



newsletter

June 2011 – issue # 27

Solomon Islands, Uganda, Congo, strategic plan, think-piece, and more ...

indigo foundation is an independent, volunteer run, Australian community development organisation. We work with marginalised communities around the world providing innovative assistance to improve health, education, and human rights.

indigo foundation seeks to empower local communities to access resources and have control over the decisions that determine their basic needs and human rights. We do this by providing financial and technical support to local 'not for profit' and community-based organisations, with a particular focus on capacity building.

We currently support community development projects in eight countries: Indonesia, Afghanistan, Solomon Islands, Congo, Uganda, India & Australia.

Turusuala Community Based Training Centre

Solomon Islands

Community owned and sustainable

Lucinda Wilson - *Management Committee Representative*

In April 2011 I spent two weeks in the Solomon Islands undertaking a monitoring and evaluation trip for the project we support there, called the Turusuala Community Based Training Centre. It was without doubt one of the best experiences of my life and I was so deeply impressed by the generosity, vision and tenacity of the people of the Weathercoast. Turusuala is an incredible project, a real credit to the people of the Weathercoast, and something the people of the indigo foundation should feel honoured to be supporting.

I have so much to say, this article can only be a tiny snapshot.

On my trip I was accompanied by Doni Kelly, the indigo foundation's first in-country, indigenous project manager. My sincere thanks to him for his organisation of logistics, translating, companionship, expertise and good humour. I look forward to introducing him to the rest of the indigo foundation crew at the next annual planning weekend in February 2012.

What is the project?

Turusuala Community Based Training Centre was set up by the local communities after the deadly ethnic tensions ended in 2004. The communities were concerned that the youth who were returning from being combatants in the recent fighting, had nothing to do and were therefore going to 'get into trouble'. Essentially the community

decided they would rehabilitate these young men by 'giving them something to do'. Turusuala was established, and it worked. The centre is for both young men and women, with the overall objective to provide education and skills which will engage and support youth to stay in the area. As there has been no violence since 2004, the purpose of the centre is now entirely educational, although it still has a part to play in reducing a return to ethnic violence.

The centre runs a two year residential program teaching agriculture and lifeskills to girls and young women (sewing, home economics, nutrition) and joinery/carpentry to the boys and young men. Literacy has initially been taught, but later suspended. As students want it returned to the curriculum we will be assisting with this goal.

The centre also has a successful student outreach program which undertakes projects with and for the community, such as poultry farming, building projects, food nutrition and screen printing.



Lucinda Wilson and Doni Kelly at Turusuala

Where is the project?

Turusuala is incredibly hard to get to. The project is on the Weathercoast of Guadalcanal which is the largest island in the Solomons, but it is on the south coast of the island while the capital, which has the only roads on the island, is on the north coast. The only way locals travel from the Weathercoast to the capital is by walking through the jungles, across mountains and crossing rivers, some of which become impassable during heavy rains.

Alternatively, you can take a boat; the one way trip to the part of the coast where Turusuala is is between eight and twelve hours and it is rough. It is called the Weathercoast for a reason! It is the wettest region on earth and the seas around it are very rough and volatile. They experience frequent earthquakes (we had two while we were there) and cyclones (thankfully none) and it is extremely hot and humid all year round.

The project is about 500m from the coast, with a huge fresh water lagoon separating the two. This is where the staff and students wash their clothes and dishes and collect native foods. It is also home to endemic proportions of crocodiles, endemic because the region was demilitarised by RAMSI in 2004 so no one has any guns to cull or protect themselves from the crocodiles anymore. There are several deaths a year in the area and the current principal's father was taken a few months ago while fishing.



The Turusuala building

The centre was first set up in abandoned Ministry of Agriculture buildings. There were eight small buildings which were used for student dorms, classrooms and staff rooms. The Government reclaimed those buildings (we visited them and they are still empty) in 2009 so Turusuala had to relocate down the hill to land owned by local chiefs. There was (and is) only one building on this land and it is a two storey building built by staff and students over four years, by materials donated by the Japanese government for the purpose of building a girls dormitory. As the only building, it houses the boys, girls, staff, classrooms and staffrooms. With new funding, the centre will build their long anticipated boys dormitory, as far from the girls as possible as this will encourage more parents to send their girls to Turusuala. It will also free up room for classes and improve conditions for staff and students alike.

In front of the current building are impressive model gardens, an equally impressive chicken coup and up the hill towards the ministry buildings is a pig pen which houses a lone piglet although this will expand with their livestock course. The piglet came to Turusuala by way of student fees. The fees are S\$400 per annum (about A\$50) but the students can pay in kind so they sometimes give chickens or sago palms or food instead. There is virtually 100% unemployment (in the way we understand employment) on the Weathercoast so few people have cash. The people of the Weathercoast are almost entirely subsistence farmers.

The problem with introducing pigs to the centre is that they attract crocodiles, which, I am told, have a keen sense of smell. I find this very worrying but the locals accept it as part of life and still think introducing pig farming to the curriculum is worthwhile.

The Weathercoast does not have electricity, roads, cars, shops, or running water, except the RAMSI station which is about a 20 minute walk from Turusuala. There is an airstrip in front of the RAMSI station but it is not used (by aeroplanes, it is good for volleyball and soccer).

The staff?

Turusuala has struggled with a high turnover of staff and a lack of qualified teachers since it began. I am delighted to report the current teaching staff have been involved with the centre for several years now and a teacher, Augustine Fidele, supported by the indigo foundation to attend formal teacher training in 2008-2009 has returned to the centre, remains committed to it and has recently been appointed the deputy principle. This is even more impressive when one considers staff wages at Turusuala. Qualified teachers like Augustine would earn about S\$1,000/month (A\$125) in Honiara (although the cost of living is much higher). Turusuala teachers get S\$200/month. Incorporated into our renewed commitment agreement will be an increase to S\$400.

