



indigofoundation

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Spotlight on Afghanistan, East Timor, Dem Republic of Congo, Indonesia, personal profiles, future direction, fun fundraisers, and more...

SPOTLIGHT ON AFGHANISTAN



In this edition of IF's newsletter, we place the spotlight on Afghanistan, especially Borjegai School, Hazarajhat, Central Afghanistan. The mountainous region of Hazarajhat occupies the central part of the country and is inhabited principally by the Hazara people. Although it is located in the heart of the country, its high mountains and poor communication facilities make it the most isolated part of Afghanistan.

2008 with Borjegai Community

Sarah Kelly – Project Manager, Afghanistan

We are very happy to report that Indigo Foundation's relationship with the village of Borjegai in central Afghanistan has entered into a new phase recently, as symbolised by the signing of a new Commitment Agreement with the Borjegai School. Our partnership with the school continues to grow as new support is provided and the positive results of our assistance over the last five years become more and more evident. This is the fourth Commitment Agreement since IF's relationship with the community began in 2003 when we made a contribution towards school textbooks.

Currently, IF provides \$5,000 every year for teachers' salaries to the Borjegai co-educational school (which consists of four primary schools, two middle schools and one high school with 3,900 students). Thanks to the generosity of an IF donor, we have also contributed to the building of a new girls' high school for 750 students (\$17,000) and are providing operational costs of \$3,500 to the girls school for three years.

The purpose of this article is to share with you the new projects, which are emerging out of this deepening relationship. We welcome any comments and observations you may have.

Building a new primary school

Under the new Agreement, IF has promised to contribute \$27,000 towards the construction of a primary school building to replace tents which are currently used as classrooms for 750 girls and boys. On our last monitoring and evaluation visit to Borjegai, the community elders and School Principal identified this as a key priority. In addition to being uncomfortable and distracting, the tents cannot be used in very hot or cold weather. This means that the primary school students who have their classes in the tents miss out on several months of the teaching year. This is another joint project with the Borjegai community, and they will donate the land, labour and tools necessary for the project (with a value of \$32,000).

The Agreement requires narrative and financial progress reports, photographs and a budget at different stages in the construction of the primary school building. A representative of each of the three tribes that live in Borjegai is required to approve the spending of the money in writing, and the Financial Trustee (a local trusted business man) will disburse the funds as he did for the successful construction of the girls high school.

Once the school is built, the community expects to get about three quarters of the cost of furniture from the Afghan Ministry of Education (as occurred for the girls high school) and will cover the rest themselves. There are no other ongoing operational costs, as teachers, books and stationery are already provided by the school.

The village community has already started work on the school. The hard work of breaking rocks to be used for the walls has begun and will continue over the freezing winter. We will of course be sharing the updates on this exciting project with members over the next 12 months.

All going well, the building is expected to be completed in time for the beginning of the school year in March 2009.

Assisting Borjagai students at university

There has been a remarkable improvement in the educational standards reached by the students since the beginning of IF's involvement with Borjagai School. Eighty percent of graduating students are now successful in the national university entrance exams. This high success rate is unheard of in most remote, disadvantaged regions of the country. It is a testament to the enthusiasm of the students and the dedication of the staff, some of whom are volunteers. For the past three years, each class of graduating students has postponed their own university studies by one year in order to teach at the school so as to assist the following year's students. The success rate is also due to the effectiveness of the teacher training program which was introduced by the school on the recommendation of Salman Jan, an Afghan-Australian IF representative who made a monitoring and evaluation visit in 2004. The school has even indicated that it will probably be in a position in about two years to discontinue the teacher training because the quality of the local teachers has improved so much.

A question that regularly arises when IF volunteers speak about the Afghanistan project at fund raising events is how the young school graduates are coping in the 'big smoke' of Kabul where they are attending university. The move from Borjagai to the big city can indeed be a daunting one. In recognition of these challenges, a lecturer at Kabul University, who is himself originally from Borjagai, has recently formed a small 'student organisation' to support the new graduates. The group has started to meet on a Friday (the equivalent of our weekend). The existing students show the new students from Borjagai around the city and the University, help them to find accommodation, and make introductions to other teachers and students which are important in Afghan culture to getting ahead.

Students find it hard to get affordable accommodation in Kabul because they have very little money. Under the previous Soviet system, students who successfully passed the entrance exams were automatically given funds to cover their living expenses. This is no longer the case. Students who pass the exams have only their education paid for and they must support themselves. The cost of living for a student per year is approximately \$AUD400. The Kabul students find it easier to support themselves both because they have family to live with and because they have better English skills and can often teach English as a part time job. The Borjagai students can take up to two years to find a job, for example, in a hotel, because they do not even know the Kabul dialect when they arrive.

Despite all the problems, we are advised that the students are pursuing their courses with great interest and enthusiasm. At the request of a number of IF supporters, IF is currently discussing with the student organisation ways in which we might assist these committed and determined students to complete their university degrees. We look forward to reporting back on progress on this front.

A Health clinic for Borjagai

During the monitoring and evaluation trip made by Afghan Australian, Kawa Mobaligh in 2006, the Borjagai community identified the need for a health clinic as one of their highest priorities. Until recently we have not been able to provide support for this due to our limited resources. Instead we have looked for a larger partner non-profit organisation to provide financial support. The good news is that the steady growth of IF's financial support and volunteer base now means it may be possible for IF to support this project on its own.

There are no medical services available in Borjagai village, despite the desperate need for them. Rates of maternal and infant mortality, if based on the Afghan average, are appalling. The community has, for a number of years, requested IF's support for the construction of a health clinic building and basic medical equipment. Once a clinic is established, the elders are confident that, as has occurred in other places, the government and non-profit organisations based in Kabul will provide money to run the clinic, provide medicine and vaccinations, and pay for the staff. The constant frustration for the villagers is that these services will not be provided without the building, but the government and non-profit organisations will not pay for the building. This is where IF can make a difference. The villagers are prepared to contribute the land and labour and have estimated they need a contribution of \$20,000 from IF to complete the project.

We will need to work closely with the community to answer a number of questions before making this significant commitment. While there are several nurses living in the village, concerns about sourcing doctors, the quality of health professionals in general, and the ability to provide continuous supplies of medical equipment and pharmaceuticals need to be addressed. It is clear however, that the provision of basic health services such as treating common causes of mortality and morbidity (e.g. diarrhea and acute respiratory infections), providing pain killers, first aid, assisting in childbirth and giving vaccinations, could make an enormous difference in the lives of the villagers. As one elder poignantly described the situation to Kawa during his visit, "Anything is better than waiting, suffering and dying".

We are hoping that a representative of IF will make a monitoring and evaluation visit to the community in June this year. This will provide an opportunity to investigate and verify facts about this project, as well as consolidate

the relationship of trust which is one of the key tenets on which our support is based.

With much achieved, and many new and exciting avenues to continue providing assistance, the IF volunteers connected with our Afghanistan project have told us they feel very privileged to be involved. We can only agree!



