

Presence ♥ Compassion ♥ Liberation



Edmund Rice
FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA

Liberating Lives Through Education

REACHING OUT

DID YOU KNOW...



Did you know it's been 20 years since our first *Reaching Out* newsletter was released? To celebrate, we've decided on a new look and a move to printing on recycled paper.

AND ... to help our environment further and cut unnecessary costs, we invite you to sign up to receiving this newsletter by email at: <https://reachingout2020.erf.org.au/subscribe>

Use our new icons to easily find articles that interest you.



DID YOU KNOW?



DONOR PASSION



GET INVOLVED



STORIES TO INSPIRE



LIBERATING EDUCATION



BEST FOOT FORWARD

2019 *Success!*

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in the Best Foot Forward Day of Giving on the 17th October 2019. We are so incredibly grateful for your donations and your support.

We reached our goal to educate 550 women and girls through a **\$250,000 target** and surpassed that by the next morning.

Just amazing! We couldn't have done it without your support and we thank you for putting your Best Foot Forward.

In 2020 the Best Foot Forward campaign will be back, bigger and better and we encourage you to get involved, share the message and show your support on the day of giving on **6th November**. For more information, please visit:

www.bestfootforward.org.au

Or follow us on social media:



#bestfootforward



IN 2019 ERFA
DIRECTLY IMPACTED
THE LIVES OF

71,429 *People*

(and hundreds of thousands more indirectly)

COMPUTERS

in Kibera



Joseph is talented at drawing and cycling. He's friendly and social and he loves nature which gives him inspiration. With very few chances for schooling for teenagers in Kibera, Joseph was lucky to receive an education. Now he's found his passion for graphic design and has become a student in the Mirror of Hope computer training program. Not only is he learning valuable vocational skills but he's loving being busy and learning new life skills as well. Joseph says...

"I will use the skills I learn to be innovative in this society of today to create solutions to various problems.

Joining this program has positively **impacted my life and I know it will help many to come."**



Getting to know...

BIONG BIONG

Biong Deng Biong works as Executive Officer for Edmund Rice Community and Refugee Services (ERCRC).

Can you tell us about your background?

I arrived in Australia as a refugee from war-torn South Sudan in 2004. As a 9-year old, I was left alone with some boys around my age to trek from South Sudan to Ethiopia. We became known as the "lost boys" of South Sudan. I ended up in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya and was selected from thousands of other children for a scholarship which allowed me to complete my school education in Kenya.

How did you become involved in the Edmund Rice Network?

In 2004, I was offered a humanitarian visa to settle into Australia. After two weeks I started working as a carpenter. I studied and worked hard and have a Masters degree in Finance and Banking as well as a Graduate Certificate in Migration Law. But ... what I'm really passionate about is improving social harmony and promoting equality and I was fortunate to secure a role at ERCRC where I can support others.

What inspires you most in your work?

My work has given me a chance to give back as others have given for me in the past.

What difference has the Edmund Rice program made to your life?

There are many areas but some key things have been improving my advocacy and leadership skills and building my sense of self-worth ■



"What I'm really passionate about is **improving social harmony and promoting equality** and I was fortunate to secure a role at ERCRC where I can support others."





Liberating lives

THROUGH WORKPLACE GIVING

In 2018, Kate decided to make a trip to the slums of Nairobi with ERFA's Gone Fishing immersion program. She was incredibly moved by what she saw,

*"It came as a real shock ...
The desperate need was
overwhelming."*

When she returned to Melbourne, Kate was determined to do something. Her colleagues were moved by her passion and keen to support too.

