and treasure stalls or cake stalls. It was noted that Facebook is regularly used in Indigenous communities to promote fundraising for specific causes.

Some participants reported an expectation that community members with well-paid jobs will give more. Comments were also made about the growing Indigenous middle class who have more capacity to give.

'If you're a person who's a 9-5 worker, then the expectation may not be as high compared to someone that holds a high position. If you work in a good position, the expectations are higher.'

Indigenous woman

Participant story: helping out in a remote Queensland community

'Volunteering for me comes from the heart – I am a giver by nature and I give without expecting anything back. There may be a need for food in a family and they don't know where they'll get their next meal from – you give from your own kitchen. You might provide someone with a lift and you don't expect anything back – there is the cost of fuel taking them into town.'

'I work in health and justice. It's voluntary and we just throw ourselves in because we do a service for the community and we don't care how much time we give. Some of the community think we get paid, but it's all on top of my job. You give what you can.'

Indigenous woman

7.5 Helping and giving outside the community

While a large amount of volunteering by Indigenous people is done inside their communities, there are also significant contributions made to mainstream volunteering by many Indigenous people. Indigenous participants reported volunteering for sporting organisations, schools, hospitals, playgroups, PCYCs and Surf Life Saving. Some participants said they participate in essential services in rural and remote communities, such as the Fire and Emergency Services. This is often motivated by need as service provision is limited.

For Indigenous volunteers, the participants noted, there is a large amount of voluntary representation on committees, advisory bodies and boards of management in both the non-government and government sectors. Many Indigenous people represent their communities in various capacities and may sit on more than one board or committee. It was noted that this voluntary work often goes unrecognised.

'I'm always being asked to be on this or that committee might be for government or an NGO, you never get paid, and it takes a fair amount of time.'

Indigenous woman

One area of Indigenous participation that was previously voluntary but is now likely to receive a fee is performing a Welcome to Country. Since this cultural practice has become more widespread, it is now likely to be given a monetary value, particularly in government and official settings.

'I did Welcomes to Country for nothing for a very long time, up until the Olympics, that's when I started to get paid, and now, people generally are paid for Welcomes, but I did it voluntary because it's something important I wanted to do.'

Indigenous man

Churches and religious organisations were low on the list of giving priorities for Indigenous participants. Several noted that they would never give to a religious charity or to a church, and that this was connected to the negative role of religious organisations in the colonisation of Australia.

'People want to trust who they give to. They might give to the Metro Land Council, they give funeral grants to Aboriginal people, so some might give to that, but not to other organisations, and not to churches.'

Indigenous man

Some Indigenous participants felt that people who have 'done it hard' and received help and support themselves are more likely to help others; conversely they felt that many people who have never had to ask for anything may not really think about helping others. They noted that Indigenous people are therefore more likely to be aware of the needs of others. In fact, most focus group participants who volunteer and give said they had at some time been recipients of both volunteering and giving.

7.6 Indigenous volunteering and giving activities

Participants reported a wide range of volunteering and helping activities, many of these activities addressing service gaps (e.g. helping people find housing or visiting people in hospital). Key volunteering activities mentioned by Indigenous participants were as follows:

- ❶ **Caring for community** – There is a significant amount of caring for others within communities, including children, people with illness and disabilities, older people, and young people.
- ❷ **Participating in sport** – Many Indigenous participants reported being active in sporting organisations and local clubs as managers, coaches, referees, fundraisers, etc. These activities took place within Indigenous communities and as part of mainstream sporting organisations.
- ❸ **Indigenous advocacy and cultural interpretation** – Participants saw this role (carried out both within communities and with government agencies, non-government agencies, businesses and other organisations) as very important in maintaining culture and improving community wellbeing. Many indigenous community members contributed large amounts of time to advisory bodies and management committees for a wide range of projects.
- ❹ **Building Indigenous organisations** – Indigenous community organisations provide a range of services to Indigenous communities, and many participants said they volunteer for local community activities and organisations as well as state-based and national organisations. Participation in boards of management

and providing valued roles as Elders and leaders was seen as important to cultural and community wellbeing.

7.6.1 Variations across gender and age

According to the participants, Indigenous women tend to be more active in volunteering than men overall. There is a tendency for women to be involved in caring for and feeding people, looking after children and spending time with young mothers, as well as caring for the elderly. They are also actively involved on boards of management, committees and in advisory roles in communities and in government and non-government settings.

Indigenous men noted an interest in being involved in outdoor activities such as sport, cleaning up communities, emergency services and boards of management. Indigenous male participants often expressed a preference for volunteering in environmental areas such as firefighting or wildlife rescue. Older men can also have an important position as role models for younger men, providing cultural leadership and transferring skills and knowledge.

Elders appear to carry a significant burden of volunteering, often due to their expertise, cultural knowledge, experience and cultural position. They are often members of government, non-government and community committees and are regularly called upon to represent their communities in a wide range of contexts from local community events to national forums. Elders also perform a wide range of volunteering roles in supporting young people and providing cultural guidance and leadership to communities.

Indigenous young people (under 30) are more likely than older people to have volunteered outside the community in a mainstream organisation or in a formal volunteering role in an Indigenous organisation. Potential employment and opportunities to learn new skills are strong motivators for young people to volunteer.

Participant story – Black Eagles Basketball Club

'The Black Eagles is all about giving back to the Aboriginal community. We see the kids succeed, they are getting exercise, getting healthy and they are proud. The Aboriginal volunteers are role models, respected by the community and valued for the work they do.

'Volunteers do a wide range of activities, including collecting fees, coaching, organising registrations, ordering uniforms and providing transport. Many of the volunteers feel they are more comfortable in an Aboriginal club, and while some were initially pressured into volunteering now they wouldn't be without it. It's about giving back to the community and seeing their kids grow up healthy and strong.

'An important role for the club is getting the kids involved in stepping up and helping out and building that culture so that the kids give back. If we don't get the kids coming up into helping roles then we won't have a club. Building this culture of volunteering is important, and volunteers are also recognised through a presentation night where they receive a Black Eagles shirt. We can't do this without the volunteers.

'Getting money to run the club and buy uniforms can be a struggle, and the volunteers are also involved in fundraising activities and searching out sponsorship opportunities. Sometimes this work can get hard and feel like an uphill battle, but the thing that holds the club together is really the shared love of the game and the desire to give kids opportunities to have fun, work together, help each other and reach their goals.'

