



## newsletter

October 2016 – issue # 37

*indigo foundation is an independent, volunteer based, 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?

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- + Jirghai, Afghanistan – forging ahead!
- + Club Rafiki – sex education, Rwandan style
- + Nyirripi, our think piece, Pat's Picks and... more!

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### Stories from Indonesia

#### Cooperative gardens, women's empowerment and a Festival in Rote

**Jemma Bailey** – General Manager

It is late afternoon and the sun is beating down when we arrive at Oenale in Rote. There is no one out on the dirt road that is the main street and as we approach the stone walls of the Oenale cooperative garden, I expect to see a quiet scene. But I am wrong.

The gardens are a hub of activity.

Green shoots are pushing up from the garden beds, the smell of compost is in the air, women are crowded around the garden well busily drawing water, another small group of women are hand-weeding the onion beds, children are shouting and playing on a small pile of soil in the middle of the garden.

In 2016 indigo foundation received \$10,000 in funding from Australian Ethical to help our partners in Rote, the Lua Lemba Education and Community Development Fund, support the establishment of five new cooperative gardens, including a garden run by widows in Nemberalla. The grant included funding for water tanks and infrastructure, seeds and stone walls to keep out the ever-present pigs. One established, it is estimated that each will feed and provide a small

income for about eight extended families. In total 400 people, and growing over time, would benefit.

When Development Coordinator Libby House and I visited in July, all five gardens were up and running. The scene at Oenale gardens we saw repeated at the Tuaneo and Oelolot gardens. Hubs of women planting and watering and weeding productive garden plots. Onions, papaya, tourist beans and sayur putih (local spinach) were the staples.

What was clear at each of the gardens we visited was that the women were at the helm. During our visit to the Oenale garden, one gardener commented with a wry smile that 'women run the gardens. We only bring the men here to do the



In the garden at Tuaneo, Rote

heavy work when we need them and we tell them what to do'. Sure enough, I looked over and saw the sole man at the garden carrying two very heavy buckets.

On an island which has been badly hit by a drought this year – where river beds that should be running are dry and the landscape is brown – the green shoots and well-tended gardens were remarkable to see.

This grant was based on the success of a pilot garden at M'bore village, which was previously funded by us and is now self-sustaining. In 2014 the M'bore Farmers Group exported 30 tonnes of onions. Income from the garden has been used to build toilets and establish a community bank, which distributes profits to families on a two-year rotation. Women who had spent hours every day drawing water from distant wells now have confidence, funds and time for small business enterprise initiatives and to support their children to stay in school and study.

Now, less than one year after Australian Ethical grant was provided, the cooperatives are producing food for the farmers and their extended families. And the cooperatives have hopes that they will grow enough produce to sell in future years, creating a rare income-generating opportunity for women in these small villages.

This visit certainly showed a promising start for the women and villages in the cooperatives. The power of the collective is strong and we look forward to seeing how the gardens develop.

*Thank you to Australian Ethical for supporting this initiative*

### **Education at the core of Lua Lemba's work**

Education remains at the heart of Lua Lemba's mission, from training kindergarten teachers, to bursaries from primary school through to university. There are a number of teachers in the core Lua Lemba group (including Lua Lemba's Chairperson Pak Onny), the conversations at the cooperative gardens frequently turn to schooling and, as I walk around villages in Rote, I meet a stream of current or former bursary recipients and parents of bursary recipients keen to share their pride in their children's progress.

In the small mountain village of M'bore, I had the privilege of seeing the full cycle of Lua Lemba's impact, meeting Mama Taruci and her Granddaughter Desi. Mama Taruci is somewhere in

her 80s (she guesses), she did not finish primary school and she continues to live a subsistence lifestyle in what is a very poor village. Mama Taruci's granddaughter Desi was supported by a Lua Lemba scholarship first through senior high school and then to study nursing in Kupang. Desi has now returned to Rote. She was the first midwife in the town of Bo'a and she now runs the health clinic in Bo'a, responsible for pregnancy care and all other health complaints that come through the door.

### **Delha cultural festival 2016**

Lua Lemba set an ambitious agenda for this year's annual cultural festival. The organising committee had obviously put a lot of work over many months into planning a full day of activities that went late into the night.

The gathering started at 10 in the morning on the beach, with young and old slowly gathering for the canoe tug-of-war. As people came together, a rhythm was struck up on the traditional Rotinese gongs, women danced, men did the traditional 'foti' and the tug of war was gallantly contested.

By lunch, a much larger crowd had gathered at Sedoen soccer field for traditional horsemanship, women's tug of war and slippery pole climbing. Sixteen riders in traditional costume rode in dramatically on Rotinese ponies, first parading to the crowd and then racing around the field as their riders swung down from the horse's saddle (with horse in full flight) to try to pick up a small ball from the ground.



*The canoe tug of war*

The women's tug of war was when the crowd really came alive. 14 teams from villages around Rote signed up. As the crowd gathered in and around the women, the excitement was palpable and cheering was deafening. The slippery pole competition ended the day's activities. Gasps and laughter came from the crowd as the young men climbed over each other to reach the prizes at the

top. There were more than a few heart-stopping moments!



Participants in traditional Foti dance competition, with Libby



Lua Lemba Committee dancing the traditional Foti dance at the night time performance

As darkness settled on Sedoen, hundreds gathered around the stage for an evening including traditional foti dancing from young boys, a fashion parade of traditional Rotinese clothing by young girls, singing, a weaving competition by school children, stand up comedy, plays by senior high school students and traditional Rotinese music.

The smiles on the faces of the Lua Lemba organising committee at the end of the day were contagious. As the chairs and marquee were being packed away and I turned to walk back home, the sounds of the committee singing karaoke-style from the stage were a testament to the closeness of the Lua Lemba committee and the success of the day.

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## Women's Empowerment – supporting women headed households

In the deep green jungle of the island of Adonara, surrounded by volcanoes and treacherous currents, is a hub of women 'heads of household' supporting each other, building capacity and creating rare opportunities to generate income.

Many of these women are very poor and have not been educated past primary school. They come from mixed backgrounds - women whose husbands have died or left the island, women who are the sole carers for children or for elderly relatives, nieces and nephews.

Nearly half (49%) of families at the lowest welfare level are headed by women. Women household heads are typically aged 18-65 supporting 1-6 dependents. They earn a livelihood in the informal sector, either as farmhands, sellers and craftswomen, bringing in an average daily income of only Rp 10,000 (approx. \$1). These women are poorly educated where more than half (57%) are illiterate. At least 78% of women heads of household are divorcees who have endured domestic violence. Women as heads of household for a long time were not recorded, turning them into the hidden poor.

Libby and I had the privilege of being hosted for by the women of PEKKA (Empowering Women Headed Families) Adonara. And what an inspiring, strong and well organised group of women they are – building community despite huge odds and transforming the lives of women heads of household.

