Under a clear blue Ugandan sky....

The Budaka Project for Orphans and Vulnerable Children
Uganda

Ellen Kraly – Uganda Project Coordinator

Under a clear blue Ugandan sky in January, Wakabo Yusuf, Chairperson of Iki-Iki AIDS Community Initiative delivered welcome and greetings to the leaders of Budaka community-based organisations (CBOs) and visitors from indigo foundation. He described the challenges of the Budaka community most eloquently by considering larger Africa:

‘That Africa is bringing children into the world is not the challenge; nurturing those children is the challenge.’

Yusuf described the issues confronting vulnerable children and orphans and the challenges of poverty. He thanked indigo foundation for its support for Uganda, and emphasised that the key to success in supporting children is through education.

The mission and strengths of each organisation include goals to (i) support the educational engagement of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC beneficiaries); (ii) encourage health education concerning HIV/AIDS in schools and communities of orphans and vulnerable children; (iii) increase sensitization and reduce stigma within the community concerning HIV/AIDS; (iv) to promote sustainable livelihoods with households of beneficiaries; (v) foster leadership and administrative capacity of the community based organisations partnering with us; and (vi) promote leadership and empowerment of OVC youth in the Budaka region of eastern Uganda.
The organisations participating in the Budaka project are Gaalimagi AIDS and Grieving Orphans; Iki Iki AIDS Community Group (IACI); Kakule AIDS and Grieving Families Association (KAGA), Manaku-Kaama, NACOMAS, and Trinity Childcare.

Each organisation is distinctive in its strategy to support vulnerable children and youth in the region, but all give focus to education, health, and human rights. Each has its own ways of working and its own culture of governance.

Each also has remarkable leaders – inspirational women and men who are fully centered on the mission of the organisation to serve the welfare and well-being of children and youth.

Over the past several years, we have supported the work of these organisations to implement their distinguishing programs. During 2015-16, the scope of support has been expanded to promote collaboration to realise a broader, more regional vision to support vulnerable children and youth. In coming together for regular dialogue, the CBOs are working to identify root causes of persistent risk and vulnerability, particularly as children grow out - and too often drop-out of the school system.

This past January, with our support the CBOs met to develop ideas around a shared program which would operate at a regional scale – that is, working across the many communities that exist within the Budaka region. An initial subcommittee was formed and from there lively discussion ensued. It was an exciting process to watch unfold. Joy [Katooko Joyce, Project Liaison] described the importance of both women and men leaders participating in the process and also the value of having persons with skills in budget development and financial oversight. The degree of collegiality and humour during the discussion of the committee composition was wonderful. In the end, the subcommittee consisted of two delegates from each of the organisations with near equal representation of men and women leaders.

Katooko Joyce, our Project Liaison Officer

The Budaka Project is poised to expand its impact in promoting the well-being of children and youth, and in so doing changing lives, and the trajectories of those lives. The CBOs will maintain their strategic response to their respective communities. And with our partnership which provides support for planning and resources, they will begin to provoke positive change at the regional scale as they recognise the creativity and value added of cooperation and collaboration.

Club Rafiki - designed to change and inspire young lives!

Rwanda

Ellen Kraly – Uganda Project Coordinator

Below are extracts from Ellen’s trip report to Club Rafiki, which she visited after her time in Budaka. Travelling with Ellen, who is a Professor of Demography in New York were five students from Colgate University, where she works. We support Club Rafiki’s Urban Dance School – the only one of its kind in Rwanda.

The Club also offers a range health and educational programs and activities. It trains some of the urban dancers in peer-to-peer sexual health education and through them, runs public performances and outreach activities to raise awareness about HIV and teen pregnancy.

In spite of the limited time available for our visit to Club Rafiki a great deal was accomplished and important information was exchanged between the organisation’s leadership and our group. It was an
energetic and positive visit, with the youth of the Urban Dance School expressing their creativity, and pride in their accomplishments.

The facilities and footprint of Club Rafiki are very impressive, and provide a dramatic contrast to the rural CBOs in Budaka. It stimulated critical thinking among our group concerning the challenges to HIV sensitisation and support in such different contexts in this region of eastern Africa. The Club Rafiki staff are seasoned, professional, and committed to their mission which is held firmly in the hearts and minds of the leadership, volunteers and parents with whom we engaged.

**Background**

This visit to Club Rafiki was arranged to take advantage of my presence in Uganda where I was conducting field visits as project coordinator to the Budaka Project in the eastern part of that country. My role in visiting Club Rafiki was informal, although I was also tasked with gathering from the Club’s leadership the impact of the reduction in funding on its HIV sensitization projects that it had recently experienced.

Given that I was traveling with five Colgate students with interests in community and public health, the opportunity to visit an urban based organisation seeking to address HIV risks among youth was exciting.

**The Program**

**Arrival and welcome:** We arrived at 9:30am as requested by Omar Tony (Tony). There had been a large community event at the venue the previous night that had lasted well past midnight, so we waited in our bus for about 45 minutes while Tony and his team of youth organized the auditorium for the program. This time gave us the opportunity to watch the activities taking place in the playgrounds of Club Rafiki (basketball games and practice, exercises and gymnastics, etc.) The contrast in the activities and playfulness of the youth we had witnessed in Kisoro, and Budaka before that was interesting. The lack of presence of girls in the sports activities raised questions among us. The Colgate women were eager to get out on the courts to join in the play. Not knowing how this might unfold, for first and only time on the two week trip I put down a negative foot!

We soon were escorted into the venue where formal greetings were exchanged, and introductions took place for their team as well as ours.

**Tour of facilities:** We began the program with a thorough and interactive tour of the impressive facilities of Club Rakifi.

The visit to the volunteer HIV counselling and testing clinic provided an opportunity for the staff to describe changes in their operations given the cuts in funding, notably a decline in staff and hours of service available to clients. The clinical and counselling facilities were impressive. Pride and professionalism was expressed at every turn, with effective signage, informational posters, flow of offices and private spaces, etc.

