

Presence  Compassion  Liberation



**Edmund Rice**  
FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA

*Liberating Lives Through Education*

# REACHING OUT

## GET INVOLVED



There are many ways you can be involved and support ERFA. Please visit <https://erf.org.au/get-involved> to view our latest events and ways to support.

Use our icons to easily find articles that interest you.



DONOR PASSION



GET INVOLVED

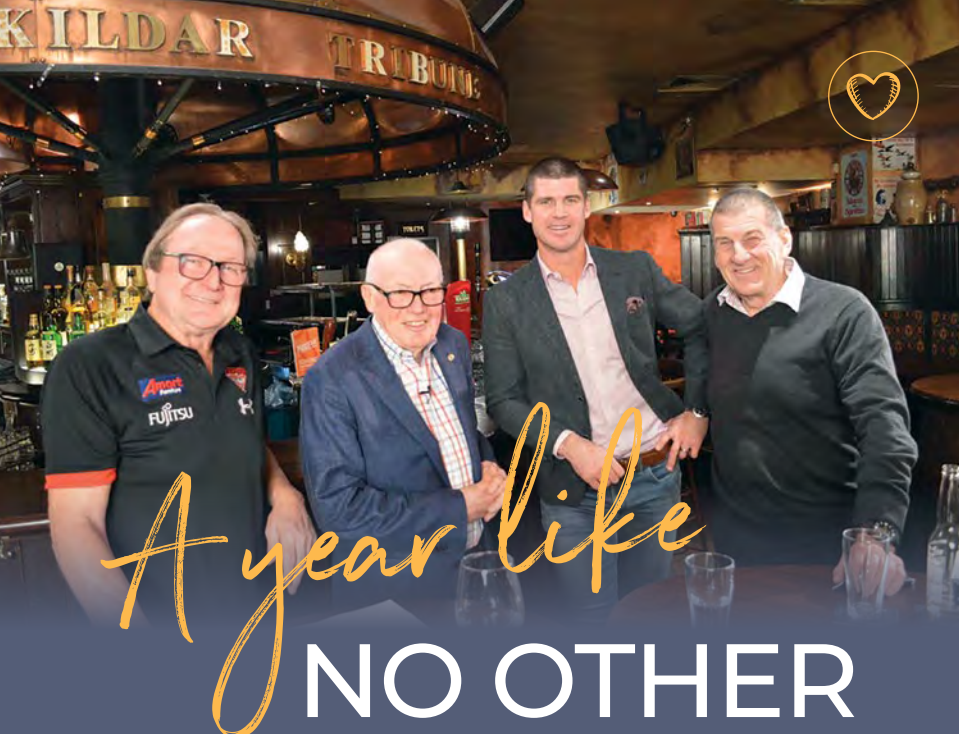


STORIES TO INSPIRE



LIBERATING EDUCATION





# A year like NO OTHER

In 2020, as the pandemic swept the globe, the purpose of the 500 Supporters Group's work for the Ruben Centre was put into perspective. The support from over 200 financial members, sponsors and other friends was never more needed.

With Melbourne in lockdown last May, it was decided that the annual AFL event would need to go online. After consulting with inaugural speaker and AFL Legend, Kevin Sheedy, and filmmakers Richard Keddle and Archie Chew (great friends of Ruben), "the back bar" was born.

Filmed in "the back bar" at PJ O'Brien's and hosted by Leon Wiegard, the one hour "special" comprised an impressive footy panel including, Sheeds, Jeff Kennett and Jonathan Brown, with cameos from champion Ruben friends Simon and Justin Madden, Tom Mitchell, and Jobe Watson. A report from Ruben updated viewers on the effect of the pandemic on the people of Mukuru and the Ruben school, its health clinic and associated projects.

While all enjoyed watching Sheeds and Jeff going head to head and learning about Brownie's family connection to Ruben, the best thing about the event was the record \$570,000 raised.