Adonara is a small island, with a population of about 100,000. Incredibly, on such a small island, there are 80 PEKKA 'kelompok' (small PEKKA village-based groups) and an estimated 800 PEKKA



Libby with PEKKA members at the PEKKA Centre at Boleng

women spread throughout Adonara.

The PEKKA centre we stayed at had interim accommodation for women who need an emergency place to stay, open meeting rooms, a cooperative for bulk food, literacy lessons and a productive food garden that produces enough food to feed the core of the PEKKA women and women who come to centre for activities.

Over the five days we were there, the centre was a hub of meetings and women coming and going. Meals were shared communally and the atmosphere was open and welcoming.

On the first morning, PEKKA's savings and loan scheme was in full swing. Two volunteers staffed the desks in the large meeting room as women lined up for their 'banking'. PEKKA Adonara offers female heads of household a place to put their savings and to apply for loans (which they can access through mainstream financial services) from 15,000 to 50 million IDR (approx. AUD1,500.00 – 5,000.00). To borrow, a woman has to show that she is capable of ongoing savings and she must learn writing and arithmetic to record figures in her savings book. After a month and when 100,000 IDR (AUD100.00) has been reached, PEKKA can grant a loan. The reason for the loans are varied - to pay for schooling, to help establish a market stall to buy a motorbike for transport or a taxi business. Some very vulnerable women may apply for a loan to buy food and repayment is flexible, for example, it can be made in textiles, vegetables, coffee or honey.

While women were coming and going from the savings and loan 'bank', outside the weaving circle was getting started. PEKKA has a stock of weaving looms and materials for women to come together, share skills and produce beautiful weavings. There is a small shop at the PEKKA centre where visitors can buy weavings and PEKKA Adonara has a relationship with a weaving wholesaler who buys weavings from the women to sell in Bali. Weaving circles happen a couple of times a week at the two main PEKKA centres.

Maria Benga Sabon is one of the weavers I met that first morning. When she first came to PEKKA, she couldn't read or write. Now she can read, she does book-keeping and she runs the weaving group. Maria wants to be the first woman Kepala Desa (village leader) of her village – and she

is in good company. There have only been three women Kepala Desa's on Adonara and all of these have been PEKKA women. With much confidence, Maria said 'Take my photo and put it on the internet with my name because I want the world to know when I become Kepala Desa'.

By the afternoon, about 50 young women streamed in for the women's leadership course. This is a year long course that PEKKA runs to teach the women about politics, how to participate and how to organise communities. The women come three times a week to earn a diploma on graduation.

The depth of the PEKKA networks throughout the island became clear as we drove around in the PEKKA truck, picking up and dropping off women at each village we went through.

It was with some reluctance that we climbed into the PEKKA truck to traverse the island and travel back to Kupang, loaded with textiles for indigo foundation fundraising, honey, fresh coffee and locally made coconut oil, and leaving behind an inspirational group of women.

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### **A new partner in sustainable gardens!**

*Libby House – Development Coordinator*

Jemma and I also visited Apren village in West Timor with former Lua Lemba (our partner in Rote) Treasurer Pak Andi Abineno. Pak Andi has wanted to replicate Lua Lemba in Apren, his home village for many years and with this in mind he has organised twelve of the forty extended families in Apren into a co-operative – known as Nefo Ko'u Farmers Co-operative. indigo foundation agreed to provide funds to Nefo Ko'u for a cultivator this year with a view to ongoing support for a wider capacity building program in the future. Our visit aimed to have the Letter of Understanding for the cultivator funding signed and to build relationships



with the people of Nefo Ko'u

We left an already hot Kupang early in the morning passing roadside stalls selling woven baskets of sea salt and bottles of a milky coconut beer before climbing into the mountains along a narrow sealed road through tiny villages until we bumped and swung along the track into Apren.

The members of Nefo Ko'u had prepared well for our visit and were waiting for us. We talked for some time about indigo foundation and Nefo Ko'u's plans for the future before some of the Co-operative members took Jemma on a walking tour of garden sites that I had seen earlier in the year. I stayed at the house with other members, including some of the women and watched students from the high school engage in team work exercises on the edge of the village and talked about life in Apren.

When the group came back from touring the gardens we prepared to sign the Letter of Understanding. All the women disappeared when the group returned from the walk, leaving the men to negotiate the signing. I asked about this and the group explained that women held equal status in the community but they were more comfortable, and it was customary, that they sit in the adjacent area while discussions of this type took place. Two women then came and joined in the meeting – I suspect out of politeness - and other women who had been listening also joined the conversation and laughter while we drank fresh coffee and ate cassava from the gardens. This latter interaction seemed more relaxed and unforced, and the women certainly participated equally when we discussed future possibilities for the partnership with indigo foundation.

An interesting aspect of the discussions with Nefo Ko'u was their commitment to organic gardening and an appreciation that organic produce would fetch a premium at the food markets. This interest has potential to link in with the PEKKA Womens Co-operative at Lodan Doe in Adonara, East Flores who are trained in organic production and regularly pass through Kupang, and the food security program in Rote. We are hopeful of building links and information exchanges between our projects in Eastern Indonesia in the near future.

After signing the Letter of Understanding we left Apren confident that we have a solid foundation to build on with this small pilot project.

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## Nyirripi project strides ahead ...

### Australia

*Alice Roughley – Nyirripi Project Coordinator*

The ultimate goal of community development is empowerment. We are proud to see our Australian Indigenous project in Nyirripi, Central Australia, launch itself into an evolved, community-run program of cultural and community sustainability.

In 2010, at the request of Elders and Cultural Custodians, the partnership was formed between indigo foundation, the Nyirripi community (a small community with a small remote population of around 150-200 people) and Walpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC) to support an inter-generational cultural knowledge transmission project.

The project has taken the form of an annual cultural camp. Elders and young people from several families have spent time together on Country where stories about Country and culture were told and songs, dances and ceremonies were taught. The people of Nyirripi viewed the camp as 'a time of pride, joy, strong kinship, solidarity and awe.'

The project has contributed to the community holding and sharing their stories, language and traditions across generations. Through the project many young people have developed skills in all aspects of event organisation and management as well as in digital and written recording of culture.

Through the bush camps over five years the community realised opportunities to extend the program which captures the significant interdependencies between connection to Country, maintenance of cultural practices, identity and psychological and physical health. The community has, this year, decided to extend the objectives of the program, increase the number of bush camps and to run them independently.

This community-led outcome is in part the legacy of solid support and partnership and possible through the community recently acquiring government funding for bush camps. Future camps will take a variety of forms, some gender-based, some age-based and some with a specific focus on at-risk groups such as young people who are at risk of self harm and health education.

We view this community initiative and the evolution of the project as a most rewarding outcome. We wish the community every success and look forward to news from the program, the community more broadly and to staying in touch.

We will also continue a relationship with the community through our partnership with the Wurlukurlangu Artist Aboriginal Corporation whereby we can support Nyirрпи artists in their artistic development and promote and celebrate Walpiri culture in the broader community.

