



EdmundRice
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REACHING OUT

PRESENCE | COMPASSION | LIBERATION

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LET THERE BE LIGHT

The Nzara Hospital in South Sudan has been conducted by the Comboni Sisters for 40 years.

Reliable refrigeration, imaging, transfusions and oxygen supply have not been possible as there has been no constant source of electricity. Dr Daniel Doyle with the assistance of the Edmund Rice Foundation and many generous supporters set to remedy the situation. The supporting

framework, photo-voltaic panels and batteries were assembled in Launceston and loaded into containers.

The containers departed Burnie in October 2015 for the sea journey to Mombasa. Then by truck the containers were transported through Kenya to Juba in South Sudan. After several aborted attempts to move west by convoy, one attacked by gunmen, they arrived at the UN Mission compound in Yambio before containers were transferred

to a low loader for travel to Nzara together with the container forklift. After the 20,000 km journey taking almost 4 months, they arrived in Nzara. A team of skilled volunteers had prepared the site and soon assembled the structure and installed the equipment ready to ensure that the medical equipment will be available to serve the hundreds of patients who come through doors. Sr Sara, the Medical Director, and staff are overjoyed.



PROJECT UPDATES: OCEANIA

Comunidade Edmund Rice

East Timor

Where there is a will...

Early in 2014 the community of the small village of Poerema high in the mountains of East Timor approached Comunidade Edmund Rice (CER) requesting assistance to establish a pre-school (known as TEKA).

After several public meetings led by the Mayor, the loan of a room, from Jose a local builder, bounded by bamboo walls & an earthen floor, the selection of 3 village ladies to teach - the tentative arrangement got under way. On day one 30 excited little ones appeared – mayhem reigned. Gradually with a restructure of the program, training of the teachers, gathering of resources and the establishment of a food program, things became more settled.

Last year, Anthony Ryan, from the Foundation, visited the ministries of CER & offered to assist the Poerema TEKA by building a permanent facility for the children. Fund raising in Brisbane by the 'Rainbow of Hope Committee', the finalising of a site by the village community, the initial levelling of the ground by the locals & HELP students from Brisbane saw the project commence. Under the supervision of Br Peter and Jose, teams of local workers & cooks, the project became a reality. Thanks to the Foundation and its arm in Brisbane – 'Rainbow of Hope,' a village community request has been fulfilled for the benefit of its little ones with the opening of the TEKA in 2016.

Edmund Rice Services

Maasin, Philippines

Edmund Rice Services Maasin was established following a comprehensive process of research and social analysis in 2010 by an in-country development team. The object of the ERS Maasin project is to promote better quality of life for the poorest children and youth through removal of barriers and alleviation of poverty through education, health awareness and empowerment of poor families. ERS Maasin delivers three programs: the Child Assistance and Livelihood Promotion (CALP); Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR); and Youth Development Animation (YDA).

In 2015 direct beneficiaries of the CALP program were 2,423 (1,578 children, 728 women and 117 men). The CALP program provides supplementary feeding for children and, through this, school absenteeism has decreased and children have gained sufficient weight leading to improvement in school activities. The program assists parents of school children in selling their produce through the support of the Department of Agriculture and the women and men involved received livelihood/skills training.

CBR health services treated 7,070 people (5,877 children, 624 women and 569 men). This included ear patients being screened and treated and resulted in improved academic performance and self-esteem. Children with low vision were appropriately seated in classrooms and received prescriptions for glasses. Some patients also had eye surgery improving self-reliance and independence. Students participating in the Youth Development animation program become active agents of advocacy for better stewardship of the earth. 316 students were involved in tree planting and care.

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.

Callan Services

Papua New Guinea

A training workshop on advocacy was conducted by Callan Services National Unit for representatives from throughout the Callan Disabilities network, as well as other disabilities organisations both government and NGO. The key outcomes of the workshop were:

- The achievement of a more common understanding of what advocacy is for each organisation/department.
- A common agenda for joint advocacy with the Government of PNG departments.
- Greater determination to communicate among each other and to act jointly whenever possible.
- A beginning understanding that The Network of Callan Services for Persons with Disabilities can call on an international advocacy organisation, Edmund Rice International (ERI) to advocate at the United Nations.

