IMPACT REPORT
2023
“Even though I was there for a short period, I felt like my experience had a huge impact on the community. I feel that I really gained a new perspective on service from this experience.”

Melissa, Teaching English in Peru
At International Volunteer HQ, positively impacting people and the planet is at the core of everything we do.

We empower our volunteers to explore the world with kindness, give back to causes they care about, and leave every place better than they found it. As a certified B Corporation, the impact of our operations on our volunteers, local teams, communities, and the environment is externally audited every three years to ensure we continually uphold the highest standards.

Reporting on the impact of our volunteers, as well as the impact of our organization's operations, is important to us. It enables us to demonstrate complete transparency, celebrate the incredible work of our volunteers, and hold ourselves accountable to our commitment to being a force for good in the world.

This Impact Report is a summary of what we and our volunteers have collectively achieved to bring positive transformation to communities around the world in 2023.

Simon Birkenhead
Chief Executive Officer
International Volunteer HQ
“Volunteering through IVHQ, and with the local Australia team was the best decision I have made. This experience challenged me and pushed me out of my comfort zone, which allowed me to grow so much as a person and gain so many skills! Volunteering is such a great way to travel and save money, whilst also being able to learn from locals about the culture and environment you are in. IVHQ has high standards regarding the ethicality of projects and meets UN goals which was something I really looked for to start off my volunteering journey.”

Sophie, Marine Conservation in Australia
We care about people and the planet. Our purpose is to create positive social, environmental, and personal transformation through regenerative travel. We facilitate life-enriching travel experiences that enable our volunteers to give back to causes they care about, while exploring the amazing world around them.

We connect volunteers with local leaders around the globe who are best suited to identify the most pressing needs in their communities and who can facilitate meaningful ways for volunteers to support responsible, sustainable projects.

Instead of placing IVHQ staff at program sites, we partner with local NGOs, non-profits, and community organizations to provide guidance, advice, supervision, and support to volunteers. This enables us to support long-term employment in host communities. IVHQ program fees go directly to these passionate local teams to cover the cost of accommodating and hosting our volunteers.

Our regenerative travel model creates opportunities for cultural exchange, personal growth, and impactful service, while boosting the local economies in 44 countries around the world.
Certified B Corporations (short for ‘Benefit Corporations’) are businesses that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose. These standards are intentionally set high and are developed independently to measure a company’s impact in five key areas: Governance, Workers, Community, Environment, and Customers.

Certification involves a comprehensive audit by B Lab, the nonprofit behind the B Corp certification, to verify each company’s impact on all stakeholders as well as its governance practices.

The importance of operating a business for the benefit of every stakeholder, not just shareholders, has been at the heart of IVHQ’s business practices since our foundation. This is why IVHQ was one of the first organizations in New Zealand to become a certified B Corporation in 2015.

In 2023, we were recertified as a B Corporation (something we do every 3 years) with a B Impact score of 93.5. The median score for ordinary businesses is 50.9.

The breakdown of our B Impact assessment is public and can be viewed at the QR code below.
IVHQ’S 2023 IMPACT IN NUMBERS

- **134,000**
  - Total volunteers since 2007

- **627,000**
  - Total hours our volunteers contributed to community projects around the world

- **$10 million**
  - Amount in USD invested into communities abroad through program fees

- **26**
  - Number of new volunteer projects launched in 2023

- **16**
  - Number of years IVHQ has been providing volunteer travel opportunities around the world
THE DIVERSITY OF IVHQ VOLUNTEERS:

- Number of nationalities represented by volunteers: 121
- Number of countries our volunteers came from: 107
- Percentage of first time volunteers: 89%
- Total number of IVHQ programs our most active volunteer has joined: 15
- Number of volunteers who were over age 75: 43
AGE PROFILE

11% 17 years old and under
64% 18 - 29 years old
20% 30 - 59 years old
5% 60 years old and over
DESTINATION PARTICIPATION

- 29% North, Central, and South America
- 28% Africa and Middle East
- 31% Asia and the Pacific
- 12% Europe
All IVHQ volunteer programs contribute to one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were developed by the United Nations as a blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face – including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice.

To highlight the ways our volunteers support the Sustainable Development Goals, we pair each project with one specific SDG.

In 2023, IVHQ volunteers devoted a total of 627,649 HOURS.
17,972 Hours
Contributed through youth support, community outreach, and homeless support projects in 7 countries.

8,665 Hours
Contributed through food rescue and outreach projects in 5 countries.

111,149 Hours
Contributed through medical, health education, special needs and elderly care, dental, and sports development projects in 27 countries.

Taught 200 students at a primary school and organized after school programming for more than 300 kids in Fiji.

Served more than 35,000 portions of food and taught 576 classes to 1,500 students in Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam.

Contributed more than 6,675 hours to supporting medical staff who provide accessible healthcare services in Ghana and Zambia.

Led four medical campaigns reaching 1,000 patients, in addition to providing medical check-ups to 300 political refugees from Venezuela and Nicaragua in Costa Rica.