The outgoing principle, Jerry Anderson, teaches agriculture, as does the incoming principle, Brian. Agriculture is the main activity on the Weathercoast, and has become the focus of Turusuala, largely because of its partnership with a local non-government organisation called Kastom Gaden Association (KGA). The partnership between KGA and Turusuala was forged by a previous project manager, Helen Lucy Moss, who is still remembered fondly by all at Turusuala and KGA. Not only do KGA fund Turusuala for their agricultural initiatives, but provide capacity building and technical support such as reporting and planning skills. However, KGA do not provide core funding or support the lifeskills or joinery classes so our support is still invaluable.

The fourth, and incredibly important, teacher is Mary Theresa. Mary is the only female teacher, and without her, no female students would attend. She not only teaches but cooks and cleans and is the sole carer for her

gorgeous eight year old niece who lives with her at Turusuala. Words cannot express how kind and dedicated this quietly spoken woman, with the biggest smile you have even seen, is. She wishes to attain formal qualifications as a teacher, which will encourage female enrolments. Unfortunately the policy of the training institute Augustine attended has changed such that they prefer applications from those wishing to teach at (government accredited) Rural Training Centres which Turusuala is not. It will be terrible if Mary is rejected as she, and the centre, students, management committee and indigo foundation all wish her to achieve her formal qualifications. Our project manager has an idea to set up a distance training centre so that teachers at community based training centre's like Turusuala have a way to get qualified. Fingers crossed she is accepted into Vanja Teacher's College though as the project manager's idea would take some years to set up.

The students?

They students are aged 14 to 30 and at the moment there are five girls and twelve boys. Students in the Solomons can only go into the next year of school if they pass an annual test, so from about 13 years they can be excluded from the formal education system. Turusuala takes these youths, plus those who have finished school and wish to further their vocational training.

One of Turusuala's graduates is employed as a carpenter and he makes local houses and school buildings. This is a huge achievement given the lack of formal employment in the area. The only second year female student, Clodetta Pava, will continue her training with KGA after graduation in December to become an agriculture teacher employed by KGA and hopefully to run classes for Turusuala too in the future. Another student, Brian wishes to attend Vanja Teacher's College in Honiara next year, but he will confront the same problem as Mary, outlined above.

Most graduates return to their villages where they impart their skills, including building chicken coups, introducing pig farming and setting up model farms. Their skills give them added impetus to stay on the Weathercoast rather than drift to Honiara where they



Print making with the community

will confront unemployment, higher cost of living and lack of guidance from their village elders. Urban drift is a problem the local communities hope Turusuala will help avoid, such as has happened in PNG with the problems of drugs and crime in Port Moresby.

The community?

The community have supported Turusuala by sending their children to the centre, being part of the management committee, buying food and items made by the students at the markets or when the centre holds an open day. The land on which Turusuala operates will be formally purchased from the four customary owners by the end of the year, for the price of pigs, food and shell money. This will allow the centre to register the land in its name and ensure it is not asked to leave. Turusuala has been concerned about building more buildings only to be asked to leave by the customary owners.

Any problems?

The two main issues confronting Turusuala are, in the words of the indigo foundation's guiding principles, transparency and equity.

The issue with transparency is that the centre is run by a small group of committed staff members who have a lot of control, and the management committee do not have a strong or clearly defined role in the centre's management. The good news is the management committee want to improve their position and expressly requested 'governance training' (in those words). KGA were going to provide such training so we will liaise with them, including possible funding, to ensure this happens. We will also specify some steps we would like implemented to improve systems such as how expenditure is approved and decisions made as, while there has not been any problems with use of funds, the lack of proper systems means it could occur if the wrong people join Turusuala.

There is no gender equity in the Solomon Islands. Girls are rarely educated and have much higher rates of illiteracy than men. Domestic violence is reported to be in 67% of marriages, and this is with the study noting a serious lack of reporting. There is not a single female in government and women suffered terribly during the ethnic tensions. It is said that women's rights are worse now than before 1998 when the tensions began. However, there does seem to be a movement to address this chronic inequality, which I noticed from my first day in the Solomons. The daily newspaper dedicates one page to women, writing about what is being done to improve women's rights or other issues facing women in the Solomons. Westpac had a women in education competition (which Mary, her niece and Clodetta entered) and there is a local calendar that has cartoon pictures and pidjin words encouraging men to respect women. The situation is worse in rural and remote areas like the Weathercoast than in the capital where women are seen in schools and working.

Given this background, we should be delighted by the commitment shown by the staff, students and management committee of Turusuala to bring the enrolments to 50% boys and girls. The problem is that Turusuala cannot currently accommodate 50% female students. The five current female students sleep in their

lifeskills classroom, along with Mary and her niece, and there is no room for anymore. There are 12 boys who all sleep in one small room so what is needed is a boys dorm so the boys can move out, the girls move upstairs, and downstairs can be dedicated to the lifeskills room, not converted to the bedroom every night.

Next, staff huts need to be built so all staff can stay onsite and improve supervision of the students, which would make the parents more content to send their girls to study there. At present the centre can only house Mary and Augustine, but Jerry and Brian will move in once there are huts for them and their wives and children. Unfortunately parents concerns are founded, three of our female students have become pregnant to male students, so they do need to be separated and have extra supervision.