In November two staff members of CSNU visited several villages in Finschafen to survey disability needs in that area of the very large Morobe Province. This was in response to an invitation from a former staff member of CSNU, who had identified a large number of people suffering from muscular dystrophy. The visit involved: Awareness about the causes, transfer and outcomes of muscular dystrophy, a survey of numbers with disability (muscular dystrophy and other disabilities), distribution of ready-made spectacles when appropriate).

A submission has been made to the Department for Community Development seeking funding for staffing, technical equipment and program implementation costs for 12 months to, provide limited service delivery and support the communities in making a submission for the establishment of a Special Education Resource Centre in Finschafen.



PROJECT UPDATES: AFRICA

Star Support Group *Yambio, South Sudan*

Turmoil continues in the region but the STAR project goes on. Recent successes have included the formation of the advisory board that helps to strategise the project activities and monitors the project progress; the prophylaxis supply has been assured through some other agencies; and the sponsorship of the orphan children has been achieved by seeking for funding from some more donor agencies.

A tailoring project began as a capacity building project with an aim of making the beneficiaries self-reliant rather than depending on the project for their livelihood. The project is in a pilot state of initiating a micro-finance project for mostly women to become self-sustainable in terms of building their capacity to be self-employed in their own homes.

The project has benefited from the United Nations Mission in South Sudan in organizing child protection policy workshops, the right of freedom of expression, speech, right to health, applied technology in how to reduce, reuse and recycle waste materials with an aim of conserving the environment. The Mission does a monitoring and evaluation on the trainings they have carried out.

A total of 1522 people living with HIV/AIDS have benefited from free supply of prophylaxis, nutrition support and awareness workshops. The orphan children have been well equipped with knowledge of child rights and child protection policies.

The clients on anti-retroviral have greatly benefited from the nutrition support the project provides to the bedridden clients.

Comboni Hospital *Nzara, South Sudan*

The Comboni Hospital program promotes the right to good health and accessibility to essential medical care and treatment, giving special attention to the most vulnerable. The beneficiaries of the program are the population of Nzara, Yambio and Ezo Counties, while some essential services like the TB program, Leprosy program, and specific services for HIV/AIDS are available only in Nzara. Last year the hospital served over 16,000 patients: 10,289 women and 5,945 men.

Provision of adequately trained nursing staff is a priority and Sr Sara has sponsored 7 for registered nurse training with a supply of diploma nurses becoming available to take responsibility in the hospital departments over the next few years.

After study and evaluation the hospital management agreed on the need for upgrading the whole power system in the hospital. During the year a power failure led to a break down in most essential services, such as in pediatric ward, with great challenge in operating oxygen concentrators and using only torches for light at night. The budget was reviewed to provide for a new solar system proposed by Daniel Doyle and approved by ERF. Adequate power supply is going to bring improvement in most of the hospital activities, including lifesaving procedures, thanks to the capacity of the power system to run full time the medical equipment needed in the various departments. Political instability continues with insecurity in the area especially on the roads.

Education for Life

Eldoret, Kenya

EFL offers education support for the most at risk children who belong to families that are either infected or affected by the HIV and AIDS scourge, some of whom are total orphans while others live with widowed mothers. The children who benefit from the education support will in turn help their families and support their siblings when their parents finally die. The greatest challenge has been the continued influx of clients due to the phasing out of HIV/AIDS programs in the region. A project was commenced with a group of women to generate income to support their families. These women are single and are the bread winners for the family, as well as providers of school fees. The community engagement model was used with the women coming up with the idea of a chicken project. The management, purchase, and erecting the structure was totally their work. A workshop facilitated by the ministry of agriculture on poultry farming was arranged so that these women learned skills on how to keep poultry.

