

Global Impact Report 2015

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Introduction

Gathering the achievements from our projects across the world has been an inspiring task. We have both been amazed at the contribution our global community made in just one year! Our impact amounts to more than simply the number of volunteers we support abroad, more than the length of time one person travels, more than the hundreds of projects we run. Impact is the ongoing, positive outcome of all these elements combined.

In compiling this report we gathered some staggering statistics. In Thailand we collected five tonnes of trash. In Argentina we provided free national ID cards for 20% of Cordoba's homeless population. In Mexico we released 193,375 turtle hatchlings. Across 12 destinations we launched a literacy campaign to improve access to resources. We provided over half a million dollars of direct financial support to our local partners. All this year alone.

The individual stories we heard are just as impactful. This year we learned about the women in Cambodia who set up their own businesses thanks to a group loan from our Microfinance project, escaping the harsh working environment of a clothing factory where they earned less than \$3 a day. Our physiotherapy volunteers have seen children walk for the first time. Our Public Health project helped a woman regain her sight. Our volunteers provided meals and supplies to the homeless in Jamaica. We helped a group of ecologists build a vocational school in the most contaminated area of Jalisco, Mexico. The list goes on, it is hard to calculate or even comprehend the true impact our community has made. The pages that follow are just some of the highlights.

Our volunteers join projects lasting anywhere from two weeks to a year. They are students, professionals, retirees and families from across the world. People sometimes wonder about the impact that one short-term volunteer can make. At first glance it is sometimes hard to measure the difference one volunteer has made in a few weeks. But when thousands of people donate a short amount of time to the same long term goals, we achieve massive progress together. We know that with short term volunteering, the onus is on the organisation to provide support and resources. Projects Abroad volunteers work with some of the most vulnerable groups in the world and we take that responsibility seriously. We are proud to provide the structure our volunteers need to change communities and explore the world in a meaningful way.

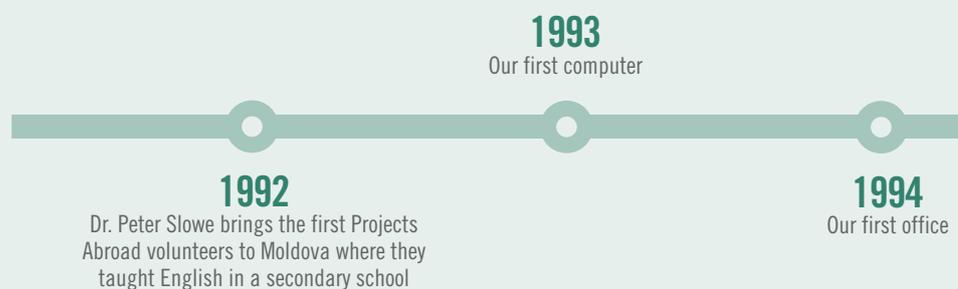
Volunteering abroad is an act of service and an opportunity for self-reflection. The willingness to step outside your comfort zone to help and learn from others is no small feat, and we love connecting people around the world ready for adventure and eager to make an impact.

Huge thanks to all our volunteers, interns and staff who work so hard to make this happen.

- JESSICA WARNER,
Head of Program Development

- SIENA HICKEY,
Global Insights Manager

OUR TIMELINE



1. Our Social Impact

1.1 We support teachers

Overcrowded classrooms and lack of resources hinder a child's learning.* Local teachers alone cannot meet the demand for individual student attention in this type of environment. In support of these teachers, 735 Teaching volunteers provided educational support to 20,580 students in 350 schools. This is a conservative estimate, based on each volunteer working with one class at the global average of 28 students per classroom.* Teaching volunteers serve these disadvantaged students according to the goals laid out in our Teaching Management Plan, which ensures we are meeting the identified needs of the institutions we support.

In many developing countries educational practices centre on rote learning and repetition or 'chalk and talk'. Our volunteers introduce creative, interactive teaching methods working alongside the local teaching staff. We also operate Holiday Schools in 11 countries where volunteers offer fun and creative learning opportunities during school breaks.