By November, the Committee had gained the confidence to "go live" on Zoom with the annual Spring Racing event on Melbourne Cup Eve. With great support from the VRC's Ambassador at Large, Joe McGrath, the event featured Cup-winning jockey, Wayne Harris, leading trainers Ciaran Maher, Peter Moody, Lindsey Smith and Archie Alexander, race horse owners Terry Henderson and Gerry Ryan and international racing expert, Francesca Cumani. Leon was ably assisted by podcast partner, Sam Kekovich. It was one of the Group's most successful Spring Racing events, raising over \$200,000.

The 10-member 500 Supporters' committee devotes its energy, drive and network towards supporting Ruben and their unwavering determination is inspirational.

Despite significant challenges, through sheer perseverance an outstanding fundraising result of over \$750,000 was achieved.

DID YOU KNOW...



## ACFID Advocacy

2021 signifies the 8th straight year of ERFA's membership with the Australian Council for International Development, the peak body for Australian NGOs specialising in international development and humanitarian aid.

ACFID CEO, Marc Purcell, kindly presented at ERFA's first Board Meeting of 2021, providing insights into the NGO sector. He spoke about how Australia's COVID-19 response – which includes development and aid programs delivered in our Indo-Pacific region – is vital for preventing regional instability and economic and social disruption. Marc also discussed how Australia's development relationships and investments to support livelihoods, inclusive growth and economic recovery are integral to supporting a safe and staged resumption of international tourism, students and labour mobility.



IN 2020 ERFA DIRECTLY  
IMPACTED THE LIVES OF

**47,924** People  
(and hundreds of thousands more indirectly)



Laurie was educated at St Patrick's College, Ballarat, from 1935 to 1940. At the age of 18 he left his home in Moonee Ponds to enlist in the RAAF. After pilot training in Australia and Canada, he was posted to the RAF Bomber Command as pilot and captain of a crew flying Halifax bombers in raids over Germany. He survived this experience losing close friends and carrying the scars of war. In recent years he won much acclaim for his reconciliation work with citizens of the German cities he bombed. He was awarded the Legion of Honour by the French Government.

Laurie settled in Melbourne as a successful publican whilst continuing his generosity with community service work. In 1987, alongside Marguerite Ryan, Noel O'Brien, Leon Wiegard and

others, Laurie helped to establish the Christian Brothers' Foundation for Charitable Works (CBFCW).

He was highly regarded by many in the community and it was not long after that Laurie organised Laurie organised for Bob Hawke, then Prime Minister, to speak at the CBFCW dinner held at National Gallery of Victoria.

Laurie has been a constant and longstanding supporter of Edmund Rice Foundation (Australia) the Trustee of the CBFCW. He is always first to buy tickets and brings a table of high profile racing people along to the 500 Supporters Group luncheons.

Now 98 years, Laurie remains a humble bloke and, when asked why he supports, replied that the Brothers who educated him also inspired him.

The move of the Brothers to work in East Africa gave Laurie much hope as he was aware of the great need there.

He has made many good friendships through his support of ERFA. And says,

*"When thinking about whether to support, remember the start you were given and give something in return".*



Thank you!

TO OUR SCHOOLS

Edmund Rice schools continue to be the biggest supporter of ERFA and our work around the globe. Even in the most challenging of years in 2020, our school communities responded to our call for help. Edmund Rice schools contributed over \$1.5 million to ERFA funded programs and these funds have changed the lives of many people for the better. We are so grateful for the support we receive from our Edmund Rice Family and in particular our schools. On behalf of the people who benefit from our liberating education programs worldwide, we truly appreciate you and thank you.





For adolescents living in the slums of Langas and Yamumbi in the north-west of Kenya, poor role models, drug and substance abuse, violence, and a lack of adequate sexual education are detrimental to emotional development and divert students from their educational and career paths. In 2020, Edmund Rice Eldoret Empowerment Program (EREEP) continued delivering life skills workshops, which aim to develop healthy and informed individuals who are motivated to pursue their career goals.

Stephen, one of 945 students who participated in life skills workshops in 2020, is a bright student who is respected among his teachers and peers. In 2019, EREEP volunteers became aware that Stephen had developed a problem with substance abuse. A volunteer was assigned to work closely and confidentially with Stephen to support him through his struggles. In early 2020, during a life skills workshop about the impacts of drug use and drug addiction, Stephen took the initiative to openly discuss his past troubles with his classmates.