Working with a fellow attendee from her immersion, Paul Colvin from Paywise Salary Packaging, Kate developed a plan to offer her colleagues the opportunity to make a modest tax-free donation each pay cycle and Ascot Group's workplace giving program was born. Kate describes it as "an easy process with hardly any work required and with the salary packaging service offered for free it's working well". Kate's made real change and her successful giving program is now providing liberating education in Kenya. ■

Small BUSINESS SUCCESS IN SOUTH SUDAN



Aliyah has a successful cafeteria in a market place in Yambio. But, it wasn't all smooth sailing. Her initial business collapsed because she lacked skills. Aliyah joined the SILC training and micro finance program at Star Support Group (SSG) where she learnt the stock control, financial management and customer services skills needed to run a small business. She took out a small loan and restarted her cafeteria.

Aliyah now has the ability to pay school fees and medical expenses for her children. She also employs four women in her business and this is great for their families too. Aliyah says she has found it easy to manage the loan repayments which, once repaid to SSG, will be available to help others start or grow their businesses. ■

Through ERFA **Partner Programs:**

2,541

people *Employed*
in paid and
volunteer work
directly supporting
communities





GIRL POWER!



Elizabeth and Victoria are long-time volunteers with Edmund Rice Camps South Australia (ERCSA) and have a passion for supporting young women.

Together with others, they have developed a fantastic new Teen Girls Resilience and Empowerment Program and the first one took place in September last year. Since then, ERCSA volunteers have discussed gender equality and female empowerment and how these can be incorporated in camps.

We're looking forward to future updates on how the program advocates for young women ■

FRIENDSHIP GRANT, *Timor Leste*



In 2019, ERFA was one of 46 Australian community organisations to receive an Australian Aid: Friendship Grant awarded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. We partnered with Mary MacKillop Today in a teacher and parent training project in Railaco where 37 pre-school and primary school teachers participated in workshops on classroom management, self-confidence, positive discipline, creative lesson-planning, teaching preparation and classroom creativity.

Workshops were run for 121 parents and these ensure that over 231 children receive support from their parents at home. One father, Agostinho Lobato reported...

“This training has helped me so much, I now understand how to read a book to my children at home every night,

I understand the importance of my involvement in my children's education, even outside of the classroom.”





Interview with **STEVE GRAHAM**

When did you first become involved with the Edmund Rice network? (what inspired you to do that?)

As an ex "Abbotsfordian" I was asked to join the Board of the Christian Brothers' Trust for Charitable Works by the CEO at the time. The rest is history!

What have you seen/learnt through your involvement that you would like to share with others?

Australians live in a parallel universe to those who live in the third world. We simply have no idea how good we have it. The more you give, the more you get back with interest.

What inspires you most about the work undertaken by Edmund Rice Foundation?

It's hands on, working in real time with people whose main priority is to survive "today". The poor have the same human needs as the rich.

What impact has supporting the work made to your life?

Satisfaction in achieving something WORTHWHILE.

What would you say to people thinking about how best to support Edmund Rice Foundation?

If you can – go to Africa on an ERFA immersion. It's very hard to describe looking through the prism of an Australian lifestyle ■



DID YOU KNOW...



Many of the images in this newsletter have been captured by professional photographer, Mark Chew, who so generously volunteers his time for ERFA. Visit his website at www.markchew.com.au



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Liberating Lives Through Education

IN 2019, WE ACHIEVED GREAT THINGS WITH YOUR SUPPORT!

\$2,792,724

Globally
disbursed
to programs

28,892

Children
received health and
education services

24,795

Women
supported in economic
empowerment, health,
and vocational training

Get more facts and read our *Impact Report* online at erf.org.au

YOU CAN HELP

support the work of Edmund Rice
Foundation (Australia).

*Liberating Lives
Through Education*

\$50

Helps women like Aliyah get
life changing training and funds
to start a cafeteria business in
South Sudan.

\$500

Provides an entire year's worth
of inclusive education for
students like Geoffrey at the
Kurt Fearnley Centre for Special
Needs in Mukuru slum Nairobi.

\$5,000

Helps "Eddie on the Road"
provide vital programs and
services for at risk youth in
remote indigenous communities
in the Pilbara, Western Australia.