Finally, better resources and a qualified female teacher/s will encourage more female enrolments. We are assisting with resources, but the qualification issue is difficult, as noted above. A few years ago we funded a female teacher to attend teacher's college but she met her husband and is still living in Honiara. It is hard to get qualified teacher's to return to Turusuala once they have moved to Honiara which has the attractions of running water, electricity and transport, not to mention constant food supply through shops.

Nonetheless, it is clear that progress is being made in all these areas such that the centre should have closer to 50% students in 2012 and hopefully 50% in 2013. The management committee plans to vote in new members and agrees that 50% of the committee should be female. We will continue, as before, to try to engage the Solomon Islands National Council of Women to do some gender training in villages. It is incredibly hard to get people to travel to the Weathercoast from Honiara but we will try.

The achievements?

Turusuala can survive against the odds; in 2010, due to a complicated misunderstanding, we did not send its annual A\$4,000 in core funding. That meant staff were not always paid, buildings could not be built and class resources (other than agriculture which is funded by KGA) could not be purchased. We are making up for this by providing A\$8,000 this year, however, the tenacity of the people who run the centre was demonstrated by their ability to continue, and even increase student numbers and expand the centre, with zero core funding. They sold food and items made in class, but they also increased student fees substantially (although the students believe prevents youth, particularly females, from attending). Our funding will allow student fees to return to a more manageable level.

The centre has gone from 0% female students to 30% and there is consensus that 50% female students and 50% female management committee members is a good thing. I cannot tell you how revolutionary this is in the

context, it makes Turusuala a real ground breaker in the Solomons!

The centre has reduced staff turnover and now has dedicated, long term teachers, one of whom is formally qualified, and two of whom have been trained by KGA. Graduates are receiving quality, highly relevant training and their outreach program has built multiple chicken coups, pig pens, model gardens and houses in villages throughout the Weathercoast. The reputation of Turusuala is very good, and it has not always been so.

Finally, the centre will soon own the land on which it sits, providing security and ensuring longevity.

The priorities?

Building a boys dormitory and staff huts; training Mary and recruiting more female (preferably qualified) teachers; selecting new management committee members who are provided governance training and of whom half are women; returning literacy to the curriculum; building at least one compost toilet; finding a power source other than the generator which is very expensive to run with oil, plus oil is very difficult to buy there (for example solar, hydro or wind power?); finalising the land agreement; completing the fence to reduce damage to crops from pigs; installing a water system.

In May the indigo foundation management committee unanimously agreed to fund a further three year commitment to Turusuala, so will continue to work closely (and enthusiastically) with the centre on these priorities.

Want to see Turusuala yourself?

Doni Kelly and I will take a group of eight indigo foundation supporters with us to the centre over Easter 2012. Not only will the group witness one of our projects in action, it will see a stunning country and help raise valuable funds for this truly worthwhile project. Please contact me for more details.

Thanks

Thanks to Doni Kelly; Shalane Hopkins and Alexandra Ward for raising \$3,000 for the project by trekking across New Zealand; the indigo foundation management committee for agreeing to support Turusuala for a further three years; Annelyse Davison for her research into education and women's rights in the Solomon Islands; Mary, Clement and Jack of KGA for meeting with me and agreeing to work with the indigo foundation again to support Turusuala; my fiancée Ben for accompanying me and supporting the project; and most importantly thanks to Mary, Augustine, Jerry and Brian and all the students at Turusuala for feeding and housing us and making us feel so welcome. You have touched our hearts in a way we will never forget and we take our hats off to you for succeeding against the odds

Partner: Turusuala Community Based Training Centre
indigo foundation Project Manager: Doni Kelly
MC Representative: Lucinda Wilson

A new commitment to the communities in Budaka, Uganda

Libby House - Development Coordinator

This year we signed a new three year Commitment Agreement with our partners in Budaka, Uganda - four grassroots Community Based Organisations (CBO). The groups work with children and families affected by HIV and AIDS, improving their quality of life through access to education and counseling and by increasing community awareness to reduce the stigma connected to disclosure of a positive diagnosis.

Libby House visited the project in April with the project manager Ian Seal. Her terms of reference included workshops with the CBO's on our four guiding principles, understanding our Ugandan partners and the context in which they operate, and supporting Ian. Libby writes of her experience below.

How powerful are some images! I would never have expected to recognise the building at the old Entebbe Airport from news coverage of the 1976 Air France hijacking but there it was and instantly images of gunmen in balaclavas engaged in a firefight of 35 years ago came to my mind.

Kampala is troubled again; rioting the day I arrived resulted in several deaths and many wounded, and it continues at the time of writing. Idi Amin's name is being mentioned in the press again as a reminder of the importance of vigilance.

So - my first morning in Africa was spent in lockdown at the compound of Congo Project Advisor and Medecins Sans Frontieres Medical Co-ordinator Vernique de Clerck while she put together a strategy for getting Ian, who arrived a day later, safely from the airport to the house. By Saturday the city was quiet and on Monday we left Kampala on a fast four hour highway drive through a landscape of tea, sugar cane and sorghum plantations, townships and villages, to Mbale and our project.

Crossing the Nile at Jinja, hoping to spot a hippopotamus, but forbidden to take photos by the bridge guard, Ian and I watched otters playing while kingfishers hovered just a few feet from our eyes. Pan- African trucks thundered past: a schoolboy called 'jambo M'zungu' (hello stranger). I was beginning to get a sense of Uganda.

On arrival in Mbale Sam Muloni, the outgoing District Administrator for Budaka put his driver Robert at our disposal and on Tuesday our first meeting was with the Kakule group, the first of the CBOs and then the Sub-County Authority.