Indigenous community member

Summary of Chapter 7

Most of the Indigenous participants saw little difference between volunteering and giving; it was all seen as part of being available to assist the community with time, financial support or just being with someone in need. Most participants felt they would prefer to volunteer for Indigenous organisations, yet there were many examples of participation in the broader Australian community.

Rather than 'informal' and 'formal' volunteering, Indigenous participants were more likely to talk about 'volunteering in community', which is seen as more flexible, local and responsive to community needs; compared to 'volunteering', which is perceived as rigid, structured, and regular.

Volunteering and giving in Indigenous contexts often involves responding to very basic support needs relating to daily survival. Indigenous community members contextualised their volunteering in terms of high levels of need, a lack of resources, and an imperative to spend any spare time helping and supporting their community as central to community survival and wellbeing.

Involvement in community-based activities that promote and maintain cultural practices contribute to feelings of identity, cohesion and belonging that counter people's lived experiences of marginalisation in the wider community.

Indigenous participants described a range of motivating factors for volunteering and giving, including:

- ❶ *Responsibility for community wellbeing:* Participants noted that high levels of need in Indigenous communities meant there is an imperative to spend one's spare time helping others or giving to those in need.
- ❷ *Cultural maintenance and survival:* Sharing, giving and helping others are integral to Indigenous culture and play a key role in maintaining culture and traditions. There is a large amount of voluntary representation on advisory bodies and boards and in the management, particularly among Elders.
- ❸ *Making a difference:* Being able to make a difference was a significant motivator for Indigenous participants often related to 'giving back' to community and to those who have helped them or the community in the past.

The types of volunteering Indigenous participants are involved in include caring for others, participating in sport, Indigenous advocacy and cultural interpretation, and building Indigenous organisations.

8.Challenges and enablers in Indigenous volunteering and giving

As with the CALD participants (see Chapter 6), Indigenous participants identified a range of challenges to volunteering and giving. A number of the issues raised were the same (e.g. lack of time, burnout), while some were different (e.g. transport, cultural appropriateness). This chapter looks at each of these issues in turn.

8.1 Volunteering – challenges

8.1.1 Lack of time

Many participants noted that lack of time is the major challenge to volunteering. Demands on their time include employment, care of older people or people with disabilities, childcare, and supporting young people. Time was particularly noted as an issue for participants aged over 50, with their many commitments, and for families with small children.

'Sometimes I run out of time and just want to go home and go to bed after a long day at work and other activities that we do, time gets away.'

Indigenous woman

Lack of flexibility was also seen as an issue, with participants not being able to do volunteering at the required time. This is particularly relevant for young people who want to volunteer on a more casual basis or in a more spontaneous way.

Some participants in remote communities noted increased pressure on their time as their communities face the challenge of scarce resources, resulting in more work for limited numbers of volunteers to do.

8.1.2 Transport issues

Some participants reported that lack of a vehicle can affect one's ability to volunteer. Finding money for petrol is also a challenge, particularly for those in rural and remote areas who need to travel long distances. Volunteers are often asked to provide transport to community members who do not have cars, such as those who need to attend medical appointments or visit relatives.

8.1.3 Need for cultural appropriateness

Most participants agreed that they would be more comfortable volunteering in Indigenous organisations (e.g. an Aboriginal preschool) than non-Indigenous organisations. The priority for most participants was to contribute to their own community and to make a difference for Indigenous people. Participants noted a preference for informal interactions, at a slower speed, and in their own time. They were wary of organisations where they may

face racism or discrimination or be uncomfortable due to lack of cultural awareness on the part of staff and other volunteers.

Participants also noted that they would avoid organisations where there was a lot of red tape and bureaucracy as they were keen to see action and change. They were also reluctant to work under close direction and/or strict rules. Some women noted that they would not like to volunteer in a men's organisation.

Cultural appropriateness and ensuring a good fit between volunteers and organisations is also a consideration. Participants noted that it is difficult to volunteer for or give to a cause that does not align with your own values and interests.

'You would really need to sell the benefits of working outside your community, I just can't see it.'

Indigenous man

Some participants noted that barriers to volunteering in mainstream organisations included the 'whitefella culture', which they find foreign and uncomfortable. The language and jargon used by people in large organisations was also seen as unfamiliar and intimidating.

'I used to be a proper quiet one, I didn't know how to talk to white people, they talk a different way, they got their own language, their English, all these big words.'

Indigenous woman

8.1.4 Burnout

Many participants noted that suffering from burnout is a major challenge to getting and keeping volunteers involved. High levels of commitment by Indigenous community members, along with high levels of need in communities, was seen as leading to a high level of burnout. Many Indigenous community members volunteer in *multiple* ways – such as sitting on several boards, helping at the footy club, looking after children and holding down a full-time job. Indigenous Elders were seen as particularly at risk of burnout as they perform so many voluntary roles inside and outside communities.

'There are limited numbers and the same people volunteering, they volunteer no matter what and they never look for the reward, it's about wanting to be a part of something, to make a difference.'

Indigenous woman

In remote communities, Indigenous people are regularly overburdened with responsibilities caring for older community members, providing childcare, cleaning up, and providing help where needed. Younger people may also have left the community to go to work in mining or attend school or university, so the number of people available to volunteer is reduced.

8.1.5 Lack of acknowledgement and appreciation

Participants reported that they want to be appreciated and acknowledged for the work they do, particularly in organisations outside Indigenous communities. They also noted that they want to be respected, be able to do the work they came for, and to receive training and support where appropriate.

'I was asked to come around and read to children, but in the end I was picking up rubbish.'

Indigenous woman

8.1.6 Limited resources

Many Indigenous volunteer-involving organisations have limited resources, and this impacts on the experience of volunteers. Participants commented that they would like to be provided with more support, including training and mentoring.

8.1.7 Limited awareness of volunteering opportunities

Indigenous participants, particularly younger participants, were interested in mentoring, training and volunteering opportunities that provide pathways to skills development and employment. However, they reported that they rarely hear about appropriate volunteering opportunities and that they are unsure how to explore the opportunities that may be available.

8.1.8 Lack of skills training

Many participants said that, in order to volunteer outside their own community, they would need additional training to develop the necessary skills. This was of particular relevance to older respondents (in the mature aged discussion groups). This may include the need for literacy and numeracy skills as well as skills related to specific areas of volunteering.

8.2 Giving – challenges

8.2.1 Limited resources

The primary challenge for giving by Indigenous participants is limited resources. Many participants noted that if they had more they would give more, and that nothing would make them happier than to be able to contribute more to the wellbeing of their communities. This is consistent with the previously noted importance of sharing and giving in Indigenous communities.