Borjegai school children with a UNICEF-provided tent as a make-shift classroom

Letter from the field - *The Financial Trustee of the Borjegai school projects, Mr Haidary, is a local respected businessman who was nominated by the village elders to receive and disburse the funds provided by IF. The following is an extract from a report recently received from Mr Haidary.*

Dear Sarah Kelly,

A lot of thanks for your personal and the Indigo Foundation's condolences for the death of my wife. I have to say I have been deeply touched by your condolences. Some times the words have a lot of power to move people and change their feelings. I have experienced that by receiving your letter. I had very difficult times due to loss of my wife. It is not just the death of my wife that made me very sad, also as you may know I have become both mother and father now. Since then I am taking my youngest son in all my trips and I travel a lot for my work. It was my pleasure and responsibility to take Mr. Kawa Moballigh to my village and not anything big. I have just done my job. [Kawa Moballigh is the IF representative who made a monitoring and evaluation trip in June 2006] Myself and the school Principal and all Borjegai people also are very pleased and thankful for your help and all men and women in the Indigo Foundation. I thank all on behalf of Borjegai people especially its children. I believe people like you are really caring about humanity though most Afghanistan people especially their leaders talk a lot about Muslim duty but in action they did not do very good things to each other. I will try what ever I can to

make sure your money is going to right place and help the education of our children. I have brought all my children to Kabul after the death of my wife because they needed me and I am in Kabul most of the time. But I assure you that I will work in Borjegai village. I travel there many times every year because of my work. In addition, every week people come from Borjegai and they always contact me. Because of your good work, we have good relationship with the district government and it will all help the children of the village. I also thank Mr. Salman Jan and Mr. Kawa Moballigh for working with you and all in Indigo Foundation. On behalf of Borjegai people, I give my biggest thanks to everyone who has given the money for our school. Your money and assistance have helped us a lot and now we have many students in university. Before not even one person studied university from Borjegai. I do not write much about university students, because I have no education and do not know much about their studies...

As you mentioned Afghanistan is a very difficult country for living. I don't know how much you know about the problem here but it is very bad. The last two years and especially after Mr. Kawa's visit the situation has become even worse. Every day there is bombing somewhere even in Kabul, there is too much hostage taking, too much corruption in the government. There is no work for people, people don't have hope because they think the government does work for them. Security is getting bad day by day. The Taliban gets stronger and stronger and now work in all Afghanistan. Before Taliban was only working in Pushtoon areas, now they work in other areas too. Many many people, even Tajiks and Hazaras, work with the government and also with the Taliban. People say that the Taliban now say to Hazaras and Tajiks that we [they] made mistake and now correct them and this time we [they] work for all Afghanistan. I think you will not believe the current situation but it is more bad than you may get in Australian news papers. Despite all of this, I and other Borjegai people are hopeful we can give a future to our children. Your work is not small. It is a big work. Even now we see the big changes in our children's lives as I said for the first time our children go to university. We give all the credit for this to yourself, Mr. Kawa Moballigh, Mr. Salman Jan and all the Indigo Foundation members and others who kindly given us the money.

I hope this letter give you a little information about Borjegai and school project. I am apologising that we can not contact you in a better way that you deserve. May be it is because we are from Afghanistan and nothing is working good in my country. Please give my very warm regards to all Indigo Foundation members. I am very happy to have worked with you and hope to be there in future.

I am again thanking you for your condolences.

Yours sincerely
Mohammad Anwar Haidary
The Financial Trustee for Borjagai School
Kabul-Afghanistan
03 September 2007

Editor's note: As was stated in IF's Annual Report published in October 2007, the part of Afghanistan that defies unstable trends is Borjagai which has remained comparatively safe and stable (thanks largely to the fact that its harsh, isolated terrain is not suited to growing poppies).

"Democracy" and "free speech" - a thin veneer in Afghanistan

Salman Jan – IF member & Project Advisor

Here is a short testimony of what goes in Afghanistan, under the warlords, war criminals, drug traffickers, Islamic fundamentalists, Mujahideen or whatever you like to call them. On the surface, there is democracy, freedom of speech, legal and constitutional provisions for human rights, and much, much more. Yet, here is a tip of the iceberg of what really goes in that troubled country. You may read and judge for yourself.
Warm regards, Salman.

Afghanistan: Peace and Security Undermined: Suspension of Malalai Joya from Parliament

Malalai Joya entered Afghanistan's new Parliament in September 2005 pledging to "protect the rights of the oppressed and safeguard women's rights." She won the second highest number of votes in Farah province, taking her seat in the Lower House (Wolesi Jirga). A staunch critic of the warlords and defender of women's rights, Malalai has consistently been stopped from speaking in Parliament or had speeches cut short, has survived a number of assassination attempts and is forced to sleep in different places every night in order to stay alive.

On 21 May 2007 Malalai was suspended from Parliament for an interview she gave to a private Afghan television station in which she lamented that the Afghan Parliament was worse than a stable of animals. She was suspended under Article 70 of the Rules of Procedures of the Wolesi Jirga. These rules were undergoing revision at the time and had not yet been approved by Parliament. Article 70 proposes that a Member of the Assembly will be subject to disciplinary procedures in the event of a number of offenses, including "intimidation and threatening of a member, defamation and accusation of others, insult and desecration against the administrative board government officials and the staffers of the general secretariat".

Under Article 70, the Member can be suspended for one day and for a further unspecified number of days at the

request of the administrative board (comprising of central government and local offices) and approval of the Wolesi Jirga. Malalai's conduct was not referred to the administrative board. Instead, she was suspended following a majority show of hands by the Wolesi Jirga. Malalai who wrote directly to the Supreme Court to protest her suspension and the procedure used to secure it. The Afghan Constitution protects freedom of speech and gives immunity from prosecution for views expressed during the performance of parliamentary duty. She subsequently heard through a television announcement that her case would be referred to the appropriate court. However, there is still no official indication as to how or when her case will be dealt with. In the meantime, she remains suspended from Parliament, leaving her constituency without proper representation.

Malalai has been continually threatened and abused both within parliament and outside. She has recounted Members of Parliament calling her a "prostitute" or "whore." On 7 May 2006 Member of Parliament Almas Khan spoke about the anniversary and achievements of the day that freedom fighters (Mujahidin) seized power from the Afghan communist regime, which was followed by civil war among various groups. Malalai on this occasion was given the opportunity to speak. She commented on Mr. Almas' claim that the atrocities committed during this time were mistakes, condemning them instead as criminal acts. Her speech resulted in members of parliament hurling water bottles at her and it has been widely reported that some parliamentarians called for her to be raped and killed.

According to another Member of Parliament, it was also reported that Rasul Sayyaf, a former warlord who has himself been accused by human rights organizations of war crimes, ordered someone to wait by the door and stab Malalai as she walked out. Malalai was protected by other Members of Parliament who formed a human ring around her and enlisted the protection of security forces.