Having now abandoned drug usage, Stephen is taking an active, positive role with his peers, encouraging them to develop resilient personalities resistant to peer pressure and the influence of drugs. ■



# THANK YOU

**Br. Robert Stone has been an integral part of ERFA for many years. He has provided deep insight and knowledge in working for equity and breaking the cycle of poverty in the places we live and work.**

In recent years, Robert has spent much of his time collaborating with ERFA partner programs around the world, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the projects they deliver. This significant task is critical in ensuring sustainable outcomes for the communities ERFA's donors support. Robert's respected and valuable feedback has, without doubt, contributed greatly to building capacity.

Robert has also been instrumental in delivering ERFA's policy framework and the training necessary for best practice development and compliance with sector codes and regulation. His skill as a most accomplished teacher has been highly regarded when delivering training to partner programs and ERFA staff.

The *Reaching Out* newsletter and ERFA's online presence was enabled by Robert over many years. He has tirelessly worked at fundraising events and behind the scenes, doing whatever jobs necessary to support the vision and mission of ERFA.

Robert's long and committed service is without peer in our history. Now however, he has decided it's time to pack up his desk and, though he will be greatly missed, we thank him for his dedication and wish him the very best. ■



Cicilia is a 38 year-old mother, Vanilla Farmer Group Leader and Finance Manager for a Savings and Lendings Community (SILC) working with a group of friends to build economic security for her family. She has received training in organic vanilla farming and financial management. Through the SILC, Cicilia and other farmers can now access and repay credit to support their vanilla farming businesses. Cicilia is rightly very proud of what she has learnt and has started sharing her knowledge by teaching other farmers.

"As a woman who has two roles, one as a vanilla farmer group leader and the other in finance management of the savings and loan group, it is challenging, but I can do it.

I can see that the group is now more **united, solid, responsible and shows strong teamwork to support activities in our community.** We support and communicate with each other.

In the next few years, I believe the group's capital will grow and have the capacity to support many community businesses."

*Cicilia, Vanilla Farmer Group Leader*



The 'Vanilla Beans of Hope' project is delivered through an ERFA/ Mary MacKillop Today partnership and has achieved enormous success over 6 years with 665 farmers now involved. Establishing structures to support international sales will soon see this project sustainably in the hands of the vanilla farmers of Timor-Leste. ■



DID YOU KNOW...

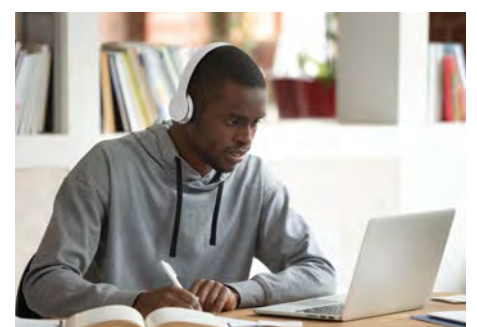


COVID  
*Pivot*

2020 has been described as the "Year of the Pivot" and ERFA had to quickly adapt to support our partner programs.

While remaining vigilant about public health, our Kenyan office conducted remote and face-to-face capacity-building visits with the 11 programs ERFA partners with across Africa.

Back home, we facilitated 6 "Community Development in Practice" online sessions with partner programs from 8 countries. These virtual assemblies were an opportunity to share unique solutions and insights into the challenges programs face. They were such a success that they have become a permanent fixture of ERFA's capacity-building toolkit.







## RUBEN HEALTH CENTRE

Constituted By His Excellency Mr. Mwai Kibaki, Nairobi City County Governor, June 21st 2019

CLINIC A

# Ruben Centre LEADERSHIP

**Nicholas Makau is the new Director of the Ruben Centre, Mukuru Slum, Nairobi. He has worked more than 20 years in leadership of community development organisations including the Lea Toto Program for people living with HIV/AIDs and for an innovative program, Nyumbani, which aims to bridge the generational gap between children orphaned as a result of HIV and their grandparents.**

### How did you become involved in the Edmund Rice network?

In the course of my work at Lea Toto, I met former Ruben Centre Director Brother Barry who agreed to host a Lea Toto field centre at Ruben. Later, in collaboration with Brother Frank, Lea Toto activities were integrated in Ruben Centre's strategic plan and operations. During that collaboration, I learnt of the works of the Christian Brothers and Edmund Rice Foundation Australia.