Kakule is chaired by Michael Mwayi, a subsistence farmer devoted to improving the welfare of orphans and vulnerable children in Budaka. We sat in the tiny office with my chair placed to avoid rain drops while Michael gave his report and showed photos of the project achievements – children receiving scholastic materials,

children holding chickens from the 'chicken bank', sturdy locally made benches, a table, registers, receipts, and a fine black Roadmaster bicycle to facilitate outreach visits.

We repeated this visit with the Iki Iki group, then NACOMAS and finally Gaalimagi over the next few days. In Gaalimagi approximately 200 people greeted us with special songs and dancing while the equipment bought with indigo foundation funding was displayed to the village. Children came dressed in their new school uniforms and the new wall clock was hung on a mango tree which serves as a meeting place before we all walked down to inspect one of the protected springs.

The attention to detail and level of consideration which had gone into allocating the funding was humbling and really underscored what was told to us several times during our visit – that despite the presence of several international aid agencies in the area there was no funding reaching the ground, at least in the area of assisting orphans and vulnerable children. This is extraordinary given the numbers of orphans we met and the stories we heard of widows caring for twenty or more orphans from their extended family, and of a number of families headed by children in Budaka.

During our initial visits it was clear that Ian was held in a very high regard by all the groups as 'a man of the field' and someone who was as good as his word. News of the signing of the new three year agreement and discussions around our commitment to work with the four guiding principles of transparency, equity, community ownership and sustainability were welcomed with ululation and clapping. It is already clear to these communities that indigo foundation is bringing a new and positive way of engaging with the community. Sadly it was also clear that the number of families needing assistance is immense, and while our program is profoundly changing lives in Budaka, it is a case of lighting a candle in the dark and we were constantly told of the people who could not be helped because of limited funds or geographic isolation.



Joy, indigo foundation Liaison Officer working with CBO representatives at a planning meeting

To date funding to the groups has included an initial tranche \$300 to each CBO and then two tranches of \$500. This money has been used to provide direct assistance to approximately 680 children as well as small infrastructure expenses such as office equipment. Before

we entered into a partnership with the CBO's they operated on resourcefulness and a belief that they could do something to help their community of people affected by HIV and AIDS. With our funding, each group has used each dollar in different ways and with different priorities within the parameters of their Commitment Agreement. In working with the groups, I came to see their different characteristics as a strength, and when we brought them together for a planning and prioritisation session there was a lively and positive exchange of ideas and views. In the future the groups are looking forward to more of these exchanges and this will be facilitated through the work of the new indigo Liaison Officer Joyce Katooko. The new agreement provides funding of \$2,000 in 2011 to each CBO.

During the process of signing the agreement, the adjustment in the exchange rate for the Australian dollar to Uganda Shilling provided a windfall of nearly 40% more funding. Given that part of our brief for the trip was to work with the groups to build their planning capacity and their understanding of working with our four guiding principles it was agreed to use a community consultation process to decide on how the money would be allocated. This was the first time the groups had come together to work.



Libby at the planning meeting with representatives from the four community based organisations.

In a structured format the groups were encouraged to brainstorm a range of priorities and then determine a short list of four activities. A training course on HIV counselling, including a focus on counselling children was the number one priority. In collaboration with representatives of the CBOs we approached relevant NGOs in Mbale, and a 5-day training course was developed and delivered. From this training, the CBOs hope to be able to further promote voluntary HIV testing and counselling, provide specific support to HIV positive children, and to form a nucleus of trainers who can educate religious leaders and others in the community to reduce stigma and improve understanding of the impact of HIV and AIDS.

Reports from Ian who is currently in Uganda are that the training was a huge success. There are still some windfall funds remaining and the groups have yet to decide if they want this money divided equally among them or if

they will use it to provide group training in governance strengthening or animal husbandry. The fourth priority established: peer support and recreation activities for children affected by HIV and AIDS, is a larger and more ambitious program, and Ian will work with the CBOs on this while he is in Budaka throughout June.

My visit to Budaka was inspirational and I am left in no doubt that the work we are doing there is both highly valued and of great benefit.

Partner: Four community based organisations, Budaka local government
 indigo foundation Project Manager: Ian Seal
 MC Representative: Sally Stevenson

End of FINANCIAL YEAR

We'd appreciate your support!

Donations to indigo foundation are tax-deductible.

Pls to www.indigofoundation.org homepage and click on the bright red 'donate now' icon. This will transfer you to ourcommunity.com.au. This is a secure site, supported by Westpac, for not-for-profit donations. Receipts will be issued at the end of the month.

An update on the health project in Kokolopori, Congo

Leanne Hankey - Project Manager

In August 2010, our project advisor, Veronique de Clerck conducted a monitoring and evaluation trip to Kokolopori. Vero is a midwife and currently working as Medical Coordinator for Medecins san Frontiers in Uganda. Her visit provided valuable insight into the project from a medical professional's point of view. Veronique's report states:

Taking into account the small indigo foundation funding, the limited local resources, the challenging logistical context, the severe geographical access barriers and the hands off development approach, one should acknowledge the achievements that have been made in only five years... Overall, the activities being funded by indigo foundation are being implemented... The Kokolopori community is benefiting from indigo foundation support... Common pathologies like respiratory tract infections, malaria and diarrheal diseases are being treated.