Since the fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan, Afghan women have been calling for equal rights and highlighting the urgent need for human security. At the Afghan Women's Summit for Democracy, organized by Equality Now, in coalition with other women's organizations in December 2001, 40 Afghan women leaders recommended the central inclusion of women in decision-making and all peace processes, endorsed principles of non-discrimination based on gender, age, ethnicity, disability, religion and political affiliation, and called for assurance of a safe and secure environment for women and girls. Afghanistan ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in March 2003 and adopted a new Constitution in January 2004, which provides for equal rights for women and men before the law. However, women continue to be violently targeted in Afghanistan and denied equal rights and equal protection of the law. The United Nations Development Fund for Women

(UNIFEM) published research in 2006 documenting systematic abuse of women's rights in Afghanistan, including violence against women instigated by state actors such as the army and police, including forced prostitution, forced marriage, rape, kidnapping and sexual assaults. In June 2007 two women journalists were murdered with many others receiving death threats. On 25 September 2006 Safia Ama Jan, the southern provincial head of Afghanistan's Ministry of Women's Affairs, was murdered outside the front gate of her Kandahar home. In recent months a large number of schools for girls have been forced to close after being attacked.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 recognizes the critical role of women in promoting peace and security and calls for increased representation of women in decision-making. Malalai Joya was duly elected to Parliament and has been consistently and courageously speaking out for human rights, recognizing that respect for human rights is fundamental to peace and security. Her suspension undermines democracy in Afghanistan and is a violation of her rights, as well as the rights of those she represents.

Editor's note: At a time when international pressure is a powerful force for change and Afghanistan is heavily reliant on support from other countries, your participation in collective action calling for the reinstatement of Malalai Joya has the potential to affect needed change. If you are interested in getting behind the right of Malalai Joya and all other Members of Parliament to peacefully express their views and be protected by law when doing so, please go to the following web page which gives you simple instructions on how to do so. http://www.equalitynow.org/english/actions/action_2105en.html

The article you just read is from Equality Now, an organization that works to end violence and discrimination against women and girls around the world through the mobilization of public pressure (<http://www.equalitynow.org/english/index.html>).

Latest fund raisers held for Borjagai School

Indigo Foundation would like to extend its thanks to the Macquarie Bank Foundation for their donation of \$10,050 that matched – dollar for dollar – the funds that Anne Cummings and Margaret Easterbrook raised to go towards the building of the new school in Borjagai. The Macquarie Bank Foundation is a vehicle through which the Bank contributes a percentage of its profits to charity and to which staff members (of which Anne is one), who are involved in not-for-profit organisations, can apply. Thanks also to Anne & Margaret for such a fantastic outcome!

In July, Theresa Huxtable hosted a 'Recycle Clothes Swap' which raised almost \$1,000 for the new Borjagai School. Below, Theresa describes how she got started, what she did, how it all went and its ongoing effects, her story highlighting just how fun and doable raising funds can be!

"FASHION SWAP BRING YOUR QUALITY PRE-LOVED CLOTHES TO SWAP WITH OTHER LOVELY CHICKS"

Theresa Huxtable – IF Volunteer



How it got started

I had this idea about a fashion swap to raise money for the Afghan school and so set a date - a Saturday afternoon - at my house when this could happen. A friend helped me produce a quirky invite which I mailed and emailed out to about 70 people. From my experience, email does work but getting a hard copy invite in the mail works better (the cost of postage can be recouped from the money you raise on the day). These 70 people were made up of friends, work colleagues, neighbours, parents of our children's friends, and some of our children's teachers, to name a few.

The invitation had stated that the cost to attend would be \$25 and generally people were accepting of this. Obviously this can be set at whatever is comfortable. I included a little blurb on the invite about the Indigo Foundation and of course pointed out that the money raised would go Indigo. In addition, one of Indigo's Management Committee members attended the event and gave a short account of Indigo's work. This was very well received and generated a lot of interest and discussion whilst creating awareness about Indigo. The local paper did a brief article with a photo saying exactly what I was doing. From this advert I got some enquiries from other people I knew but who I had not invited to the fashion swap; indeed, some of these came along as well. The local dry cleaner offered a 30% discount on all dry cleaning.

How it worked

On the invitation I requested that one week before the event date, attendees should bring along to my house 5 garments each. These garments should be in good condition and of good quality, were not worn any more or would probably never be worn again; that they be dry cleaned and/or washed, ironed and on coat hangers. I stated that, on the day, everyone could browse the selection and take away 5 garments. At the end of the

day, if there were still garments on the rack, these could be taken away too. I then set about borrowing some clothes racks from St. Vincent de Paul, bought a case of champagne, some orange juice and nibbles for 50 people and it was on.

How it went

I had about 50 people turn up on the day which indicates the enthusiasm and interest for such an event. It was a hoot and everyone loved it! A friend kindly made me up about 3 CDs of music which went down very well throughout the afternoon and helped create a bit of a buzz. I organized the event in July so it was pretty cool and our house is not heated. Anyhow it didn't matter. Some friends arrived and said they wouldn't try on any clothes, but after a few glasses of champagne it was on for one and all and at one stage there were about 8 women in our bedroom trying on this and that and each commenting to the other about how good or horrible whatever they had tried on looked and the laughing was mighty. I had set up clothes racks in three bedrooms.

Wider effects

I have a friend in Newcastle who attended and she is now planning a fashion swap with her friends. There were some teenagers who attended, daughters of friends, and they had such good fun they decided that amongst themselves they would organise one. I work at the University of Wollongong and when another staff member heard about the swap, she emailed me for details as she wanted to organise one at work. Now and again when I see friends they often tell me that what they are wearing, they got at the fashion swap, and they are so pleased with their new garment and they feel good too about how they got it. Having a fashion swap is a lot of fun. I commend it to anyone.

Want to host a fashion swap?

If you are interested in organizing a fashion swap and, as I say, it is a lot of fun and laughs, feel free to email me at huxtable@cyberelectric.net.au if you want to ask me any questions.

Many thanks to Helen and Grantley Gill who also hosted an Afghan event in their home in Adelaide in November to help raise funds for the completion of the primary school. Sarah Kelly, Salman Jan and Sally Stevenson discussed Afghanistan and IF's project, and were thrilled at the interest in and support for the school that was generated.

IF Project Manager for Afghanistan: Sarah Kelly
Project Advisors: Salman Jan & Kawa Mobillagh
Financial Trustee: Mohammad Anwar Haidary
Management Committee Rep.: Sue Cunningham

IF establishes anti-tobacco project in East Timor!

Rachel Reilly - Project Manager

Tobacco is one of the major preventable causes of mortality and morbidity in both the developing and developed world. Tobacco use is linked to lung cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic airways disease, premature births and many other disorders. In particular, tobacco use increases the severity of, and spread of, tuberculosis and other respiratory conditions which are high amongst adults and children in East Timor. Anecdotally, tobacco use amongst men in East Timor is as high as 70-80%. It is less common for women to smoke. Expenditure on tobacco represents a major financial burden for impoverished East Timorese. The health system in Timor Leste is ill equipped to cope with the demand placed on it by tobacco-related illness, and this is an area where effective change is possible for a relatively small cost.

In August, the Management Committee approved a new project in East Timor: supporting the establishment of an anti tobacco project. The project will be primarily concerned with capacity building - training a local worker in principles of tobacco control and networking with other tobacco workers in the region. This type of project focuses on changes that can be made at a policy level so as to achieve ongoing systemic change.