The Camps for Children project focussed on child protection and professional ethics and developed a code of conduct. They managed to acquire some playing equipment which was a big success for the camps. There was also improvement in the number of volunteers. Volunteers come to cook for the children. There were 416 children who attended.

Br Beausang Catholic Education Centre

Embulbul, Kenya

During 2015 some 20 Class Seven primary school pupils undertook mentorship training conducted by the Embulbul Counselling Centre which works closely with the school's Pastoral Care department. The program was to empower the pupils with the necessary skills to support and advise their fellow pupils on issues they may be dealing with both at school and at home. Other benefits have been increased motivation and the building of stronger relationships. Topics included listening skills, peer relationships, dealing with emotions and the rights of children. The group will have their graduation celebration on the Day of the African Child, a very appropriate day. The next group will commence training later in the year. Providing vocational education opportunities for both students and wider school community has been a goal for the school since it began. The name of the school, *Education Centre*, reflected the original vision which included a trade building.

Thanks to the support of ERFA and the Lions Club, this will soon become a reality with the construction of a workshop during the Term 1 break. The initial focus will be on carpentry with metal work to be introduced later. As well as giving students, former students and parents the opportunity to learn skills in the trade, the school will be able to do far more of its repair and maintenance work itself and to also provide new desks and tables in-house.



Edmund Rice Sinon Secondary School *Arusha, Tanzania*

A new academic year began in mid-January with the school population at 1500 students, 1200 of whom are in boarding. Staff numbers have grown slowly with 65 teaching/academic staff and 45 ancillary staff. The school environment has been greatly enhanced through the work of the students of art with murals on some external walls.

Early in the year, the results for both Form Two and Form Four National Examinations were published with no failures at either level and the school maintaining a place in the top 10% of schools in Tanzania. At Form Four, 194 students qualified for A-level studies (Forms Five and Six), our highest number ever. ERSSS sponsors needy students who otherwise are unable to access education. It has youth with different talents and capabilities. It has disabled students – some who would not be accepted into other schools. There are quite a number of students who have been rejected elsewhere because of low averages. The program of student support has been a long-held tradition at the school.

The start of the year brought us a new volunteer from Melbourne, replacing another who made a significant contribution in many areas during her two years with us. Staff and students are looking forward to the exchange visit with BBEC from Kenya. This is made possible through sponsorship from Zimele. Connecting with another Edmund Rice school expands the understanding of staff and students from both schools.





Mary Rice Centre *Nairobi, Kenya*

The Centre has been an oasis of hope for children who were born handicapped. They had been seen by parents as a curse, and were kept hidden in the tiny huts of the Kibera slum, destined to be confined, helpless and uneducated.

The Mary Rice Centre has developed under the Christian Brothers to provide hope for these children that their rights to life, health, education and to be respected will be fulfilled. It has emerged from a tiny beginning to offer effective education and therapy services to its handicapped children, to empower the parents with the skills and knowledge on how to live with children with special needs, and has networked with organizations which provide similar services as MRC.

Last year more sewing machines were purchased for the parent assistance project, with parent training in tailoring skills going to 11 parents. Also the training given to parents has enabled them to be able to perform basic therapy exercises for their children during holidays. This program has reduced the tendency for children to fall behind after holidays.

In November a letter was received indicating that MRC should vacate the site at the end the year. MRC has been there for five years and had hoped to renew its tenancy. The project is in serious danger of closing if it cannot get another site where it will have stability and the room to offer other related services.

Ruben Centre *Nairobi, Kenya*

The Ruben Centre offer a range of services to the people of the Mukuru slum. The school has trebled in enrolments. But as it finishes at Year 8 there is very little prospect of further education for the children. So a scholarship fund was established to enable the most capable to be given further opportunity. The Fund is spending \$50,000 this year on talented children from Ruben who are now at Secondary schools. The Fund committee selected 12 students who were the most needy in terms of social and economic needs and best performing students of Grade 8 in the National Primary Certificate Examinations. Nationwide 23,000 candidates were presented for another scholarship program and it could assist only 2,000. The Kenyan President at the presentation ceremony lamented that given those statistics, the day was more a commiseration rather than a celebration.