'I mean now I can give \$20, but if I won Lotto, then I'd be helping out everyone.'

Indigenous woman

8.2.2 Difficulty in accessing philanthropic funds

Participants who have tried to seek funding from philanthropic organisations have faced numerous challenges, including:

- Complex application forms and processes
- Extensive time required to develop submissions, with a lack of organisational resources
- Funding guidelines not aligning with community needs
- Organisations having pre-determined ideas on what they want to fund
- Large organisations treating everyone the same and not being prepared to be flexible or innovative in working with Indigenous communities and organisations
- Lack of cultural competency and/or cultural sensitivity
- Competition for limited philanthropic funding.

8.3 Enablers for volunteering

8.3.1 Acknowledgement and respect

Participants made suggestions for public acknowledgement and recognition in the form of 'thank-yous', certificates and T-shirts. Since people fit volunteering into their busy lives, feeling valued and respected, receiving training, and not getting the worst jobs were all seen as important.

'When you've done something and you get that thank-you it's like it moves you, it's like nothing else because you have actually done something that is important, and been recognised, it makes you feel good.'

Indigenous woman

8.3.2 Partnership projects that benefit Indigenous communities

An enabler that all participants agreed on is that volunteering should directly benefit the community, especially the younger generation. Most participants noted that they would volunteer where they could work to improve outcomes for their community. It was noted that collaborative partnerships between volunteer-involving organisations and Indigenous organisations and communities has the potential to lead to volunteering projects that benefit Indigenous communities.

8.3.3 Involving non-Indigenous people

Participants also noted that there are many opportunities for non-Indigenous people to volunteer in Indigenous communities through significant events such as Sorry Day, NAIDOC Week, Invasion Day and in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and other Indigenous legal and medical services.

Given that there are high needs in Indigenous communities, the involvement of non-Aboriginal volunteers was welcomed in appropriate contexts and within partnership approaches. A good example of involvement of non-Indigenous volunteers is the National Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, with volunteers providing legal expertise to Indigenous communities in a community-led context.

8.3.4 Increasing awareness of culturally appropriate volunteering opportunities

There was a general sense that many Indigenous people are not aware of volunteering opportunities available through mainstream organisations. Indigenous participants reported that they would be more likely to volunteer in organisations that are culturally sensitive and diverse and that create environments where Indigenous people will feel comfortable and will not face racism or discrimination. Participants saw a need for promoting volunteering opportunities to Indigenous community members, particularly young people, through Indigenous and online media.

8.3.5 Opportunities for skills-building and employment

Participants commented that providing opportunities that include skills-building and pathways to employment are important, particularly for young people. Volunteering experience was seen as an asset for résumés, as this demonstrates the volunteer is committed to working and happy to help others. Volunteering was also seen as building a level of self-esteem and confidence that could help young people gain employment.

8.3.6 Flexibility

Flexibility in volunteering was also noted as important, with many participants favouring casual involvement in settings where there are fewer rules and/or situations where they could respond 'as needed'. Flexibility is particularly important for young people who do not necessarily want to be tied down to regular hours or ongoing roles.

8.4 Enablers for giving

8.4.1 Partnerships and collaboration with Indigenous communities

Participants noted that community members would prefer to see giving to their communities through collaborative partnership projects between philanthropic organisations and Indigenous community organisations. Key elements of the collaborations should be:

- Projects based on community need

- Project ideas and development coming from communities
- Community development approaches that build bridges between philanthropic organisations and Indigenous communities and organisations
- Local community control of projects and self-determination
- Listening to local people and recognising their expertise and cultural knowledge
- Long-term investments, not 'fly-in fly-out' approaches.

8.4.2 Easier access to philanthropic funds

Indigenous community members would like to see easier application processes for accessing philanthropic funds. It was noted by participants that philanthropic organisations could also provide grant application training and support to encourage successful applications from Indigenous organisations. Awareness of philanthropy is limited, and providing access to information about these funding sources and options would be valuable.

8.4.3 New technology

Indigenous community members, particularly young people, are likely to use new technologies and social media in relation to giving and fundraising. Support for building digital skills in Indigenous organisations and communities would enhance this capacity. Improved access to the internet, computers and laptops is needed, particularly in rural and remote areas and for Elders, who are often isolated by lack of access to new technologies.

Some participants, particularly young participants, have had experience with crowd funding, using Facebook for social action and fundraising, and this trend appears likely to continue. Young participants mentioned giving money on GoFundMe, supporting people they know, people who live locally, or stories they see as deserving of financial assistance or that evoke their empathy.

'I think the young people have the savvy; some of the older people may not have the savvy other than using the mobile phone as communication. But we also gotta be a realistic that NBN hasn't reached remote areas yet, you can't even drive down the Stuart Highway all the way from Darwin to Adelaide and have full coverage everywhere.'

Indigenous woman

Summary of Chapter 8

Indigenous participants identified a range of challenges to participation in volunteering and giving, a number of which are the same as those identified by CALD participants, such as:

- Lack of time
- Transport issues, particularly in regional and remote areas
- Need for cultural appropriateness in volunteering organisations and potential for discrimination and racism aimed at Indigenous volunteers
- Burnout due to high levels of volunteering in Indigenous communities
- Lack of acknowledgement and appreciation
- Limited resources in Indigenous volunteer-involving organisations
- Lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities
- Lack of skills training to support Indigenous participation in volunteering.

Indigenous participants identified a number of factors that could enable volunteering, including public acknowledgement and respect, partnership projects that benefit Indigenous communities, involving non-Indigenous people in Indigenous events (e.g. Sorry Day), increasing awareness of culturally appropriate volunteering opportunities, providing flexibility in volunteering opportunities and offering opportunities for employment and skills development.

Enablers for giving were also identified, including building partnerships and collaboration between philanthropic organisations and Indigenous communities, providing support for Indigenous communities to access philanthropic funds and supporting engagement with new technology, for example, through crowd funding.

9. Volunteering and cultural diversity – results of the stakeholder interviews

The discussions held with individual CALD and Indigenous participants (detailed in Table 2.1 and Table 2.2 on pages 14 & 15) have so far been the focus of this report. This chapter now turns to the in-depth interviews conducted with representatives from 27 stakeholder organisations (see Table 2.3 on page 15), including:

- Philanthropic stakeholders
- Volunteer-involving stakeholders
- CALD stakeholders, and
- Indigenous stakeholders.