Veronique identified key project strengths and challenges, along with corrective recommendations (some of which are already being implemented). As a result, when we renewed our Commitment Agreement with local partner Vie Sauvage and international partners BCI and Kokolopori-Falls Church Sister City Partnership (KFCSCP) early this year, it was amended to better reflect a move towards greater and more

widespread health outcomes. The major focus of our support is now:

- Health outcomes to be directed and measured by basic primary health care principles, DRC's national health strategic framework, and indigo foundation principles.
- More targeted support of Primary Health Care.
- Centralise indigo foundation support to the Bonobo Health Clinic (at Yalokole) only, not the health outposts (which had stretched resources too thinly and reduced quality of care).
- Pursue nurses' registration with the DRC government's Ministry of Health.
- Investigate the viability of a Community-Based Finance Scheme to help offset some of the operational costs of the clinic and contribute towards greater community ownership.

Again, we extend our heartfelt thanks to Veronique for her invaluable and ongoing input!



Negotiating appalling roads is one of challenges of supporting community development in Kokolopori Photo: Ingrid Schulze

Ingrid Schulze (KFCSCP) visits Kokolopori

Ingrid Schulze, Director of the Kokolopori-Falls Church Sister City Partnership, travelled to DRC late February to mid-March. Ingrid visited Djolu Technical College which we hope, one day, will be a source of health care professionals and educators to the region, the Bonobo Health Clinic in Kokolopori and Vie Sauvage. Ingrid's trip coincided with the delivery of indigo foundation funds to pay nurses' salaries and purchase much-needed medicines and supplies.



Sorting the pharmaceutical delivery Photo: Ingrid Schulze

It is with sadness however, that we report Ingrid's decision to dissolve the Kokolopori-Falls Church Sister

City Partnership following her trip. Her decision stems from a mix of personal and professional reasons which she has guaranteed have nothing to do with indigo foundation, Vie Sauvage or the clinic. The dissolution of KFCSCP means that fewer resources are going to the project. This will have a significant impact on the clinic as the salaries of Dr Saidi and an A1 nurse, medicines, equipment and some infrastructure were being provided by KFCSCP. The Bonobo Conservation Initiative has indicated it will provide support to fill the gap.

Centre de Santé

For the clinic to be ultimately sustainable, it will need to become part of the national health system. The resource vulnerability highlighted by the withdrawal of KFCSCP strengthens the case for the clinic to reduce its ambition of becoming a Centre de Santé de Reference (a hospital clinic), something that is, at this point, beyond its financial, technical, infrastructure and management capacity. The partnership is currently investigating what it will take in real terms for the clinic to become a quality Centre de Santé (basic health clinic) which seems achievable with existing capacities. If this is feasible, we will work with Vie Sauvage to ensure the transition is smooth and functional and at this time we will exit this very worthwhile yet complicated project.

Partner:	Vie Sauvage
indigo foundation Project Manager:	Leanne Hankey
MC Representative:	Phil Strickland



Thank you sign to indigo foundation, the barristers in NSW who are major supporters of the clinic, and BCI hanging on the wall of the Bonobo Health Clinic Photo: Ingrid Schulze

indigo foundation and University of Wollongong

An ongoing partnership!

Since 2008 we have had the good fortune of enjoying a very productive partnership with the University of Wollongong. The support of the University has delivered not only financial assistance, but also provided excellent opportunities to speak about the work we do (from 'Speaker Spotlight' sessions to the prestigious graduation ceremony Occasional Address). Underlining

this has been ongoing and significant moral support, for which we are most grateful.

UOW Cares

UOW Cares is a workplace giving scheme, providing university staff with a simple and effective way to regularly donate to a charity through automated payroll deductions. indigo foundation is one of nine charities the University supports through this scheme (selected by a committee representing staff). We were chosen when the scheme began, and selected again when the charities were reviewed after two years.

Such workplace financial assistance is vital to our ongoing work. The funding enables us to better plan activities, goals and budgets based on a regular flow on income (and at a much lower administrative costs than more labour intensive fundraising activities). This means greater community outcomes can be achieved.

Our thanks to UOW Cares!

University of Wollongong Library

The University of Wollongong Library chose indigo foundation as their 'charity of choice' for 2011. Providing support to over 20,000 students and staff, and being the first Library to win an Australian Business Excellence Award in 2000 – we couldn't be more delighted! In February we gave a presentation to library staff on our work, showcasing our education project in Afghanistan. Since then, the library has held two fundraising events – a book/DVD swap and a cake stall raising over \$2,400!

At the same time, Michael Swire Shelving Coordinator at Library won the right to donate \$250 to his chosen charity, by participating in a UOW Cares fundraising drive. We were the lucky one!



Michael Swire donates his winning UOW Cares prize to indigo foundation, accepted by Sally Stevenson. Photo: UOW Cares

Our thanks to all the library staff, with special mention to Ainsley Lynch who has coordinated the fundraising events and Margie Jantti, Head the University who made this possible.

Inaugural University of Wollongong indigo foundation International Studies Prize

This year we awarded the first University of Wollongong indigo foundation International Studies Prize to Jessica Glover. Jessica was the top student in *Introduction to International Studies* and *Global Politics and Power*. Congratulations Jessica!

Jessica has written a short article, below.



Jessica at 'home' in Guatemala

My name is Jessica Glover, and I am a third year student at the University of Wollongong studying a double degree of International Studies/Communications and Media Studies with majors in Politics and Journalism, and a minor in Spanish.

I grew up in a humble small country town in the south west of New South Wales and relocated to Wollongong to pursue my tertiary education. Despite my rural upbringing, I have always had an insatiable interest for international affairs, particularly issues regarding global aid and development. Since completing high school, extensive travel throughout Europe, South East Asia and Latin America has further fostered my passion for global issues. During my travels throughout Latin America in particular, I was fortunate to spend some time living with a local family in a small Guatemalan village, which enabled me to experience firsthand some of the issues confronting those who live in poverty in developing countries, including inadequate access to clean water, health care services and basic education. These experiences have inspired me to pursue a career in international development.

