



newsletter

August 2014 – issue # 33

indigo foundation is an independent, volunteer run, Australian community development organisation.

We work with marginalised communities providing innovative assistance to improve their health, education, and human rights.

What's in this newsletter?

- + An exciting new grassroots project in Otjiwarongo, Namibia
- + The wonder of art for children in Rote, Indonesia
- + 'The indigo camp', cultural experiences in Nyirripi, Australia
- + Our think piece about the new global development goals, upcoming events...and more!

New horizons (AND a fabulous new project!)

Otjiwarongo, Namibia

Tracey Peters - Project Coordinator

As a relatively new member of indigo foundation, and certainly a 'new' newsletter author, I have probably spent too much time pondering how I might best relate the story of a town with which I have a rather personal relationship; but then it occurred to me that it should be really quite easy....for exactly that reason....it's personal.

I first travelled (as a tourist) to Namibia in 2003, a less known country in south-west Africa. Little did I know the impact this trip would have on my life. I developed some relationships that subsequently turned into enduring friendships with people who live in the town of Otjiwarongo – in central northern Namibia. Since then I have been supporting welfare work in the town, but despite the best efforts of those involved, this work only scratches the surface.

A chance meeting with a member of the Rotary Club of Macquarie Park (in Sydney), and the impassioned discussion about Africa that followed was the impetus for this project - support for marginalised youth in Otjiwarongo. Through Rotary connections we were then fortunate to meet indigo foundation. Perhaps other indigo foundation projects have a similar story – fate is a wonderful thing!

We very quickly came to realise that the two organisations were near enough to a 'match made in heaven' as one could get. indigo foundation was an organisation brimming with integrity and professionalism, and importantly for us - their expertise and vast experience would enable the successful delivery this project. A partnership was formed. I am now pleased and excited to report that indigo foundation's Development Coordinator, Libby House, and I have recently returned from a three week trip to Otjiwarongo. The trip was long, busy and exhausting but incredible, fruitful and inspiring. The purpose of our trip was to work with the community to ensure the project was a priority, develop a truly grassroots community-led development project.



Tracey with a group of students from the Settlements, during a priority setting exercise.

Suffice to say that whilst this was my fifth trip to Namibia and Otjiwarongo, I experienced it with a completely new set of eyes, through the prism of community development - to the degree that I sometimes felt I was seeing it for the first time. It was quite an epiphany for me on a personal level, but at the same time an incredible learning experience that I obviously needed and will greatly benefit from in my indigo foundation role. As a mentor, Libby was/is a dream (and no, she didn't pay me to say that!) and in my view we were also a great match – I think I'm right in saying that she was on 'town information overload' but totally comfortable in her work focus; I, on the other hand, was on project work learning curve overload, but comfortable in the town!

Some background: prior to this trip, we had received a proposal from the Municipality of Otjiwarongo (their term for the Town Council) to build a Youth Centre in the informal settlement area where the most marginalised youth of the town live. The centre would be dedicated to providing social, educational and recreational services to the community, with an emphasis on youth activities and community welfare. indigo foundation's initial assessment process highlighted the need for more extensive community consultation – there were lots of unanswered questions. One of the great advantages of this project has and will continue to be the relationships that were already in place prior to any discussions evolving. We enjoyed some wonderful and honest interaction with stakeholders....and you might say '....isn't that what you would expect', and the answer is hopefully yes – but we really seemed to enjoy a mutual understanding of and respect for each other's focus and position which enabled free speech and trust in our negotiations...and from my understanding of this work – this is not always the case. That was such an enormous advantage...and thrill.

We spent three weeks largely engaged in true community consultation. From a group of young adults organised by an incredibly impressive young woman we met at a local pharmacy, to a group of school aged children (all from the most marginalised part of the informal settlements), to a larger age cross-section of children from one of the local primary schools, to a group from a local church choir (men, women and young adults of various ages), to a wonderful group of women – again from the informal settlements who walked a long way, some carrying their babies and young children – to meet with us

and share their fairly horrific life circumstances. The level of trust these women and young people offered us – to tell their stories - was humbling. It's hard to find the words to describe these experiences, except to say that every one of these people, every discussion, all the fun exploring and joking about the clash of cultures, every story, and most of all – the honesty and trust – all just strengthened my resolve to do everything I can to make this project a success.