Overall, these stakeholders reported that diversity is important for the success of their operations and that valuing and supporting diversity in volunteering would lead to more productive and skilled organisations. They also noted that a significant amount of work has already been done in this space through organisations such as Volunteering Australia, Surf Life Saving and the Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum. It was noted that concepts of cultural competency have been embraced by many volunteering organisations in the last five years, and that many organisations offer cultural awareness training for both staff and volunteers.

'We are more sophisticated now in responding to diversity – youth, disability, CALD and Indigenous – twenty years ago, this wouldn't have got a mention.'

Volunteering organisation stakeholder

9.1 CALD volunteering

A consistent theme among stakeholders was the significant amount of volunteering done by CALD community members, making a contribution to operations of so many community organisations.

Stakeholders noted that volunteers from CALD backgrounds are represented in a wide variety of services, including both mainstream volunteer services (emergency services, rural fire services, surf lifesaving, etc.) and culture-specific volunteering and community organisations.

'There is a huge amount of work going on – interpreting, translating, helping people to deal with government departments, hospitals, police – the liaison and communication role.'

Stakeholder from CALD community organisation

Stakeholders confirmed comments by CALD participants that voluntary participation in communities is not always seen as volunteering but rather as an integral part of culture which supports family, community, religious and cultural life.

'In most CALD communities, people don't see the work they do as volunteering. Giving to the community is just part of what you do ... it's part of culture, and cultural responsibilities, people see it as part of normal life.'

Stakeholder from CALD community organisation

Stakeholders identified the value of volunteering in terms of reducing social isolation, enhancing social connectedness, maintaining cultural traditions and language, and promoting community wellbeing. It was also noted that young people and/or new arrivals may volunteer to develop English language skills or to gain work experience in an Australian context in skills they already have.

9.2 Indigenous volunteering

The stakeholder interviews supported comments by Indigenous participants that highlighted the cultural importance of helping, caring and sharing in Indigenous communities. Stakeholders noted the large volume of Indigenous volunteering done out of necessity to provide services and ensure the wellbeing of communities. Indigenous participation in mainstream voluntary organisations was also noted as significant, with participation in sport and community arts often highlighted as examples.

'So many people on boards, attending meetings, speaking at functions, most of our people are on more than one board of management, always doing a heap of stuff outside work ... one woman I know gets up at 4am to cook food for a sporting club, it's just what we do.'

Indigenous stakeholder

Several stakeholders noted a need for appropriate cultural competency training to ensure that volunteering organisations are respectful of Indigenous culture and protocols and understand the history and continuing impacts of colonisation.

'The non-Aboriginal volunteers need to be aware of cultural protocols and have respect for the Elders. There is that historical lack of trust, so you have to be careful.'

Indigenous stakeholder

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of building partnerships with Indigenous communities, community leaders and Elders. The importance of listening to each other, gaining a better understanding of Indigenous cultural protocols, and building genuine relationships was highlighted.

The extent of the (often unacknowledged) work that Indigenous people do was consistently noted throughout consultations with stakeholders, along with the pressure this puts on individuals and communities – often accompanied by burnout.

'What we expect of Aboriginal people we would never expect of others – meetings, being shown around communities, advice, interpreting, being helped, people suffer fatigue from all that ... there is so much poverty and need and Aboriginal people are suffering under the stress of too much volunteering, unpaid and unrecognised.'

Indigenous stakeholder

9.3 Challenges

Stakeholders noted challenges in growing CALD and Indigenous volunteering in mainstream and community organisations. The following list is a summary of the key comments:

- Volunteering organisations need adequate support from government to manage, coordinate and support CALD and Indigenous volunteers appropriately.
- Mainstream volunteering organisations need to build cultural capacity to engage effectively with CALD and Indigenous communities. Strategies for involving CALD and Indigenous community members are not well developed.
- English language and literacy skills are a major barrier (the one most mentioned by stakeholders) to involving CALD volunteers.
- There is a need to review the way the Australian Bureau of Statistics collects data on volunteering to ensure that accurate data on the participation of CALD and Indigenous volunteers is gathered.
- There is a trend towards episodic or spontaneous volunteering, meaning organisations need to provide greater flexibility, particularly for young people.
- The ageing volunteer population is an issue for some more established CALD communities, where the pool of volunteers is becoming smaller and not necessarily being replaced by younger people.
- For small CALD and Indigenous organisations, costs of supporting volunteers, including insurance and police checks (in some states), can be a barrier in services already stretched to capacity.
- Culturally specific and appropriate promotion and outreach by volunteering organisations to CALD and Indigenous communities is limited and could be further developed.

9.4 Enablers

Stakeholders identified a range of enablers to address the challenges discussed above, as outlined below.

9.4.1 Cultural competency

- Volunteer-involving organisations need to enhance their overall cultural competency and provide cultural awareness training to all staff and volunteers.

- Volunteer-involving organisations need to be culturally sensitive and welcoming to CALD and Indigenous volunteers – they need to provide welcoming spaces for volunteers and make them feel comfortable. To retain volunteers, organisations, staff and other volunteers need to be respectful of the belief systems and cultural values of CALD and Indigenous volunteers.
- Language is often cited as a barrier to volunteering, but organisations currently working with CALD clients can see the benefits of a diversity of language skills (often mainstream organisations do not see this). There are other skills besides English language skills that people have to offer, including skills in other languages.

9.4.2 Partnerships

- Genuine partnership models should be developed in which volunteer-involving organisations work with CALD and Indigenous communities and organisations, and these organisations and communities have appropriate development and decision-making roles.
- Key enablers for success in collaborations are equity, reciprocity, consultative approaches and real partnerships. It should also be noted that building effective partnerships can take years and requires respect and mutual understanding. Programs need to be long term and sustainable, rather than 'one-offs'.
- The Surf Life Saving project 'On the Same Wave' is a good example (consistently noted by stakeholders) of a comprehensive partnership response that engaged CALD and Indigenous communities, helped to break down barriers, and created a model of engagement that could be used in other locations and potentially, in other organisations (Maxwell & Edwards, 2014).