The library was very impressive and clearly a source of pride to the leadership of Club Rafiki. The library was well in use while we were there, and Stephanie described the several ways in which access to youth and parents in facilitated in spite of a household’s ability to pay for membership. The promotion of English language training is an important goal of the staff with the library served as key resource. Stephanie described the need for books written in English. Our group asked for a list of book titles which would be helpful to the library since this might be good project for fundraising at our university. The staff seemed truly excited about that prospect.\(^1\)

We also visited the beauty shop as an illustration of vocational training available to the youth served by Club Rafiki. Well formatted newsletters and announcements for Club Rafiki were posted in

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\(^1\) I have since received a very long list of book titles from Stephanie. Most of the books listed are textbooks, and available for purchase in Kigali. The children’s story books identified are more feasible and appropriate for our donation and we hope to soon make good on this initiative.
display cases along the open corridors and walkways of the campus. From my perspective these timely documents and posters creatively communicated and expressed the mission and programs of Club Rafiki.

Session with parents: We then moved to the auditorium for a session with parents of youth participating in Club Rafiki’s Urban Dance Group. The parents were actually singular, with one mother, Beatrice, present to represent the views of parents. It seemed more appropriate for the students to ask questions rather than myself, softer somehow. A good conversation transpired. Beatrice explained that at first she was skeptical about her daughter’s participation in the dance troupe – the rehearsals were time consuming and she (Beatrice) was concerned about supervision; Club Rafiki is about a 30-minute walk for her daughter. In visiting Club Rafiki, however, she immediately saw the potential positive outcomes for her daughter and the possibilities for her daughter’s talents to be expressed and recognised.

In response to questions, Beatrice described how the dance troupe provided comfort for her daughter in the face of the death of her brother (Beatrice’s son). Her daughter attends rehearsal at least three times a week, and has emerged as a leader of the troupe.

Club Rafiki is also a resource for this community/neighbourhood in Kigali by providing a place and space for street children, including many orphans, to congregate and be occupied. Club Rafiki provides a ‘family’ atmosphere and children in the community have spread the word. The youth come together at least once a week for group discussions which also include reading together and sharing constructive ideas. Club Rafiki is also a ‘safe’ place, and helpful to the youth by providing mentorship regarding respect and education.

Beatrice was also asked what more she would like to see in programming at Club Rafiki. She mentioned more training in English, more books in English, and also other forms of training. It would be good if more parents and adults in the community could take advantage of the programs of the Club. She was also asked specifically about the needs of the Urban Dance School. Beatrice suggested that there should be more promotion of the School and expansion of its facilities.

Beatrice was asked what her daughter wants to do as an adult. Beatrice thoughtfully responded that she knows her daughter has ideas, aspirations, will express them when she is ready. Her experiences at Club Rafiki will give her a good chance.

Session with youth: The Colgate students were then asked to speak with the young members of the Urban Dance School. We were assured that parents and guardians were aware and comfortable with our interactions. The Colgate students had brainstormed briefly to prepare questions about the impact (versus outcomes) of Club Rafiki generally and the Urban Dance Program specifically:

How has Club Rafiki changed your community?

One student responded that Club Rafiki had changed him, who his is. Through the Urban Dance School he found his passion and talent for dance. The program has also taught him manners. Club Rafiki has provided a gathering place for youth in the community. Another boy described how before he joined Club Rafiki he thought of himself as a street kid and did not feel like he had a place. Then he joined Club Rafiki and is now respected both his community and his family.

Another youth described making friends through Club Rafiki. She also appreciated the training in advocacy surrounding HIV/AIDs members had received. She wants to promote their talent in dance through Club Rafiki. This issue of discipline emerged in many forms: one youth told story of how he used to disrespect his mother and hang out ‘on the streets’ before he had Club Rafiki to go to; this also then increases the overall respect of people to other people in the community.

Other students described how Club Rafiki provides a gathering place in the community and thus is a place to make friends.

How effective is Club Rafiki in sensitisation about HIV?

Several children also talked about the importance of advocacy and outreach for HIV/AIDS sensitisation in the community. One youth described how competitions held at Club Rafiki served to advocate for HIV/AIDS prevention and health promotion. Another talked about how he and other members enjoyed spreading the word about Club Rafiki and how they enjoyed going out into the community to talk to other children.
During outreach, the children/members themselves share experiences and information they have gained at the Club to their friends and other members of the community.

*Are you able to apply the skills, such as dancing, you have gained at the club to the community?*

The youth described how they apply these skills and talents at their schools; at school they also share their skills with other children. One member told his story of sharing information gained at the club regarding HIV through his comedy events (he uses his passion to be a comedian as a way of communicating important information to the community). Members often invite others in the community to come see activities and talents at the club; members exercise their leadership in running open discussions in the community to share and talk about their talents and knowledge they have gained.

The Colgate students were asked by the youth, *How do we (Americans) sensitize youth about HIV/AIDS?*

The students described health education programs within U.S. public schools and the importance of extra-curricular health programs in our communities. In the United States, like Rwanda, there are also many differences among people and youth in awareness about HIV transmission, risks and healthy behaviors.

In summary, the children were very appreciative of everything the club has to offer them. They expressed their thanks for having a place that they can go to after school and stay out of trouble. A notable concern arose from the discussion of how their talents are not necessarily those that can take them anywhere in their future. They therefore seek outside advice and guidance for further improvements of their club, specifically for promoting their skills to not only their community, but to the general population.

*Dance Performances:* We then were treated to Hip Hop performances by the Club Rafiki youth of all ages participating in the Urban Dance School as well as some performances by the instructors. The Colgate students were invited on the stage to dance as well, and soon nearly everyone, sans me (!), were dancing in large circles. The congregation brought me to tears. It was rather a perfect way to conclude our visit with the Urban Dance School and the youth of Club Rafiki.