*Our thanks to Alice who has led this project with integrity, insight and commitment, and who has taught us much about evaluation and reflection as a critical part of the development cycle.*

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### Education in Jirghai ... forging ahead!

#### Afghanistan

**Ali Reza Yunspour** – Jirghai Project Coordinator

Following our successful community development model that helped nine schools in Borjeghai, we established a promising partnership with Jirghai community (the Jirghai School Project) in 2012.

Jirghai School includes a network of 21 schools in Jirghai area of Nawur District in Ghazni Province of Afghanistan. Jirghai has approximately 30,000 people who belong to the Hazara ethnic group. Hazaras are a minority ethnic group in Afghanistan who have suffered decades of social, racial and religious discrimination. Like the Borjegai community, Jirghai has embraced education as a way to alleviate poverty and to ensure their children live a more peaceful life. The community has shown strong commitment to ensure that the education provided is of good quality for their children. All Jirghai schools are registered with the

Ministry of Education.

Last year, we developed an encouraging partnership with the Planet Wheeler Foundation in Australia. They have provided the core funding for the construction of Shebar High School building, which will be completed September 2016.

*Strong collective efforts to keep the schools open:* Despite many local and national challenges, Jirghai community have lobbied their central and Provincial Governments and successfully establish 21 schools since 2002. However, keeping those schools open and operational is not an easy task in the context of Afghanistan because rural schools face acute shortages of budget, and there are always delays in the delivery of textbooks, salaries of teachers, and other education resources. For example, I was told that Shebar High School did not receive any new textbooks for their secondary students from the Ministry of Education in the past four years. But, the school asked all students to look after their textbooks and return them at the end of academic year so that they could be reused next year. Despite those efforts, I met several secondary students in SHS who told me that they share some of their textbooks with other students because of the shortage of textbooks in their school.

In addition, the school principals and teachers face ongoing security challenges during their travels to and from Provincial centre in Ghazni. Hence, the school Shuras, teachers and principals in Jirghai have to continuously work together to ensure their respective school remains open. While the burning and closure of schools have been widely reported in Afghanistan due to the threats from the Taliban and their affiliated groups and, in some cases, because of poor management, Jirghai community have shown strong collective efforts to keep their schools open and operational.



Moreover, Jirghai community have also provided the necessary financial and social supports to their school principals and teachers. For example, Shebar High School principal and two teachers are from Borjegai and it has one teacher from Jighatu District of Ghazni. Due to long distance and lack of transport facilities, they stay and sleep in the school office overnight. The community help them with cooking, bathing and washing facilities, and some additional salaries.

*Strong community engagement:* During my first trip in Shebar High School, I met the school principal and had a lengthy meeting with 10 community elders and representatives. The community representatives included some of those people who made the initial request for assistance during my trip to this school in 2013. Since the signing of our Commitment Agreement, they have been responsible for collecting donations from their respective villages for labour salaries and purchase of required tools. They voluntarily accepted to go door-by-door to collect donations.

They assured me that the project has the support of the entire community. Every family supported their school financially, and several families and individuals had donated their times. In particular, the school principal Mr Afgari, who is from Borjegai, used to stay overnight in the school to ensure the safety of the building and purchased materials. He also spent hours of extra times to bring the rest of the community together. Additionally, the professional builders also told me that several community members helped them with day-to-day works particularly during the loading and transportation of building materials to the schools.

*Strong will for quality education:* I was amazed with the strong will and efforts of Imam Hussein High School (which we supported with furniture and teacher training) to improve education quality. The school principal has hired several new teachers (two of the new teachers were university graduates from Borjegai), including two female teachers to encourage more girls to complete high school.

In the large community event that was organised by the School Shura (Council) to thank indigo foundation for supporting their schools, several parents, elders and students of Imam Hussein High School commented that the school furniture has significantly helped the school with their efforts

to improve education quality. Last year, the overwhelming majority of Imam Hussein High School Kankor (final school exams) participants went to study in public universities. In this context, the school community were also so thankful and happy to receive the DAP-funded books.

At the event, the school principal also said that he has been working with the principal of Koshkak High School in Borjegai (he was also present at the event) to learn shared lessons on how to improve education quality.

*High level of appreciations:* During my interviews and informal conversations, the people of Jirghai were really appreciative of the support they had received from indigo foundation.

In Shebar High School, the school principal said to me that 'you [indigo foundation] had provided the assistance to forgotten areas of rural Afghanistan in the past decade. We're so thankful for your support because soon our students will move to the new building...They no longer have to study under the tents'.

In Imam Hussein High School event, Mr Modaqiq said that 'the school community have benefitted immensely from the furniture project. We've now the basic infrastructure in our school, and are confident that they will help us to further improve education quality'. He asked the crowd- students, teachers and parents- to use the school resources (building, furniture, books, and etc.) wisely and properly. He added: 'every dollar spent in our school could have benefitted another person elsewhere...[As such], we're thankful for your (indigo foundation) kind assistance to our school and the risk that you (Ali) have taken to visit our school and to personally bring the books for our students'.



At the event, the School presented a certificate of appreciation to myself and gifts to Mr Hasanzada and one of his team members.

*Shortage of education resources:* Apart from the significant achievements in Imam Hussein High School and Shebar High School, other Jirghai schools face acute shortage of education resources:

Fatimeya School, Band Sang School and Shuturmorda High School had basic buildings that were constructed with community initiatives. However, the buildings were in very poor conditions - they did not have furniture, access to safe drinking water, and hygiene facilities.

I visited these three schools and met the Shura of each school. During our meetings, they spoke in length about the needs in their schools which included cementing of floors, wall plaster and windows, furniture, safe drinking water and hygiene facilities. They also said that they have seen our previous projects in Borjegai and Jirghai schools and are happy to work on similar arrangements with indigo foundation.

Following our meetings, they have sent me written proposals in which they have outlined and prioritized the needs in their respective school. Each proposal has the signatures of respective school principals, at least one teacher, key Shura members, and several community elders. They have outlined furniture, cement of floors, safe drinking water, and hygiene facilities as their most immediate priorities.

*Shortage of teachers:* From school visited, the overwhelming majority of Jirghai schools faced shortage of teachers. In particular, they needed female teachers to encourage more girls to stay longer in school and to complete high school.

Currently, the majority of teachers were working double shifts (morning and afternoon shifts), which has been a common practice in most urban and rural schools in Afghanistan in the past decade. However, several of the teachers were not paid on time because of the shortage and poor management of the government development and operational budget for schools. For example, the budget distribution to rural schools was delayed in the past two years partly because the National Unity Government could not form its cabinet until last month and some of the senior positions in the Ministry were waiting for permanent staff.