9.4.3 Flexibility and opportunities

- Promoting skills development, skills acquisition, references, workplace experience, pathways to employment and economic participation could be an effective way to grow volunteering, particularly for young CALD and Indigenous people and for people from new and emerging communities.
- Increasing flexibility in volunteering will allow for more spontaneous and episodic volunteering. Young people in particular may not want to commit to one organisation or to an ongoing position or a particular day and time.
- Engaging with new and emerging communities is important. There are many highly skilled migrants waiting for visas who cannot work for six months; for them, volunteering can provide work experience in the Australian context.
- Volunteering organisations need to explore the use of technology in volunteering, particularly in relation to CALD and Indigenous young people.
- Young people are prepared to step up if they are given the opportunity and are supported. Investment in community-led projects will help get young people involved.

9.4.4 Acknowledgement and support

- Acknowledging and thanking volunteers appropriately is important.
- Volunteers from CALD and Indigenous communities may already be disadvantaged, so organisations need to look at opportunities to provide appropriate support to volunteers (e.g. food, uniforms, transport, childcare cost reimbursement).

9.4.5 Communication

- Awareness of volunteering opportunities should be increased through promotion, outreach, partnerships and joint projects with CALD and Indigenous organisations.
- Establishing Indigenous and/or CALD reference groups will improve the quality of advice and direction given to volunteer-involving organisations.
- Volunteer-involving organisations need to use broad engagement and communication strategies, including culturally appropriate promotional activities that use CALD media to build networks in CALD communities and community organisations.
- Branding of volunteering organisations can have an impact on participation. Does the organisation have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags at reception? What do its brochures say? How does it communicate with CALD and Indigenous communities? Are community languages spoken in the organisation? What motivates people to walk in the door? Does the organisation mirror the demographics of its community?

Summary of Chapter 9

Stakeholder organisations interviewed as part of this research included philanthropic, volunteer-involving, CALD and Indigenous organisations. Overall, they reported that diversity is important to their work and that they offer cultural awareness training for both staff and volunteers.

A consistent theme among CALD stakeholder organisations was the significant amount of volunteering done by community members. Stakeholders confirmed comments by CALD participants that voluntary participation is not always seen as volunteering but is an essential part of CALD cultural traditions and has an important role in maintaining community and cultural life. Volunteers from CALD backgrounds were noted as being represented in a wide variety of services, including both mainstream volunteer services and culture-specific organisations.

The Indigenous stakeholder organisation interviews supported comments by Indigenous participants that highlighted the cultural importance of helping, caring and sharing in Indigenous communities. Indigenous participation in mainstream voluntary organisations was also noted as significant. The extent of the (often unacknowledged) work that Indigenous people do was noted throughout the interviews, along with the socioeconomic disadvantage that necessitates the large amount of voluntary work in Indigenous communities.

Stakeholders also highlighted the importance of building genuine partnerships with Indigenous communities.

Stakeholder organisations noted challenges in growing CALD and Indigenous volunteering in mainstream and community organisations, including:

- Volunteering organisations need ongoing government support
- Building cultural capacity to engage with CALD and indigenous communities
- Addressing English language skills of volunteers
- Developing culturally specific and appropriate promotion and outreach
- Managing trends towards episodic and spontaneous volunteering
- Ageing population was noted as an issue, particularly for some CALD communities
- Costs of supporting volunteers for small CALD and Indigenous organisations
- Effective promotion to recruit CALD and Indigenous volunteers

Stakeholders also identified a range of enablers to address these challenges, including enhancing organisational cultural competency and cultural sensitivity, welcoming CALD and Indigenous volunteers, appreciating and using the range of languages among volunteers, building genuine long-term partnerships among organisations, more effective promotion of volunteering opportunities, being more flexible in volunteering options, providing more acknowledgement of people's contributions, and communicating more effectively with CALD and Indigenous communities.

10. Philanthropy, giving and cultural diversity – results of the stakeholder interviews

As well as commenting on volunteering (Chapter 9), the stakeholders in the 27 stakeholder interviews (see Table 2.3 on page 15) were asked for their views on philanthropy, giving and cultural diversity.

Most stakeholders saw philanthropy as an important part of social and corporate responsibility, contributing to building social fabric and social capital and providing many benefits to communities. Many stakeholders referred to the entrenched disadvantage and poverty that still exists in Indigenous communities and the challenges faced by CALD communities, particularly new and emerging communities. Despite this well-documented disadvantage, and significant interest in the issues from some parts of the philanthropic sector, stakeholders highlighted a need to mobilise mainstream Australian philanthropic organisations to give to CALD and Indigenous communities.

'Philanthropy tends to go to the usual suspects, people who have the voice, who can communicate well. Small organisations have trouble accessing funds, they are not known and don't have the track record.'

CALD Stakeholder

Some stakeholders noted that philanthropy is a challenging area in which there is significant competition, jealousies and vested interests, all of which can get in the way of getting things done. CALD and Indigenous stakeholders outside the philanthropic sector noted that philanthropy can be surrounded by secrecy and mystery, with donors tending to keep a low profile, and that it can be a challenge for CALD and Indigenous community members to find benefactors. There was a perception that the sector operates on a word-of-mouth or 'who knows who' basis and not necessarily through formal processes. The sector was poorly understood by CALD and Indigenous stakeholders, who saw it as difficult to access.

'All seems very fickle and mysterious, there is not a clear pathway and it's hard to get a handle on who you should be talking to.'

Indigenous stakeholder

However, stakeholders also noted that philanthropy is becoming more public, that there is a move away from paternalism, and that givers are more open and prepared to talk about their giving in public.

Successful examples of philanthropic projects or organisations which have supported CALD and Indigenous communities were noted during the research, including the CAGES Foundation, Woor-Dungin, Generation One, Career Trackers, Indigenous Community Volunteers, the Australian Communities Foundation, the Australian Red Cross, the Aurora Project, Surf Life Saving, the Smith Family and the Telstra Foundation. However, the research did not include an audit of philanthropic organisations so this is simply a list of organisations that were specifically referred to in a positive light during the research.

'There are many inspiring stories they need to be told; it would be good to have government support for this.'

Philanthropic organisation stakeholder

Stakeholders noted that there are trusted foundations that do work in Indigenous communities, and that some are addressing problems through community-driven initiatives that encourage community-led approaches. For example, the CAGES Foundation supports organisations committed to ensuring Indigenous children have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Career Trackers, a national non-profit organisation that creates internship opportunities for Indigenous university students, was also noted as a good example of a mainstream organisation that has been able to successfully engage the corporate sector and universities in giving and in supporting Indigenous education, while at the same time effectively engaging Indigenous students. However, stakeholders also reported that many philanthropic projects are short term and, particularly in Indigenous communities, have not met the needs of communities.