Subsequently, IF's Management Committee agreed to enter a Commitment Agreement with project partners: Timor-Leste's Ministry of Health (Non-communicable Disease Department) and Caritas (Dili). We are currently waiting on formal approval from these two entities.

This broad public health initiative is a departure from the usual type of projects IF supports, which is both exciting and challenging for us. We are confident IF can provide the requested level of support, with both the Project Manager, Rachel Reilly, and the Project Advisor, Rowena Ivers, having extensive anti tobacco experience in Australia.

Reprinting of Memory Books

As reported in our last newsletter (June 2007), IF has contributed to the production of a second print run of a booklet written in the Tetum language. This booklet outlines the memories of women who were widowed during the violence in May 2006, along with their wishes for the future of East Timor. The production of the book has facilitated healing by allowing women to share their stories of grief, forgiveness and hope. Meredith Budge from the Alola Foundation recently reported that this second print run of the Memory Books - launched in response to popular demand - is now complete. Alola is now investigating options to create an English version - with key stories translated - so it is more accessible for others to appreciate. The full report on both this project

and the Maternity Pack Counseling pilot project that IF is contributing to will be due early next year.

IF Project Manager for East Timor: Rachel Reilly
Project Advisor: Rowena Ivers
Management Committee Rep.: Trina Supit

A strong start to the community health program in Kokolopori, Congo

Philip Strickland - Management Committee

In July 2007, the *pirogue*, (three logs lashed together) of the SS Bonobo arrived in Kokolopori in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), after a seven day trip from Mbandaka by the Congo River and its tributary, the Maringa River.

The pirogue disgorged 400 insecticide treated nets (ITNs), some basic anti-malarial and anti-parasite medication, oral re-hydration salts, vitamins, some basic medical equipment and cash for the payment of 4 nurses' salaries for 6 months. This represented AUD\$8,600 being the first tranche of funds sent by IF to the Bonobo Conservation Initiative (BCI) under our agreement with them.

The second tranche of \$8,600 was sent to BCI in November 2007. In January 2008, the same pirogue is due to weave its merry way along the same route with similar cargo.

IF has received reports, photographs and video clips of the results of the first tranche of funding. Overall, the results are very pleasing.



Receiving the insecticide treated nets

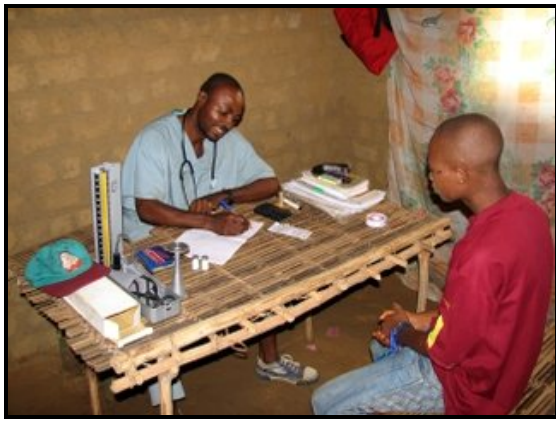
The Bonobo Health Clinic

The Bonobo Health Clinic (as it is called) is administered in the DRC by the following people ("the team"):

- Bienvenu Mupenda, an employee of BCI, is the overall co-ordinator, purchaser of ITNs and equipment, and gives detailed bi-annual reports to IF of what has been achieved/delivered;
- Albert Lokasola is a senior and respected man in Kokolopori and heads a local NGO, Vie Sauvage. He co-ordinates the project from the Kokolopori end, organises the distribution of the nets and other medication throughout the 35 villages and manages the nurses. He also provides independent reports to IF.
- Albert Alukana and Edouard Limboto are the senior nurses. They live in Kokolopori and are responsible for conducting a population census, assessing the incidence of malaria before the inception of the project, treating patients, distributing the medication, educating the villagers about the use of ITNs, disease prevention issues and sanitation and hygiene.
- Antoine Salimwa and Bienvenue Estimo are the junior nurses and their job is to assist the senior nurses.

The first task of the team was to undertake a population census of Kokolopori. As reported in our Annual Report, the population of Kokolopori was approximately 23,000 people. This figure was apparently based upon a census taken before the Civil Wars in 1998. The census taken by the team however revealed a dramatic difference. It showed a population of 7,874 people across 35 villages, 1,510 men, 1,833 women (25 per cent of whom were pregnant) and 4,531 children of which 2,003 were under five years of age. However unscientific either population census was, reports from elders at Kokolopori support the view that there has been a significant decline in population over the last 10 years caused by deaths from the two Civil Wars, disease and massive internal immigration.

There are 5 medical dispensaries located throughout Kokolopori. The senior nurses conducted an assessment of malaria incidence in the population prior to the introduction of the project. There were 885 diagnosed cases of malaria, which included 344 children (38 %) and 165 pregnant women (18%)



Treating a patient in Kokolopori

The enormous efforts the team and the people of Kokolopori have undertaken to ensure the success of the project are inspirational. The video clips show hundreds of villagers waiting in the central village compound to receive the ITNs. The ITN's were distributed randomly to families with children under the age of five, with a maximum of one per family. The distribution was done via ballot, each family name is written on a piece of paper and names are selected from a receptacle and read out. A member from the fortunate family picks up the net.

The biggest hurdle with the project is the delivery of the ITNs and the medication to Kokolopori, due to its remoteness and all the attendant problems created by that critical fact that the roads leading to and within Kokolopori are just appalling. The ITNs and medical equipment have travelled 1,000 kilometres up river from Mbandaka. Once they have arrived in Kokolopori, they must be then distributed to 7874 people across 35 villagers, which stretch along a 70 kilometre "road". Porters (who were unpaid) carried the nets on their backs to distribute the nets. The main bridge crossing the Lana River had collapsed, which meant that porters were forced to walk 16 km to deliver the nets to one village.

As part of an approach to continually improve the program, IF has now budgeted in the second tranche for a small per diem for porters as well as the purchase of bicycles to facilitate nurses travelling to all the villages. Albert Lokasola also recommended that it would be very beneficial to purchase two motorbikes for the project, which IF will explore in next year's budget.

An exciting spin-off from the project is that the city of Falls Church in the USA, based on the success of the IF funded project to date, have raised funds to pay for the salary of a doctor. The doctor has already been recruited and his work will build on the program supported by IF. We have been coordinating with the city of Falls Church to avoid duplication in our efforts. Essentially, Falls Church is responsible for employing a doctor and will concentrate on pre-and post natal health and care. To achieve this type of leverage in such a short period of

time has been a very positive (and unexpected) outcome of the project.

After such a short time and with a number of risks attached to the project we are very happy to provide this optimistic report. Clearly the project's success is heavily dependent on both Bienvenu Mupenda and Albert Lokasola and we appreciate their commitment and professionalism. 2008 should continue to bring us encouraging results from Kokolopori, and consequently, the opportunity to consolidate the impact of the project, and possibly both deepen and expand it.

IF extends sincere thanks to barristers at the NSW Bar Association who have been involved in fund raising for the project.