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*Jirghai people were really appreciative and happy about their partnership with indigo foundation. They were strongly in the view that they could not provide the furniture, safe drinking water, and hygiene facility for Imam Hussein High School and a new building for Shebar High School without the kind donations from indigo foundation.*

*Moreover, they respected the partnership for its transparent decision-makings and ownership they felt in planning, design and implementation of indigo foundation-funded projects. A community elder told me that 'In the past decade, we've had some supports for our roads, and occasionally for our schools, from other places. But, we didn't know them and they also didn't ask us about what we wanted....When we work with you (indigo foundation), we are so comfortable and feel respected. We trust you because of your works in Imam Hussein High School and also we hear a lot about you from Borjegai schools. We are really thankful of your support and making the hard trip to our schools. At the current context, we know many people would not make this journey from Kabul to our schools'.*

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The Jirghai School Project has had the following impacts:

*Infrastructure improvements:* Jirghai School Project has provided furniture, library, and books for Imam Hussein High School and a new building for Shebar High School. For Shebar High School, this means that they will not continue the rest of their schooling under the tents or under the hot sun. In the long-term, as we experienced in Borjegai schools, infrastructure improvements would ensure safer learning environment for students and improve gender equity in Jirghai schools.

*Learning opportunity:* Our previous and current projects in Jirghai schools have helped the community and indigo foundation to learn about each other's priorities, and shared goals and objectives. In 2012, we knew very little about Jirghai schools and the existing capacity in the community. However, we have now the data on the level of needs for almost half of the 21 schools. As our experiences in Imam Hussein High School and

Shebar High School indicate, the community has also the capacity to work together, to raise fund, and to manage small and large education projects. In addition, the community has learnt about our Guiding Principles and community development models in Borjegai and in their own schools.

*Capacity development:* Jirghai School Project has improved the capacity of indigo foundation and Jirghai community. In indigo, we have better supports available for our volunteers and staff; are more mature in coordination and project management; and are stronger in fundraising. We have also developed a promising partnership with the Planet Wheeler Foundation in Australia. In Kabul, our Financial Trustee and his team have transitioned successfully since 2014, and have added new members from Jirghai in their team. In addition, Imam Hussein High School and Shebar High School have learnt how to write proposals, provide reports, and raise funds for education purposes. They have also developed skills to coordinate and manage development projects.

*Peace building:* Jirghai community has suffered from historical discrimination, poverty and ongoing wars in Afghanistan. Moreover, the villages and families are deeply divided on various issues including land ownership, water distribution, and political affiliations. However, indigo foundation-Jirghai partnership has brought the community together to work on several education projects since 2012, and has strengthened the community's shared purpose to educate their children irrespective of their age, gender and socioeconomic backgrounds. As such, the indigo foundation funded project has served as a catalyst for peace building in the community.

Three issues we are often asked about:

1. **Equity:** Jirghai schools are public schools. As such, they have the responsibility to enrol all school-aged children irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, age, and geographic distance to schools.

In this regard, they have made significant improvements. For example, around 30-35% of all students, particularly in primary schools, are girls. In addition, schools have also students from families that are located very far from the school. In Imam Hussein High School, two of the 11 teachers are female that highlights a significant development in a social environment where girls were historically excluded from education opportunities.

However, Jirghai schools still have a long way to achieve full gender and geographic equity. In particular, girls are under-represented in secondary schools because of cultural, social and economic barriers. For example, some of the families still do not feel comfortable to send their girls to study in open space or under the tents. In addition, students with disabilities are entirely excluded from education system in Afghanistan, including Jirghai schools, because of lack of resources and qualified teachers in this area. As our experiences in Borjegai schools and Imam Hussein High School indicate, access to basic education infrastructure like building and furniture can encourage more girls to stay in schools and complete Year 12.



2. **Finances:** We have several reporting mechanisms in place to ensure the safety and transparency of our financial supports to Jirghai schools. We get a transaction receipt from the relevant Financial Agency that helps us with sending of money from Australia to Kabul (we have also used Western Union several times in the past year). Our Financial Trustee (or a member of his team if he was not in Kabul) confirms the receipt of each transaction in Kabul. Due to ongoing security concerns, our Financial Trustee uses a local Financial Agency when he transfers the money from Kabul to Jirghai schools (the financial agency is from Borjegai and he does not charge any fee for the transaction). After that, the relevant school principal and at least one member of relevant school Shura confirms the receipt of money to the Financial Trustee and myself. The Financial Trustee and his team members also assist the schools with the expenditure and management of money, and regularly provide updates to us. Before the next transaction, our Financial Trustee provide a detailed written report on the expenditure of previous transaction and identifies areas that will be supported with the next round of fund.

In addition, our Financial Trustee and the school Shura regular provide financial updates to the community during major school gatherings like Muslim Eid and New Year celebrations. During my monitoring and evaluation visit, our Financial Trustee and the school principals (Imam Hussein High School and Shebar High School) also gave an update on our financial assistance to those schools.

**3. Security:** Nationally, the security situation in Afghanistan remains very fragile. Recently, a report by US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction found that the Afghan government has control of around 65% of the entire country. The remaining 35% are controlled by armed opposition groups such as the Taliban, ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and other groups. In addition, the Taliban and other armed groups have managed to take several districts and, in a rare event last year, Qunduz Provincial Centre, from government forces in the past two years. Yet, they have not been able to hold and control the majority of those areas more than a week. More recently, ISIS attacked a peaceful demonstration in Kabul which killed around 90 people and wounded another 300 innocent civilians. In addition, the economic conditions have deteriorated since the ‘partial’ withdrawal of international security forces in 2014.

Despite those security and economic concerns, the risk of a full breakdown of political order in Kabul seems unlikely. In the recent meeting of NATO countries in Warsaw, the international community promised to support the Afghan security forces and provide financial aid to Afghan National Unity Government until 2020. This new commitment means that the National Unity Government in Kabul is likely to complete its five-years term. As long as the government controls major city centres, it is very likely that the Ministry of Education provide the operational budget for Jirghai schools. In addition, the newly graduated students have returned, and continue to return, in the community as school teachers and principals.

Moreover, Afghanistan is a very different place than what it was in 2001. The confidence in the country’s security forces, police and army, have grown significantly, and the majority of people and political groups support them. Around 8 million students are enrolled in schools, and approximately 250,000 students study in 33 public universities and around 100 private higher education institutions.

Also, there are over 100 radio stations and around 50 private TV channels. More significantly, the majority of the people of Afghanistan- regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sect, and age- are no longer supporting the underlying ideas and cultures that produce violence and allows for the rise of violent and extremist groups like the Taliban.

In such a mixed socio-political context, the reality remains that no work in Afghanistan is without risks. However, the commitment and dedications of our volunteers, supporters, and our staff assisted us to succeed in helping the Borjegai schools in the past decade. As future guardians of their schools and community, the youths of Borjegai, girls and boys, have been equipped with knowledge and skills that could help them to ensure the sustainability of their schools. If any lesson our partnership with Borjegai schools has for our current and future works in Jirghai, it is that indigo should continue to provide support for Jirghai schools today with a strong hope that an educated children and youth in Jirghai have more will and capacity to ensure the future sustainability of their schools in the future.

