

## MEDIA RELEASE



### AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION

#### **International Volunteer Day and Australian volunteers in Bangladesh**

To mark International Volunteer Day Australian High Commissioner Greg Wilcock hosted a reception at his residence and recognised the contribution of Australian volunteers working in Bangladesh under the Australian Government’s aid program.

Mr Wilcock said “Australian volunteers play a vital role. By contributing their time and skills where needed overseas, volunteers make a positive contribution to economic growth and poverty reduction, while building strong people-to-people links”.



*From left Faiyaz Khurshid Kasji, Director UN Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr Asif-us-Zaman, Additional Secretary, Economic Relation Division, Mr Greg Wilcock Australian High Commissioner. Ms Priya Powell, Counsellor, Australian High Commission stands to the right.*

The event, attended by special guests from the Economic Relations Division and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, featured a photo exhibition of Australian volunteers and their host organisations in Bangladesh towards sustainable development in Bangladesh.

During the event, Australian volunteer Jennifer Burley said “volunteering under the Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program allows us to make a contribution to international development beyond the confines of our careers in Australia”.

Jenny is volunteering as a Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Officer with Solidarities International, and contributed to the Bangladesh Government’s needs assessment following the flooding of August this year.

Like Jenny, around 40 Australian Volunteers for International Development come to Bangladesh every year to work for a year or more alongside Bangladeshi counterparts in NGOs, UN agencies and the Bangladesh Government.

Currently there are 34 Australian volunteers on assignment, with five having just arrived. More than 285 Australians have worked on volunteer assignments in Bangladesh since 2008.

The AVID program is an important and long-standing part of the Australian Government's aid program, helping to drive change and build enduring people-to-people links between Australia and the world.

Further information about the AVID program can be found on the website at:  
<http://www.australianaidvolunteers.gov.au/>

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