In the future I hope to work collaboratively with a reputable organisation such as the indigo foundation, and local communities in less developed countries to establish initiatives that address poverty reduction and developmental challenges.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the indigo foundation for their support of International Studies students studying at the University of Wollongong. It is fantastic to have such a well respected organisation showing interest in young students who aspire to careers in the international sphere. It is a great honour to receive the very first University of

Wollongong indigo foundation International Studies Prize, and I look forward to taking this accolade and utilising it to assist me in my professional career.

indigo foundation Strategic Plan

Jenny Dixon – General Manager

The indigo foundation strategic planning session was held on 5-6 February 2011, with Management Committee members, Project Managers and key volunteers.

The consistent message that came from the weekend was that we need to build on our many successes to date. The best way to do this over the next five years is to focus on **strengthening our organisation** and for expansion to take place, where and when appropriate, within our current projects.

We agreed that indigo foundation is known for its unique developmental philosophy and approach, which focuses on support for grassroots community organisations. We are able to maintain our flexibility and integrity because of our independence and through our principles-based approach to development. Backed by the expertise and dedication of our volunteers, and built on a culture of professionalism and quality, we have a reputation as an organisation that makes a real difference in communities.

From this basis, a new strategic plan covering five years 2011-2015 was written.

The plan has two key objectives: organisational strengthening and strengthening project quality. Below is a summary of the strategies and actions. The full strategic plan is available on request.

Organisational strengthening

We aim to strengthen indigo foundation by constantly reflecting on our needs in terms of paid positions, and the support we are offering to volunteers. We are streamlining our financial management and reporting systems to make sure that we continue to adhere to the core tenets of the organisation (to be fiscally responsible and transparent while keeping bureaucracy to a minimum). We are focused on our internal communication strategy, and how we provide easy-to-access and timely information to our volunteers and supporters while ensuring that our communiqués are pertinent and relevant. The basis of strategies such as this is to maintain the enthusiasm and dedication of our volunteers, and our ongoing commitment to open and respectful relationships within indigo foundation.

While we remain dedicated to grass roots community development, as the capacities of communities that drive our long standing projects increase, so can the size of the projects. To manage this potential growth we need to ensure our management of human resources is

high quality, and we are able to maintain the enthusiasm and commitment of volunteers.

As fundraising remains critical, over the next five years we aim to add corporate partnerships to our existing fundraising strategies. Concurrently, we will be strongly marketing indigo foundation so that we increase our brand recognition and consequently our supporter base.



All around the table at the strategic planning weekend

Strengthening project quality

Central to this objective is the great pride we take in building relationships within our communities, with our partners and all of those who are part of, or support indigo foundation.

We will continue to ensure that the strategic direction both within our projects and with our partners are aligned; that projects are responding to development needs and the needs of communities; that we are constantly assessing the feasibility of the project aims and outcomes and adapting where necessary.

At the same time we need to assess that a project's size and scope fit within indigo foundation identity and aims and we will question and balance the tension between project growth and indigo foundation's commitment to small, community based grass roots projects.

Finally, we will focus on identifying common challenges across the projects, and assess whether the lessons learned can be translated into our methods, management and /or processes. And perhaps most importantly we will continue to take informed risks – which underpin any serious attempt to truly empower.

I am confident we will meet our objectives and look forward to reporting on our progress.

Marketing & fundraising

Successful events and future plans!

Community events and fundraisers 'spread the word' about us and raise the necessary funds to support communities around the world. Our supporters continue to do a great job – please take the time to read about their successes below.

: **University of Wollongong Library** organised a 'mega book and DVD swap' to raise funds for our

projects. Not just a fundraising event, which raised almost \$600, this was a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase our work to the staff, students and broader University community. For example, interviews with Sally Stevenson and Ali Yunespour about our project in Afghanistan were telecast across the university campus. The library also donated an Apple iPad, which was raffled and The **University Print and Distribution Services** printed a number of high quality posters free of charge to display our work at the swap.

The Library *then* organised a huge cake stall, which sold out within hours! Our thanks to **Wendy** at *Out to Lunch* for kindly donating a range of delicious baked goods and everyone else who baked to help raise over \$1,800!

The support of all the Library staff has been wonderful – thank you!

- : An afternoon tea for 40 people was hosted by **Karen Baumgart** and **Sarah Watson** in Canberra in mid April. Nicole and Cameron Moore, our India project managers spoke about their recent and positive experiences of the project, whilst guests enjoyed some wonderful home catering! Raising over \$750, the afternoon was a terrific success. Our thanks to the afternoon tea team!

Upcoming events include:

- : **Our inaugural Canberra dinner is imminent!** Organised by **Libby Lloyd, Moksha Watts, Zohra Akseer and Elicia Rudnick** the evening will highlight the success of our Afghan project, with Virginia Haussegger (ABC news reader in the ACT) as MC, a great auction, great food and indigo foundation wine! With 150 people coming to Legends Restaurant, many of them new to indigo foundation, we are expecting a cracker of an evening!
- : **Mary Lou Nugent** and **Lisa Addison** are holding another of their wonderful swaps, this time for accessories. Known for their unique and cutting edge style (!) Mary Lou and Lisa's morning tea promises to be a Canberra *fashion event*.
- : **Clare Matthews** and **Sally Stevenson** will be holding a stall at Coledale markets on 26th June. Exclusively selling ClearRange lavender and embroideries from Borjegai, with total sales going to indigo foundation. This will be a lovely community event – come along and say hello if you are in the area!
- : **Our annual dinner:** This year's annual dinner in Sydney is being held at the State Library, a stunning location. The \$100 ticket includes entertainment, a three course meal, wine and soft drinks so is a bargain. Each year has been great but we are

hoping this will be the best. Not only is it a fundraiser but the perfect chance to get together with all the indigo foundation crew and celebrate the work we do. **Hope you can make it!**



Join our facebook page and be kept up to date on event details!