*Conclusion:* Our visit concluded with lunch. We walked with the staff of Club Rafiki through the community to a restaurant where we shared lunch together as our guests. It was a long affair, and with probably too many people for the restaurant to accommodate. Tony, Stephanie and I did move to a quiet table to talk through some additional aspects of the terms of reference. I also wanted to give them the opportunity to express their ideas for continued and even strengthened support from indigo foundation.

*Some further questions...*

*How do you see the relationship established with indigo foundation in 2013?*

This point of discussion primarily took the form of expressions of appreciation and gratitude by the leadership of Club Rafiki, notably Omar Tony and Stephanie. Each underscored the critical importance of support from the foundation for maintaining the quality of their programs. There was every expression of a positive relationship with the foundation. My sense is that there is strong confidence in the partnership between indigo foundation and Club Rafiki, largely to the good work and communication of David and Mandy Wheen.

*Could you discuss the impact of the 50% cut in funding to the Family Friendly Clinic (Sexual Health Clinic) on the services the Club can offer and in particular on the implications of the cut for the Urban Dance School?*

Tony and I discussed these impacts throughout the day, and then more directly in our ‘debriefing’ conversation. Five impacts of the cut in funding are being felt by Club Rafiki in relationship to those programs it can offer.
First, the staff of the clinic has been cut from 8 to 3 persons. This restricted personnel has reduced significantly the days and hours of service for VCT which can be provided to youth in need of services; current remaining staff cannot work on the weekends due to fatigue.

Second, the educational sessions at UDS have been reduced to 1-2 times a month from regular weekly sessions;

Third, outreach activities, including those of the Urban Dance School, have been reduced

Fourth, operating costs of the Club have increased given the need to hire occasional external staff, whose fees are high;

Fifth, the cost of other operating costs (electricity, water, security and cleaning services) for the facilities had been largely covered by government funding is now drawn from other funding.

The general implications of these effects are reduced presence of Club Rafiki in the community and fewer opportunities for peer education regarding HIV/AIDS and healthy living among youth.

What is the Club’s planning for the Because We Are The Future program which is to commence in April 2016? Any comments, suggestions or concerns you have about the current plans would be welcome.

Tony described how Club Rafiki has begun to implement Because We Are The Future, which is the second stage of the program, My Talent, my Health. This program is to given strong emphasis to peer education, with a focus on teen pregnancy. The Urban Dance School will join several other activities in this program of Club Rafiki.

The purpose of the outreach program of the Urban Dance School is to reach a broader set of communities in Rwanda, including rural communities, with their messages concerning HIV/AIDS prevention and health living among Rwanda youth. Accordingly, Club Rafiki is looking for resources to amplify its marketing of the Urban Dance School.

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A fledging project takes shape in Otjiwarongo ...

Libby House - Development Coordinator

In August 2013 the Rotary Club of Macquarie Park submitted a proposal to us for the development of a youth centre serving the marginalised township of Orwetoveni situated outside the regional capital of Otjiwarongo in Namibia.

I visited the project in October 2015 and met for the first time the Board of the Otjiwarongo Development Program Fund, a new local NGO established to implement the program. Following extensive community consultation the ODPF has established three areas of activity: supporting recreational activities that will enhance wellbeing among young people in Orwetoveni, small income generating projects for women, and food security which is initially focused on the Otjiveg project. Meeting with the group and working through proposal assessments with them in a workshop was very interesting and there are lessons to be learned by us in the strongly entrepreneurial focus of the ODPF. They are constantly looking at ways they can generate income for the ODPF and see this as an important part of their brief to sustain the NGO.

Members of the ODPF Committee

It was a little daunting to understand how much work there was to do in developing the project. There was however, a beautiful moment in one of our meetings when we were workshopping a proposal evaluation. The Treasurer’s face lit up as he truly understood that we were looking to the ODPF to identify the community priorities and he said ‘this is new! This has never happened in Namibia before!’
Since our first visit some of the funding has been spent on water and shade infrastructure to Otjiveg, a computer and equipment for showing films, sporting equipment a video camera and a fund for offering fruit and drinks during sporting activities. In their eagerness to comply with their volunteer status the ODPF had not been offering to pay any stipend or cost to themselves or any volunteers. As a result it was impossible to attract people to help deliver the program so most activities had been conducted through our Liaison Officer and at the Multipurpose Centre and there had been fewer events than everyone involved would have liked. Two wonderful young women have since been engaged with stipend, to co-ordinate the activities.

Otiveg Co-operative is going ahead in leaps and bounds after a single severe frost killed all their young mango and banana trees in May. Shade protection saved most of the other crops and will be expanded to the orchard in the next round of funding. Otjiveg sell at the Farmers Market held in the town centre weekly and deliver vegetable orders to local office centres.

They anticipate being independent from ODPF funding in the next twelve months.

That there is a need for a specific centre for the people in the most marginalised areas of the Townships is clear, but how that will be delivered and sustained remains uncertain. We are waiting for the ODPF to achieve registration in Namibia as a first step before assessing the path to building a permanent home for the program.
The next phase in building education in Wedweil: teacher training!

South Sudan

Thanks to generous donations from key donors, with matching donations from the IAG and Macquarie Bank Foundations, we have been able to support a long-held goal of the Wedweil community in South Sudan - teacher training.

Wedweil School is an under-resourced and overcrowded school in Aweil region. In 2014-15, we supported a renovation and rebuilding of a school building that was damaged in the civil war in the 90s. Many in the community live in poverty and have never experienced proper schooling.

Wedweil School has 15 teachers, two of whom are women. The majority of the teachers have only been educated to year 8. Those with year 8 education teach the primary classes and those educated to year 12 teach the high school classes. The teachers are mostly locals, teaching out of a commitment to the education of their young people. They are either paid a small wage or are given food rations in lieu of wages.