So what did we find out? The short answer is that much of what we learnt from the community consultations confirmed what we knew (or we thought we knew), which was encouraging in terms of the big picture. We learnt that within the area of the informal settlements, there are large numbers of teenage heads of households (estimated by one student group at 50%) and of grandparents caring for orphans. Student pregnancies, substance abuse, illegal abortion and teenage suicide were reported to us as issues of great concern. Depression was also recognised as a common problem, albeit most likely not diagnosed or treated as such. The majority of residents in the informal settlements live without electricity or household water connection. Water is purchased by the council and distributed through water points on a pre-paid system....it's like liquid gold. Physical and sexual abuse was reported as not uncommon and there are no provision for support for gender based violence. Many children are undernourished and partially dehydrated and often have to walk long distances to school. Lack of access to food and water, and caring for family members who are unwell can mean children do not attend school, despite primary school education being free and compulsory in Namibia. Abject poverty is commonplace. Needless to say, the psychosocial impacts of these family and community dynamics are devastating and they typically go on to transcend generations.



Community consultation with a group of young adults who we met via a young woman at the Pharmacy, Rally, second from left.

Yet, we felt an amazing sense of hope in this town and a real enthusiasm to progress and identify new initiatives. There is a real sense of community in the town that didn't escape us. And this feeling extended to those who we would call the more privileged. We were very fortunate to be able to identify a convener, Manfred /Uxamb (the slash denotes a click accent) to establish a new community based organisation (CBO) with whom we will partner. Manfred's credentials, passion and enthusiasm are



Libby, Tracey and Isabella between community consultations at the MPC.

exceptional. He is the immediate past CEO of the Otjiwarongo Municipality, now retired, has lived and worked in the town for most of his adult life and was the first Mayor following independence of Namibia. He is truly a 'man of the people' and his background and experience lends itself perfectly to the task ahead. We also recruited a Liaison Officer, Monica Tjehiua, who works as the Manager of the 'Multi Purpose Centre'(MPC) in the township – a municipality owned but privately funded community centre. Monica has a prominent and respected presence in the community as well as extensive knowledge of the issues and challenges faced by the most marginalised.

What's the plan? This trip has given us clarity and direction. The opportunity to sit face-to-face with stakeholders and work through potential barriers has provided a clear way forward which is satisfying and exciting. Our community consultation identified and prioritised activities, some that would require a venue, others not – and some that would be mobile– but all speak to indigo foundation's key development areas of health and education, primarily in the youth demographic. In our discussions with the Municipality and Monica, we came to understand that the MPC is grossly underutilised as a facility. To that end, our negotiations included utilising the MPC building as a venue for some start-up activities whilst further consideration is being given to the planning of another structure, which will work as a type of 'satellite' centre to the MPC – in a location which will be more central to the most marginalised of the community.

Over the next 12 months the CBO will be formed and registered, and a small activity program initiated.

Identified by the community as priorities, the activities can be easily and quickly introduced. This is important - having sparked the interest of many during our visit we need to demonstrate that it wasn't all a talk fest, and we are committed to following through. We also hope to address some ingrained self esteem issues by providing activities that the more privileged part of the community would take for granted. They include:

- A mobile cinema (DVD player and TV), hosted at the MPC.
- An IT system, located at the MPC, to enable school dropouts and the unemployed access to create a CV and seek employment, as well as to provide access for the most marginalised to a computer and the internet.
- Provision of sporting equipment, specifically for netball and soccer, with a view to creating sporting related opportunities such coaching clinics, training and/or friendly matches that can be a mobile service in the informal settlements. Local school fields will be used.
- Traditional dance classes with an identified volunteer teacher, and the venue initially at the MPC.
- Film making, which seems a little 'left of centre', but we will purchase of a video camera, which will be wonderfully multifunctional. In the first instance to record dance and sport, which support empowerment and self-esteem building for the youth, as featuring in a video is highly valued. In the future the camera can be used to make films about sanitation and hygiene including the importance of hand washing, and other similarly educational social videos.
- Off-site camps. 'Learning more about nature' featured strongly in the consultations with the youth of the community and in fact is an activity that has been successfully undertaken by the MPC in the past.