IF Project Manager for Congo:	Susan Engel
Project Advisor:	Luke Bennet
Management Committee Rep.:	Phil Strickland

Colgate University and IF

We are thrilled that through Professor Ellen Kraly, Indigo Foundation and Colgate University have developed a working partnership to identify and investigate positive case studies of small public health interventions in the Congo.

Colgate University is one of the top liberal arts Universities in the United States, and Professor Kraly's academic specialties include population geography, ethnic and racial studies, medical geography, environmental issues and social research methods. She is a friend of Sally Stevenson's and became interested in IF when undertaking ground-breaking HIV/AIDS research with South Sudanese in Marial Lou, South Sudan where Sally was working with Medecins sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders) in 2005 - 06.

The Colgate University research on health care delivery and malaria prevention and treatment in remote regions of the Congo will be of great benefit to our project as there is very little publicly available information on positive public health programs (and their conditions of success) in remote regions of Africa.

Health program in Rote, Indonesia – a positive beginning!

Ian Seal – IF Representative

Earlier this year, Ian Seal, Manager of Adolescent Capacity Building at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, travelled to Rote, Indonesia. He volunteered his time and expertise to work with Lemba Education and Community Development Foundation (Lua Lemba).

In July – August 2007 I made the first of what is expected to be three trips to Rote, to work with the Lua Lemba on reproductive health education and health curriculum for schools. In recent years the Delha community, where IF's work with Lua Lemba is based, has grown increasingly concerned about the risk to their young people of HIV/AIDS; however, there is still little in the way of accurate information or support available in the community. Indonesia now has the fastest growing HIV epidemic in Asia. I worked with Gusti Doru, who provided translation, and Immy and Lucy Bire, who live in Melbourne and volunteered to spend a significant part of their Indonesian holiday supporting IF's work on Rote. We ran six workshops across the three high schools in the area and four workshops in youth groups attached to the village churches.

Each workshop looked a little different from the others, as we negotiated with school teachers and principals about what information was appropriate, and took into account the age of the young people involved and the technology and resources we had access to. In three of the school workshops students made posters, applying what they had just learned to design appropriate messages for their peers. A key element of every workshop was to collect written questions that participants had. When we eventually compiled these with the answers we had 16 closely typed pages! These we made into a booklet, leaving a number of copies with each school and church.

The workshops were an opportunity to provide information to participants and to begin to develop reproductive health skills. These, while central to HIV prevention in communities, are of course only a part of what is needed for a comprehensive response to HIV and other sexual health risks. For this reason we spoke to Lua Lemba health workers across Delha, and to Tanpa Batas, an HIV-prevention organisation working in Kupang, West Timor, about broader awareness raising programs, access to testing and treatment facilities, and opportunities to build further partnerships between Lua Lemba and other NGOs. Developing this work will be a key part of my next trip to Rote.

I also had the opportunity to work with a group of teachers on health curriculum and health promotion more generally. We identified key health concerns for children and young people in Rote and looked at models for supporting child and adolescent health. Next year we hope to begin the development of comprehensive health curriculum in schools. Lucy Bire ran maternal and child health workshops in each of the churches which were very well attended and popular. Discussion amongst participants highlighted the ways in which poverty and gender inequities conspire to reduce health for both women and children. Some babies are being weaned as early as one-month old so that their mothers can return to work seaweed farming, and they may have no access to healthy breast-milk substitutes. Lucy and Immy have

offered to return to Rote next year and we hope to be able to build on the very important work that Lucy began.

I'd like to thank Lucy and Immy for their support of my work, not only on Rote, but also in fundraising. Thanks also to those others who worked hard to raise funds for the trip, especially Lea, Rosie, Mandy and Libby. A big thankyou to IF for giving me this opportunity and to Lua Lemba and the community of Delha, for making me feel welcome and allowing me to work with you.

IF Project Manager for Indonesia: Elizabeth House
Project Support & Advisors: Rachel Kelly, Ian Seal, Rosie
When, Alberto Vela de Aguila
Liaison Officer: Theresia Tamelan
Management Committee Rep.: Sally Stevenson

Congratulations!!!



IF would like to extend a hearty congratulations to Susan Engel on receiving her PhD. Susan conducted her research through the University of Wollongong under the Globalisation and International Development program. Her thesis title is 'World Bank Lending Practices in the Post-Asian Crisis Period'. The following is a brief description of her thesis:

The World Bank and the post-Washington Consensus in Vietnam and Indonesia

Susan's thesis undertakes a detailed examination of the development theories and practices that drive the World Bank, especially its shift from the "Washington Consensus" (a series of policies originating in Washington DC that emphasize economic growth as the main route to development) to the "post-Washington Consensus" (a purportedly more poverty-focused development agenda with an emphasis on democracy, sustainability, education and health). Susan's thesis is the first attempt to systematically outline the contents of the post-Washington Consensus development model.

The first part of the thesis explores the origins, history and development theory of the Bank as influenced by prevailing ideas and political power. The second part of the thesis is a detailed analysis of the contents of the post-Washington Consensus as they apply to the Bank's lending practices in two countries, Vietnam and Indonesia. The case studies look at the extent to which the rhetoric of the post-Washington Consensus has actually been incorporated into the Bank's lending practices. The findings raise some questions about the relationship between the post-Washington Consensus and the expansion of US influence and policy.

Susan, we wish you the very best in all your endeavors!

Annual General Meeting – and IF's Future

Sally Stevenson - Chairperson

The IF Annual General Meeting was successfully held on 7 October, in Wollongong. During the meeting we reflected on our projects in Afghanistan, India, Indonesia, Solomon Islands, East Timor and the Congo, presented a healthy financial report, discussed the future direction of IF and elected a new Management Committee.

The Future

As highlighted in the Annual Report, how IF manages its current growth and what that means for our future was an important topic of discussion during 2006-2007. This debate was generated largely because our operations continued to expand during the year, as, evidenced by:

- The establishment of projects in three new countries;
- The growth of existing projects (for example Indonesia now has three major development streams, education, health and water, and an active volunteer team of five),

- An increasing number of financial supporters, and people offering to volunteer for IF or hold fundraising events for us; and
- The recruitment of a paid coordinator.

Our expansion has resulted in an organisational momentum that is independent of the individuals within IF. After seven years, this is an achievement we are collectively proud of. It reflects, we believe, the quality of our work and the commitment of our volunteers.

Our work is grounded by two sets of principles, and it is these that allow us to establish and maintain quality projects. These principles are our *Guiding Principles* (sustainability, community ownership, transparency and equity) and our *Operational Principles* (for example, core funding, participation and partnership development and a medium to long term commitment to communities). This principle-based approach provides our partners and us a clear framework that allows our assistance to be both effective and ethical.

During the AGM, three options for our future were canvassed:

- Maintaining the status quo, where we would limit growth to eight projects (our goal over the last five years) thereby preserving our current identity and (successful) nature of IF.
- Winding up in a systematic and thoughtful manner, ending on a positive note of achievement having operated for ten years.
- Embracing our momentum and taking on the challenge of growth. In order to make this work we would need to maintain the essential core elements of IF that makes us unique, personal and dynamic. These include characteristics such as: our organic way of operating; support for small grassroots community development organisations; principles based approach; financial independence and willingness to take risks in order to empower communities.