*Average class sizes where we teach: Togo, 50; Vietnam, 43; Senegal 41; South Africa, 40; Kenya 38

Volunteers provided educational support to 20,580 students across 350 schools.

WHAT IS THE CARE DATABASE?

Children have easy access to ...

local language children's books

Need considerable help in this area Need some help in this area Need no help in this area

English language children's books

Need considerable help in this area Need some help in this area Need no help in this area

alphabet books

Need considerable help in this area Need some help in this area Need no help in this area

In 2015 we launched our Care Database allowing volunteers to determine their contribution using specialised checklists designed to assess children's levels of English, numeracy and overall development according to the rate at which their age group should reach crucial developmental milestones. These checklists help guide daily activities and updates are regularly uploaded and tracked in the Care Database. In

this way we monitor children's development in real-time so staff and future volunteers can quickly target specific areas of need. We also assess placement environments for hygiene and literacy levels (an example of the Literacy Rich Environment Checklist used at a placement in Togo is seen here). The Care Database is a secure password-protected platform with comprehensive Child Protection measures in place. In 2016 this database will expand to include tracking and reporting for our Teaching, Medical and Conservation Projects.

1996

Projects Abroad opens in Ghana; Our first Care programmes launch



1995

Dr Slowe hires the first full-time staff member, marking the beginning of our team

1997

After encouraging feedback following the introduction of our Care Database, next year we will formally launch a Teaching Programme Database, making it simpler to measure progress towards our long-term education goals. Our core focus centres on English and numeracy and the promotion of a comfortable classroom environment with access to resources and libraries. By understanding our partners' goals in greater detail, we can assess requirements and match volunteers to the placements where they will have the greatest impact.

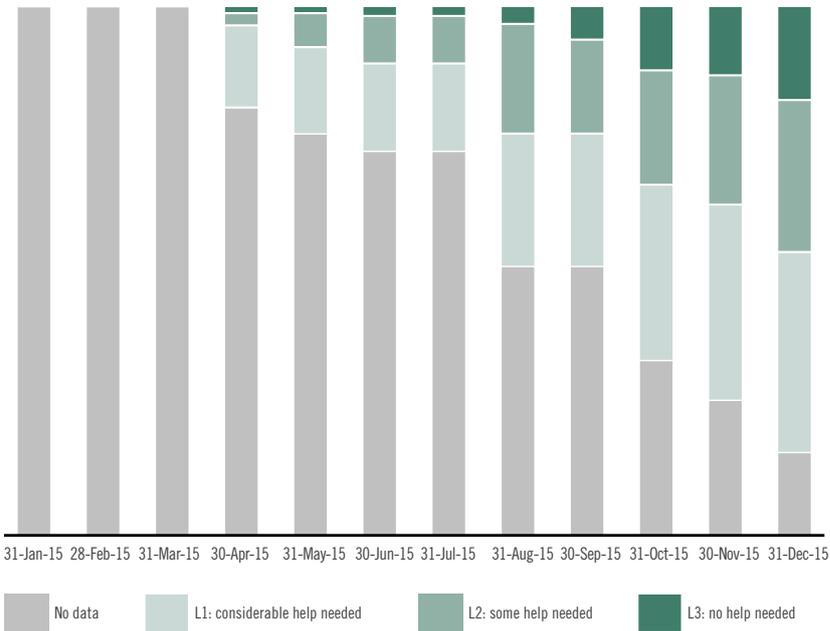
Our Care volunteers have already made a significant impact in English and Numeracy levels. In 2015 we created 1,920 comprehensive secure progress files for children and centres, tracking their progress in a range of goals. With this baseline data collected in many destinations, we are already seeing the results of our targeted intervention. Updating and sharing these results on a regular basis helps our volunteers and beneficiaries understand the current condition of our placements.

“With the ongoing assistance of Projects Abroad volunteers, childcare centres have been able to maintain low child to staff ratios and therefore improve the level of individual support and education that has been provided to all students.”
– KHEMARA ORGANISATION
Annual Report, Cambodia partner day care centre

1.2 We increase literacy

Given the right environment, children are naturally drawn towards the essential skills of reading and writing. This year our volunteers launched a campaign to improve literacy across 26 schools spanning 12 countries. As you can see in the graph to the right we are fast collecting information and promoting literacy rich environments worldwide. This campaign is a long term commitment and we have pledged to help these communities with our real-time assessment and targeted intervention.