Issues surrounding nutrition (and hydration) underpin much of the community's opportunity to take advantage of activities. We have identified a start-up co-operative called OtjiVeg, which is essentially a group of unemployed trying to establish a vegetable farm to provide themselves and the community with fresh produce. OtjiVeg have submitted a proposal for support to us and whilst the CBO will make a

recommendation in this regard, we view it as potentially playing an integral role in the 'big picture'.



Otji-Veg is a gardening co-op for the unemployed residents of the Informal Settlements in outlying Otjiwarongo. These people walk several kilometres a day to work on the project which provides food and a small seasonal excess for sale.

In summary, the first 12 months will be a period of planning, small scale activity implementation and relationship building between indigo foundation and the new CBO. Importantly, the interest and enthusiasm of a township that is desperate to break free from a cycle of under-education, unemployment, poverty and despair need to be supported and enabled. We believe this first year puts on a solid and hopeful path to success. We would be crazy to think we could change things overnight, but we've done the homework, we're signing on and we're here for the long haul. Bring it on and stay tuned for the next chapter!



With Monica, our liaison officer

Art in Schools

Rote, Indonesia

Tamara Gulic - Technical Advisor

Over two years ago I found myself at a talk given by Jenny Hopkins who spoke of her work with indigo foundation on a small Indonesian island called Rote.

I knew then that I wanted to be involved, somehow, sometime, somewhere with indigo foundation. I also knew that my skills as an artist and art educator are not on the list of priorities for impoverished and struggling communities around the world. Nonetheless, I approached Sally and offered my services, planting the seed for what was to come.

As the universe would have it, on that same island a community elder, a self-taught artist who has wanted to develop a program of art in schools for decades, approached indigo foundation for help. The door suddenly swung wide open and the opportunity I hoped for presented itself, but there was a catch. I was heavily pregnant at the time but as most first time mums-to-be, I was blissfully unaware of the tornado that was about to be unleashed into my life and being the eager beaver that I am, Rote was just a hop away as far as I was concerned, so I signed up.

After my son was born the idea of Rote seemed like an impossible task but with the patience of Libby and Sally who gave me the time I needed I found myself on the plane heading to Rote. A year later than initially planned but I was on the way nonetheless.

As an artist and an art educator most of my working life is spent working in a wonderful studio filled with light, abundant with art materials and various equipment. I knew that Rote was going to be very different but what it lacked in resources they made up in enthusiasm, eagerness and resourcefulness. Their thirst for knowledge was inspiring.

It was an incredible privilege to work with the community elder Pak Engadas, who is a self taught artist and who paints on anything that he can get his hands on. Most of the time it is just offcuts of old curtains or discarded wooden boards and only when he can afford paint. Sometimes the foreigners bring him paint as a present and he holds on to it for years, knowing that he will not be able to get new paint for a long time to come.

Pak Engadas is a living embodiment of the famous line from the 'Dead Poets Society' delivered by Robin Williams - *'Medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life.'*

But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for. For Pak Engadas he feels most alive and at peace when he is painting and he has a painful need to share his passion and skills with his community. To be around this energy almost every day of my 10 day stay was remarkable.

The first school we visited was Oenitas Manggis. The term 'school' here stands for a front yard of another elder's house who generously allowed us to accommodate approximately 30 children to run our first art class.

There on the dirt floor, the faces of children and the adults were fascinated by the images I was showing them. For most this was a first exposure to the art outside of their small village.

As they were looking at the Aboriginal cave and finger paintings, to my astonishment Pak Engadas started talking about their own art practice that is now long gone but shares striking similarities with the Australian aboriginal art. He knew how the traditional paint was prepared and that instead of bark they used a certain leaf. The images I brought along acted as trigger to his memory.

We then 'travelled' to Europe and saw the works of DaVinci, Vermeer, Van Gogh, Renoir, Kandinski and then to America to see the works of Pollock and De Kooning.



Tamara showing art references at Ouenggaut.

presentation, teaching children the basics of drawing and empowering them to search for things in their art that others may overlook. This was followed by an art experience where children were encouraged

And the message after each introduction was the same. The artists through ages have chosen to make their art in so many different ways, because there is no right or wrong way. Art is about self-expression, about freedom and they could never get it wrong.

Pak Engadas would then do his own

to explore mark making using coloured pencils, oil pastels and paint.