The unanimous decision at the meeting was to embrace growth. This is an exciting prospect and one we will have to manage carefully. However, with a new and invigorated Management Committee, a paid coordinator and Patron (see below), and a number of opportunities waiting to be taken up, I believe we are in for a great, if critical year. It will mean a lot change for us, but this is what keeps us on our toes!

In February we are holding our annual strategy workshop, where we will be developing our approach to growth, and ensure we have all the tools and systems in place to manage, what we imagine will be a fairly rapid expansion. We look forward to reporting on this strategy, and our progress through the year.

Without doubt 2007-08 will be a watershed year for IF.

Management Committee

Over the last twelve months, whilst IF's supporter and volunteer base was full of enthusiasm, passion for development and a commitment to the future, the momentum of the management committee began to flag. The majority of current management committee members have served for long periods and this seemed to have contributed to a decline in energy.

Fortunately at the AGM the Management Committee received a much needed boost with the addition of four new members. Trina Supit, Caitlin Marshall, Philip Strickland and Amanda Jennings were very warmly welcomed to IF. They bring some wonderful experience, and we are lucky to have them. There is a small profile on each in this newsletter but in summary: Trina has a long background in education, speaks multiple languages, including Indonesian and has worked extensively in Indonesia and East Timor. Caitlin a social worker by background is the Community Programs Coordinator for Healthy Cities Illawarra and is studying a Masters in International and Community Development. Phil you would already know as Congo Project Manager. He is also a State Counsel, and has worked for the Northern Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Services. Amanda is currently working for AusAID, has a nursing and education background with Masters' in public health and international development. She is also currently studying for a Masters in Anthropology. Amanda has worked in Nauru, East Timor, Sudan and Kenya.

Mark Harradine our Treasurer stepped down from the Management Committee. He is moving to Vanuatu this month and will be undertaking a PhD and working for AusAID. We will of course miss him and do sincerely thank him for all his work including and especially being a great Treasurer. We look forward to him launching IF's presence in Vanuatu!

Following her PhD graduation. Susan Engel is taking some well-deserved time out from the Management Committee. She has been an active member for about five years, was Secretary for most this time, Chairperson during 2005-06 and Management Committee Representative for Congo for the last year. Susan is instead taking on the position of Project Manager for Congo.

Pat Duggan hosted the AGM this year, and her hospitality was very much appreciated. It was an excellent meeting, allowing us the time to assess IF's development and discuss the potential the future holds. It, understandably, finished on a high and encouraging note.

Introductions....new positions....new people!

A key strategy to both manage our current *and* projected growth has been to employ a paid coordinator. This is a significant and necessary change for IF, which until now has been a fully volunteer organisation. As such, we are pleased to welcome Kieran Longridge as our new coordinator. Kieran comes to IF with a background in community engagement strategies through her work with Greenpeace and Amnesty International. Her project design and implementation skills (especially in human rights and environmental sustainability) are complemented by her skills in organisational profile building, strategic campaign planning, team building and budget management. Kieran starts with IF in mid January – and we are all very much looking forward to it!

It is with equal pleasure that we also welcome Libby Lloyd to IF in a newly created position of Patron. The Management Committee has previously discussed the benefits such a position could bring to IF, but felt we did not have access to the 'right' kind of person. Last month we were introduced to Libby through Pat Duggan. Libby has a strong presence in the international and development community, and will be able to boost IF's profile within a range of development and private sectors networks. Libby has been awarded an Order of Australia for her contribution to international relations. She has filled a number of senior management positions in Immigration and Community Services within the Australian Public Service, has been a senior staff member and consultant to the UNHCR and a senior coordinator and executive director in several large community organisations in Canberra.

Libby is currently a Board member of the White Ribbon Foundation, the Representative for International Relations for UNIFEM Australia and from 2002-2005 was President UNIFEM Australia.

As importantly, Libby has extensive experience in management of organisational growth, human resource management and training, the development of leadership and management skills and improving client service and customer focus. Using this experience Libby will be able to mentor both the IF Management Committee during our time of growth and change. We feel extremely privileged that Libby has agreed to take on this role for IF.

Libby and Kieran's involvement with us represents a new phase in IF's development and we are excited to begin 2008 on such a positive note.

We are also very happy to welcome Helen Lucy Moss as the new project manager for the Solomon Islands. Helen has a Commerce degree and a post graduate degree in International Relations and we will be hearing more about her many talents in a future newsletter. She is currently living in Honiara for two years. This is the

first time IF will have a project manager in-country and we think this will be a great opportunity for us to engage with Avu Avu community. Helen travelled with Sue Cunningham to the Weathercoast recently to visit our Solomon Islands partner, Turusuala - so has hit the ground running!

Finally, we would like to say a very big thank you to Lisa Addison for being the newsletter coordinator over the last couple of years. The work required to put together our newsletter can easily be underestimated – generating articles, ensuring continuity with previous reporting, providing information on a good cross-section of IF's work, collating, editing, formatting, printing and posting – there is much to do. Lisa has been unfailing in her patience and confidence that we will get a newsletter out!

Lisa has now handed over the newsletter to Leanne Black, who you may know from her many informed and (sometimes) amusing articles in our newsletters. Leanne was also an IF Development Praxis Award recipient. We are thrilled that she now wants to bring her talents to coordinating and editing the newsletter. You will notice a new style in this edition - we hope you enjoy it. If you have any suggestions, comments or questions about the newsletter, please contact Leanne at indigo.foundation@bigpond.com

New Management Committee members

A very warm welcome to our new Management Committee members: Trina Supit, Caitlin Marshall, Philip Strickland and Amanda Jennings. Each has written a brief profile to aid us in getting to know them better and to highlight the wealth and variety of personal and professional experience that makes up IF's management committee.

Trina Supit



I began my working life as a languages teacher in Indonesia and Australia. I have since led a team of distance education materials developers in the Open

Training and Education Network (OTEN) and a team of curriculum and professional development consultants for the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) in northwest NSW. I've also worked for UNTAET in the rehabilitation of education in East Timor during the emergency and transition phases and returned to support teacher development under the auspices of the NSW DET. I came back to Australia this year from Indonesia where I led a team of national consultants on an education governance project in East Java for AusAID.

I have extensive experience as a volunteer in community-based NGO's and feel that IF is an appropriate organisation in which to share my interest and experience in international development.

I live with my husband in Stanmore in the inner city of Sydney. The last few months have been the first time in over 10 years that I have been at home for longer than two weeks. At least the dust has now been cleared away! In 2008 I hope to undertake preliminary research for a PhD as well as continue editing manuscripts for Tibetan students of English from Qinghai Normal University in western China.

Caitlin Marshall



I grew up in Brisbane and trained as a Social Worker at the University of Queensland, developing a keen interest in community development when introduced to collective organisations in the women's sector. I went on to work in a number of women's services which provided direct housing, support and sexual assault services to young women, but also embraced community development and capacity building principles into its work. During this time I was actively involved in reviving the Queensland Women's Housing Network, an alliance that successfully influenced policy change within the Queensland Department of Housing.

