



EdmundRice
FOUNDATION
AUSTRALIA

EDITION 55

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REACHING OUT

PRESENCE | COMPASSION | LIBERATION

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EdmundRice FOUNDATION

METANOIAMATTERS

Dear Supporters,

A little over two years ago I took a group of 10 Australian business people to Nairobi for the first Gone Fishing immersion. The immersion centred upon three projects that we partner and support in East Africa. Since that time over 40 business people have now accompanied the Edmund Rice Foundation on this immersion.

Immersions provide powerful experiences that challenge our everyday way of thinking. The only negative of immersions is that most people cannot find the time or the resources to leave Australia for a period of ten days. As a response to this challenge Edmund Rice Foundation has developed a website that allows every Australian the opportunity to visit online any Project in Australia or the world.

Essentially all you need to do is visit the Metanoia Matters website www.metanoiamatters.org and register your willingness to share your knowledge and skills. Our dream is that via Skype or Phone you can help our program and project leaders achieve their goals.

In essence, this is Australia's first online peer to peer website to link our Project leaders with Australians who want to give more than a donation. All you need to do is give your time and knowledge from the comfort of your own home or business.

Edmund Rice was a businessman who utilised his skills to bring education to the poor; the Metanoia Matters website now allows every Australian to follow his example in a simple yet powerful way.

Anthony Ryan
CEO Edmund Rice Foundation



PROJECT UPDATES: OCEANIA

Comunidade Edmund Rice *East Timor*

Pre-school education (TEKA) was tentatively commenced by Comunidade Edmund Rice (CER) in 5 villages in the District of Railaco in 2006. Volunteers from New Zealand spearheaded the venture. It involved gaining recognition from the Basic Education Department, staffing, training, resourcing & finding accommodation for the pre-schools. Volunteer builders from various Rotary groups & Terrace Timor Network (TTN) from Australia set up a suitable room in each village.

The structure of the TEKA week was:

- classes on 3 days for the children aged 3 - 5 years.
- classes were conducted from 8.30am to mid-day.
- a food program each day for the children
- a training day each week for the teachers
- transport for the staff to come together for training
- professional training through Baucau Teachers College.

In the ensuing years the program grew under local leadership with classes now held on 5 days. Teachers continue to train on one day in the week and participate in external training during school holidays. CER now has 10 TEKA centres operating across the villages. In 2015 there are 247 children attending in the care of 27 teachers. The seed that was planted 10 years ago has grown into a large tree that benefits so many children teachers & families. Strong financial support comes from the Edmund Rice Foundation) and various donors. Recently CER recognised the contribution of teachers who had served for 10 years with a certificate and celebration.

Br Frank Hennessy Project Leader

Edmund Rice Services *Maasin, Philippines*

Questions we face at Edmund Rice Ministries:

How to sustain ministries beyond the reach of the main centre at Maasin City?

ERM Maasin established a centre in Bato with 5 staff to serve the region. The staff are working with the communities to have them engaged in developing regular services across the population.

What to do when disaster strikes?

Taking measured action driven by compassion: In 2013, Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda hit Tacloban City and regions along the Leyte Island east coast. The wind reached recorded peaks up to 315 km/hr. Accompanying the wind, an 8 metre high tidal wave swept all before it. Noting what other agencies & NGOs set out to do, with support from Australia, we set up a mobile ear health clinic screening children in all schools within reach and facilitated treatment for the poorest people, no matter what the injury or critical condition.

Where now for Tacloban, Palo & Tanuaun, post-typhoon?

There remains looking to liberation through development and 20 months later we are establishing in this "ground zero" area, with the help of Edmund Rice Foundation, our regular services of Youth Development, Child Assistance & Livelihood, and Community Based Rehabilitation in Palo. We will use a model similar to the outreach centre at Bato by having 2 Filipino nurses, a social worker, and 2 teachers, working as a team assisting communities of people to become engaged in their own development.

Br Graeme Leach



Nurse checking
child's ears

Edmund Rice Services *Kabankalan, Philippines*

In partnership with the Cataract Foundation (CF) and Visayas Hearing Centre (VHC), Edmund Rice Ministries conducted hearing screening recently for 500 Grades 1 and 2 children from a nearby Elementary School. The screening revealed that nearly 100 of these children had inner ear infections, common among young children who live in conditions of poor hygiene. These infections often cause partial temporary deafness. Unaware teachers may scold the children for not paying attention. Some consequently stop coming to school. Ear screening is one strategy we use to counter this loss of education. VHC provided free ear drops to enable our ERM nurse to treat them gradually over the ensuing weeks.