LITERACY LEVEL PROGRESS AS WE COLLECTED DATA ACROSS 12 COUNTRIES



1999
Expansion to Nepal, Mexico, Togo;
Recruitment offices open in Germany and the US

1998
China joins as our next destination;
Medical programmes open

1.3 We promote community health

In many of the countries we work in, basic primary healthcare infrastructure cannot support the demands of the population. To ease the pressure on overstretched primary healthcare services, it is vital that we do all we can to prevent disease at a community level. In addition to clinical and research work that our medical volunteers conduct, our medical outreaches are the best way for us to address these needs.



WE CONDUCTED

Outreach and awareness programmes

- Mosquito borne illnesses including malaria and dengue fever
- Wound care and infection prevention
- Nutrition, non-communicable diseases and healthy lifestyle
- HIV testing and family planning
- Hygiene and sanitation

In over 60 locations

- Rural communities and villages
- Disadvantaged urban areas
- Schools
- Day care centres
- Residential institutions

Targeting at-risk groups

- Market seller groups
- Women's groups
- Communities with little access to healthcare
- Full-time workers without time to visit clinics
- At-risk children and youths becoming sexually active

2000

Projects start in Peru, including our first conservation programme in the Amazon rainforest



2001

We celebrate over 1,000 volunteers in a single year for the first time



1.4 We believe in justice

Projects Abroad funds and runs four Human Rights centres in South Africa, Argentina, Ghana and Senegal. To date our Human Rights volunteers in South Africa have completed over 2,000 cases including over 400 Refugee cases where we have assisted refugees fleeing civil unrest in Rwanda, Burundi and DRC. We have over 550 active cases, with more coming in every day. These will be the work of our volunteers in 2016, supported and advised by our local legal team.

Projects Abroad helped 20% of Cordoba's homeless population get free ID cards

This year we designed a procedure by which 20% of the homeless population in Cordoba, Argentina obtained national ID cards for free (necessary to get a job or visit a doctor). We also developed a programme called "Abilities for Life", where our volunteers work to empower and support young female victims of abuse. We will continue this work in 2016, and expand the programme to at-risk young males.

"The children enjoy their Multisensory Environment Therapy activities in the room that Projects Abroad set up, they become more calm and stop crying when the therapy sessions are happening."

- AUTISM CARE CENTRE IN HANOI, VIETNAM

1.5 We improve the quality of life for those living with disabilities

Throughout the developing world there is a pronounced lack of specialised support for children and adults living with disabilities. Projects Abroad partners with local care centres where hundreds of our volunteers give their time and creativity to people in need. In 2015 we introduced Multisensory Environment Therapy (MSE) in several countries and developed resources to help actively stimulate the relationship between brain function and the five senses. Multisensory Environment Therapy is a basic form of sensory stimulation which has a host of social, cognitive, language, physiological and motor benefits. All of our volunteers have access to this information after they apply, and in many destinations we have created purpose-built rooms and gardens to conduct our work.

BENEFITS OF MULTISENSORY ENVIRONMENT THERAPY

- Increases awareness and focuses attention
- Improves coordination and motor development
- Promotes cognitive development by increased brain function
- Strengthens social interactions and communication
- Decreases stress levels dramatically during therapy sessions

2003

Our volunteers reintroduce Spider monkeys to our site in the Taricaya Amazon Rainforest, where they had previously been extinct; Bolivia projects introduced



2002

Mongolia and Sri Lanka welcome our volunteers; Multiple recruitment offices open

2. Our Environmental Impact



2.1 We monitor habitats

To protect an ecosystem we must first understand it. Our organisation plays a critical role in educating the broader community. Our Conservation projects around the world monitor thousands of species in oceans, rainforests, caves, mountains and national parks. By consistently tracking local flora and fauna we have become expert in their movements, interactions and threats. This year we built weather stations and used 48 land based sensor cameras and 96 underwater cameras across seven countries to peacefully observe wildlife behaviour. Our projects store an immense knowledge base and cover a diverse range of ecosystems. The expertise of our professional conservation staff guides our Conservation Management Plans. Next year we will further develop our project databases to analyse and share our data more efficiently, expanding our practical power to protect our planet.