'Aboriginal people are sick of the short-term FIFO (fly-in, fly-out) approach, it promotes a colonial view of communities... It's better to find out what kinds of support communities need, know the communities more deeply, take the long-term view.'

Indigenous stakeholder

Stakeholders also noted that smaller CALD and Indigenous organisations are competing with larger better-funded organisations and that donors and foundations may see them as a higher risk option and therefore less attractive.

'Most of the foundations don't spend the time that small organisations need to develop proposals, that's not the model – a sophisticated proposal from a known organisation is a much easier choice for philanthropists.'

Philanthropic organisation stakeholder

10.1 Challenges

The stakeholders identified a number of key challenges, summarised as follows:

- ❶ Colonisation and paternalistic practices of government and philanthropic organisations have had a strong effect on many Indigenous communities. Partnership approaches that respect Indigenous culture are recommended.
- ❷ Indigenous communities and organisations find it difficult to set up charities due to the taxation framework, and gaining deductible gift recipient (DGR) status in order to get tax deductible gifts is not always possible.

- Philanthropic organisations tend to be risk averse and are more likely to support familiar and established community groups and organisations, disadvantaging both CALD and Indigenous communities and organisations.
- People tend to give to causes they have experience with (e.g. a particular illness like cancer) or something in their realm of experience (e.g. children, animals). Many people have no connection to Indigenous communities or new and emerging communities and are therefore less likely to favour these causes.
- Many organisations, and particularly small organisations, will not have the administrative functions or organisational capacity that donors are often looking for.
- CALD and Indigenous communities are disadvantaged by the complex application processes involved in accessing support through the philanthropic sector and often do not have the resources required to devote to these processes.
- CALD and Indigenous organisations find themselves applying for projects that are not exactly what they want to do, and try to fit into narrow funding parameters of philanthropic organisations that do not align with community need.

10.2 Enablers

Stakeholders identified the following enablers to enhance the development of philanthropy in the CALD and Indigenous sectors.

10.2.1 Building relationships and partnerships

- Collaborative partnerships where projects are developed jointly with CALD and Indigenous communities are more likely to be successful. Philanthropic organisations should assist CALD and Indigenous communities through application processes, including providing project development advice.
- Building cultural awareness in the philanthropic sector is a good strategy for moving towards stronger relationships with CALD and Indigenous communities, working in partnership, and supporting community-led projects.
- Long-term approaches and investments are particularly important when developing projects with Indigenous communities in order to ensure that projects are realistic and achievable.
- Opportunities should be explored to promote giving to CALD and Indigenous causes through corporate-employee-matched giving programs and through corporate giving programs generally.
- There should be investment in existing Indigenous organisations and leadership, where those services exist (e.g. Aboriginal Legal Services, Aboriginal Medical Services).
- The support of organisations that assist donors to work with Indigenous organisations and communities (e.g. Australian Communities Foundation, Woor-Dungin, Career Trackers) should be encouraged.

10.2.2 Building skills in philanthropy and cultural competency

- Cultural competency and awareness training will provide philanthropic organisations with the skills to work more effectively with CALD and Indigenous organisations.
- The capacity of CALD and Indigenous boards of management and organisations should be built so they can work with philanthropic foundations; this may include assistance with application processes and training on policies and procedures relating to philanthropy.
- The values of mutual help and support inherent in CALD and Indigenous cultures are a benefit when approaching philanthropic organisations as these communities are already engaged in extensive giving and sharing as essential aspects of their culture.

Woor-Dungin – A new partnership between Indigenous organisations and philanthropy

Woor-Dungin was funded in 2016 in response to the disproportionately low amount of philanthropic funding going towards Indigenous organisations and projects. Woor-Dungin brings philanthropy and Indigenous partners together using a community development approach to build partnerships for change based on strong and trusting relationships and shared learning.

Partnerships have been developed with a small number of Aboriginal-community-controlled organisations in Victoria, assisting them to engage with the philanthropic community and providing training to philanthropic organisations about how to work appropriately with Indigenous communities. Indigenous partners receive practical support, advice, training and mentoring to help them develop expertise in sourcing philanthropic funding, including brokering of funding, donor briefings, grant opportunities, feedback on draft grant applications, and help with preparing acquittal reports. Support is also provided to these Indigenous organisations to strengthen their governance and management skills.

Woor-Dungin takes time to establish and build relationships and trust, with processes structured around face-to-face conversations, often 'in country'. Aboriginal partners set the agenda and are supported through a flexible and long-term approach. Woor-Dungin recognises that community issues often overlap in cause and effect, and often need to be addressed alongside each other. We are volunteer based so we don't incur heavy costs, yet we bring a wealth of skills and experience to our partnerships.

Summary of Chapter 10

As well as being asked about volunteering and giving, the stakeholder organisations were asked about the role of philanthropy. Overall, they saw it as an important part of social and corporate responsibility, contributing to building social fabric and social capital and providing many benefits to communities. They highlighted a need to mobilise mainstream Australian philanthropic organisations to give to CALD and Indigenous communities.

CALD and Indigenous stakeholders outside the philanthropic sector noted that philanthropy can be surrounded by secrecy and mystery, with donors tending to keep a low profile, and that it can be a challenge for CALD and Indigenous community members to find benefactors. However, stakeholders also noted that philanthropy is becoming more public and that givers are more prepared to talk about their giving in public.

The stakeholder organisations identified a number of challenges, including:

- ❶ *Paternalism*: Colonisation and paternalistic practices of government and philanthropic organisations have had a strong effect on many Indigenous communities.
- ❷ *Administration*: Some Indigenous communities and organisations find it difficult to set up charities due to the taxation framework. They may also be disadvantaged by the complex application processes of philanthropic organisations.
- ❸ *Risk aversion*: Philanthropic organisations tend to be risk averse and are more likely to support familiar and established community groups and organisations.
- ❹ *Lack of connection*: Many people have no connection to Indigenous communities or new and emerging communities and are therefore less likely to favour these causes in philanthropic activities.
- ❺ *Mismatch between available funds and community needs*: Community organisations reported on difficulties making projects fit narrow funding parameters that do not align with community needs.

The stakeholders also identified a range of enablers to enhance the development of philanthropy in the CALD and Indigenous sectors, including building partnerships between philanthropic organisations and CALD and Indigenous communities, building cultural awareness in the philanthropic sector, taking long-term approaches and developing investment, promotion of CALD and Indigenous issues through corporate giving programs, support for organisations that assist donors to work with CALD and Indigenous communities, and building the capacity of CALD and Indigenous boards of management.