Dedicated 7,000 hours to caring for, feeding, and socializing stray animals in shelters across programs in Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain.
222,247 Hours
Contributed through teaching, education, and childcare projects in 32 countries.

17,547 Hours
Contributed through women’s education and empowerment projects in 6 countries.

47,320 Hours
Contributed through construction, renovation, and sustainable agriculture projects in 19 countries.

Provided medical first aid training to 48 parents of primary school children, facilitated English teaching sessions for 68 women, and conducted a summer camp for 80 children in Kerala, India.

Devoted more than 7,000 hours toward teaching and early childhood education for disadvantaged families in South Africa.

Dedicated 9,280 hours toward teaching in Tanzania, including more than 100 hours of menstrual education and period empowerment lessons to secondary education girls.

Supported education projects in Kenya, of which more than 30% of children graduated into higher education (secondary school or colleges and universities).

Improved sanitation and access to clean water in Laos by rebuilding bathrooms in schools and providing new water pipes to surrounding villages.
25,993 Hours
Contributed through community development and NGO support projects in 15 countries.

6,350 Hours
Contributed through environmental education, cultural immersion, and sustainability projects in 4 countries.

16,157 Hours
Contributed through eco-agriculture, climate action, and environmental conservation projects in 9 countries.

Established a clean water and energy project for a childcare placement in Kenya, which provided safe and sanitary drinking water and electricity for the center, as well as the surrounding community.

Facilitated sport and life skills programs in Argentina and Brazil, which provided healthy, fun, and constructive recreational activities in a safe and supportive environment.

Shared health advice with over 5,000 community members and helped to prepare thousands of meals for the local community in Lima, Peru.

Facilitated creative-based workshops focused on improving motor skills and wellbeing for people with mental disabilities in Croatia.

Organized summer camps in Romanian villages, which provided opportunities for children from disadvantaged backgrounds to access English classes and develop life skills.
**95,819 Hours**
Contributed through marine and turtle conservation, environmental scuba diving, and coastal conservation projects in 10 countries.

**58,255 Hours**
Contributed through animal care, veterinary, and wildlife conservation projects in 21 countries.

Surveyed 144 turtles in **Australia** with unique identifying markings and contributed the data to an image capture research project for artificial intelligence training.

Established a tree nursery and planted seeds as part of agroforestry initiatives in **Nosy Komba, Madagascar**, which has improved the island’s forest coverage by 30%.

Dedicated 7,000 hours to caring for, feeding, and socializing stray animals in shelters across programs in **Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain**.

Devoted 1,925 hours to animal care and sustainable development in **Mexico**, which supported the re-homing of five cats and six dogs in **Canada** and the **USA**.

Assisted in the construction and maintenance of new animal shelter facilities in **Croatia**, which resulted in the ability to provide appropriate care to an increased number of stray cats and dogs.
GLOBAL IMPACT

- 9,703 participants of 121 nationalities from 107 countries
- 627,649 hours volunteered in 51 locations
- Over $10M USD contributed to local host communities*

*Estimate based on IVHQ program fees paid to local communities to cover the cost of volunteers' meals, accommodation, transportation, etc., plus additional spent on tours and activities, as well as average additional weekly amount spent by volunteers while in-country.
AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST
OVER 198,500 VOLUNTEER HOURS IN 2023

Ghana  Morocco  Victoria Falls
Jordan  Namibia  Zambia
Kenya  South Africa  Zanzibar
Madagascar  Tanzania
“It was fantastic. I learnt so much about myself as well. I created the most amazing friendships with people from all over the world. Seeing the impact I had in the kids was amazing too, teaching them English and watching them slowly understand new concepts was rewarding.”

Cecilia, Childcare in Tanzania
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

OVER 203,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS IN 2023

- Australia
- Bali
- Cambodia
- China
- Fiji
- India
- Laos
- Nepal
- New Zealand
- Philippines
- Sri Lanka
- Thailand
- Vietnam
“I think we all do volunteering for different reasons and there will be many surprises along the way. But the certain outcome is a new perspective, whether of yourself, your home country or the place you served. Offering your time and skills without any expectation of anything back is the most selfless thing you can ever do and with this, no matter what, you will grow positively as a person.”

Adrian, Construction and Renovation in Laos
NORTH, CENTRAL, AND SOUTH AMERICA
OVER 159,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS IN 2023

Argentina
Belize
Brazil
Colombia
Costa Rica
Ecuador
Galapagos Islands
Guatemala
Jamaica
Mexico
Peru
Puerto Rico
Trinidad and Tobago
USA
“I had a wonderful and unforgettable experience and I learned so much. Being in this experience allowed me to do so much for a community as well as allow that community to do so much for me. The impact was very mutual. It was definitely very gratifying and I would do it all over again a thousand times.”

Mariana, NGO Support in Ecuador
EUROPE
OVER 67,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS IN 2023

Croatia  Italy  Romania
Greece  Portugal  Spain
“For those who are hesitant about volunteering abroad I would say take the plunge as I can guarantee that it will be the best decision of your life & the memories that you make you will cherish for many years to come! After volunteering on this program it has left me wanting more!! I will definitely be volunteering abroad again because the connections that I made were priceless and are unable to be found anywhere else!”