Pak Engadas presenting his own work

Interestingly as the project moved along his own struggle to reconcile the freedom of art making and the cultural expectation of presenting a final work that looks like something recognizable, became a source of contradiction for him and a dilemma for us.

These are the challenges of working cross culturally but it was also a personal challenge that Pak Engadas was experiencing within himself. We had to find a point of balance that would preserve the integrity of the project and ensure that the community was happy.

Despite this challenge the children and the teachers at all the schools we visited were completely engrossed. During my 10-day stay we visited 8 schools and approximately 200 children participated in the project. For most of them this was the first time that they held a paintbrush and had access to any art materials. Despite this lack of exposure they produced some incredible artworks showing how innate the process of art making is to all of us.



As the word spread we were approached by teachers from other schools wanting to be involved in the project. The message from the community was clear, they want more of it but desperately need the resources and support. That is where indigo foundation can make an enormous contribution. If we are successful in obtaining funding this will be a

three year project where indigo foundation will work closely with the community to further develop the 'Art In Schools Program' and what a wonderful project that would be.



If you have any question regarding the program please don't hesitate to contact me through indigo foundation.

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The 'indigo camp' **Nyirripi, Australia**

Alice Roughley – Project Coordinator

This year the indigo foundation Board agreed to continue working with Australia's western desert Nyirripi community and the Walpiri Youth Aboriginal Development Corporation (WYDAC) to support cultural sustainability. We would do this, primarily, by sponsoring a 'cultural camp' for the community. These types of projects can have beneficial outcomes for individuals and communities. Research confirms that there are significant interdependencies between connection to Country, maintenance of cultural practices, identity and psychological and physical health.

I travelled to Nyirripi (440 km from Alice Springs) in June and this marked our fourth visit to participate in

the cultural camp. The camp has gathered momentum with increased community participation each year. Regular visits by indigo foundation volunteers provide a great opportunity to be in community and enhance the relationships and trust between the community, WYDAC and indigo foundation, to support and encourage the efforts of the young Aboriginal people in preparing for and conducting the cultural camp and to speak with community members and WYDAC about potential future cultural sustainability opportunities.

The lead up

Even though Nyirripi is a small community of only 250 people, organising the camp weekend is a big job. Kathleen Gibson (WYDAC Youth Committee Rep), Simon Dirs (WYDAC Outreach Worker), and Martyn and Paris (the two WYDAC Nyirripi youth workers) put in a huge effort to prepare healthy and delicious meals before the camp, order supplies and transport camping equipment. I arrived with my partner and Michelle and Jane from the Woolyungah Indigenous Centre at Wollongong University, a couple of days ahead of the camp. We all lent a hand. Michelle and Jane connected with some community members who were artists in residence at the University last year, so it was great to build on those relationships.

In the Old Nyirripi riverbed

Saturday morning was a frenzy of activity. As we drove through the town children were running down the street shouting 'indigo camp, indigo camp'. It was delightful to witness the excitement and ownership the camp now has. Kids and elders alike were rallying to be first on the bus or in one of the 4WDs going out to the camp. The vehicles were a colourful site loaded with swags, blankets and camping equipment.



We couldn't have hoped for better weather- 28 degrees by day with chilly nights. The dry river bed at Nyirripi is a long wide sandy expanse edged with desert vegetation. Unseasonally heavy rain just before the camp had left the bush looking green and fertile. It wasn't long before people had tents up and swags and blankets laid out in circles around small fires. And then the old ladies started to sing traditional Walpiri songs - a beautiful sound that could be heard until well into the night.

During the afternoon some of the young boys walked down the river with us to a special site where they uncovered a tree root to show us a snake's head. In

the evening we sat around the camp fire with a group of young boys who taught us a couple of Walpiri songs. They laughed and laughed at our Walpiri accents!

The old women shared bush tucker they had collected including bush coconut, bush sultana, bush figs and bush tomatoes. June is an excellent time of year in Nyirрпи for flowering and fruiting plants. On Saturday we joined the girls and boys in an athletic game of softball before lunch and volleyball after lunch. Gillian and Bruce, guests at the camp from Canberra, led an activity with a small group making holes in coloured beans for beads.

The local police officers and nurses dropped in and spent some time chatting with community members. It was good for them to see the community together on Country, enjoying themselves in a relaxed and peaceful environment.

