

# Australian *Volunteers*



**Developing global support for  
locally-led volunteering**

# Developing global support for locally-led volunteering

Co-designing a set of tools for community volunteers alongside in-country staff and partners

**In design**

July 2022 - Nov 2022



## Summary

The Australian Volunteers Program teams in Tanzania, Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Sri Lanka and Mongolia, spent July to December 2022 developing volunteer management support ideas for community volunteers. Namely, a Needs Assessment Tool and a Volunteering Toolbox. These tools were seen as having a potential to form a support service the program could offer to our partner organisations and their volunteers.

In this project, community volunteering refers to volunteers who live in the community and are involved with the partner organisation at a local level.

As co-designers of this project, staff used their firsthand experience to better understand and develop a community volunteer management support service in a small, low-risk environment. In addition, the project team engaged in-country stakeholders in ideation, prototyping and testing for their ongoing input and feedback.

## Our objectives

- Understand what service elements best respond to country needs and could form a global support service
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- Better understand what type of organisations we are designing this for.
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- Learn how do we make the global support service easy to find and accessible to the partners.
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- Discover what the needs assessment and resource toolbox might include.
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- Understand who the relevant stakeholders are, as well as what resources might be required to support the chosen approach.

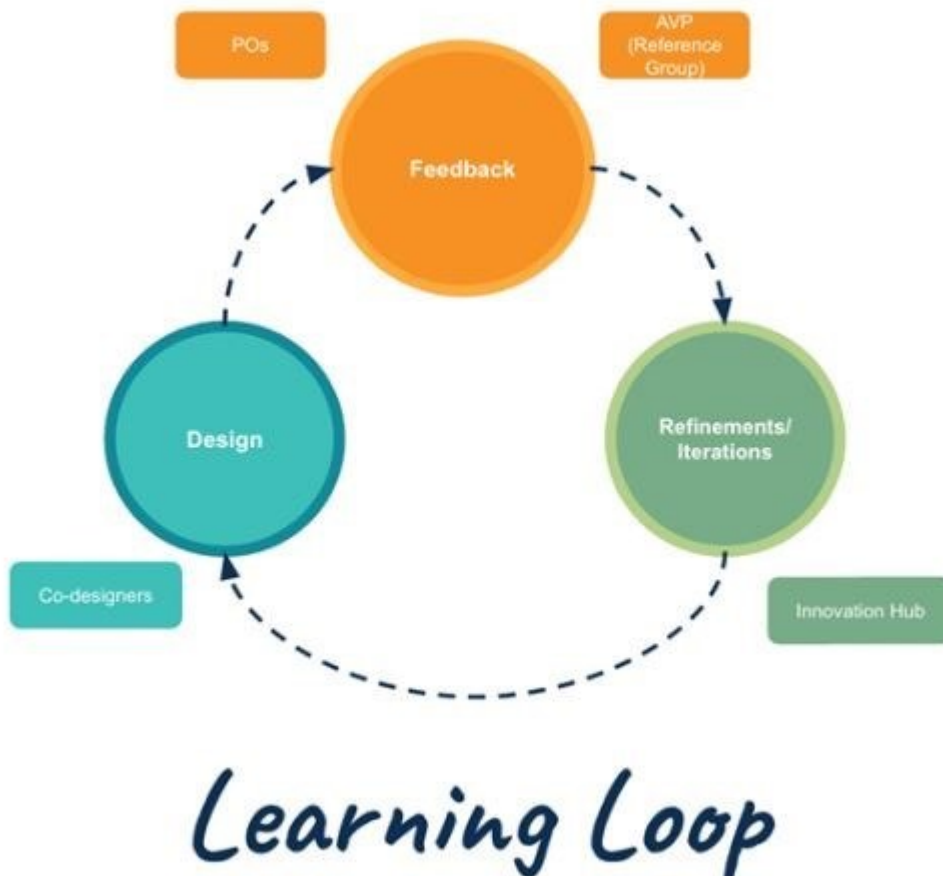
## Our approach

The five in-country teams started the project by co-defining and co-developing the idea of a potential community volunteering support service that is feasible and relevant to each of their country contexts.

In-country teams, as co-designers, bring invaluable operational and country-context expertise and experience that greatly supports the design process.



Throughout this process, a multi-stakeholder learning loop, pictured below, was used to strengthen the design and ensure its desirability and global applicability. Additionally, we tested assumptions and ran prototyping activities to fill the knowledge gaps. These processes were essential to understanding user needs, as well as developing ideas that have the potential to support our partners with community volunteering.



## What we learned

- One model of these tools will not fit all, as partner organisations have varying experiences and different needs. Partners' needs will also evolve, and the potential support service should aim to observe and understand that
- The needs assessment process may require a more dynamic approach. Partners and in-country teams found that a needs assessment interview may feel like an audit and may not provide the partner organisation with an opportunity to discuss what matters to them in relation to volunteer management.
- The support service should include resources for volunteer management, as well as volunteer upskilling.
- The final version of any global support service requires a range of ways to reach our partners. Partner organisations agreed that existing networks are an important platform for learning and resource sharing.
- Partner organisations do not utilise volunteer management resources that are available online. By better understanding the reasons why not, the project will be better placed to design or direct our partners to useful supports.
- Australian Volunteers Program staff members have a desire to build on existing program processes.
- Partner organisations desire a stronger national government and peak body presence in supporting country volunteering ecosystem.