On the same day, ERM staff worked with CF personnel screening 255 adults with sight problems. A large number walked away wearing broad smiles and new glasses, their first ever, which had cost them fifty pesos (about \$1.50). Others were found to have cataracts for which treatment is arranged.

Training of nurses and teachers in screening and after care is scheduled for August. ERM staff will participate and be involved with nurses working with the Division of Education, until they can work alone. Kabankalan Division of Education has 138 schools, attended by many thousands of children. The focus initially for the younger children will be ear care, and for the high school youth, eye care. In time both aspects will be catered for across the Division.

Br Rod Ellyard *Project Leader*

Callan Services *Papua New Guinea*

A visually-impaired student, Emmanuel Simon, from Rosary Secondary School in Simbu sat for the Grade 12 National Written Expression Exam. He was assisted by the invigilators and the visually-impaired teacher and Braille officer from Callan Services - Mingende Special Education Resource Centre, who transcribed the Brailled answers onto the actual answer sheet for easy and quick marking for the exam markers.

It was fascinating for the invigilators who had not come across a such a student in the past. The team leader from Muaina Secondary School paused for a while to absorb the Braille machine and Braille paper and then exclaimed "It's so amazing and very interesting to see Braille dots or writings." The purchase and transport of low vision equipment, braille equipment and optical lenses for lower vision clients has been a major source of expenditure this year. This equipment will be located at Callan SERC Rabaul and Gerehu to allow Braille services to be available to the New Guinea Islands Region and to the Southern Region. Braille services are already present and are being re-developed and upgraded in Goroka for The Highlands Region and Wewak for The Momase Region. Training of Braille staff members is being negotiated. We are being helped in this by Dr Frances Gentle from the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children in Sydney and Mr Ben Clare, former student of St Edmund's Wairoa, for training of staff members in Braille.

PROJECT UPDATES: AFRICA

Star Support Group *Yambio, South Sudan*

Yambio is in the west of South Sudan. It has been one of the most peaceful parts of this war-torn country. Sadly, tension here began about a month ago when some 35 innocent young people were arrested by an order from the capital, Juba. The whereabouts of those young men is not known yet but the rumour is that they are in Juba in a torture chamber.

The tension started mounting when some civilians, in response to the disappearance of the youth, killed some soldiers. The military decided to take revenge; a Dinka soldier executed two young men at the airstrip. The killing of the two young men marked the beginning of an exodus: people fled Yambio town seeking refuge and the town was nearly deserted. Friday night we heard heavy gunshots, which continued past midnight. On Saturday the situation deteriorated: the shooting started in the morning with firing of heavy artillery. The town became completely deserted. People sought refuge elsewhere, but have since returned. Tension is still very high. But the program continues for over 520 people receiving Home Based Care Support. Home based care includes provision of food: beans, rice, sugar, salt and soap.

On the first Saturday of the month, the orphan children also have their monthly meeting and day of support. Recent progress has seen formation of an advisory board for the project and further mutual collaboration with other NGOs.



Br Beausang Catholic Education Centre *Embulbul, Kenya*

During the past 3 months staff and students were involved in various training activities - Child Protection (staff); counselling skills (teachers); Student Leadership (students). The Deputy Principal was selected to attend a program on Edmund Rice spirituality. The school submitted an application for a grant through the Australian High Commission's Project Assistance Program to install a water filter for the bore hole to lower the fluorine level. An application for capital assistance for a trade / vocational building was submitted to the Edmund Rice Foundation.

School celebrations included the Edmund Rice Celebration Day. This was particularly significant as the theme was marking 10 years of Edmund Rice education from when the Christian Brothers East Africa District took over the administration of

the school in 2006. Many Brothers from Nairobi attended the day and student and staff awards were presented.

At the Ngong Diocese Education Day, the school was awarded the prize of Most Improved in the secondary national exams for 2015 as well as having the top student in the Diocese (Rick In-Soo). Students also excelled in the Kenyan schools national science competition, achieving four first places at the County level and a second placing at the nationals. The netball team won the County championship for the second successive year and the boys soccer also qualified for the County games. The Zimele Foundation Immersion group visited the school prior to our exchange visit to Edmund Rice Sinon.