After a sojourn to Scotland working in social work services, I returned to Australia in 2005 with a renewed energy to pursue development work. Since then, I have been studying a Masters in International and Community Development through Deakin University and have worked with tenants in boarding houses and caravan parks in

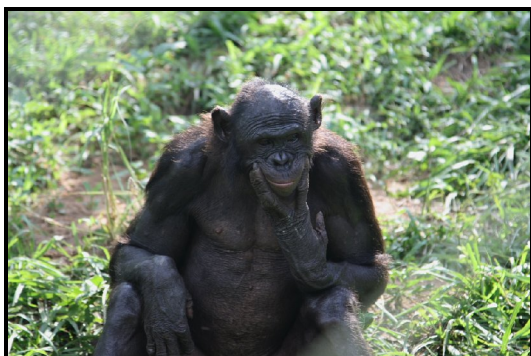
Brisbane in recording their stories and developing their advocacy skills.

After making the seachange to Bulli in 2006, I began working as a community development worker at Healthy Cities Illawarra, a local NGO that is celebrating its 20 year anniversary, and has been a vibrant site of local community development around health, environment, child friendly communities, and sexual health. The Healthy Cities movement was initiated by the WHO and there are over 3000 'Healthy Cities' organisations around the world. Currently, I am engaged in local development work around food security, advocacy in technology with older people, and skills development for men from culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD).

I have been hearing about the work of the Indigo Foundation since arriving in Wollongong and have been impressed by the authenticity, commitment and energy of this small and vibrant development organisation. As I am about to embark on the biggest role of my life – motherhood – with my first baby due on Christmas day, I feel it is a perfect time to commit time to such an incredible organisation, in between changing nappies and getting some sleep! I am looking forward to working with the Indigo Foundation and contributing as a member of the management committee, as well as gaining valuable learning from the diverse membership and volunteers of IF.

Editor's note: Caitlin gave birth to a gorgeous baby girl, Clara Jennifer, on January 4th. CONGRATULATIONS Caitlin, from all of us at IF!

Philip Strickland



In the absence of a photo of Phil at time of publication, a picture of the Bonobo Ape seemed fitting; not because of any resemblance, but because the project Phil is MC rep for, is indirectly trying to protect this endangered species.

I was introduced to IF by Janet Manuell, who is a close friend of Pat Duggan. I have been a barrister for 16 years and a Senior Counsel for 2 years. I mainly specialize in criminal law and other public law areas. Between 1999 and 2001, I spent some time working for Aboriginal Legal Aid in Darwin and in Arnhem Land. My main interest is being involved with people who live in protected, wilderness or high conservation areas. How

can we assist people living in those areas? What can we learn from them about a whole myriad of matters?

The Congo project is the first time I have been involved in delivering an "aid project". The Congolese living in Kokolopori have a tradition of protecting Bonobo apes and their habitat. But they also want something practical in return for their efforts, such as nurses, doctors, medication, anti-malarial mosquito nets. The difficulty is delivering anything in such a remote area. So far, the objectives of the project are on track. One of the things I value about IF is how it is prepared to take on such a project with its attendant risks. I doubt many other organizations would take it on. I will enjoy becoming familiar with all the projects that IF manages and meeting the people behind the projects and the members, who are IF's lifeblood.

Amanda Jennings



I previously worked as a nurse and a midwife in Geelong, Melbourne, and London. I then made the transition into development, working for NGOs in Kenya, East Timor and Sudan. I've completed my Bachelor of Education, and two masters degrees, one in public health and tropical medicine, the other in international and community development.

I now live in Canberra and work at AusAID on the emerging infectious diseases program. I became interested in the work of IF after meeting with Mark Harradine in 2007. I was impressed by the good work being done by a relatively small but highly effective group of dedicated people and wanted to get involved.

"Relationship" is an important part of IF's philosophy. Therefore, in future issues of our newsletter, we will present updated profiles of each Management Committee member, along with others who are involved in various roles in IF, so that everyone can get to know the people behind this amazing and dynamic organisation!

Over the last four years, IF has organised an annual 'get together' of IF volunteers in Sydney. We attend the Sydney Peace Prize lecture and follow this with dinner. It is an opportunity for many of us to meet face to face - a delightful and too rare occasion given we operate in a virtual office. We endeavour not to talk work (!), but enjoy the inspiration of the Peace Prize recipients (such Arandati Roy, and XXXKhan, Executive Officer Of Amnesty International).

This year over a dozen people connected with IF in one way or another had a great night at the 2007 Peace Prize lecture at the Sydney Town Hall on 7th November. Below, Trina Supit provides a snapshot of the lecture given (to a full house) on the "Globalization of Peace" by Dr Hans Blix, Swedish diplomat and Chair of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission for the United Nations.

According to Dr Blix, the long term interdependence of nations should lead to the globalization of peace; but this could be obstructed by great power tendencies such as the new arms race and short, medium and long term threats such as shortage of fossils fuels and population growth. Viruses such as avian flu can travel everywhere and nations need to cooperate to overcome them. The world is constantly changing. Conflicts over borders have all but disappeared as have wars of conquest, wars to spread religion and violent struggles for independence. Conflicts today are about pollution, carbon dioxide emissions, raw materials and are usually played out in prices not conflict. It is now unthinkable that there would be a war among the European states or between the United States and Russia.

It was thought that the end of the Cold War would lead to a more peaceful era, but since the middle of the 1990's the picture has been less rosy. We now face threats of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. The United States has committed more resources to its military than all other states combined. The 'Pax Americana' is supposed to make the world not only safer, but better. Nevertheless it is international law that reduces the potential for conflict among states and the United Nations is the institution for settling differences. In its preemptive strike on Iraq, the United States said goodbye to the restrictions it had helped develop in 1945. The evidence of 700 weapons inspections which found no evidence of weapons of mass destruction was ignored and the evidence and intelligence from many nations questioned. The United States entered Iraq 100% sure that weapons of mass destruction existed but with 0% knowledge of their location.

The global convergence of values is encouraging. The death penalty is disappearing and spanking children is now forbidden in a growing number of countries. Yet we face a souring of the relationships among the big powers. The United States has been trying to bring India into its orbit to contain China. Traditional balance of power politics have led to traditional reactions and yet

interdependence among nations is increasing. To move further along the road to peace that opened up at the end of the Cold War we need diplomacy, the United Nations, economic incentives (cf Korea). Negotiations are more useful than threats with Iran.

In 1996 the Australian government sponsored the Canberra Commission which set out the steps needed to eliminate nuclear weapons, but the United States Ssenate rejected the comprehensive test ban treaty. We should return to the Canberra Commission. A global disarmament agenda is crucial. The nuclear weapons states must disarm. Just recently in a *Wall Street Journal* article entitled "Nuclear Madness" elder US statesmen, Henry Kissinger and George Schultz stated that the nuclear deterrent is no longer relevant. As the Swedish saying goes: When the devil gets old he gets religious!

We need a multilateral security order not a unilateral security order. The United Nations must play a central role in this new world order. As the former United Nations Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjold (also a Swede) said: "The United Nations may not take us to heaven, but it may help us avoid going to hell."

The 'Indigo' in Indigo Foundation stands for...