We have now been able to fund an intensive teacher training program for the 15 teachers from Wedweil School and ten head teachers from surrounding schools. This is the first time teacher-training of any kind has taken place in the area.

The training is being conducted by two experienced teacher-trainers, usually based at the teachers’ college in Juba (the capital) and the teachers have now undergone 15 days of teacher-training and will continue the course later this year. More power to them!

Lua Lemba continuing to grow and adapt to community needs: great community development in action

Indonesia

Our partners, Lua Lemba Education and Community Development Foundation, registered as an NGO in Eastern Indonesia in 2000. Our first Commitment Agreement with them was signed in 2004. Lua Lemba’s first initiative was to establish a senior high school in West Rote Island. Now, many graduates from this school go on to university returning to Rote as teachers, primary health workers, administrators and business people. Many of the university graduates were recipients of grants from the ongoing Lua Lemba bursary program.

While education remains at the core of Lua Lemba’s focus, with programs supporting early childhood education through to University level, a successful food security program and an annual cultural festival have been important features of the Lua Lemba program in recent years. Last year Lua Lemba were chosen from several hundred applicants for a grant from the Australian Ethical Investments grants program.

The grant will be used to establish new food gardens in the areas of Oenale, Dengka and Delha. The changing weather patterns in Rote have made this program critically important, as traditional planting times can’t be relied on any more. For two successive years seed stores have been used up in multiple plantings that failed as the rainy season had false starts and delivered little rain overall. This year the rice crops are patchy at best and the price of rice has already increased 20% in the local markets. Seasonal lakes, always brimming at this latter end of the rainy season, remain shockingly dry.

Guarding the rice crop in Rote
Over the next year Lua Lemba will bed down and monitor the impact of the new gardens, as the AEI grant has enabled 4 years of future planning to be delivered over a period of twelve months.

From 2011 to 2014 we, in partnership with Big Fat Smile Illawarra, Jenny Hopkins and Lua Lemba delivered a Kindergarten Teacher Training program which had an enormous impact on early childhood education in our target area. Indonesian NGO Yayasan Kasih Bangsa recently visited Rote to deliver training to Sunday School teachers and in response to a request from the Kindergarten. Lua Lemba are negotiating with them to come back to deliver three days of training to Kindergarten teachers. A wonderful development as Lua Lemba have worked for many years to improve the status and acceptance of kindergartens in Rote, and a local partner will make ongoing training a lot more accessible.

Another new initiative in the planning stages is the establishment of a BIMBEL or tutoring centre. Similar to the Village Education Centres we support in Tamil Nadu, young graduates will tutor students at a central village location. There is an undercurrent of excitement for this initiative from families, tutors and students. A pilot BIMBEL will be established in Sedoen Village and if there is demand and human resources to support it, the program will be expanded.

Plans are well underway for the 2016 Delha Cultural Festival, with canoe and horsemanship competitions, traditional music and dancing, tests of strength and bravado, traditional storytelling and a first – stand up comedy.

From the aspect of Rotinese humour that focusses on people looking foolish and that poetry and storytelling are central to Rotinese culture there will be an opportunity for any visiting westerners who may not speak Indonesian to read a poem to the audience in Indonesian and be judged on their performance. Gwyneth Graham and I were privileged to judge this competition in 2014 – a poisoned chalice in itself. Tourists joined in in good spirit and there was a lot of laughter on all sides.

The Festival is planned for July: the theme is Budaya Banget roughly translated as Full of Culture.

Lastly, this is my final newsletter article as project coordinator for the Rote Project, and I am delighted to welcome Caitlin Winter, a former project coordinator for Mahalir Sakthi, to take over the reins. After twelve years in the position it is time for me to hand over to a younger person who will bring new eyes to the position, and to share the joy that is working with such a dedicated NGO in such an inspiring community - and I know Caitlin will do just that. Welcome Caitlin!

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**Mahalir Sakthi: the quiet achiever.**

**India**

Some beautiful photos from our partner Mahalir Sakthi’s 11th annual celebration - marking 11 years that Guna and Grace Vincent and the team have been working to educate and empower women and children from Dalit and Adivasi communities in the Madurai slums. What an incredible organisation - lean, community-led and with an impressive impact. We are privileged to partner with them!
The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 development targets finalised by the United Nations in 2015. They follow the course set by the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000-2015), which was a landmark recognition by the UN of global development issues. The tenure of the MDGs was moderately successful; they provided a focal point for development efforts and saw elements of some goals met and improvements in many other areas, though some areas saw less success. Indeed, there are still around one billion people living under the UN line for extreme poverty of US $1.25 (adjusted to $1.90 this year). Further, the MDGs were developed without much consultation with developing countries and there were a number of vital areas not included.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation of all
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14. Conserve and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

The SDGs expand on the scope and ambition of the MDGs and, like them, each goal is linked to a range of targets and indicators to highlight progress. The SDGs push to foster widespread improvement in general social, environmental and economic development conditions globally. Breaking the goals down into these three categories is a good way to understand and review them.

Socially, all of the targets and indicators carry over from the MDGs, however they push the aspirations of the MDGs further through expansion of its targets into new fields. For example, with regards to gender, MDG 3 focused on closing the gender disparity gap in education and literacy, employment and
proportion in national parliaments. SDG 5 retains and broadens all of the existing indicators and adds in reducing discriminatory practices (5.1), violence against women (5.2), harmful practices such as child/forced marriage and genital mutilation (5.3), improving access to public services (5.4) and social protection (5.4) as well as other areas.

The augmented scope demonstrates progression toward more realised action on social issues, which addresses one of the most significant criticisms of the MDGs, namely that they were a ‘one-size-fits-all strategy for dealing with cross-cutting issues in a global agenda for development’ (Vandemoortele, 2012: 30). By addressing each goal with a broader range of targets, more specialised approaches can be applied based on context and location.