Additionally, we (in indigo), and our Financial Trustee’s team in Kabul have also learnt the ‘know-how’ of how to plan, implement and manage education projects in difficult contexts like Afghanistan. Thanks to the dedication and professionalism of all involved, we have supported Borjegai schools since 2003, and Jirghai schools since 2012, without any minor or major incident.

More importantly, the support and commitment of local people have been the backbone of our success in Borjegai and Jirghai communities. Looking at both of my M&E trips, the Jirghai community’s support for education and their faith and engagement in their schools are stronger today than they were in 2013. As such, they will continue to support to ensure the sustainability of their schools.

As one of elders in Shebar High School put it *‘The people here consider their partnership with you [indigo foundation] as the only chance to provide education resources for their schools and to ensure that their children receive a quality education they deserve’.*

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## Sex education – Rwandan style!

### Rwanda

David and Mandy Wheen – Project Coordinators

We were asked to be at the Camp Kigali School by 2.00 pm for an event to be put on by Club Rafiki to further its program to reduce teenage pregnancies in Rwanda.

We entered the cavernous school Assembly Hall to find some 500 secondary students, with typical African patience, quietly waiting. Camp Kigali School has 3000 students from Nursery to Year 12.

About 2.30pm music blasted forth and two local musicians appeared wowing the audience. By this time there were several hundred more young people and their teachers present.



The audience at Camp Kigali

With the audience suitably warmed up a video was screened which the audience watched attentively. It was about boy/girl relationships, including sexual relationships and the impact of unplanned pregnancies. The film was a locally produced and was part funded and part written by Club Rafiki. Not the sort of presentation which would grip Australian teenagers but young Rwandans were glued.

The film was over and the audience erupted as Club Rafiki dancers appeared. As they performed the audience surged closer and the music roared in our ears. The dancers finished and the audience in a disciplined way all retreated to their seats.

Prizes were then awarded to winners of poem and drawing competitions about “Teens Fight Against Teen Pregnancy”.

Then stepped forward six young dancers. Initially holding a large, very large, poster of the female

reproductive organs and an explanation was given by the youngsters of the functions of these in the reproductive process. A similar explanation was given about the male reproductive organs.

There followed a question and answer session between the young presenters and the audience. Questions were tossed to the audience and those who gave the correct answer received a Bic biro. A much valued possession.

The confidence of these young peer educators was to be admired. Presenting so well, as evidenced by the attentiveness of the audience, on a subject which Australian young people may have been much more diffident about. We believe some of the self confidence of the dancers can be attributed to the work they do in the dance school preparing for and then performing in public.

Four young people then came on stage. They were actors from the movie. They proceeded to talk with the audience asking questions and providing views. Or that is what we think they were doing as during the whole afternoon there was not a word of English.

The actors then conducted a small role play about how a girl can deal with unwanted advances.

Yet again the dancers performed. The level of excitement and sound David can only compare with the night in 1964 when he went to see, but barely hear, the Beatles at Sydney Stadium.

All the while we had noticed three young people, senior students we guessed, sitting quietly at a table writing as the afternoon progressed. They were then called upon to speak. We were told that they presented a summary of the key points which had been made during the afternoon about how to look after your sexual health. Excellent pedagogical practice.

By this time it was 5.00pm and we thought the afternoon was over. But no, the audience erupted again as 30 or so senior girls and boys strode the stage modelling various garments they had had a hand in designing/making. They did it so well. Fashion is a high priority particularly for Rwandan girls.

At 5.30 the show was over and with what now must have been 2000 students we left the hall with the sound reverberating in our ears.

We were so impressed with the confidence and panache of the young people who led the afternoon, of the receptiveness of the students to the sexual education messages, the lack of embarrassment or sniggering at the explicit sexual health messages, the presence of so many teachers, the good use made of items indigo has funded (eg sound equipment, camera and Family Planning NSW educational materials) and the support of the school in being willing to hold such an event for their students.

All in all, indigo foundation funds put to extremely good use.



Camp Kigali presentation

### Pat's Picks

*If you, like most of us, don't have time to research, but want to be kept informed about global development developments – Pats Picks is for you!*

**The focus this issue is the refugees**, with some useful blogs on the Refugee Summit, held in September in New York and which went nowhere.

I recommend to you the first blog - from UNSW's Kaldor Law Centre - an excellent one stop shop for those wanting to brief themselves on refugee policy, scope and law. In fact, it's all you need!

a. *September summits on refugees: Background, commentary and resources*

<http://www.kaldorcentre.unsw.edu.au/news/september-summits-refugees-background-commentary-and-resources>

b. *Amnesty: UN Refugee Summit Talks End in Abject Failure*

Unsurprisingly, countries preparing words for the 19 September global summit on refugees could not

agree a global compact to shape a global approach and standards to the new reality on refugee flows. Shame on them.

<http://www.amnesty.org.au/news/comments/42262/>

The Summit was thus forgettable. The Refugee Council of Australia's report below shows just how forgettable it was:

<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/getfacts/international/internationalsystem/un-refugee-summit/>

c. *HRW: The Refugee Summit: A Failure of Vision*

"As failed states proliferate, as non-state actors become more abusive, and as climate change drives ever-more migration, the need to protect a broader set of vulnerable migrants forced to leave their homes will be more compelling than ever" - .....but the Summit was a missed opportunity to realign the global response to reflect this reality.

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/09/20/refugee-summit-failure-vision>

The Australian Government's intervention at the leaders' Summit the day after was both dishonest and self serving. Here is the Human Rights Law Centre's response to the intervention. The ABC has reported on it extensively anyway.

<http://hrlc.org.au/obama-summit-announcement-does-nothing-to-address-suffering-in-offshore-camps/>

On refugee children, and the importance of educating them, I tripped over this gem - from the Lebanon d. representative of Human Rights Watch:

d. *Educate refugee children or lose them forever*

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2016/09/educate-refugee-children-lose-160919102949662.html>

And this, handy outline, updating you on the history, scope and nature of refugee flows into Malaysia

e. *FACTBOX-Fleeing persecution at home, thousands of Rohingya land in Malaysia (Thomas Reuters)*

<http://news.trust.org/item/20160830030159-t1h1q/>

Some country-level analysis which might be worth a look....

a. *Aleppo is screwed. Thanks everyone. (IRIN)*

Penned by senior IRIN journalist Ben Parker in late July, and prescient given recent weeks of horror in Aleppo. What should aid agencies - the UN, international NGOs - do in a place like Syria? A question highlighting the moral dilemmas...

...'As the donors make demands, the NGOs and media bash the UN, the auditors bash the NGOs, and the kaleidoscope of aid agency alliances shifts, the international system is starting to look a little like the Syrian conflict'.