OUR RESEARCH HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE FIELDS OF:

- Ornithology
- Entomology
- Mammalogy
- Species reintroduction techniques
- Marine megafauna

2005

Offices open in Senegal, Cambodia and Argentina; Our 100th staff member joins the Projects Abroad community



2006

Volunteers start working in Ethiopia and Costa Rica; We have now supported over 5,000 volunteers

2004

Following the devastating tsunami in Sri Lanka, our first Disaster Relief project works to provide essential support

2.2 We tackle mass pollution

The biggest threat to thousands of species is human pollution. We all share the responsibility to minimise waste and take the state of our planet seriously. Our volunteers join us because they are ready to take action. In 2015, we collected over 8 tonnes (8,000kg) of waste, over 5 tonnes (5,000kg) in Thailand alone during community clean ups. Every destination reported that the majority of the collected waste was a form of plastic- one of the most notorious threats to wildlife. Fifty-four percent of the 2.5 tonnes of waste in Cambodia was collected underwater, by volunteers diving on our Cambodia Marine Conservation Project. We are able to call communities to action by collecting, documenting and analysing these pollutants.

In 2015 Projects Abroad ran campaigns to address the environmental crisis caused by plastic in the oceans. In Cambodia and Fiji our volunteers distributed reusable cotton bags to communities and ran awareness programs about the dangers of plastic to marine life and ecosystems. We also built recycling stations in Cambodian schools and are proud to run a plastic-free project by making bamboo straws and reusing glass bottles for our coffee.



BEACH CLEAN-UPS Top 5 findings in Thailand

458,993

Pieces of styrofoam

23,455

Cigarette butts

19,232

Plastic bags

12,567

Plastic bottles

11,333

Food wrappers/containers

2.3 We work to restore natural ecosystems

Manmade environmental threats can cause irreversible damage to our fragile ecosystems. Our professional conservationists are passionate about restoring balance and protecting native species of flora and fauna. From planting 30,000 mangrove seedlings in Fiji, to removing invasive species in bird nesting sites in Ecuador, this year volunteers worked hard to help repair ecosystems and bring them closer to their natural state.

In 2015 the spider monkeys we reintroduced to Taricaya, Peru welcomed their third baby in the wild. This species was previously extinct in the area, mostly due to hunting and destruction of habitat. Our reintroduction techniques for this troop of monkeys has been adopted by other organisations and rescue centres.

2007

We establish partnerships with grassroots NGOs in Morocco and South Africa

2009

Tanzania is added to our group of destinations. We facilitate placements for 5,000 volunteers, bringing our total volunteer network to 15,000

2008

Our new team in Jamaica welcome their first volunteers. 10,000 volunteers have joined our community

3. Our Economic Impact

3.1 We build for communities in need

In the Philippines, following the destruction of Typhoon Haiyan, 230 Disaster Relief volunteers rebuilt seven schools and a day care centre totalling 22 new classrooms. There are over 3,000 students now attending these schools thanks to the ongoing efforts of our volunteers. We also built 24 houses for displaced community members. Following the devastating earthquakes in Nepal in April 2015, we shifted our financial and human resources to prioritize building work in these affected areas. To date we have already rebuilt three schools, with two more scheduled for completion in 2016.

Since Typhoon Haiyan we have reconstructed seven schools and one day care centre totalling 22 new classrooms.

3.2 We nurture small enterprises

Over 2.5 billion adults are without bank accounts. In the developing world, where financial institutions are often inaccessible, the microfinance solution provides access to credit for the unbanked. These small loan opportunities can boost economic growth and activity for the world's poor, and since 2010 Projects Abroad has developed a presence in this space. In 2015, our Microfinance project in Cambodia provided thousands of dollars in loans to our 18 new beneficiaries, who are gradually repaying during volunteer home visits. With the help of our local loan officers, volunteers are also training beneficiaries on bookkeeping, marketing and fiscal management. These loans have allowed these small business owners to escape harsh working environments, gain independence and grow existing businesses.