Alongside the expansion of social issues, the SDGs are notable for the significant increased emphasis on global environmental issues. MDG #7 was the only goal which made direct reference to environmental issues, consisting primarily of narrowly focused targets revolving around modifying problematic human interaction with the environment. The SDGs expand on this by partitioning each of the most pressing issues linking environment and poverty, these being climate (13), land (14), and water (15). It is important to note that since the MDGs were instigated, consciousness regarding the environment has increased, particularly the tangible impacts of anthropogenic climate change. The increased recognition is important because, as the International Council for Science states ‘the impacts of climate change constitute a major risk for all dimensions of sustainable development’ (ICSU, 2015: 66).

While the SDGs present a better understanding of the interrelationship between the social and environmental contexts and poverty, the same cannot be said about the economic context. A key issue within the economic context is the framing of poverty, in particular the lack of any recognition of, or movement towards, any systematic or institutional change with regards to its causes. The language used throughout the SDGs and their supporting documentation is a crucial indicator of this shortcoming. Poverty undoubtedly has a myriad of causes, however to gloss over its causes entirely while proposing a global political approach towards addressing poverty is more than an oversight.

The very first target (1.1), to ‘eradicate extreme poverty’, frames poverty in a way that undermines the existence of causation. Metaphorically: ‘Poverty eradication frames poverty as a disease. It is part of nature. It just happens’ (Brewer 2015: 7). When viewed through the lens of being a ‘natural’ occurrence, the approach to mitigating poverty changes immensely. Rather than poverty being a symptom of a global network of injustices, which require long-term changes in institutional and conceptual frameworks, in the SDGs it is still just a problem - the sum of its indicators, and mitigating these will supposedly ‘eradicate’ it completely.

The underlying effect of such framing can be seen by deconstructing practically any of the targets, for example 11.1, ‘ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums’. The wording of this target presents slums as a fact of life for those living in poverty, and suggests improving the quality of such housing as the most appropriate course of action. This target ignores the political and economic context that confine large numbers of people to life in slums, which Davis (2006) summarises as: ‘national market deregulation… structural adjustment programs and public sector downsizing’ in poor countries, centralising jobs in rapidly densifying urban areas while decreasing their prevalence and demanding low cost domestic infrastructure delegated to the outskirts of cities. While the targets themselves do not explicitly outline what measures will be taken in order to achieve their outcomes, there is no evidence that any kind of understanding of underlying causality has been considered in their construction.

Another key area of weakness in the economic framing of the SDGs is the problematic framing of economic development. This issue carries over from the MDGs, and pertains to the equation of economic growth expressed through GDP or through per capita income ($1.25 a day) as the main indicator of economic development. This means the SDGs are ‘constrained by a very particular model of how the world economy should run’ (Blackmore 2015). The results of this manifest in various ways throughout the SDGs, yet in target 8.4, the suggestion is made to ‘decouple economic growth from environmental degradation’. While
progress may render this decoupling feasible, it would require the current global economic framework to treat ‘economic growth’ as non-limitless as the natural resources it relies upon. Yet later on target 17.11, which proposes ‘doubling export shares of developing countries’, indicates that limits to growth are still not recognised at all. The SDGs do demonstrate a change in the global consciousness about poverty and the understanding of it. The broadened approach to poverty and development issues both is to be welcomed and seems to offer more potential for their mitigation. However, considering the limited success of the MDGs, there is a danger that this expansion will dilute the effectiveness of the developed world’s efforts. For developing countries themselves, there sheer number of goals and targets may also prove a little overwhelming. Further, developed countries are decreasing their financial commitments to aid and development, which is a tangible threat to success. Finally, it’s important to note that current modes of aid giving are not as effective as they could be, so unless this is addressed it is likely that people will still be left people.

References

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 – Pat’s Picks is for you!

1. Climate Change: The Paris Agreement

Comment on the Paris Agreement on Climate Change is mixed, but largely positive. This might be a function of very low expectations going into the Paris meeting after Copenhagen four years ago. As Timmons Roberts at Brookings says ‘The spectre of another train wreck of that magnitude hung over the Paris negotiations from the start to the very end’. People are both optimistic and sceptical about the Agreement’s content – and the world’s capacity to change its behaviour sufficiently anyway, particularly our reliance on fossil fuels. The first blog from Brookings reflects the optimism. The second, from the DevPolicy blog at ANU (by an ex-senior aid official who worked on climate change) analyses how the Agreement demands greater accountability. Finally, several articles from those who remain deeply concerned that Paris did not go nearly far enough.

a. In Paris, the United Nations delivered. Now it’s up to the rest of us to transform society away from fossil fuels

A lot remains unfinished: How adequate and predictable climate finance will be delivered to help developing countries cope with climate impacts and make the transition to clean energy is not clearly addressed. Critically, the Paris Accord is still a voluntary system, with neither binding mechanisms or clear ways to enforce compliance. While laying out the ambitious goal of keeping warming under 2 degrees Celsius, the agreement will still leave the planet vulnerable to major impacts.