Mr Peter Shanahan
Principal



Education for Life *Eldoret, Kenya*

Travelling through the rift valley of Kenya to Eldoret to visit the Education for Life Centre is always a special part of the Zimele immersion experience. The Education for Life Centre caters for over 300 women with HIV and their children. While one can be overwhelmed at the suffering, it is inspiring to hear the positive stories coming to the lives of so many. The house visits are the most confronting experience on the immersion. Each 'home' is little more than a tin shed, with no electricity, no light, no running water. The stigma associated with HIV is still very strong in the community. The women of Education for Life are testimony to the great human spirit to survive. Their gratitude for the support they receive was

expressed by one of the mothers we visited.

"Education for Life is transforming. It provides us a place we call home. Education for Life gives us a second chance at life. You don't give up because you know you are not on your own. Education for Life enables us to carry each other's burden, makes us happy and have little stress. Here we are able to be free, free to share, free to be who we are."

The Education for Life Centre is filled with hope. We went back to Australia with a great sense of hope and gratitude that EFL is uplifting the lives of so many people.

Mr Tom Purcell

Comboni Hospital *Nzara, South Sudan*

Despite South Sudan's political power struggle with fighting and population displacement, the area around Nzara remains relatively peaceful and secure. The Italian Comboni order has worked in South Sudan for 50 years facilitating development of community health care, education and community support groups. Edmund Rice Foundation Australia's (ERFA) financial support for training and infrastructure development at the Comboni managed Nzara Hospital has assisted healthcare of the STAR HIV/Aids community, a Christian Brothers initiative. The success of an ERFA financed 10 KWh/day solar energy system enabling reliable laboratory testing and refrigeration gave the impetus for the development a larger scale 100kWh/day solar energy system. A team of Australian and German expert volunteers worked closely with

Sr (Dr) Sara Antonini, Nzara Hospital director, to assess current and future energy requirements and future design of the hospital and provided a sustainable energy solution. Designed and built in Tasmania by Mode Electrical, it will provide a reliable energy supply for X-ray equipment, improved transfusion services, oxygen supply, laboratory equipment, a humidicrib and introduction of new patient monitoring facilities. The basic support structures for this system and power distribution will be built onsite by Nzara contractors with the system installed and commissioned by volunteers in January 2016. Funding has been provided by donations and support from the Abruzzo Club in East Brunswick, the Bitu-mill Group Golf Day and of course, ERFA. Thanks to all our contributors

Dr Daniel Doyle





Edmund Rice Sinon Secondary School *Arusha, Tanzania*

This is a real success story of our work in Africa. When the Brothers were asked to take responsibility for it 20 years ago, it was a few "tin" sheds, few students and not performing at all well. The remarkable transformation is evident and the number of students that it serves so well is a great credit to many. Our Australian supporters contributed substantial funds to build the school and its infrastructure, but now it is near sustainability level. Generous supporters enable many students to attend. As academic results are so vital for the future of the locals, the school works hard on this front and does very well for its students. Volunteers over the years have made a substantial contribution and continue to do so.

Last year an exchange visit was organised with Brother Beauang School (BBCEC) in Nairobi with assistance of the Zimele immersion group led by Tom Purcell from St Kevin's College in Melbourne. This year the immersion travelled to Arusha, where they assisted in the running of the sporting/cultural exchange between ERSSS and BBCEC. The exchange came to fruition with the help of Peter Shanahan (Head of BBCEC) and Br Clem Barrett (Registrar of ERSSS) 50 students from BBCEC travelled south to Arusha to challenge ERSSS students in volleyball, netball, basketball, AFL football and debating. The hospitality offered to the visitors was most appreciated and the exchange was a resounding success.

Mr John Mount



Ruben Centre *Nairobi, Kenya*

We have started a special class for children of the Mukuru slum who do not attend school because of a range of disabilities. We have 17 children, 5 girls and 12 boys, who now come to school daily. We have had 2 groups of visitors from the Association of People with Disability of Kenya (APDK) to advise us on the best approaches. We are grateful to APDK who have given some wheelchairs which are of great help to the children. We have one teacher who is working in that class, one Yoga trainer – part-time and three caregivers. The Teacher was only part-time but is now full time in the unit and this has helped the children considerably. Most of the children have gained social skills since being in the class. We have one boy who is dumb and now is able to communicate by simple sign language. And now the mothers have started a support group

for themselves with a focus on ways to improve their economic well-being among other things.