◆◆◆ Have you tried our wine yet?? ◆◆◆

We have a great range of 'value for money' wines from Prospect Wines. **Starting at \$10 a bottle**, we encourage you to support this fundraiser - for every bottle of wine you receive \$4.

Simply go **on-line system** for ordering. Click on the link to go directly to our fundraiser page on the Prospect Wines web site: <http://www.prospectwines.com.au/?k1111&R7G&v1n>

If you want to order wine but don't like to purchase via the internet, there is a downloadable order form on the website. You can print the order form, and send it direct to Prospect Wines. This order form is also great if you want to take orders from your friends, work mates or neighbours.

For every dozen wines – we make \$48!



indigo foundation think piece

Dr Susan Engel – *Management Committee member*

Susan lectures in international studies, global politics and international political economy at the University of Wollongong and convenes the Master of International Studies program.

This article was published in 29 May 2011: www.theconverstation.edu.au

Speculation last month that Paul Keating and Peter Costello could nominate for the top job at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was a mere distraction, but the hoopla did manage to highlight a crucial issue: the need for reform at the top of the world's economic institutions.

Since Dominique Strauss-Kahn's dramatic exit from his post as IMF managing director earlier this month, much of the debate around his replacement has focused the need for a non-European to take the reins.

French Finance Minister Christine Lagarde has emerged as the frontrunner, despite a significant – and warranted – push from the developing economies to see one of their own win the job.

IMF has made it clear that the nomination process will be open and democratic, but if Lagarde's fast ascent is anything to go by, it seems that some long-standing conventions are proving difficult to break.

Battling history

An informal agreement between the US and the Europe finalised at the inaugural meeting of Board of Governors of the IMF and World Bank in Savannah, Georgia in March 1946 established that the US would select the head of the World Bank and the Europeans the IMF.

This agreement was the product of Cold War politics. John Maynard Keynes, who was head of the British delegation at Savannah, had lobbied to have Harry Dexter White, the US official most responsible for drafting the IMF and the World Bank's articles of agreement, appointed as the first Managing Director of the IMF.

However, US Treasury Secretary Fred Vinson did not have a good relationship with White and, one month prior to Savannah, had been given a FBI report by President Harry Truman naming White as a probable Soviet spy.

To block White, Vinson argued that the World Bank needed to be headed by an American to gain the confidence of Wall Street, where it would need to access funds for on-lending.

Further, he argued, it would be inappropriate for an American to head both the World Bank and the IMF, and thus a European should take the IMF role.

It turns out that White did have some relationship with Soviet intelligence. Nevertheless, the organisation produced from the negotiations between himself and Keynes were marked by their promotion of market-based, US-led global order.

Resisting change

After years of protesting by non-governmental organisations, activists and some governments from the Global South, Brazil in particular, the IMF in 2009 committed to "an open, merit-based and transparent process for the selection of IMF management."

Boding ill for openness was the fact that the process for selecting the two deputy managing directors appointed since this commitment was not particularly open and transparent, and saw two G8-nation officials get the jobs.

Will the process that the IMF has announced for the new managing director be transparent? Well, sort of.

Only fund governors and executive directors can nominate candidates.

It will be merit-based. Well, again, sort of, because it will take into account the IMF's weighted voting system.

This is where countries' votes are proportional to the shares they have in the organisation and the shares are based on the size of each countries' economy.

It is this voting system that has been said to be at the heart of both the IMF and World Bank's democratic

deficit. The countries that tend to utilise the IMF the most have the least say in management and direction.

These processes – and the range of statements coming out of Europe over the past couple of weeks making a case for another European head – highlight the enormous difficulty in truly reforming the international financial institutions.

The IMF and World Bank were created at a time when the US was hegemonic within the non-Communist world and there were far fewer nation-states in existence from which to obtain agreement.

Even then, creating the two organisations involved a whole series of compromises that narrowed the scope of their operations and increased the use of conditions. Once they were established, postwar economic chaos saw the IMF's mandate further limited and left the World Bank with limited funding for two decades.

It is one of the paradoxes of the Bretton Woods' twins that while critics rightly point to their high level of influence over developing countries, particularly those in crisis, in reality their influence over the international economic system seen as a whole, is limited.

This is even truer in the age of globalised finance. This is clear from an examination of the reforms made by Strauss-Kahn – the IMF's capital base was significantly expanded and there were some small changes to the voting shares of emerging and developing countries, but it still does not have enough resources to stabilise the global economic system should one of the G8 economies go bust.

IMF packages continue to subsidise the private financial institutions that hold the sovereign debt of crisis countries and, in effect, socialise their investment risks.

Hope for reform?

All this means I am sceptical about how much reform any new managing director can achieve.

Still, the role is important. Strauss-Kahn did achieve some short-term lifting of IMF conditionality and open up thinking about issues like capital controls in the IMF's influential research department.

Aside from Lagarde, Mexico's central bank governor Agustin Carstens is also in the running.

While it would be interesting to debate their respective strengths and weaknesses for the role, it is unlikely to be a useful pursuit.

Lagarde is clearly the frontrunner. The European Union has 32% of IMF votes. The US, with 16.7 per cent of the votes has been rather silent suggesting it wants to maintain its control over the World Bank top job and, despite the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China) joint call for a transparent process, China has since indicated support for Lagarde.

indigo foundation People



*Doni Kelly - Project Manager,
Solomon Islands*

My name is Mr. Doni Keli, from the island of Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. I was born on 24 June 1963, at Tiaro Bay, I am the 4th child in a family of 6 children.