...but: in Paris, the UN has finally delivered. Now it’s up to the nations, companies, civil society and all our institutions—from universities, churches, hospitals, service agencies and local governments—to immediately and aggressively move this effort forward.


b. A fragile symmetry: climate finance in the Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement has two elements: mitigation commitments and financing commitments. At the very least, it provides a great deal of purchase to those looking to exact greater accountability. Desirable processes have been set in motion, but inertia and bickering might well break the ‘symmetry’ of the Agreement. An omission is that it contains no figures for financing mitigation efforts in developing countries. The existing mobilisation goal of US$100 billion per annum by 2020 (set in Copenhagen) will be considered a floor until 2025, and a higher collective goal will be adopted before
2. Refugees and Migration

What’s been happening in Europe might give Australian political leaders some pause for thought.

a. Migration crisis: ‘Who can refuse these human beings? Who?’ asks UN official

‘The wave was 10cm high two years ago,’ he said. ‘Now it’s about 40cm high. But for your children, it will be 30 metres high. Why? Because 2 billion people in the world earn less than $1.25 a day. The difference between now and 20 years ago is that everybody looks at everybody now – it’s the globalisation of the economy and the globalisation of communications: internet, TV, radio. It’s very new.’


b. This could be the largest refugee resettlement intake in Australia’s postwar history – here’s what it means

Do you know how the 12000 Syrian refugees fit with Australia’s overall annual refugee intake, past and present? Useful summary from the Guardian.


c. Migration can help to forge a more prosperous world, says World Bank

The World Bank’s 2015: Global Monitoring Report, points to the implications for migration, poverty and development of the far-reaching population shift of today. The large-scale migration of people from poor countries to richer ones will ‘reshape economic development for decades’ Overall trends are stark: while more than 90% of global poverty is concentrated in lower-income countries where populations are young and fast-growing, more than 75% of global growth occurs in higher-income countries where women have fewer children, where there are fewer people of working age and where the proportion of elderly people is on the increase.

3. Ethiopia’s 2015 - 16 drought:

The unfolding drought in Ethiopia. This year I want to explore more how are we at this point again in Ethiopia...?
a. **No reason for famine (IFPRI).**

From one of my favourite African food security think tanks, IFPRI.....

The 2015-16 drought and production shortfall need not have caused a famine. By heeding the lessons of past famines, Government can ensure sufficient cereals and transfers in cash and in kind to provide households with their needs. Other food security issues will still need to be resolved, including ensuring adequate nutrition for all individuals.


b. **More child marriage in drought-hit Ethiopia with risk of ‘full-blown disaster’**

As well, child marriage is on the rise in Ethiopia due to the worst drought in decades, the government and agencies said on Friday, as Oxfam warned of a ‘full-blown disaster’ unless more than $1 billion in food aid is found for 10 million people. Agencies predict the El Niño weather phenomenon will cause record levels of malnutrition in Africa’s second most populous nation, famed for war- and drought-induced famine in 1984. More than one in ten of Ethiopia’s 92 million people, most of whom depend on rain-fed agriculture, are short of food

c. **The Cause of Ethiopia’s Recurrent Famine Is Not Drought, It Is Authoritarianism**

Written by a post Grad student in Washington for the Huffington Post. Why is it still the case that so many - millions of - Ethiopians lead a marginal life...?


d. **Famine and Government Neglect in Ethiopia.**

Punchy...I haven't seen this site before but might be one to watch.....


e. **Ethiopian girl wins $150,000 for rape, abduction and marriage at 13**

A strike for women’s justice. One in two girls in Ethiopia are brides by the age of 18, according to government data. Abusive practices include marriage by abduction -- as in Woineshet’s case -- and forced unions between cousins.

http://news.trust.org/item/20160311143029-1m3hx/

4. **And just a couple more...**

a. **Five humanitarian crises largely overlooked in 2015**

...and the losers are: Central America’s Hidden Displacement, South Sudan’s refugee crisis, Central African Republic, Yemen, Global Impact of El Nino, Republic of Congo...these five received less media attention and funding than all the others...this article demonstrates tragically, yet again, that need is not enough to trigger response from those with the capacity to do so....

http://news.trust.org/item/20151216112508-7bf0k/

b. **Scant aid for low-caste villagers hit by Chennai floods in south India**

And while we are speaking of the powerless, Dalit communities miss out, yet again, in India....

http://www.trust.org/item/20151208133244-8I8rI/

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**our people**

**Christine Edwards – Board Member (sustainability)**

I was recently introduced to indigo foundation by Alice Roughley. Although I didn’t know her at the time, through a series of serendipitous circumstances Alice ended up at my place for dinner and we were soon talking about indigo. By the end of that night, I’d learned about the work of volunteer project coordinators, and understood that indigo valued listening, relationships and learning. These sparked an interest in me because they said something about the values that inspire indigo’s work.

Over the next months, I found out more about indigo. I realised that it was driven by values, and that people placed them at the front of professional practice and decisions. I saw values in action, and that they were woven into the fabric of indigo’s culture.

This is what separates indigo from a lot of organisations. Although many claim to be driven by values, it is often more rhetoric than reality. But for indigo, values are reflected throughout: from how people talk to each other, to how coordinators work in communities, treating people with respect and honesty.

I feel fortunate to have been elected to join the Board. I hope that skills that I have developed during my career
in the community, health and philanthropic sectors can assist indigo to grow, and to help steer it on its continuing path of quiet achievements.

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Monica Kande Tjehiua – Namibia Liaison Officer

Monica discovered her passion for social change when she was working as a volunteer for UNICEF in her home village of Okakarara. Despairing of the effect of HIV/AIDS on her community she wrote to Carol Bellamy, the then Executive Director of UNICEF, and asked her to come to Namibia to see for herself. Carol responded by coming to Okakarara to meet with Monica and her community, much to the amazement of officials in Windhoek.

Since then, Monica has worked for the Peace Corps and volunteered in other UNICEF programs. She is now the Co-ordinator of the Otjiwarongo Multi-Purpose Centre and our Liaison Officer in Otjiwarongo.

Monica is a courageous and wonderful woman to work with and she is playing a key role for us as our partnership with Orwetoveni Community Development Fund develops. Thank you Monica

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Congratulations to our very own Dr Ellen Kraly

Ellen, in March this year, was was awarded an honorary doctorate from Curtin University in recognition of her service to the Noongar people (WA) and her contribution to repatriating the Herbert Mayer Collection of Carrolup Artworks - renowned artworks painted by Noongar children during the time of the stolen generation.