<https://www.irinnews.org/opinion/2016/07/29/aleppo-screwed-thanks-everyone>

*b. Aid and Afghanistan's future (Dev Policy blog)*

Countries will meet with the Government of Afghanistan in Brussels in October. Essentially another pledging conference, it's a chance to consider how the international discourse on aid to Afghanistan has evolved since 2001. indigo foundation's effort is local and community-based, and we are not engaged in this national level discussion but it's good to know the broader policy picture. The focus here is the Government's experience of aid. Some interesting recurring problems appear here - capacity, effectiveness, and leakage...

<http://devpolicy.org/aid-afghanistans-future-20160923/#comment-553979>

*c. Israel Declares War on Gaza's NGOs (Foreign Policy)*

You will have heard about the harassment, arrest and jailing without charge of World Vision's Director in Gaza. It seems the aid community in Gaza is seeing a wider pattern emerging..."An ongoing crackdown on international organizations is paving the way for the next armed conflict with Hamas".

[http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/09/20/israel-declares-war-on-gazas-ngos-palestine-hamas/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=flash%20points%209-20&utm\\_term=Flashpoints](http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/09/20/israel-declares-war-on-gazas-ngos-palestine-hamas/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=flash%20points%209-20&utm_term=Flashpoints)

*d. Olympics marathon medalist's protest shines spotlight on unrest in Ethiopia (Thomas Reuters)*

<http://news.trust.org/item/20160825172943-6fj9m/>

Next time, we'll revisit two recent stories:

An update on Ethiopia - the roots and political economy of the current unrest caused by forced land reform (which led to the Olympic runner's protest); and the food crisis - did the news agencies just move on? or was it averted? what happened?

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**our think piece**

**No One Gets Left Behind: Sustainable Development Goals and the \$1 a day poverty measure**

**Dr Susan Engel – Board member**

On 25 September the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) turned one. All United Nations member states signed onto the goals and this can be seen as an unprecedented step toward creating a more inclusive and equitable society because the goals are underpinned by the principle that *no one is to be left behind*.

But what does 'no one is to be left behind' mean in practice? The SDGs target is that by 2030, we will eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, measured by the World Bank developed absolute poverty measure of people living on less than \$1.25 a day. The line started off at US \$1 day in 1990 and was increased over the years to \$1.08 in 2001, \$1.25 in 2008 and then, in 2015, not long after the SDGs were formulated, to \$1.90 day. These increases are supposedly to adjust for increases in the cost of living but that is only part of the story.

First though, let me explain briefly how the measure came about. It was created by World Bank researchers in the late 1980s, who realised that the poverty lines in some of the then poorest states (mostly in sub-Saharan Africa) converged around the US \$1 a day mark, when converted not using exchange rates but using Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs). PPPs are a way of accounting for the different cost of goods and services in different countries and thus avoid some of the problems of exchange rate based comparisons (though they have other limitations).

The measure was not calculated to provide for basic human needs, indeed there is strong evidence that the measure does not even provide enough calories for a human to survive in the long run! It was simply an average of the very lowest poverty lines of the time at which it was created.

It is a very mono-dimensional approach to understanding what poverty is, it does not take into account the various dimension of well-being like being educated and healthy. As with any single measure of poverty, the difference between being just above and just below is marginal yet once a person is just above

the line, they disappear from the statistics and are seemingly no longer of concern to inter-state humanitarian efforts. There is also a fairly large margin of error around single number based statistics – the quality of the national data they are based on matter a lot and these are often fairly poor as do adjustments.

The shift to \$1.90 day was not to adjust for increased costs of living but rather to adjust for depreciation in the US dollar. According to Jason Hickel (2015), the new line is significantly lower than the old one and thus with it 100 million people simply disappeared of the global poverty headcount.

In contrast, Peter Edwards back in 2006 attempted to calculate an ‘ethical poverty line’. He did this by looking at the income it would take to achieve a normal human life expectancy of just over 70 years. Edwards found it was around 2.7 to 3.9 times the poverty lines of the time. Hickel updated these calculations in 2015 using the World Bank calculations and came up with a figure of \$7.40 day.

This makes it clear that poverty is not simply disappearing with economic growth as our current government would have us believe. The work of indigo foundation with its focus on respect based partnerships is vital but it is not enough. We need to encourage governments to do more, not just to give more aid but equally to put in fairer global systems around tax evasion and avoidance, illicit money flows, trade and equality. This is one of the key reasons that indigo foundation aims to give greater attention to issues of advocacy into the future along with continuing our strong program of support for marginalised communities.

#### References

Edwards, P. (2006) ‘The Ethical Poverty Line: a moral quantification of absolute poverty’, *Third World Quarterly* 27(2) 2006: 377-393.

Hickel, J. (2015) ‘Could you live on \$1.90 a day? That’s the international poverty line’, 1 November  
<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2015/nov/01/global-poverty-is-worse-than-you-think-could-you-live-on-190-a-day>

J. Hickel (2016) ‘The true extent of global poverty and hunger: Questioning the good news narrative of the Millennium Development Goals’, *Third World Quarterly* online first.

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## our people

### Joyce Muwoya Katooko – *Uganda Liaison Officer*



Joy is our Liaison Officer for our project supporting vulnerable children and families impacted by HIV in Budaka, Uganda. This project is a unique one for indigo foundation because we partner with six very small

grassroots NGOs. Joy plays a key and highly skilled role in bringing together the priorities of our six partner organisations.

Joy has a passion for social justice and, despite have now moved on from her job at the Marie Stopes Institute in nearby M'bale, Joy continues to travel long distances to maintain her role as Liaison Officer for indigo foundation.

Thank you Joy!

### Lyla Rogan – *Board Member (monitoring and evaluation)*



The opportunity to contribute and reflect on international development has come up at a few points in my life. Being on the indigo foundation board is the most recent of those.

As a young adult I travelled across South East Asia, learning about different cultures and experiencing travel on a shoe string, like so many other enthusiastic Australians. I was somewhat blind to the underlying causes of the poverty, marginalisation and other struggles I stumbled through. I saw them but was not reflecting too much on causes or solutions.

With a social work background, a commitment to social justice and advocacy and a little more maturity, my next encounter with international development was with WaterAid UK in Tanzania. My partner and I were working on a water supply and sanitation program and my brief was to develop a community appraisal process that engaged communities in understanding the link between

water, sanitation and health and supported them to develop strategies to improve hygiene and health in their villages. Much later I came to development again as a consultant working with the international NGOs and UN agencies in the humanitarian sector around accountability to communities and the quality and impact of aid and development.

These experiences have left me both passionate and sceptical about the role and impact of international development in addressing the underlying structural and political factors that cause and invariably reinforce inequity, conflict and power imbalance in this world of ours.