Raquel, Animal Care in Croatia
Trustpilot is a review platform that's open to everyone. People share their experiences to help others find the perfect program. Since 2018, volunteers have left more than 1,400 reviews about their experiences with IVHQ. Over those six years, 94% have been 5-star or 4-star, with an overall TrustPilot Score of 4.8.

I couldn’t fault my experience

“I couldn’t fault my experience, from the beginning to the end everything was faultless. IVHQ and the local team were absolutely fantastic, I always felt safe and everything was so well planned and explained. 10/10

It was the best thing I have ever done, and no feeling compares to how I felt when volunteering! So rewarding and heart warming, I cannot wait to experience it again!”

| Bonnie from Australia | October 30, 2023 |

Food Rescue—Barcelona

“This was an incredibly wonderful program. Everything was smooth sailing from the application process, up until my last day at my program. I stayed for five weeks in Barcelona to volunteer at a soup kitchen. This kitchen was incredibly clean, organized, and well maintained. Each local volunteer was incredibly friendly and welcoming. The program coordinators also provided me with all of the help, support, and resources I needed to feel comfortable. I initially decided to travel in order to explore my future endeavors as a humanitarian worker of sorts and could not be happier with my decision.”

| Erika from the United States | November 13, 2023 |
“My desire is to travel to new destinations and contribute my small share to helping people in need of assistance.

On my first IVHQ trip to Ghana, I quickly realized that it would not be my last. Now years later, I have volunteered in Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa, Guatemala, India and Zambia with IVHQ. IVHQ trips are a true adventure and an intimate experience. You live, you feel and you love the people and the country.

As the grandfather of the group, I have always been respected and treated well by all. The “kids” would ask me to accompany them on the evening outings, the cook would prepare me a special breakfast because I was always the first one in the kitchen.

There is no age limit to volunteering, there is no limit to giving... I have found the road to a fulfilling retirement!”

Julien from Canada

October 23, 2023
**My first time solo travel with an incredible volunteering experience!**

“I spent 12 weeks (3 months) in Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam), volunteering in a kindergarten / pre-school. IVHQ made the whole booking / preparation process very simple which was very helpful. During the whole time, I felt well taken care of by the local host organization. That was very important to me, considering that it was my first solo travel experience. The coordinators of my program were very kind, cooperative and organized, food was well provided and my voluntary work was very fun! I've also met incredible people and made some very close friendships which I wouldn't have expected.

All in all, I can highly recommend volunteering with IVHQ!”

*Thao from Germany*  
November 25, 2023

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**Best travel experience of my life**

“My trip to Tanzania was everything I hoped it would be and more. The people I met at the volunteer house were some of the most incredible people I’ve ever met and I loved spending time with them. My placement was lovely as well. It was what I was expecting and I was able to bring some donations that the kids seemed to really enjoy. Also, the safari was amazing! I wish I could have stayed longer, but I will definitely be making an effort to come back to Africa as soon as I can and would love to stay longer next time. IVHQ made my first solo trip a seamless experience and I now have the confidence to do more.”

*Kayleen from the United States*  
November 14, 2023
Although the success stories were small, they were significant

“I absolutely loved volunteering on the Elephant Conservation project! The accommodation at a local hotel was comfortable and the staff there was very friendly and helpful. The project itself is hard work, but it is very rewarding. Most of the time there is spent cleaning the barn and cutting and planting elephant grass, rice, and sugarcane. It was awesome to be around the elephants every day and to see the direct impact the volunteers make on the two elephants in the sanctuary, as well as some other elephants in the village. The food was delicious and they always made sure you had enough to eat. There are also plenty of places in the village to eat at too. The staff at orientation and at the project were all very accommodating, during and after my volunteering. I would highly recommend this project!”

Holly from the United States  October 02, 2023
“The program I participated on was amazing from the moment I applied until the end. The skills I gained were far beyond my expectations. Lots of eye-opening experiences and I made lots of new friends. It made me realise how big the differences are in healthcare practices compared to where I’m living. This was a risk worth taking.”

| Lanly from Australia | October 16, 2023 |

“Having done several amazing volunteer projects with IVHQ, I have yet had another valuable experience with this company at my recent project!

I embraced and learned about/from the culture, in particular the kindness and helpfulness of the people in Sri Lanka.

My placement was in a pre-school in the mornings and some village teaching in the afternoons. Both children/students and staff really appreciated my involvement and input.

Meeting and working with like minded volunteers enhanced doing such an activity.

What we were shown and learned about, i.e. spices, fruit and vegetable markets, tea manufacturing venues, Buddhism (temples and rituals), elephants and other wild life was always most interesting, broadening the horizon. I felt safe and welcome both in the volunteer house and outside throughout, all in all, I had yet another rewarding experience!”

| Ingeborg from UK | December 20, 2023 |
CONNECT WITH US

Feeling inspired and want to contribute to our collective impact?
Head to our website to see where you could give back to communities on a meaningful volunteering abroad trip:

www.volunteerhq.org

Or get in touch with us:

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