I attended primary education at Tangarare Catholic School from 1971- 1976, and later attended Secondary education there. After completing school I served as youth in my village community, in 1985 I was enrolled to do Diploma in Pastoral studies at Nazareth Apostolic Center, and graduated in 1989.

In 1990, I entered Holy Spirit seminary, Port Moresby, PNG to do Degree in Theology. I graduated in 1997 with Bachelor of Theology and return to Solomon Island. I was ordained a priest in 1998, and was sent to the weather coast of Guadalcanal on the same year. During the heightened, of the social unrest, from 1998 -2001, I work as a negotiator, between warring militant groups.

Turusuala Community Base Training was set to assist militants who are returning from fighting and need some rehabilitation.

I started working with indigo foundation in 2004 when Ms Sue Cunningham was project manager. I began as liaison officer. This is because of my knowledge and experiences working in the Weather coast of Guadalcanal with militant groups. In the same year, I requested for laicization, and left the priesthood. I got married to Ms Jennifer Vatukubona in 2005, and we have four kids, two boys and two girls.

I find the job of liaison officer very interesting, as I am able to continue serving the educational needs of young people. I also have the privilege to visited Turusuala Community Based Training Centre, from 2005 - 2010 and to liaise with other NGOs working in the area. I also learn a lot from indigo foundation project managers that I served under, Ms Sue Cunningham, Ms Helen Lucy and Ms Sally Anne. The trip this year was to introduce Ms. Lucinda Wilson to Turusuala and it staff and members of the Board of Management.

Now that I have been appointed as Project Manager, for Turusuala I feel very humble. I look forward to serving indigo foundation with respect.

Management Committee update

Sally Stevenson – Chairperson

Winter has arrived, and I hope you are all well. It's been a busy but very positive three months for us at indigo foundation.

To begin, I am very happy to announce that we have agreed to continue our partnerships in four countries by renewing our three years commitments with: the Pravaham Trust in India, Turusuala in the Solomon Islands, our most long term partner Lua Lemba in Indonesia and with Borjegai village in Afghanistan. We remain as excited about these projects as when we began them, not just with the progress made, but with the potential they hold for the future.

As mentioned in Lucinda's article on her Solomon Islands trip – Doni Kelly is our new project manager for the Solomon Islands. When Doni accepted the position, it signalled an important shift for indigo foundation - one which points to an optimistic and exciting future for us - welcome Doni! We are all very much looking forward to meeting you in Australia next year.

I would also like to warmly welcome Cynthia Grant as our new project manager for Afghanistan. The Borjegai project is our most ambitious, and we are thrilled to have Cynthia on board. She has extensive international development and education experience, including a Masters in Education and more than twenty-five years' experience in both the formal and informal sectors of adult and community education. Also joining the Afghan team is Chris Murphy, who will take the lead in fundraising. Chris is Vice President of the Illawarra Branch of JCI, is a graduate from the Rotary youth leadership program, has sat on numerous community boards, and is an accountant with a particular interest in forensic accounting of international aid organisations. The skills and experience that both Cynthia and Chris will bring to the team will benefit it enormously.

In a few months we bid a (temporary, we hope!) farewell to Stefan Knollmayer and Reiko Take from the Management Committee as they head to Papua New Guinea to take up a two year AusAID posting for Reiko. Congratulations Reiko! We will certainly miss you both: your calm, thoughtful and insightful comments have been invaluable to us. Also, heading overseas is Alice Davies, our marketing guru. Alice is moving to Berlin, but thankfully staying on the Management Committee and operating remotely. Her ongoing contributions to marketing and the Afghan project (as MC Representative) would otherwise be very sorely missed. We wish you lots of fun Alice in your new home!

As Jenny Dixon wrote, we now have a new strategic plan, one which focuses on strengthening the quality of our work. In the five months since the planning weekend a lot of work has been done on this, and the achievement of our objective is feeling very real. I'd like to thank the whole indigo foundation team for its extraordinary commitment to the process. The enthusiasm, optimistic, patience and belief in the organisation that is constantly shown by our staff, volunteers and supporters is inspiring and empowering.

And that's it for now! Please feel free to contact us if you'd like to talk about the work we do - we'd love to hear from you.



Lucinda and Doni flying to Honiara after visiting Turusuala.



Guiding Principles

We have four *Guiding Principles*, which describe how we wish to work with communities.

Community Ownership

Community ownership is vital to the success of community development activities. We understand that it is the people in the communities where we work who are in the best position to generate and implement their own development solutions.

Project activities (such as design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) will be done jointly with the communities we work with. Together, we will seek to include the most vulnerable groups so that they actively participate in project activities.

We only support projects where participation is voluntary.

Sustainability

We aim to support organisations with projects that have a long-term sustainable impact. The design of projects should be flexible so that changing community needs and lessons learnt can be incorporated over the life of the project. Local skills and knowledge will always be used as the first option for solving problems.

Transparency

Projects must operate in a transparent manner. This is particularly important with respect to decision making and financial management. Trust and open communication are essential.

Equity

Projects must operate in an equitable manner. This is particularly important to ensure equitable distribution of benefits as well as child and gender equity. We believe that women, men and children should have equal opportunities to participate in, and benefit from, community development activities.

the first thing we offer is **respect** 

PO Box 694 Dickson ACT 2602 Australia

info@indigofoundation.org

www.indigofoundation.org

ABN 81 765 707 4

