



STRATEGY

2017-2022

Introduction

For over 16 years, indigo foundation has supported grassroots organisations in some of the most marginalised communities in the world to define and implement their development goals – be that getting children into school, improving health, empowering women or strengthening culture. Over that time, we have built a body of evidence that community-led development works. It improves lives and builds resilient communities.



This strategy sets an ambitious agenda to increase our impact in and across communities while remaining a proudly nimble and creative organisation. It will guide the direction of our programs and inform the way we build capacity and sustainability of our organisation. It retains what has been distinctive and effective about our community development approach, builds on our learnings and experience and provides a clear strategic focus for decision making.

Who we are

The essence of indigo foundation

indigo foundation is a small independent community development organisation that supports marginalised communities in the Asia Pacific and Africa.

We work with, and directly support, local community organisations to create and sustain systematic improvements in health, education and general wellbeing that benefit both individuals within the community and the community as a whole. We believe building deep and respectful relationships with our community partners and supporters and within our organisation is the key to positive change. We value, and work at creating, an organisational culture that is open, ethical, inclusive, accountable, personal and quietly ambitious.



Founded on the principle of community-led development,



our experience has shown that transformative change happens when communities are given the respect and support to generate and implement their own development solutions. We listen and facilitate, rather than direct or impose. We recognise respectful development is a relationship of mutuality. We are able to bring to the relationship a diversity of resources, including experience, information, education and funding and in return we ourselves learn, improve and share the stories of success made possible when communities are ethically supported and the resourcefulness and already in communities is unleashed.

The outcomes we work for

Our success is measured by the progress communities achieve in their context, specifically:

- Marginalised communities leading their own development with confidence and resilience
- Improvements in individual and community wellbeing reflecting each community's needs and priorities
- Broader social change resulting from community action and advocacy.

Within indigo foundation our success is also assessed through the quality of relationships, the application of our principles and ethical standards and the extent to which we are a sustainable, accountable and reputable organisation.

We recognise strong development outcomes are underpinned by principles in international frameworks for human rights and international development, including those that relate to education, health, children, refugees and gender justice.





Our strategic direction – building on strong foundations

GOAL ONE - Expand the impact of our work in communities, while retaining our commitment to being a principles driven, relationships based development organisation.

Actions

- Stay invested in a small number of communities, support their efforts to achieve sustainable changes over time and replicate what is working, through local partners and within neighbouring or likeminded communities, where appropriate.

- Adopt a more strategic approach to selection of partner communities by applying the lens of our guiding principles together with our identified strategic focus areas.
- Strengthen participatory monitoring and evaluation of our programs, with a clear focus on how we maximize and demonstrate program impact.
- Improve the way we share the success stories, with our community partners and to current and potential supporters.



GOAL TWO - Develop and improve our support for, and management of, community partnerships through a growing and documented impact evidence base.

Actions

- Strengthen our program management model to ensure our methods fit the needs, complexity, capacities and stage of relationship each partner has with indigo foundation.
- Invest in evaluation approaches and research that help us tell the story of communities leading their own development and the results achieved over time.
- Develop peer-to-peer networks and

connections between our community partners to allow for direct peer support and cross-pollination of experience.

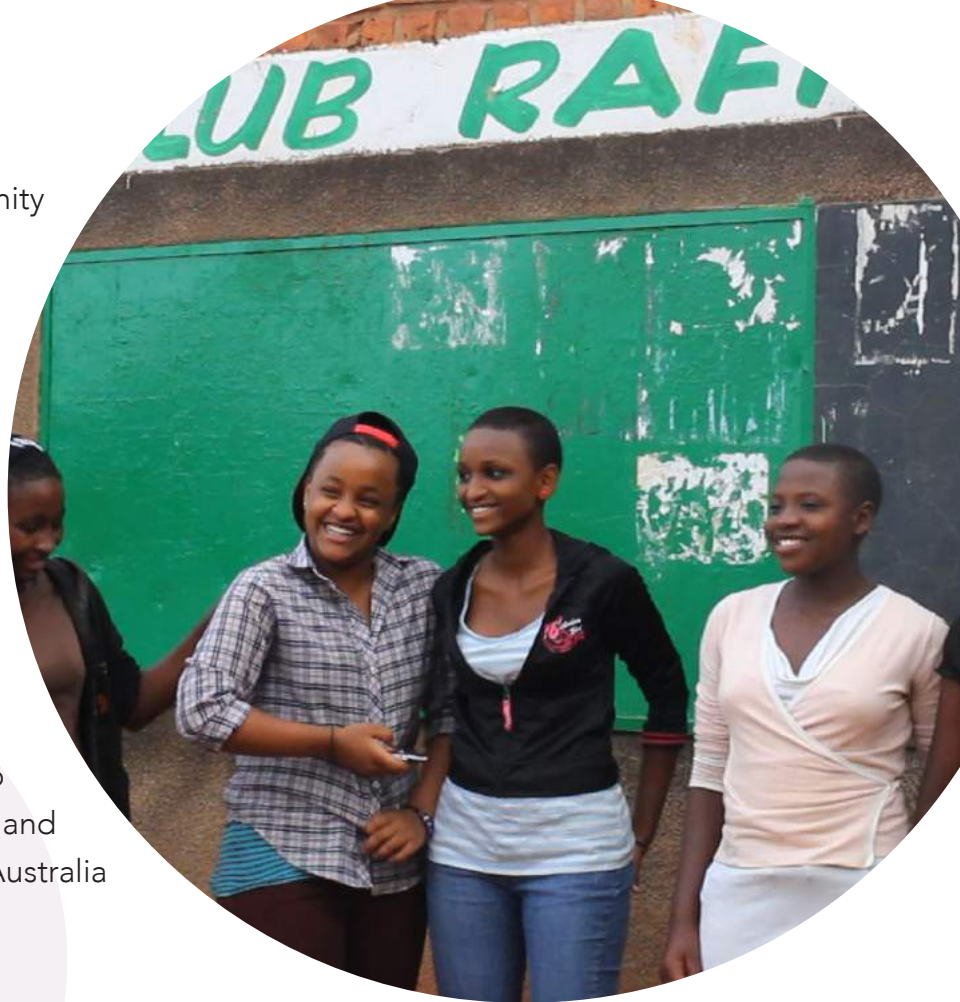
- Strengthen the way we and our community partners are accountable to communities and ensure best practice is embedded in our development approach.

