



**AUSTRALIAN
BUSINESS VOLUNTEERS**

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Australian Business Leaders Recognised for International Volunteering

Business leaders, both young and young at heart, are recognised today by **Australian Business Volunteers** for their international efforts to eradicate poverty in Asia and the Pacific.

More than 100 Australian Business Volunteers were deployed in 2013 to share their expertise on short-term, high-impact international development projects in Asia and the Pacific.

With this year's International Volunteer Day theme being **Young. Global. Active.** – Australian Business Volunteers' Chief Executive Officer, Sarah O'Connor, acknowledges the often energetic and adventurous spirit required of business leaders engaged in ABV international projects.

"Our volunteers often find themselves in quite remote locations providing invaluable pro-bono advice and training to local staff within small businesses, government institutions and community organisations," said O'Connor. "The expertise required of our volunteers usually means that they are typically between mid-career to early retirement. Whatever their age, they generally approach a project with passion and a commitment to make a difference."

Judy Tier, aged 68, has been an Australian Business Volunteer for 22 years undertaking 13 international development projects in Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Tier is well versed in operating and promoting small businesses, having owned and managed four boutique retail shops in Canberra after prior experience in manufacturing and retired this year as the Director of a management and marketing company, as well as part-time Lecturer in marketing at two universities.

Over the past 22 years, Tier's volunteer assignments have included advising women business leaders in Vanuatu, providing governance training in Solomon Islands, and strategic and operational advice to garment retailers and manufacturers in Fiji, Samoa and Cook Islands.

"As a volunteer, you experience so much more of a culture than as a tourist," said Tier. "ABV assignments allow me to build long-lasting friendships across the Pacific and a chance to really exercise my brain on helping to solve sometimes complex challenges faced by business owners and leaders within organisations."

One of Australian Business Volunteers' youngest business leaders to be deployed on an international development project has been Mr Stuart Brown, at age 31. He is a senior consultant in end-to-end data management services, specifically focusing on governance and information security and privacy. Recently, Brown undertook his first volunteer assignment with ABV as a data management advisor, working with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the region's principal technical and scientific organisation promoting sustainable development. Since his return, his career has taken an international focus.

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"Volunteering with ABV gave me a unique opportunity to grow the skills I had already cemented in Australia and test myself in an international setting," said Brown. "I gained valuable overseas experience working across cultures and the not-for-profit sector which have helped launch my career into our global office in Hong Kong."

Brown has since moved to Hong Kong with his career and his volunteering efforts inspired his father who is now currently on an ABV assignment in East Timor.

Tier encourages those inspired to volunteer to grab the chance as it presents itself. "Don't wait until you have retired to share your skills, knowledge and experience with others," urges Tier. "There is so much you learn and gain from volunteering, especially on short-term international development assignments offered through ABV."

Australian Business Volunteers are recruited nationwide and are required to have 10 years' experience in their field. To find out more information about Australian Business Volunteers' international development projects and recruitment of business leaders go to www.abv.org.au.

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