Professor Terry from Curtin University writes: ‘The artworks painted by Noongar children at the Carrolup River Native Settlement Camp in the Great Southern region were transported back to the Western Australia community after being discovered in storage at Colgate University.

‘Professor Kraly worked tirelessly to ensure the paintings were transferred from Colgate University to Curtin University...Curtin University is now custodian of a significant historical collection of 122 artworks from children of Australia’s Stolen Generations. ...

Without Professor Kraly’s foresight, action and generosity, the Collection may never have come home.

Ellen is based at Colgate University in the US and we are very lucky to have her as the Project Coordinator for our Budaka project for vulnerable children impacted by HIV in Uganda.

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The annual indigo foundation get together

We held our annual get together in February again this year – bringing all indigo people – from Tasmania to Ballarat to the Blue Mountains and Newcastle - together. It is a critical weekend for us : whilst being a virtual, volunteer organisation is a great strength of ours it also brings its challenges, such as feeling isolated and disconnected. Seeing each other face to face brings the wonderfully social aspect of indigo foundation to the fore – this weekend is a chance to remember how great it is to be working together as team, how terrific our team is and how important it is to working collectively for such a valued common goal.

We always leave feeling energised and inspired by the work our colleagues and friends are doing.

Keys aspects of the weekend included presentations by Dr Susan Engel on the millenium development goals –how far we have come in some ways, but how limited it is in others, Dr Kate Senior a medical anthropologist from the University of Wollongong on the significant and negative impact the NT Intervention has had on Aboriginal communities, and
a great workshop by Jeff Waters ABC journalist on how to use our smart phones to capture the stories of the extraordinary people we work with.

A big thank you to Gwyneth Graham, for organising the weekend, Susan Engel for all the logistic arrangements (whilst suffering Dengue fever!) and Alice and David Martin for hosting such a beautiful dinner on Saturday evening.

From left: Alice Martin (finance administrator), Jemma Bailey (general manager), David Wheen (Rwanda PC), Alice Roughley (Nyrirpi PC), Sue Cunningham (South Sudan PC), Santino Yout (South Sudan Advisor), Libby House (Development Coordinator), John Bolger (India PC), Sally Stevenson (chairperson), Cressida Hall (board member), Chistine Edawrads (board member), Gwyneth Gaham (board member), Susnsa engel (secretary), Many Wheen (Rwanda PC)....just some of the indigo foundation team!

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our Board

Sally Stevenson – Chairperson

I am very pleased to report that since our last newsletter and following our AGM, we have welcomed three new Board members to indigo foundation. Firstly though, I would like to say a huge thank you to Deborah Raphael, who recently stepped down from our Board after five years in the role with a number of those being Chair of the Development Subcommittee. Whilst this is a huge loss at a governance level - I am very happy and relieved to say we are not losing Deborah, she is simply taking up the role of project coordinator for Namibia. Deborah’s contribution at Board level has been wonderful - insightful, compassionate, critical, warm, wise, dedicated, persistent, forgiving and so many hours and hours of work, not just on general governance and our development program but Deborah has also worked tirelessly fundraising for us. We would not be the same without her and so I thank her deeply for that and am, at the same time, very happy that she is not leaving the indigo fold.

Secondly, our new board members bring an incredible range of skills, experience and expertise to the organisation. Filling the:

1. Organisation Sustainability role is **Christine Edwards**. Christine has had a long and successful career encompassing in leadership and management responsibilities in the philanthropic, health and human services sectors in Australia. From planning mental health services to managing hospitals and most recently, as Chief Executive Officer of The Myer Foundation and the Sidney Myer Fund, Christine’s knowledge of the philanthropic sector, her experiences with and understandings of small NGOs and her insights into successful governance, management and development will, undoubtedly, be of great benefit to us.

2. Monitoring and Evaluation role is **Lyla Rogan**. Lyla has worked with non-profit, government and UN organisations as an advisor, facilitator and critical friend. She is a recognised expertise in strategic planning, evaluation and impact assessment and has strong experience in governance, management and organisational development. Her most recent experience, which she brought to the February workshop last year is in quality and accountability in humanitarian and international development.

3. Marketing and Fundraising role is **Bianca Crocker**. Bianca is a professional fundraiser, working in a number of organisations as an employee and operating her own business for the last 5 years. Bianca has extensive experience and expertise in fundraising and is strongly connected to fundraising networks. This is a position we have endeavoured to fill for a number of years and so we are particularly excited Bianca is coming onto the Board.

The depth and breadth of experience that our Board now has is quite extraordinary and augurs very well for our future. It is with appreciation and keen anticipation that as Chair of the Board I look forward to the coming years working such wonderful members, building on the work of previous boards where the high levels of commitment, hard work and believe in what we do has built such a solid, successful and respectful organisation.

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Future thoughts and directions

After 15 years of operations, we are at a unique point in our organisational growth. We have experience, success, a strong reputation, a growing momentum and an exciting new Board, with a range of experiences and skills, new views and perspectives. As such, we feel it is time to deliberate on ‘what now’, ‘what next’.

We have the opportunity, and it is the time, to renew and reconsider our strategic vision for the future. Developing this clear and shared direction will begin in May, and continue over the next months, in consultation with our partners, supporters, volunteers and representatives. Key questions and opportunities we want consider include:

- What defines or distinguishes our identity? How has the supported or influenced our purpose? How effective has we been in achieving its objectives?
- What are possible and preferred futures for us as an organisation? How might these reflect, build on or change our identity? Do these lead to sustainability as an organisation?
- What does our future success look like in terms of impact, reach and scope of activity? Should we use it resources to continue focusing on its development program? If so, should this be expanded (and how?) ie are we a project implementation organisation – or do we seek to have a greater overall impact through research and/or advocacy leveraging our project success to influence more fundamental change in the development sector, the community and/or government policy. Is this possible? What are the experiences of other development organisations in this regard?
- How should the organisational model evolve in line with the Board’s ambitions and our future directions? How are our community partners part of this model? What will it take for indigo foundation to be a robust, effective and accountable into the future?