GOAL THREE - Build on our strong foundations to further develop indigo foundation as a sustainable, effective and visible development organisation in Australia and the region.

Actions

- Develop indigo foundation into a recognisable and reputable brand known for our belief in and respect for communities, the impact of our work and the commitment of our supporter base.
- Diversify and refine our approach to income generation in order to grow our income and achieve a more adequate, predictable and sustainable funding base.
- Continue to build a connected and active supporter base in Australia committed to our communities and to community-led development, and equipped to promote indigo foundation within their networks and spheres of influence.

- Develop relationships and alliances with like-minded organisations, both in Australia and in the region, to strengthen support for community-led grassroots development and our 'respectful partnerships' model.
 - Develop our staffing and volunteer model to ensure we have the appropriate structure and people to meet our commitments as an organisation.



Selecting our partner communities

In order to grow our influence and impact, indigo foundation will assess potential community partnerships through the lens of four strategic focus areas, together with our guiding principles, to ensure we use our limited resources to achieve the greatest impact.

EMPOWERING WOMEN AND GIRLS

Entrenched inequality, and in particular discrimination against women and girls, is a driver of poverty. Programs that promote participation and leadership and improve safety and economic empowerment of women and girls have been shown to have a multiplier effect on change, as we have experienced with our community partners in India, Afghanistan and Rote. indigo foundation has always had 'equity' as a guiding principle. We will make empowerment of girls and woman an explicit goal across all our programs and a key filter when considering new partnerships.

LINK WITH REFUGEE COMMUNITIES

indigo foundation is committed to justice and fair treatment for refugees and where opportunities arise we will develop in-country projects with Australia-based leaders from refugee communities. This approach builds meaningful relationships in Australia and allows us to manage risk and develop programs in highly marginalised communities that would otherwise not receive external assistance.

BUILD PROGRAM CLUSTERS, PARTICULARLY IN THE ASIA PACIFIC

Geographic clusters of projects will lay the foundation for our community partners to build networks and engage in peer-to-peer learning. A cluster approach can also create efficiencies in terms of program management and program costs will allowing us to capitalize on regional networks. We will remain committed to our current hub of partners in Namibia, Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan, but will not seek to expand our program in Africa.

SUPPORTING ADVOCACY FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

We will support communities and partner organisations to engage in advocacy programs where they seek to influence change in the power structures that support and reinforce the marginalization of communities. This may translate to support for local advocacy organisation or to supporting advocacy activities that communities prioritise to influence change in their communities.



Our guiding principles

indigo foundation has four guiding principles which describe how we work with communities and how we run our organisation. We require our partners to align with these principles.

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Lasting systemic change is best effected by resourcing and empowering communities to transform themselves. We support community initiated and led development as we believe that communities and the people within them have the knowledge and wisdom to determine the best solutions for their development. We are guided by our community partners and supporters in decisions about our strategic direction, policy making and approach to development.

SUSTAINABILITY

Good investments in community development create change that is sustainable: change that has a long lasting and positive impact. Strategies and actions must be socially, environmentally, culturally, economically and politically sustainable, and result in development outcomes that are equitable and life changing. Development patterns that perpetuate today's inequities are neither sustainable nor worth sustaining. Change must always be made with a view to supporting the capabilities, opportunities and potential of future generations: intergenerational social justice is a foundation to achieving a sustainable impact.

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency builds confidence and trust in relationships and facilitates participation and accountability in organisations and programs. Transparency in decision making, planning, implementation, financial management, and reporting is vital in ensuring fair and equitable outcomes. Our systems need to be transparent for our partner communities our members, supporters and we support and encourage partner communities to develop their own processes for transparency and accountability.

EQUITY

A commitment to equity is at the centre of organisational management and program development. Equitable organisations focus on social justice, human rights, universal access, fair treatment, inclusiveness, dignity for all, and challenging embedded power relations. An equitable approach addresses issues of vulnerability and discrimination due to gender, class, disability, ethnicity, religion, chronic poverty and geography. We have a focus on achieving equity for women and girls.