Some comments from the children's mothers:

I am very appreciative because my child is doing well at home. We wanted to abandon him because of his condition.

Mama Lameck Omwenga

My child can write at least numbers 1 – 3 which he couldn't do before.

Mama Nickely

I thank God for you people; you have done well for my child.

Mama Shekynah

I have hope now for my girl.

Mama Gloria

Br Frank O'Shea
Director

Mary Rice Centre *Nairobi, Kenya*

The Centre carried out home visits during this month to facilitate home training to the parents and guardians so that they can assist their children in bathing, toileting and feeding, and also to perform basic therapy to help children with mobility difficulty such as walking.

Parents are guided to support and encourage their children to stand and walk. We carried out the renovation of Virgilian House to facilitate Income Generation Activities (IGA). We built a perimeter wall which was six feet high to provide security and an extension for poultry and vegetables. Unfortunately the perimeter wall was demolished by our neighbour who claimed the house belonged to him. We have reported the case to the police and the Nairobi County Land Department who have decided to solve the dispute by drawing the boundaries. Eye screen testing was carried out through the collaboration with the Lions Club Eye Clinic to identify children who might need treatment.

Three out of 27 children were found with serious eye problems and they will receive treatment free facilitated by Lions Club. We did the evaluation of the children who have been placed in schools, both regular and special. The number who have been supported by the Centre is 17. We observed 14 children are doing very well in terms of adjusting to the learning environment and following instructions, but three children are struggling.

Br Gerald Mgalula *Director*





VANILLA – BEANS OF HOPE

“Now, we know how to look after our vanilla we can help others to grow vanilla,” says a woman while tending vanilla vines in her garden.” She is Adelina. Her age is unknown but her spirit is young, energetic and inspiring. Adelina lives with her husband Manuel in Samelete, 5 hours walk uphill from Dili, Timor-Leste. Most farmers in Samelete and the surrounding villages rely on coffee as their sole cash crop. Coffee generates less than \$250 income, less than \$1 a day for the majority of households, causing farmers many financial problems, including difficulties in feeding their children and seeking medical treatment when they are sick. Adelina earned an additional \$260 from vanilla beans in 2014 - life-changing sum. Imagine what she could earn if she had something other than a machete to work with. ERFA and its partner Terrace Timor Network (from St Joseph’s College, Brisbane) are working together with Comunidade Edmund Rice in Timor-Leste to support Adelina and other farmers to build a sustainable vanilla industry. The vanilla project is a 5 year economic development project.

‘From little beans big things grow...’

Kaylene Benson

LEARNING SUPPORT AT THE SUNSHINE HARVESTER PRIMARY SCHOOL, VICTORIA.

Many new arrivals enrol with only very basic English language skills due to little or disrupted prior schooling, limited time spent at introductory language school, and little or no available support to undertake learning at home. Many students also bring with them the emotional impact of their refugee experience - trauma, separation anxiety, grief from family loss, and sensitivity to noisy environments. All of these factors impact on the student’s ability to learn and thrive. Refugee background students participate in mainstream schooling including having an English as Another Language coach who works closely with teaching staff. Even with appropriately skilled teachers, it is a challenge to provide the individualised support that is needed.

A collaborative partnership between Edmund Rice Community and Refugee Services and Sunshine Harvester Primary School, to strengthen the literacy ability of children of refugee background, began in 2013. The ‘out of school hours’ learning support program was established with the goal of assisting students to develop the literacy skills to be active and engaged participants when they return to their mainstream classrooms. The program has achieved set outcomes and has a consistently high attendance of 30 students per session each week. A further two secondary schools have partnered with ERCRS to bring student volunteer tutors each week to ensure that students can receive individual support. Opportunities are opened up for students to participate in activities such as swimming lessons and camps during the school holidays, which are either funded by or organised through ERCRS partner agencies. In the Term III school holidays this year, Edmund Rice Camps Victoria, will operate a camp for the Burmese families whose children are enrolled in the learning program.

Br Frank Perkins
Project Leader

FUNDRAISING EVENTS 2015

October 16

Bitu-mill Golf Day, Melbourne

October 17

*Terrace Timor Network Annual Fundraiser,
Brisbane*

October 25

*Zimele Walkathon
– Yarra Bend Park, Melbourne*

October 27

*The 500 Supporters’ Group Spring
Racing Luncheon – MCG*

For booking details visit
www.erf.org.au/events



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