IN ADDITION TO IMMEDIATE DISASTER RELIEF, IN 2015 WE BUILT:

- Kindergartens and libraries in South African townships
- A school for the Maasai community in Tanzania
- Houses, schools and teachers' accommodation in Ghana
- Community homes in Jamaica
- Sanitation facilities in Senegal

MICROFINANCE CASE STUDY

P.L. is a female living in Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Before her loan

P.L. used to work in a clothing factory and often had health issues due to the poor working conditions. Although she had children at home who needed financial support for schooling, she was forced to resign to protect her physical condition. When the children were old enough, they joined one of the day care centres supervised by our Care volunteers. It was here that we met P.L. who was interested in starting a business of her own.

Thanks to her loan

P.L. now runs a small business selling groceries during the day and pastries in the evening from her own stall she purchased through the help of our loan. She is earning more than she did in her factory role and increased her monthly savings thanks to lowered transportation and healthcare costs. P.L. is now in good health and can afford to continue sending her children to school.

Source: Cambodia Microfinance quarterly report, Q3 2015

2010

First microfinance project launches in Senegal



2011

We build relationships in Ecuador and Fiji

2012

Projects introduced in Kenya, Samoa, Vietnam

3.3 We directly finance more than 50 projects

Projects Abroad works with hundreds of placements where our volunteers provide essential in-destination support at a grassroots level. This partnership approach is ideal for many of our placements. Additionally we run projects funded entirely by Projects Abroad where this direct financial sponsorship and year-round presence addresses critical areas of need. In 2015 over 50 such projects were financed and operated by Projects Abroad staff and volunteers.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Building Projects in Ghana, Jamaica, South Africa, Tanzania, Senegal, Nepal

Community Farm in Ghana

Microfinance projects in Costa Rica, Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, Cambodia

Human Rights & Law in Ghana, Senegal, South Africa, Argentina

Public Health project in Ghana, Belize, Cambodia and the Philippines

Cantonments football club in Ghana

The Cochabanner magazine in Bolivia and the Cape Chameleon magazine in South Africa

Inca Project in Peru

Nutrition project in Fiji, South Africa and Peru

Voices of the World

Sounds of the World

ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

Animal Care Centre in Argentina

Amazon Rainforest Conservation in Peru

Marine Conservation in Cambodia

Shark Conservation in Fiji

Tropical Forest Conservation in Costa Rica

Galapagos Island Conservation in Ecuador

Sea Turtle Conservation in Mexico

African Bushveld Conservation Project in Botswana

Himalayan Mountain Conservation in Nepal

Marine Conservation in Thailand

African Savannah Conservation Project in Kenya

CARE AND EDUCATION PROJECTS

Day care centres in Cambodia

Talibe centre in Senegal

Senegal summer school

Teacher Training in Peru

IT centre in Sri Lanka

Several care centres in Sri Lanka

Drama workshops for school kids in Romania

Maasai school teaching project in Tanzania

Holiday programmes in 11 destinations

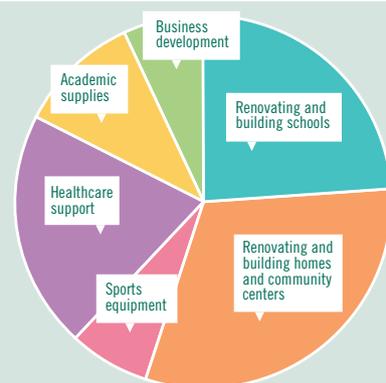
Primary school in Ghana

Junior High School in Ghana

3.4 We provide resources

Beyond the skills of our volunteers, we also recognize the need for material assistance. Thanks to our volunteers, we are able to respond to an immediate demand where availability and affordability of resources is scarce. In 2015 the Projects Abroad community donated over half a million dollars to our placements, multiplying the effect of our volunteers' work in-destination.