I am involved with indigo foundation to restore the balance in my own mind and heart – to be part of an organisation that puts communities and their resourcefulness first through genuine respect and a solid and transformative community development approach. Being on the board of the indigo foundation is for me is a way to give back. Having been a consultant now for over 20 years, I bring knowledge of the shared and different experiences of a wide range of non-government organisations and other agencies. As a member of the board I am tasked to assist indigo foundation develop its processes for monitoring and evaluation. The underlying goal here is to improve our capacity to demonstrate and tell the great stories of impact and change that communities achieve with relatively small grants and a principled approach to partnering with communities.

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### **Future thoughts and directions**

As mentioned in the last newsletter, in May the Board held its first planning day to determine the strategic future of indigo foundation for the next 3-5 years. Facilitated by Ann Porcino of RPR Consulting, this proved to be an energising day that broadly affirmed indigo foundation's principles and development practices, while also discussing opportunities to expand our impact and influence. The board approached the planning day with a commitment to asking the hard questions and getting to the heart of what indigo foundation stands for and how it can be most effective.

The day explored past successes, forces of change in the world and their likely impacts, why indigo foundation exists and what we want to achieve. We looked ahead five years to picture what the we would be doing and how we are organised to achieve

our goals. While there was much convergence of thinking there were also new ideas or areas where different strategies were identified. The day was drawn together by looking at the emerging priorities and identifying questions needing further discussion. Below are two key areas that will influence our future.

### **Looking back on indigo foundation's successes**

Success for us is very much captured by the significant gains communities make as a result of our support over time. Benefits may flow at an individual, community and societal level. Several projects were cited in the discussion as examples of this even though they are at very different stages, for example - South Sudan, Indonesia, Rwanda, Afghanistan and Uganda. indigo foundation believes in and draws on the strengths and resilience of communities and sees its success through the lens of communities growing in capacity to deal with their own issues. Projects are encouraged and supported to take new directions as communities prioritise their needs and benefit from the spin-offs from early successes.

We believe this success stems from a willingness to listen to communities and to understand community development takes time and that the results are not linear or predictable. We stick with communities when there are setbacks and unanticipated turns in projects and recognise how important small accomplishments can be for sustainable improvements in people's lives and in communities. indigo foundation focuses on creating sustainable change through a grass roots community development approach. The fundamental belief in communities to be the driver of their own change is critical to indigo foundation's identity and approach to development.

indigo foundation can be proud of the way it lives out its values and is vigilant about a principled development approach. The guiding principles are used in assessing, monitoring and sometimes closing projects, in deciding who we partner with in communities and in selecting and supporting our volunteers and staff. Our values also help us calibrate our relationships with communities and local partners. Taking risks and enabling communities to exercise power and responsibility is an important aspect of the process and relationship. Respect is not just a word for indigo

foundation, it is a way of being and relating to the communities we work with.

Importantly, successful impact in communities is generally achieved with very small amounts of funding. Resources – financial and human – are used as enablers of a development process.

*We saw the pillars of our approach to community development being:*

- Our guiding principles – community ownership, sustainability, transparency and equity
- Belief in the capacities and potential of communities to lead and achieve change
- Respect for the dignity, integrity and identity of individuals and communities
- Human rights at the centre of our belief system and approach
- A commitment to long term partnerships with communities and flexibility in use of funds
- Grassroots engagement – a bottom up understanding of needs and priorities
- A commitment to listen to communities as a first principle and be flexible in responding to changing needs and priorities
- A willingness to take risks and stick with communities when the going gets tough
- Quality relationships between community leaders and volunteer project coordinators.

### **The future: the context for future strategic directions**

We reflected on the critical driving forces likely to shape indigo foundation's world in the next 10 years and explored the potential impact of these forces. This section briefly summarises the identified themes.

*Rise of nationalism and neo-liberalism:* The spread of this philosophy or ideology has resulted in a declining middle class in many developed countries and rising inequalities within and between countries. Empowering local movements and supporting action on fairer distribution of wealth is critical in developing and middle income countries and indigo foundation can play a role in supporting these efforts.

*Rising conflict and terrorism:* The world is witnessing high levels of conflict on many continents with tragic consequences. The threat of terrorism is fuelling fear and retaliation around the world, and exacerbating existing tensions,

particularly in the Middle East and parts of Africa. This poses significant risks of a crackdown on civil society and increased oppression and violence toward religious and ethnic groups.

*Movement of people:* The largest movement of displaced people (internally displaced people, refugees and economic migrants) since the Second World War is placing pressure on many poor countries and on the western world. Politically this is creating divisions and conflict within countries receiving and hosting refugees. It also presents a massive challenge regionally and globally to find long term solutions to stem the tide and respond to the needs of people fleeing their countries. At the same time, diaspora groups are becoming a more important force in international development and in the transfers from developed to developing countries. People are also more mobile as a result of global businesses, international trade and tourism.

*Climate change:* The frequency and scale of climate events and natural disasters is increasing and they are having a disproportionate impact on already poor and marginalised communities and countries. Over time, the impacts of climate change is likely to influence the focus of our work with communities (based on their needs and concerns). There is an urgent need for continued negotiations and agreements to strengthen the global response to climate change.

*Role of women in society:* Positive and adverse trends here - There is continued oppression and exclusion of women in many countries where we work but also evidence of more involvement and influence of women in decision making in many countries. Domestic violence continues to impact women and children but there is also greater acknowledgement of this as an issue. Pornography is increasing and is more accessible than ever. Exploitation of women (sex and labour) is a major concern globally.

*Other forms of oppression and violence:* Religious minorities and ethnic minorities; Lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people.

*Technology and increased connectivity in the world:* Rapidly developing technologies are enabling rapid communication and exchange of information. Mobile phones can be a significant asset for developing communities, however there can be pros and cons in terms of impacts on human relationships. Lack of

access to modern technology can be a new form of inequity and disadvantage for communities.

*Investment fund flows:* As developing countries embrace stable responsible governments that follow sound governance practices (e.g. transparent reporting in accordance with international standards), investment funds should flow to support resource, infrastructure, tourist and business development. This in turn creates income (wealth) which can be taxed to support, amongst other things, health and social services; in this context steps to eliminate systemic fraud and corruption become even more critical.

*UN Sustainable Development Goals:* Building on the Millennium Development Goals, the SDGs provide an international framework for development with commitment from 170 countries. Social and environmental goals are better reflected in the 17 SDGs and the specificity of the goals and indicators provide a clearer framework than before.

*Changes in aid and development architecture and funding:* Globally, there are major threats to institutional support and financing of humanitarian aid and international development. Funding overall is reducing and the proportion being allocated to humanitarian crises and response is now significantly higher than to long term development. Some long standing international development NGOs (INGOs) have grown dramatically in size (staff, budgets and operations) and in keeping with global trends, they are increasingly looking to work through local partners rather than having an operational presence on the ground. Governments are looking to the private sector to play a bigger role in aid and development and this potentially presents a threat to the traditional role of civil society in the development space. There is also a trend toward straight cash payments, something indigo has supported in principle, if not implemented, for some time.