There was great anticipation for the dance ceremony to be held in the evening. Gail made damper over the camp fire while explaining her technique to a teenage girl. A couple of men worked with some other young people preparing kangaroo tails for the feast.

At about 4pm on Saturday the fun began with women and men separating to be painted up. The men were covered in ochre and women in patterns associated with their skin names. The old ladies chanted as they painted us. They demonstrated the dance moves. And then we danced! The men danced followed by the women. The feast followed the dancing. Kangaroo tails disappeared rapidly, followed by spaghetti bolognaise and damper. Everyone was in high spirits by the time the fires were glowing under amagnificently star lit night.



Girls being prepared for dancing

On Sunday, we headed out to the other side of Nyirрпи with some women and children to hunt for

honey ants. We then drove to Emu Bore where Gail showed us trees for collecting beans for necklaces.

The next day we were fareweled by the waving hands of many in the community who now look forward to next year's camp and possibly a couple of gender specific cultural camps before then. We are struck by the richness and complexity of Aboriginal culture, the warmth the people have shown us and equally, by the beauty of the landscape.

The camp is a great opportunity for the community to come together and every year there are more people attending than there were the year before – 60 last year and 110 this year. The children learn language, song, dance, hunting and the importance of being on Country, a celebration of culture. If this camp contributes to instilling a sense of identity for the children then our hope, shared with the edlers, is that their self esteem and confidence will be enhanced.

indigo foundation's contribution is but one of many. Our partners at WYDAC contribute continually in many ways through genuine respect and community partnerships. Their projects are many and we are grateful for our partnership.



Cooking snags....

Nyirрпи Arts

Our project also aims to contribute to enhanced community strength and identity through supporting traditional arts. In 2013 an artist in residency project brought five Nyirрпи artists to the University of Wollongong. The University, WYDAC and Warlukurlangu Aboriginal Artists Cooperative provided significant support to the residency which showcased the Walpiri arts culture and the talents of the Nyirрпи artists. A small exhibition of Nyirрпи art works in Canberra later in 2013 also promoted the

vitality of Walpiri culture. Sales from the paintings will support future 'indigo camps'.

The artists take great pride in these achievements. The artists have received further recognition this year with Warlukurlangu opening a new art centre in Nyirripi. A Nyirripi woman, Ursula Napangardi Hudson, won the competition for the design of the Indigenous jersey for the Melbourne Football Club.

This year the Warlukurlangu Artists Aboriginal Corporation, based in Yuendumu, built an artists workshop at Nyirripi. The vibrant and often contemporary artworks are one more way of celebrating Walpiri culture. Painting also provides additional income for artists. Warlukurlangu puts proceeds from gallery sales into community facilities.

This year I brought 50 paintings back to Canberra for an exhibition at the Front Gallery and Café in August to raise funds for the project in Nyirripi. The response was overwhelming with all but two paintings sold at the opening which was attended by more than 70 people. By coincidence, a number of Walpiri artists were in Canberra for another Walpiri exhibition at the National Museum. The absolute high point of our opening night was their arrival and their address to the crowd, which made the event real. ABC radio announcer, Alex Sloan declared the exhibition open and said to our Walpiri guests, "Thank you for painting our country for us". We look forward to doing this again and finding more and different ways to support the Nyirripi community and to celebrating Walpiri culture.

Thanks

Thanks to WYDAC, Simon Dirs, Martyn Ralph, Paris Sheppard, Kathleen and Gail Gibson, Colin, Michelle and Jane and the Nyirripi community.

General Manager's report

Jemma Bailey

Winter has not dampened our spirits at indigo foundation – our projects continue to go from strength to strength, our team has worked extremely hard to pull together some very successful (and fun!) fundraising events and the recent strategic planning session was energizing, ambitious and a great opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to our guiding principles of equity, transparency, sustainability and community ownership.

A key focus of mine over the last few months has been overseeing an operational review, including an evaluation of our internal communications and volunteer support structures. The review drew on interviews across our board, staff and volunteers and has been a great opportunity to stand back and see how we tracking and what can be improved. As a virtual organisation, indigo foundation has the advantage of keeping our overheads low and being able to pull together an expert and dedicated team of people based around Australia. It also means that we need to innovate to ensure our lines of communication and management support are strong. The review contained some useful recommendations to that end that we are now putting those in place.