11. Conclusions and opportunities

The social cohesion, social integration and individual and community wellbeing benefits of volunteering are well documented in the literature. However, there are gaps in the available literature in terms of promoting understanding of the motivations, patterns and construction of volunteering and giving in CALD and Indigenous communities in Australia.

This research, involving CALD and Indigenous community members and stakeholders, has found that volunteering, helping, sharing and giving are all integral to the cultural life of both CALD and Indigenous communities and form an essential component of civil, harmonious and healthy societies. For participants there was little distinction between giving, sharing and volunteering, as they were all seen as part of supporting one's community and/or people in need. Similarly, there was little distinction among CALD and Indigenous participants between the voluntary work they routinely carry out for their community and the work that they do for their family - a normal part of everyday life that did not have or need a title such as 'volunteering'.

A deeper understanding of the interpretations and application of volunteering and giving attitudes and behaviours in CALD and Indigenous communities would enrich volunteering and philanthropy across Australia. Central to this is recognising, supporting and 'piggy-backing' on the existing informal giving and volunteering networks in CALD and Indigenous communities.

To increase volunteering and giving beyond CALD and Indigenous community settings, the sector needs to be perceived as providing more equitable access than it currently is. There are also opportunities to improve engagement between the philanthropic sector and CALD and Indigenous communities so that philanthropic efforts are more responsive to community-identified needs.

11.1 CALD conclusions

Giving and sharing of time, belongings and money in CALD communities provide vital support for communities within Australia and in countries of origin. Particular support is provided during migration and settlement. Cultural and traditional beliefs around individual duty and personal responsibility for collective wellbeing are the basis for high levels of volunteering. Patterns of giving matched patterns of volunteering, irrespective of financial status.

Community networks linked to village, tribal, cultural and religious networks have emerged as providing powerful enablers and structural support to volunteering and giving in CALD communities. Rather than being considered formal, these community processes were typically understood by CALD participants to be operating outside formal volunteering structures and management, occurring through trusted community channels and traditional social networks without the need for formal volunteering structures.

Motivating factors for volunteering and giving identified by participants include:

- Religious and social ethics
- The psychosocial need of CALD communities to maintain their own cultural values throughout the migration process
- Promoting community connections to reduce social isolation for individuals and communities in transition
- Responding to the various immediate practical and human needs of community members during migration and settlement
- Humanitarian responses to crisis both in Australia and overseas
- Meaning and personal satisfaction, particularly in the face of the loss of status that migration and refugee experiences often impose
- Access to employment opportunities and skills development through Australian employment networks.

The personal desire expressed by some CALD participants to volunteer outside their communities was constrained by the level of more immediate need for help that was evident in their own communities.

The high level of demand for assistance, advice and advocacy from vulnerable CALD community members places considerable pressure on established community members, in terms of time, practical knowledge, experience to provide support, and the emotional toll of such support in an environment where there are limited opportunities for appropriate debrief and structural support.

Other barriers include poor English-language proficiency and concerns about capacity to navigate the formal volunteering structures imposed by mainstream organisations, as well as perceptions about the lack of cultural capacity of these types of organisations.

There is a strong desire for involvement in volunteering and giving activities that produce practical tangible outcomes responsive to community-identified needs. There are perceptions that some philanthropic organisations lack the flexibility to target specific communities or issues, and that this discourages involvement. The activities of mainstream organisations are not always viewed as likely to have the greatest impact or to be reflective of the greatest community need.

Given this, effective partnerships between volunteer-involving organisations, philanthropic organisations and CALD communities that adopt genuine, respectful two-way engagement processes are a key enabler for growing giving and volunteering in CALD communities.

11.2 Indigenous conclusions

Volunteering and giving in Indigenous contexts often revolves around responding to very basic support needs relating to daily survival. Indigenous community members contextualised their volunteering and giving in terms of high levels of need, a lack of resources in Indigenous communities, and therefore an imperative to spend time supporting community wellbeing and survival.

In Indigenous communities the distinction between giving, sharing and volunteering is virtually meaningless, as they are all seen as part of supporting one's community. Similarly, the distinction between formal and informal volunteering appears meaningless and largely unnecessary. Rather than 'informal' and 'formal' volunteering, Indigenous participants were more likely to talk about 'volunteering in community', which is seen as more flexible, local and responsive to community needs; compared to 'volunteering', which is perceived as rigid, structured, and regular.

There is a large amount of voluntary representation on management committees and on advisory bodies where Indigenous people provide cultural expertise. Elders appear to carry a significant amount of the burden of such volunteering.

As with CALD communities, involvement in community-based activities that promote cultural practices and maintenance contribute to feelings of identity, cohesion and belonging that counters the lived experiences of marginalisation in the wider community. Obligations to family and community are a priority for Indigenous participants. Kinship relationships in Indigenous communities are complex, and 'family' in Indigenous contexts does not fall neatly into categories of 'immediate', 'nuclear' and 'extended' family.

Participants noted that there is limited interest in more mainstream volunteering or giving while one's own community faces daily struggles to survive. In remote contexts in particular, money and other resources are so scarce that any sharing or giving beyond the immediate community is unlikely. However, some Indigenous participants reported voluntary activity in a mainstream setting, often in sporting organisations and as representatives on advisory bodies and management committees.

There is a strong preference for a more personal and less structured approach to volunteering. The structured nature of volunteering outside Indigenous communities – with set hours each week – is seen as very different to being inside Indigenous communities, where immediate and flexible responses are required. Organisational trust is an important driver of volunteering and giving activities. For this reason there is a strong preference for channelling giving and volunteering through Indigenous organisations.

Indigenous participants identified a range of challenges to participation in volunteering and giving, including lack of time, transport issues, need for cultural appropriateness in volunteering organisations, burnout due to high levels of volunteering in Indigenous communities, lack of acknowledgement and appreciation, limited resources in Indigenous volunteer-involving organisations, lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities and lack of skills training to support Indigenous participation in volunteering.

Indigenous participants identified a number of factors that could enable volunteering, including public acknowledgement and respect, partnership projects that benefit Indigenous communities, involving non-Indigenous people in Indigenous events, increasing awareness of culturally appropriate volunteering opportunities, providing flexibility in volunteering opportunities and offering opportunities for employment and skills development.

Enablers for giving were also identified, including building partnerships and collaboration between philanthropic organisations and Indigenous communities, providing support for Indigenous communities to access philanthropic funds and supporting engagement with new technology, for example, through crowd funding.