There was so much more, but these two areas give an indication of the context that will shape our future how future. A second planning day was held in September, and we will have the plan finalised by our AGM on 6th November.

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**indigo update**

**Jemma Bailey** – General Manager,

**Sally Stevenson** – Chairperson

It's been longer than usual between newsletters this time, but we hope you find this one an interesting read. There is always so much going on, for a small organisation such as ours: working with our partners, strategic partnership development here in Australia, future planning, strong governance and effective management, and the further development of our marketing and fundraising approach.

Firstly though, we are very happy to report we had a fantastic result for the financial year 2015-16. Our supporter base continues to grow, with our long term donors being the backbone of financial sustainability. This year our position was strengthened with more philanthropic grant funding, and the development of excellent partnerships including a continued relationship with as Rotary. A very warm thank you to all of you who have supported us throughout the year, and provided us with a lovely surge in June.

We are all excited by the direction that has emerged out of the strategic planning process: confirming and consolidating much of what we do, but with new ideas and approaches that will improve and expand on what we have done, and respond to emerging local and global issues.

As part of a renewed approach to telling our stories and improving our communication with you, our supporters, this will be the last of this style of newsletter. We will be increasing our on-line contact, and producing a bi yearly magazine, still packed with the personal indigo foundation style information and detail, but with improvements!

If you would like to meet the Board, have any questions or comments or would just like to know more about the direction or operations, please come to our AGM in Sydney, on November 6<sup>th</sup> (details at [www.indigofoundation.org](http://www.indigofoundation.org))

Until then, our thanks to all of the wonderful people who create and manage events and fundraisers for us, and who promote us to their friends and networks – we can't do what we do without you.

Warm wishes..... and enjoy Spring!

## indigo foundation in the community

### **The Canberra Dinner**

On Saturday 28th May at the National Press Club, we hosted our 6th annual Canberra dinner. MCced once again by the wonderful Virginia Haussegger, over 150 guests were entertained by Rotinese dancers and musicians with sasandos, while we celebrated our 15 years of partnership with the Lua Lemba Education and Community Development Foundation in Rote, Indonesia.



A big thank you goes to our Patron, Libby Lloyd, who is the driving force behind this dinner every year - we are so grateful to have her. Thank you also to others that helped make the event a success including Louisa, Shelley, Heather, Yoshi and Supipi. We were thrilled by the support we received and the enthusiasm of our guests raising just over \$18,000. We are looking forward to 2017 event already!

### **University of Wollongong**

Board member, Susan Engel, presented the indigo foundation award at the University of Wollongong in June to the best first year student in International Studies. Congratulations Harry Thompson!

### **Afternoon tea with Dr Sima Samar**

We had the wonderful privilege of enjoying an afternoon tea with Dr Sima Samar, former Vice President and former Minister of Women Affairs and the current head of Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, organised by the inimitable Ros Strong.

Dr Samar, a Hazara woman, is also the founder of the Gawharshad Institute of Higher Education, within which sits the Women's Empowerment Centre which we support and is run by the indefatigable Nasima Rahmani (see below).

It was a delight and an honour to sit with Dr Samar and listen to her insightful and compelling thoughts on women, Afghanistan and the future of the country. We look forward to seeing Dr Samar soon, as we hope she will be coming out again in May.

### **The Rotary Satellite e-club of Ryde - 2nd annual Golf in your Pyjamas!**

Following on from the success of last year the club held its Charity Golf experience again in May.

Unlike a traditional golf experience, there was no need to get up at 4am, weather conditions were immaterial, breakfast, lunch and dinner could be had when you wanted and you could drink whatever you wanted from your own fridge. It was a virtual game of golf and all the proceeds went to Rotary Satellite e-Club of Ryde beneficiaries, including us! Thank you to the wonderfully innovative Rotary Satellite e-Club of Ryde!



### **Ripple to a River Panel Discussion**

Nasima Rahmani, the Director of the our partner in Kabul, the Women's Empowerment Centre, led a excellent panel discussion in Sydney in September that explored the politics of Afghanistan and the barriers and opportunities for women.

Facilitated by Virginia Haussegger, and hosted by the University of Technology Sydney the panel also included Professor Amin Saikal

(Director, ANU Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies) and Michelle Hannon (Partner, Gilbert + Tobin). Guests enjoyed a video of support from Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Sydney Member for Parliament, Tanya Plibersek. Public Education Foundation and former MP, Verity First gave a fabulous introduction setting the scene for the evening and once again. About \$4,000 was raised from the event which we very much appreciate.

Thanks (again) goes to Libby Lloyd and Ros Strong for creating the event, to Deborah Raphael for her tireless effort in pulling it all together on the night, to Ron Switzer for his photography skills and last, but by no means least, the wonderful UTS volunteers - Alison, Cathy and Isabel – without whom the we really could not have managed the event.

Here is Nasima on Radio National this evening <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/drive/how-opportunities-for-women-in-afghanistan-have-changed/7845550>

### **An intimate evening with Helen Evans**

On Wednesday 5th October at the Queen Victoria Women's Centre in Melbourne we put a spotlight on our empowerment work for women and girls.

Guests had the privilege of hearing public health and development expert, Helen Evans, speak. Helen served as Deputy CEO at the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations following her role as Deputy Executive Director at the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Our deepest thanks to Marnie Marin and Mielle Roberts who at times through sheer force of will and hard work made the event a very successful one!

### **Hunter High Tea**

We are thrilled to be the beneficiary of the Hunter High Tea - organised by the Rotary Club of Rutherford Telarah, Rutherford Technology High School Interact Club and Rutherford Girl Guides. These three groups joined forces to organise a high tea on Saturday 8th October to raise funds our South Sudan project.

Sue Cunningham and Santino Yuot talked with almost 100 guests at the Lochinvar School of Arts about our work in the Wedweil community which, so far, has funded rebuilding of the school and teacher-training.

### **Getting involved with indigo: Annual Sydney Dinner**

Sydney supporters please get out your diaries and save a date!

Our annual Sydney dinner will be on 11 March 2017 at the lovely Moore Park Golf House, with a focus on women's empowerment. The event is sure to be a great night and we look forward to seeing you there.

More details to come. Please check our website here: <https://www.indigofoundation.org/whats-new/events>

### **Our Marketing and Fundraising Direction**

Effective marketing and fundraising planning can greatly improve the success of a non-profit organisation, enabling it to achieve its mission and have more social impact.

At recent strategy days with the Board, we worked on developing a more strategic approach to our marketing and fundraising. This will help leverage our opportunities and improve the outcomes of our efforts with the limited capacity we have, as is such with a small volunteer-driven organisation such as ours.

With the guidance of newly appointed board member, Bianca Crocker, plans are currently underway to prepare a marketing and fundraising plan with a well-defined overarching strategic approach for the next 2-3 years. An element of this will include building more robust connections within the Australian community and strengthening our relationships with supporters like you. This is an exciting time for us and we look forward to sharing more of this direction with you as it unfolds over coming months.

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