It has been fantastic to see some of our projects recognized in the media. Our Afghanistan Project Advisor Ali Reza Yunespour did a interview on ABC RN Drive about our successful work supporting schools and education in Borjagai for over a decade

[<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/drive/program-offers-education-hope-to-afghans/5443346>]. Board members Sally

Stevenson and Susan Engel had an opinion piece published in the Canberra Times, *Is development aid necessary? Absolutely*. And of course our founding Chair Sally was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for 'significant service to social welfare in Australia and overseas'. Links to all of these are on our website.

Again over the last quarter I have been struck by the passion, skills and dedication of the indigo foundation volunteers and supporters. We are currently looking for a graphic designer with a passion for social change who can help us produce our annual report this year. If you could assist with this, please get in contact on jemma.bailey@indigofoundation.org.

Thank you for your support!



indigo foundation think piece

A Brief Introduction to the Sustainable Development Goals

Dr Susan Engel

The United Nation's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are set to expire in 2015 and the work to develop a replacement is well underway. The replacement is set to be called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlighting the aim to integrate developmental and environmental goals. Numerous reports have been released and in late July 2014 the UN General Assembly Open Working Group published a draft text with 17 goals and 169 targets. This will be represented to the UNGA in September 2014 and will serve as the basis for intergovernmental negotiations for the next 12 months.

The 17 proposed goals are:

- End *poverty* in all its forms everywhere
- End *hunger*, achieve *food security* and improved *nutrition*, and promote *sustainable agriculture*
- Ensure *healthy lives* and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Ensure inclusive and equitable quality *education* and promote life-long learning opportunities for all
- Achieve *gender equality* and empower all women and girls
- Ensure availability and sustainable management of *water and sanitation* for all
- Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern *energy* for all
- Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable *economic growth*, full and productive *employment* and decent work for all
- Build resilient *infrastructure*, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- *Reduce inequality* within and among countries
- Make cities and human settlements inclusive, *safe*, resilient and *sustainable*
- Ensure *sustainable consumption and production* patterns
- Take urgent action to *combat climate change* and its impacts
- Conserve and sustainably use the *oceans, seas* and marine resources for sustainable development

- Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of *terrestrial ecosystems*, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- Promote *peaceful and inclusive societies* for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the *global partnership for sustainable development*

(For the goals and the associated targets see:

<http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>)

It's a rather comprehensive list and more holistic than the MDGs. However, goals and targets are difficult things to get right - there is always a trade-off between the comprehensiveness and simplicity and clarity. Simplicity is important in 'selling' the goals to the public and political leaders, which is absolutely vital to ensuring there is adequate support and resources behind them. Equally, a broad set of targets runs the danger of being too difficult - where do you start? But development is always complex and its challenges are always inter-related and can't be tackled with a single tool or focus - for example achieving universal provision of education doesn't mean it will be effective where children are malnourished or where the school lack's appropriate water and sanitation systems. So, overall I think we can live with the complexity and perhaps focus on goal one - ending poverty - for marketing.



Credit: Joel Pett, USA Today

Yet the key target linked to this very first goal is one of my main concerns about the proposed goals. The target is "by 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day." This is an improvement on the MDGs but it's still not great.

The MDGs claimed their aim as eradicating extreme poverty but the target was to “halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than [US] \$1.25 a day.” The target was not to halve the number of people on the planet living in extreme poverty but rather halve the proportion of a rapidly growing global population. So the target was met but the number of people living in ‘extreme’ poverty hasn’t changed much. Part of the way the goal was achieved was the choice of the base year of 1990 – the goals were set in the year 2000 and the decision-makers knew that the world was already well on the way to meeting that target!

My major concern with the SDGs target is the idea that getting people above \$1.25 a day (measured through PPPs) means they are out of extreme poverty. The \$1.25 a day measure does not necessarily provide people with enough calorific and micronutrient intake to be well-nourished let alone their shelter and clothing needs. To see this as getting people out of extreme poverty you also have to assume that health, education and other social services are provided and are free, which is just not the case in many places. \$1.25 a day is not in any way an adequate monetary representation of an end to extreme poverty – we know this and we have to stop pretending that it is.