11.3 General conclusions

Measuring giving and volunteering

The research suggests that traditional definitions and measurements are inadequate to capture the extent of spontaneous and planned giving and volunteering within different CALD and Indigenous communities.

The informal contributions of CALD and Indigenous community members in both giving and volunteering to support their communities appears to be significantly underestimated, unsupported and unrecognised.

This research suggests that traditional definitions and measurements are inadequate to capture the extent of spontaneous and planned giving and volunteering within different CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The contribution of CALD and Indigenous communities in terms of volunteering and giving appears to be significantly underestimated. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census question in relation to volunteering is unlikely to capture the extent of this participation, so asking a more appropriate question would be useful. It is also difficult to find reliable data on philanthropic funding of CALD and Indigenous communities, so improvements in this area would be useful.

Opportunities

Given the gap in research and evidence base relating to volunteering and giving in CALD and Indigenous communities in Australia, there are opportunities for further research in this area to build on the findings from this report.

A variation in the way that data collections, including the ABS Census, ask questions about volunteering to include a clear definition of volunteering (and what it includes and excludes) could assist in more effectively collecting data in relation to CALD and Indigenous volunteering.

Recognition

CALD and Indigenous volunteering and giving fills a need to support community wellbeing by providing important services and supports, and in many cases fills a significant gap in service provision to these communities. It is important to acknowledge the value of the contribution of CALD and Indigenous community members and organisations, and the pressure this places on what are often vulnerable and marginalised communities. This acknowledgement, both formal and informal, was highly valued by volunteers.

Opportunities

It is very important for volunteer involving organisations to acknowledge CALD and Indigenous volunteers through, for example, the awarding of certificates or the making of formal announcements,

There are opportunities for the Australian Government to support and encourage organisations to provide this acknowledgement – at both an individual and organisation level.

There are opportunities to acknowledge CALD and Indigenous volunteers in the Australian Honours System.

Partnerships and collaboration

CALD and Indigenous volunteering and giving supports community wellbeing by providing important services and supports, in many cases filling a significant gap in service provision to these communities. Efforts to grow volunteering and giving need to be framed within this context.

While community needs relating to settlement, migration, survival and disadvantage remain unmet, there are limited opportunities to grow volunteering efforts outside of these settings. There are, however, opportunities to support volunteer-involving organisations to build accessibility into volunteering initiatives in order to build recognition and support for the existing contribution of CALD and Indigenous community members in terms of both volunteering and giving.

The most appropriate and successful approaches when working with CALD and Indigenous communities around volunteering and giving involve partnerships and collaboration that are community-led, based on community need, driven by the communities themselves, and built on strengths-based community development principles.

Opportunities

Support for partnerships and collaborations that promote better understanding, communication, relationship-building and culturally sensitive approaches among volunteer-involving organisations and philanthropic organisations, on one side, and CALD and Indigenous communities, on the other. This could be effective in building a more accessible and responsive not for profit sector for meeting CALD and Indigenous needs.

CALD and Indigenous volunteering and community development projects have the potential to build relationships particularly with young people, enhancing social cohesion and strengthening community wellbeing. This is particularly important in communities where family functioning and social cohesion are at risk.

Support should be given to long-term approaches and investments with Indigenous communities in order to ensure projects are achievable and sustainable.

Inclusion

Volunteer-involving organisations and philanthropic organisations would benefit from a focus on building the cultural competency of their organisations, staff and volunteers, so they will be able to work more effectively and successfully with CALD and Indigenous organisations. Being aware of and understanding the importance of cultural protocols is vital to building successful partnerships with these communities.

Opportunities

Implementing cultural competency training for staff and volunteers would enhance the capacity of volunteer-involving and philanthropic organisations to work effectively with CALD and Indigenous organisations. This would make it more likely that they could attract and retain CALD and Indigenous volunteers and donors and enhance capacity to develop effective and culturally respectful partnerships and collaborative projects.

Cultural competency and awareness training to provide philanthropic organisations with the skills they need to work more effectively with CALD and Indigenous communities and organisations, would be beneficial.

Improving access to philanthropic funds for CALD and Indigenous communities could be achieved by simplifying application processes and forms and by providing additional support through the development and application process. More flexibility, support and partnership work on requirements for reporting by CALD and Indigenous organisations to philanthropic foundations could be encouraged.

Training and professional development

CALD and Indigenous organisations would benefit from support and training in relation to philanthropy and volunteering and the particular skills that may be required in these contexts.

Opportunities

Training and additional resources for CALD and Indigenous organisations should be provided so they can increase their participation in volunteering and philanthropy, for example, recruitment of volunteers, effective communication and marketing, networking, etc.

The capacity of CALD and Indigenous boards of management and organisations should be increased so that they can work with philanthropic foundations; this may include assistance with application processes and training on policies and procedures related to philanthropy.

Support for volunteers

Resources are particularly limited in Indigenous and new and emerging CALD communities.

Opportunities

Enhanced infrastructure and resources are required to support engagement in volunteering in CALD and Indigenous communities. Many CALD and Indigenous volunteer-involving organisations are require better access to training, reimbursement of expenses and volunteering expertise and networks.

There is opportunity to access support from private sector, business and the philanthropic sector as well as from government.

Promoting value and pathways

Increasing awareness of volunteer opportunities among CALD and Indigenous communities is more likely to be useful if it is done in the context of partnerships and targeted to the needs of particular groups. For example, young people and new and emerging CALD communities are more likely to be interested in roles that may lead to skills-building and employment. Flexibility in volunteering is also valued, particularly by young people.

Opportunities

Promotion of the benefits of volunteering in relation to skills development and employment pathways, particularly for young people and new and emerging communities, is likely to be an effective way of engaging more volunteers from CALD and Indigenous communities.

There should be promotion of the value and benefits of philanthropic projects that work with CALD and Indigenous communities and the provision of resources to support and develop successful projects, models and approaches in order to encourage the development of this sector.

Developing strategies to encourage participation

A comprehensive organisational strategy to encourage participation by CALD and Indigenous communities is likely to be effective.

Opportunities

The development of specific strategies to encourage CALD and Indigenous participation in philanthropic and volunteer-involving organisations is likely to be effective. The strategy needs to address issues of organisational cultural competency, discrimination and racism, training and professional development and working in partnership - all key elements noted in this research. It may be useful to establish CALD and Indigenous Reference Groups to drive organisational change.

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