In many ways the name Indigo Foundation was rather a whimsical choice. ...but there were two main reasons...

Firstly, indigo is a dye commonly used throughout developing countries by women for clothing and weaving. It is a beautiful, deep blue/purple that we felt provided a subtle and 'grassroots' connection to the communities we anticipated working for.

Secondly, we also loved the acronym – IF – which we felt was optimistic and forward looking. For example, what if we could provide quality assistance to marginalised communities? What if we could set up a great non profit organisation? What if we could make changes to the world? *What if...*

Development Award 2007

Each year IF offers a Development Praxis Award to support and promote links between development research and practice. The award of \$500 is granted to a person or organisation undertaking research that IF believes will contribute, in a practical and accessible way, to community development. IF also provides non-financial support to award recipients, including access to our organisational experience and contacts and, as appropriate, introductions to communities that we are working with.

We are proud to announce that the Indigo Foundation Development Praxis Award for 2007 has been given to Ian Seal. Ian's capacity to link research and action has been demonstrated in his long research/development career which has benefited us recently. As mentioned earlier in the newsletter, Ian volunteered his time and expertise to work with Lemba Education and Community Development Foundation (Lua Lemba) in Rote, Indonesia to develop a Reproductive Health program. He also collaborated with the schools to develop a curriculum of health education.

Ian is currently exploring opportunities to provide capacity building support to an organisation in Africa that works with HIV/AIDS orphans. Specifically, Ian's aim is to *improve psychosocial outcomes and reduce risk factors for poor health in orphans by strengthening and supporting the capacity of families and communities to protect and care for their children*. Ian will be travelling to Africa later in 2008 to develop the project.

We hope this praxis award provides Ian with extra assistance in the development of his project proposal for HIV orphans.

Fund raisers

Rowena Ivers and friends held a wonderful fundraising event at Clovelly Bowling Club in August which, with the help of a great venue and crowd - generated almost \$3,000 for one of our East Timor projects. About the event, Rowena writes...

Three friends of mine - Jenny Hunt, Jenny Lovric and Gordon Renouf - have, for the last few years, organised an annual social fundraiser for various charities, for example to raise money for the Asian tsunami recovery. This year they decided to raise some money for the Indigo Foundation - in particular IF's tobacco project in East Timor. Rachel Reilly, Jennifer Spence and I are involved in this project. It involves working with Caritas Dili to employ a project worker to work on developing tobacco policy and health promotion programs within East Timor.

We held the function at the Clovelly Bowling Club in Sydney, located on the cliff tops at Clovelly. We had phoned around other clubs in the area and some were very encouraging with lowering normal hire fees for charities - it's worth negotiating! We charged people \$50 per adult as a donation for the event and IF was able to distribute receipts (for tax deductions). We also had credit card donation forms available for those who wished to give more!

We all were involved in organising food (barbecue fish and steak, salads and nibbles, donated by the organisers) and setting up/cleaning up. We had a slight hiccup with the venue due to a change in club policy about fundraisers (which happened between our booking the function and it being held). However, we ended up on a lovely Sunday afternoon overlooking the cliffs of Clovelly at sunset (in a smaller room than planned, but with better access to the BBQ). Kids and adults had a great time! We also asked friends to donate items for auction (including a framed picture, some designer kitchenware and a West Timorese ikat), all of which raised several hundred dollars. Thanks to Sally Stevenson and other IF members who came along and gave a hand in setting up and selling tickets! It was a fun and social night!

IF's project manager for India, Pat Duggan, has some "very generous mates"! Pat used the opportunity of her recent return to Canberra, and her birthday, to invite friends over for drinks. She suggested to friends that rather than contributions to drinks for the afternoon, or presents for her birthday, people might like to contribute to IF. And friends very kindly obliged: \$1,600 was raised.

Many thanks to everyone who initiated, organised, participated in and/or contributed to fund raising events for IF over the past year. A good portion of donations to IF projects during the financial year came from such events. Thanks also to those who asked that a donation be made to IF instead of receiving birthday, wedding and Christmas presents. This sort of generosity is very inspiring!

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From the Management Committee!

We are happy to report that 2007 finished on a high note, when we held our final Management Committee meeting for the year on 16th December.

Following the addition of four new members at the Annual General Meeting, we took the opportunity to review and reallocate roles and responsibilities within the Committee.

At the same time, I have accepted a position with Medecins sans Frontières (MSF) / Doctors without Borders as Head of Mission in Ethiopia, and will be leaving for one year at the end of January. Zoë Mander-Jones and Jennifer Noble (nee Spence) will jointly take on the role as Chair. Zoë is a founding Management Committee member of IF and Jenny might as well be given her long and extensive involvement with us. I am very excited that they have agreed to undertake this role – it represents not just a new approach to managing IF, but means that during this next critical year for us, IF couldn't be in better hands.

We are grateful to Trina Supit for accepting the role as Treasurer, a not-always-desired task but one that is critical to our smooth functioning. We now have a complete 'financial team' made up of Trina, Anthony, and Kieran! Amanda Jennings is Secretary, another important role in the management of the Committee.

Phil Strickland will be the Management Committee member responsible for fundraising and marketing. With Phil's excellent fundraising record, and strong advocacy skills (he is a Senior Counsel), we expect great things!

Finally, there has been some rearrangement in the Management Committee Representative roles for projects – they are now as follows:

East Timor - Trina Supit; Afghanistan – Sue Cunningham; Indonesia – Sally Stevenson; Congo – Phil Strickland; Solomon Islands - Sue Cunningham; India – Amanda Jennings.

Our projects continue to progress. In early December Sue Cunningham undertook her last trip as Project Manager to the Solomon Islands, which she will report on in the next newsletter. The Centre at Turusuula is doing well and it is Sue's view that it has an excellent choice of

partner for IF. As a consequence, the Management Committee has agreed to continue supporting Turusuula for another three years. Our thanks to Sue for being such a passionate advocate for the Solomon Islands, and a wonderful, insightful and committed Project Manager.

At the same time, the first year of our support to the Pravaham Trust in Tamil Nadu for Dalit children has come to a finish. Given the direction and outcomes of the program to date, IF has agreed to continue supporting the program for another three years. This will allow time to consolidate the village centres and to develop the counselling and education program for senior high school students – the initial target group. There is strong potential for this program to be replicated in other areas where Dalit children continue to suffer marginalisation, and this is an exciting prospect. There are also a number of research opportunities arising out of the project, which our Liaison Officer, Annie Namala will be developing. This is extremely important to IF, as we try to bridge the action-research gap that so often appears in development. Our thanks to Pat Duggan, Project Manager for India, who has managed the project so well and to Annie and the Pravaham Trust for being such excellent partners.

As we have mentioned a couple of times, we expect 2008 will be a big year for IF. We are energised and optimistic about our plans, and trust that through the year our reports to you will continue to bring positive, interesting and personal stories about development.

Happy New Year!

Sally Stevenson

Lost your newsletter? Find it on our website! IF's website provides members, community partners, and those interested in providing or accessing funds, the opportunity to find out more about our projects, our guiding principles, and key directions. We are about to update the information on our website so if you have any comments and/or suggestions on its format and content, they will be most welcome!



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