There are a whole range of other things to be debated about the SDGs – I am pleased about the inclusion of inequality and the focus on sustainable production and consumption systems, yet economic growth is listed above both those targets. There are gaps around the inclusion of human rights generally and the rights of indigenous peoples specifically, and there is very little in the targets that would produce the kind of structural reforms of international organisations necessary to meet the targets.

If you are interested in finding out more two good places to start are *The Guardian's* Global Development section (<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development>) and the analysis by the philosopher Thomas Pogge on the Academics Stand Against Poverty website (<http://academicsstand.org/2014/08/sustainable-development-goals-a-better-pact-is-possible/>).

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Congratulations to Susan!



Susan is one of our longest serving Board members (12 years!). She recently and so very deservedly won the 2014 University of Wollongong's Vice Chancellors Award for Community Engagement. Countless hours of indigo work, constant intellectual integrity and rigour, years of hosting meetings and dinners and lunches at her home, roles as Chair, Secretary and Treasurer...so great all the hard hard work has been publicly recognised. Congratulations Susan!

our people

Cressida Hall – Secretary



Why I work with indigo....

In May I visited indigo foundation's Cambodian project, OCCO, an English language learning centre on the rural outskirts of Battambang, Cambodia's second largest city.

Here I spoke with the senior class, fourteen students aged between 14 and 17. I asked them what their aspirations were, what they wanted to be when they grew up. At first the class was shy with many not brave enough to give voice to their dreams. As we talked their diffidence evaporated. One girl wanted to be a nurse, her friend a teacher. Another student wanted to be a singer, so I invited her up to the front of the class to sing for us. Seemingly everyone in the class had a talent, we soon had an impromptu concert going. After all the fun and laughter the class relaxed. I spoke with them further about their hopes for the future and about the computing classes they would be taking later in the year (which indigo sponsors). I asked any student who had ever used a computer to raise their hand. One lonely arm shot up at the back of the room. Of these fourteen teenagers only one had ever used a computer.

The following day I visited the parents of some of these students. I wanted to learn about their support for OCCO and to find out what aspirations they held for their children. In the stifling heat I sat on rickety

wooden bedsteads, on chairs buckling under my weight and on mats smoothed across dusty concrete floors asking parents what dreams they had for their children. Like people the world over they just wanted their kids to be happy and healthy. I asked what jobs they wanted for their children – teacher, nurse, scientist, doctor or even President! I was met with shaking heads and a few giggles – no parent thought these jobs were attainable by their children. I pressed on asking if they wanted their children to go to university. This was seen as an impossibility, a dream best not countenanced.

In the classroom the joyful senior students had wanted to be nurses, doctors, teachers, businessmen. They wanted to go to university. They could see bright futures for themselves, futures which their parents couldn't bring themselves to imagine. They had hope. They knew OCCO was giving them the English language skills necessary for employment. They watched as five volunteer students earned scholarships (supported by indigo) to go to university. They could see that one day their dreams and aspirations might actually be realised. They had hope.

And that's why I love working with indigo. Hope.

Cressida Hall is the Secretary and Public Officer of indigo foundation. In the small amount of time left to her after completing her commitments to indigo foundation she is a writer, anthropologist and traveller

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Board update

Sally Stevenson – *Chairperson*

We've had another great few months, with very positive visits to Namibia, Nyiripi and Indonesia, a productive strategic planning day, and a strong finish to the financial year.

Firstly, I'd like to warmly welcome two new volunteers to indigo foundation. Following on from her insightful and extremely helpful work on our operational review and her strict (!) and focused facilitation of our strategic planning day, we are very happy **Gwyneth Graham** has agreed to join our Board. Gwyneth's expertise and long and successful experiences managing people in the private sector, often in cross cultural contexts, will be a significant asset to us. As such, Gwyneth's specific responsibilities as a Board member are for Internal Operations, which includes ensuring our staff, volunteers and board members experience a healthy, positive, supportive internal culture that reflects our Guiding Principles. We are also very fortunate to have

Professor Ellen Kraly join us as Project Coordinator for our Uganda project. Ellen lives in Hamilton, upstate New York and works at Colgate University. She is a specialist in demography and population geography, international migration and refugees, ethnic and racial studies, medical geography and, environmental issues. Through Colgate, Ellen has had a long term relationship with the Bwindi community in Uganda (in particular training and enabling staff at the Bwindi Hospital to undertake social research) and recently travelled to our project in Budaka. She has lived and worked in Wollongong and initiated and last year implemented the historic return of the Carrolup Art Collection, held by Colgate University, to the Noongar people of WA. I worked with Ellen in South Sudan on HIV focus groups in remote Marial Lou, and can vouch that her expertise and professionalism are matched by her fantastic sense of fun and adventure. Welcome Gwyneth and Ellen – we are thrilled to have you both!