Ruben Centre's vision is to empower people and to create a just and fairer community. Last year this desire led the Centre to reach out to the group at the bottom of the pecking order, and a *Special Needs Unit* was established. A generous donor supported the costs of creating the room and equipment which was named the Kurt Fearnley Room after the decorated Australian para-Olympian who has visited the Centre. Twenty small children with various disabilities suddenly were classified as normal because they were now 'going to school' like all their age mates.



EDMUND RICE CAMPS – MAN SKILLS

“Your camps do not focus on special needs, just being special,” one mother recounted at the conclusion of her son’s second Edmund Rice Teenage Boys Camp in January this year. She went on to describe John’s struggles outside of camp, having experienced significant bullying at school resulting in mental health concerns and low self-worth, in addition to the impacts related to his disability. This week-long program provides an intensive opportunity for children like John to experience peer-to-peer validation within a positive community atmosphere, two aspects John’s mother describes as key in boosting her son’s confidence and sense of self-worth, to be able to face his daily struggles at home and at school.

The young men have been referred to Edmund Rice Camps for a number of reasons. Some boys are living in residential care, some with involvement in the foster care system, some with mental health issues and behavioural issues, and some with other medical conditions which impact on their day-to-day lives.

This recent summer, the Teenage Boys Camp participants were introduced to the value of developing their ‘man skills’ through a competition to win the converted Golden Top Hat; a comical way to engage the group in demonstrating skills in the use of manners, sportsmanship, assistance in the kitchen and loyalty over the course of the program.

The Teenage Boys program is just one of 13 camp programs delivered over the course of Edmund Rice Camps’ calendar in Victoria with 80 being offered around Australia. Edmund Rice schools provide vital assistance for this. Each program provides the participants and young adult volunteers with an intensive experience of developing community. Dependability, trust, communication, compassion and teamwork are fostered. This social capital is then transferred into their relationships, family, school, work and local community setting outside of the camp program.

“Your camps do not focus on special needs, just being special.”

EDMUND RICE CENTRE MIRABOOKA PERTH W.A.

At the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka in Perth we support young people from Refugee and Aboriginal backgrounds who are experiencing disadvantage and marginalisation.

Our programs help empower young people to reach their full potential by teaching sport, art, and leadership skills which allow them to better connect with the Australian community. We provide equal opportunities to help people develop and learn in a supportive and encouraging environment.

Many young people come to Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka with limited social skills, low self-esteem, and some have serious mental health issues like anxiety and depression. We provide on-going support to build trust and self-confidence, and

help them develop their problem-solving, teamwork and anger-management skills.

The Centre provides a range of pathways to encourage young people to aim high and achieve their goals. We celebrate one another’s successes together!

This year our government funding has been reduced significantly, and it will be cut by another third in 2017.

We have 14 programs running every week and we have up to 1000 young people registered in our programs.

The work is very labour intensive and if our young people are to exceed their own expectations we need more staff to mentor them.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS 2016

May 4

*The 500 Supporters’ Group
– AFL Luncheon – MCG*

May 6

Prawns on the Lawn – Brisbane

Saturday May 14

*Timor PARTE ESTRADA FESTA
– Street Party Festival, Brisbane*

June 3

Rainbow Ladies Luncheon – Sydney

July 2

*Nzara Dinner Dance
– Abruzzo Club, Lygon St,
Melbourne*

July 29

*Edmund Rice Dinner Brisbane
– Royal International Convention
Centre (Ekka)*

September 3

*Zimele Dinner – St Kevin’s College,
Toorak, Melbourne*

September 9

*Rainbow Ladies Luncheon
Melbourne*

October 7

*Friends of Africa Golf Day,
Sandhurst Golf Club, Melbourne*

October 23

Zimele Walkathon – Melbourne

October 25

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

TBC

Sydney dinner

Gone Fishing

- May 16-26
- October 8-18

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



Edmund Rice Foundation (Australia) is an accredited member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)