### What drives you?

In everything I do, I am driven by the desire to make a difference in people's lives. Working with HIV infected children, my motivation was to reduce morbidity and mortality among infected children. In early 2000, we had 12 to 16 deaths

a month. That was heartbreaking for the team but eventually, although not initially popular, we had most children on treatment and reduced deaths to almost zero. I've worked to implement income generation and youth empowerment programs which have had remarkable returns in terms of people's self-reliance. Working with youth to lead advocacy for policy change is another passion and seeing the results makes challenging work worthwhile.

### What else are you involved in?

I am involved in various humanitarian initiatives especially those that focus on development works and easing human suffering. I have been a member of the Executive Board of Kenya Alliance for Advancement of Children's Rights and I'm involved in community associations to promote economic empowerment of disadvantaged people and rural youth.

### What are your initial insights on the role of Ruben Centre?

Through my interactions with Ruben Centre beneficiaries, the Mukuru community, program staff, the Christian Brothers, program partners and friends, I have come to understand the unique position that Ruben Centre has, not only

in Mukuru but also in Kenya and beyond. Ruben Centre is an opportunity to change lives in a sustainable way, to learn and to share experiences. Looking at the challenges faced in Mukuru's informal settlements, we are purposed to act and change the status quo to ensure fairer and just communities. That is what Edmund Rice did when he stepped out of his comfort zone and acted. Now is our time to replicate this. I am honoured to have this opportunity to lead the team in the next part of the journey and look forward to embracing the challenges and opportunities working with the residents of Mukuru and the Edmund Rice community ■



**Edmund Rice**  
FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA  
Liberating Lives Through Education

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>



**Edmund Rice**  
FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA  
*Liberating Lives Through Education*

**IN 2020, WE ACHIEVED GREAT THINGS WITH YOUR SUPPORT!**

**\$1,714,991**  
(AUD)

*Globally*  
disbursed  
to programs

**18,456**

*Children*

received health and  
education services

**19,727**

*Women*

supported in economic  
empowerment, health,  
and vocational training

## 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.





**YES, I would like to support the work of  
Edmund Rice Foundation (Australia) in**

*Liberating lives through an  
empowering education.*

Please tick the region you would like your donation to go to:

☐ Overseas Programs ☐ Australian Programs

**Please accept my donation for the amount of \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

**OR become a monthly supporter**

I wish to show my support and be there for people in need every day of the year. I want to provide ongoing monthly support to Edmund Rice Foundation.

☐ \$20 per month ☐ \$100 per month ☐ \$500 per month ☐ My choice of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month

**MY PAYMENT DETAILS**

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Amex

Credit Card Number

Expiry Date: (mm/yy)   /

Card Holder Name:

Signature:

**BANK TRANSFER**

Should you wish to make a donation by bank transfer, please contact us on 07 3621 9649 or email [info@erf.org.au](mailto:info@erf.org.au).

**PAYMENT BY CHEQUE**

**For overseas projects:** please make cheques out to Edmund Rice Overseas Aid Fund

**For Australian projects:** please make cheques out to Edmund Rice Foundation (Australia)

**GET INVOLVED**

☐ I am interested in information on immersion programs ☐ The business I work for is interested in supporting ERFA's work

**MY CONTACT DETAILS**

**If your contact details have changed please update them here:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ I would like my receipt sent to the above email address to help save administration costs and make sure more of my donation goes where it is needed most
- ☐ I would like to receive information about leaving a Gift in my Will to Edmund Rice Foundation
- ☐ I have already left a Gift in my Will to Edmund Rice Foundation

 Complete the form and return  
it in the **envelope provided**

 Call us on **07 3621 9649**  
with your credit card details

 Donate online at  
**[www.erf.org.au](http://www.erf.org.au)**

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