In May we held our three yearly strategic planning day. Tackling a number of challenges such as growth, identity and influence we had a thought provoking and productive day. We have grown significantly in the last three years, and believe we are now well positioned for the next three. As always there is much to do (at least there is much we *want* to do), and an outline of the finalised plan will be included in the next newsletter.

A thank you to all our supporters who have contributed financially throughout the year. Whilst the annual financial statements will be presented at our AGM in November, I can say that we remain in a healthy financial position – boosted by a great outcome from our end of financial year appeal.

Thank you!

We've had a series of wonderful fundraising events recently - the Annual Canberra dinner was a zinger with almost 200 people and the wonderful Virginia Haussegger hosting. We've also got some wonderful opportunities to meet with other indigo foundation supporters coming up including *Celebrating Women of indigo* lunch on 20th September, a private screening of the internationally acclaimed *Charlie's Country* with special guest Director, Rolf de Heer and stay tuned for great event in Melbourne in the new year.

Do come long – we'd love to see you!

+ + +

Come along to some wonderful events!

Community and fundraising events are critical in helping 'spread the word' about our work, as well raising the necessary funds to support communities we work with.

Our thanks for some great **recent events** go to:

⇒ Theresa Huxtable **for organising the exceptional Flamenco and Fire!** night...a fiery flamenco fundraising evening held in Wollongong on 2 May. April Kelly and her wonderful band and dance troupe performing flamenco danced for us, and the Dixie Dukes sang some great tunes. It was an excellent night!

⇒ The extraordinary volunteer team that made our annual **Canberra dinner** a wonderful success happen - yet again! Libby Lloyd, Virginia Haussegger, Heather Chapman, Tritia Evans and Doreen Culliver along with Louisa Yasukawa and Emily Graham put together a night for 180 people which raised almost \$18,000. Just brilliant.

And coming up!!

⇒ On Saturday 20 September we are hosting a lunch to **celebrate the women of indigo, past, present and future**. There will be a combination of familiar faces, including those who founded the organisation in 1999, women who currently support us and women new to indigo. It will be a fun, informal lunch, with a room full of 40 dynamic women. Bookings are essential and we recommend you get in early as we only have 10 spots left at the time of writing. To book, go to trybooking.com and enter the date and the word indigo. Any questions email lucinda.wilson@indigofoundation.org



Board member, Lucinda Wilson at the Flamenco and Fire night.



The Flamenco dancers!



Tritia Evans and Libby Lloyd at the Canberra dinner.

⇒ We haven't forgotten one of our guiding principles, equity, so of course we are also organising an event that the blokes can attend as well! You will not want to miss this one. Internationally renowned **Director Rolf de Heer** has agreed to be our special guest at a private screening of his most recent film **Charlie's Country**, starring award winning actor David Gulpilil Ridjimiraril Dalaitngu. This film raises issues familiar to our Nyrippi, Central Australia project, and is also just a wonderful film. The venue is the historic Chauvel Palace cinema at 249 Oxford Street, Paddington (cnr Oatley Road). Tuesday 28 October 2014. Pre drinks start at 530pm, doors open 615pm, film starts at 630pm, Q&A with Rolf to follow film.

Tickets are available through charliescountry.floktu.com: \$30 for full time students/U18 and \$40 for everyone else. This is guaranteed to be a fun, inspiring night.

Please encourage friends to attend as it is a once in a lifetime event, and all proceeds go to the indigo foundation. Any questions email lucinda.wilson@indigofoundation.org

⇒ **And.....**

The Entertainment™ Books we have left are being returned next week! If you haven't had a chance to order your new one yet then please do so TODAY before you miss out! <https://www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/912z037>

We only have a few copies left!

PURCHASE NOW!

Thank you for your support.



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