This will be an exciting and challenging process and I look forward to reporting the results, which will be used to set our operational framework for the next 5 years.

Watch this space!

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indigo update

Jemma Bailey – General Manager
Sally Stevenson – Chairperson

Another great quarter leading into the end of financial year: new people, great fundraisers and a terrific sense of optimism about our future.

Apart from our new Board we are thrilled to welcome back Caitlin Winter as project coordinator for Rote, Indonesia. Some of you may remember Caitlin from her previous role as project coordinator for Mahalir Sakthi in 2012-13. Caitlin comes with a wealth of experience in education. She is a primary school teacher in Canberra and is currently studying a Masters of International Education through Sydney University. We think she’ll be a great fit with Lua Lemba.

As mentioned above, Deborah Raphael is now the project coordinator for Namibia, replacing the wonderful Tracey Peters, who introduced us to the community of Otiwarongo and brought the project to us. Tracey’s deep and enduring ties with the community have allowed us to build a solid relationship that has launched a raft of activities and set in place a plan for a great community development program. Tracey has been integral to the indigo foundation over the past years, and we are so very pleased she will stay on a member of the Namibia team – her humour is warm and wonderful and her compassion and commitment cannot be overestimated. Thanks Tracey!

Our project coordinator for Jirghai, Afghanistan, Ali Reza Yunespoor has moved to Kabul with his wife Sughra to take up a academic position in Kabul University. We are thrilled for him, as he is putting into action the recommendations and conclusions he came to in his PhD about tertiary education in Afghanistan. We will miss him (and all the speaking engagements he so graciously and beautifully does for us!) but his presence in country will clearly provide enormous added value to our work in Jirghai.

As June 30 approaches, and you are bombarded by requests for your dollar – we ask that you remember us and consider making a donation.

We also have a number of events coming up – and we hope to see you at one of them (!). Until then, warmest wishes and thanks again for all your support!

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Wonderful events – past and future!

Community and fundraising events are critical in ‘spreading the word’ about our work, as well raising the necessary funds to support communities we work with. Our warm thanks to the following people for organising some great events:

- The indigo foundation Cole Classic Team: Pat Duggan, the organiser and Lyla Rogan, Loris, Judy, Katherine Holland, Rohana Rogan-Darvill, Phil Strickland, Dan Lloyd and Lucinda Wilson – whose strong and fearless efforts in the Manly ocean swim in February raised $8,400 for our projects... busting through the $5,000 target. A phenomenal effort!

$8,400 will have a significant impact. To put it in context:

- For our South Sudan project, $8,000 is half of the funding needed to support a two month intensive teacher training (the first of its kind) in Wedweil, as well as building four toilets – a much needed addition to Wedweil School.

- For our project in the slums of Madurai India, $8,000 is the annual operating cost of eight community-based after-school tuition centres, including tutor salaries and education materials, to support Dalit children to stay in school and break the cycle of poverty, discrimination and violence.

- For our project in Rote, Indonesia, $8,000 is the cost of establishing four cooperative food gardens, providing permanent water, nutrition and a rare source of income generation for the cooperative members - largely women - and their extended families.

- Theresa Huxtable, Lyn Read, Alice Martin, Susan Engel, Jenny Hopkins, Rowan Huxtable and Ian Rosier who were the organising group for the fabulous Wollongong Live Music Trivia night. Theresa Huxtable, what can we say? You are amazing! 450 people and spectacularly successful night. Our thanks also to Principal Frank Pitt of St Marys Star of the Sea who allowed us to use the school’s hall for free, to John Littrich and the Water Runners and Michele Kenworthy for playing music that had every one of us up dancing, to David Kilby as MC keeping the questions and answers flowing and to Olena, Atlanta, Alex, Samuel and Mika for all your help on the night. Same time again next year Wollongong supporters!

- The unstoppable Robin Brown and the seatomsmit team. From Sydney to Mt Kosciusko...they did it on their bikes after 9 days of riding! They smashed their fundraising target of $9,500 by over $1,000! And it is all going to our wonderful partner Mahalir Sakthi, which works with marginalised women and children in the slums of Madurai. Win, win, win! Thank you team!
And coming up!!

- **Our 6th Annual Canberra Dinner!**

  The dinner is a social calendar highlight in Canberra, each year building on the success (and fun!) of the year before.

  At this year's dinner, we will celebrate our partnership with the Lua Lemba on the small arid island of Rote, East Indonesia. Over the past 15 years, this partnership has had an incredible impact - hundreds of children given a chance to go to school, the first senior high school established and improved health outcomes through health clinics, cooperative gardens and pig banks.

  It promises to be a great night with stories from the field, delicious food, a silent auction and a unique chance to get to know Rotinese music and dance. Our sasando musicians have been practicing and Virginia Haussegger, our MC, has been rehearsing her Rotinese dance moves.

  Come along, bring your friends!

  **Saturday 28 May 2016, 6:30pm for 7:00pm, National Press Club, 16 National Crt, Barton ACT**

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

  Following on from the success of last year the club is holding its Charity Golf experience again on 30th May.

  Yes! An opportunity to help our beneficiaries without leaving your computer. You’ll have fun playing 18 holes of virtual golf, with your mouse.

  It won’t be like a traditional golf experience. No need to get up at 4am. Weather conditions will be immaterial, you can have breakfast, lunch and dinner when you want and you can drink whatever you want from your own fridge!

  What’s more, the cost of a game will be about ¼ that of a regular golf-day fundraiser. All the proceeds will go to Rotary Satellite e-Club of Ryde beneficiaries, including us!

  Register now to play and your chance to support us, AND win some great prizes! [www.trybooking.com/KLYK](http://www.trybooking.com/KLYK)