OVER
\$500,000
DONATED
TO OUR
LOCAL
PARTNERS



2013

The Philippines and Ecuador join us as we celebrate 21 years of service

2015

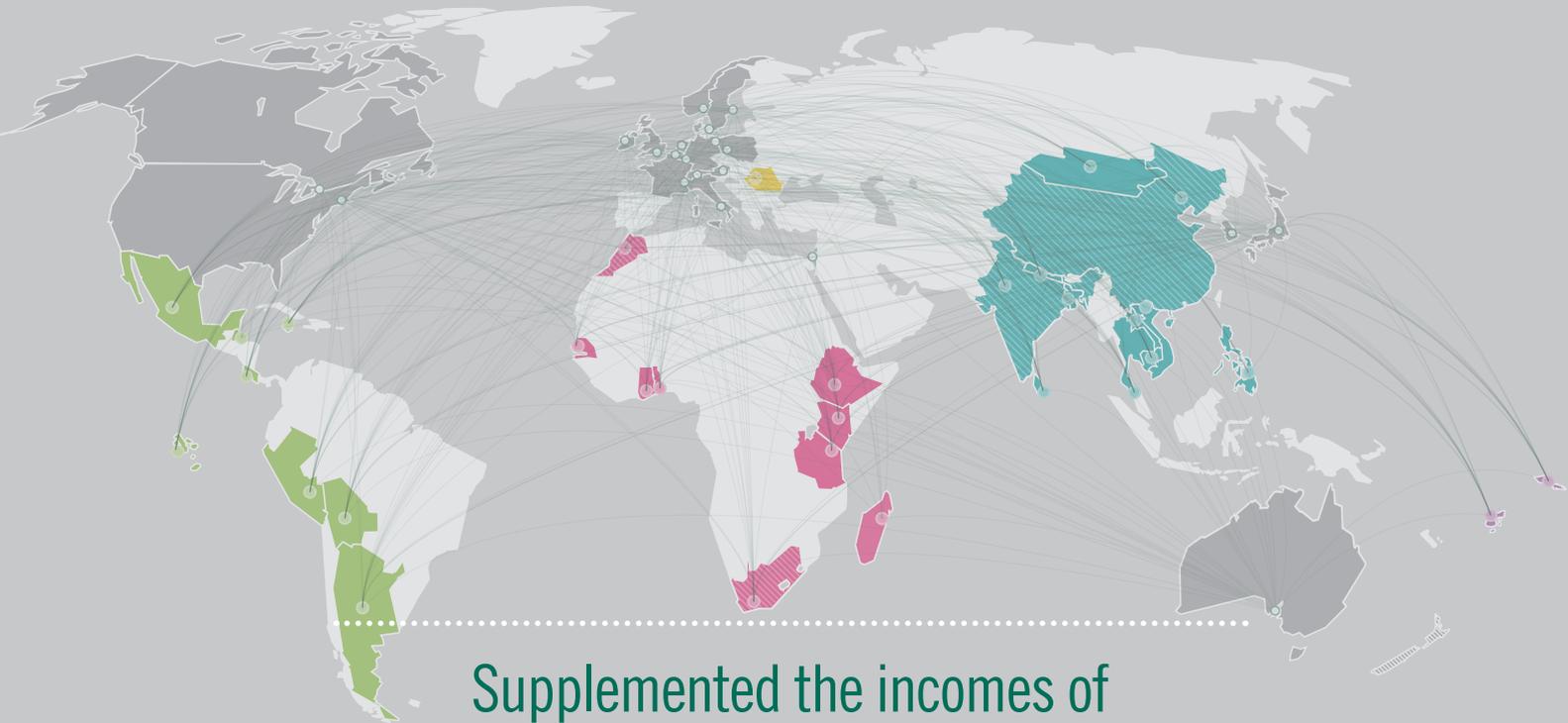
Projects introduced in Belize and Madagascar

2014

500 staff dedicated to our volunteers and partners across 60 countries worldwide



In 2015 thousands of volunteers
from over 90 countries



Supplemented the incomes of
over 1,000 host families

Created business for
thousands of local enterprises

Allowed for 1,000,000

Projects Abroad staff hours

Supported over
570 full time staff
across the developing world

We believe a more compassionate world begins with connecting cultures.
By exploring and learning from each other we will create
a generation of global-minded leaders.