

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





# Relationships CONTINUE TO GROW

2022 marks another exciting chapter for Edmund Rice Foundation and its fantastic relationship with the Edmund Rice schools network. The generosity of this network provides enormous support to our international and domestic education and development projects, for which we are always grateful! This support changes lives and builds stronger and more sustainable communities.

Keep an eye out for our soon to be released *Ruben 360 project* which captures a wonderful partner program in Kenya using cutting edge 360° camera technology. We are also partnering with Australian schools for the "Walk for Edmund" fundraising campaign, coinciding with Founder's Day in May.

Edmund Rice Foundation seeks to engage school communities in a meaningful way with the important work that we do around the globe.

If you would like to be added to our education emailing list, to be kept in the loop for new releases and upcoming events, please get in touch: [info@edmundrice.org](mailto:info@edmundrice.org) or [jbongers@edmundrice.org](mailto:jbongers@edmundrice.org)



# Empowering GIRLS

South Africa is one of the most unsafe places in the world to be a woman or a girl. The Justice Desk's Mbokodo Club Project focuses on offering women and girls a combination of empowerment workshops, mental health care and support, and self-defence programs. Participants learn to build their confidence, heal their trauma, report abuse effectively and challenge gender-based violence (GBV) and human rights violations in their communities.

In 2021, the Mbokodo project expanded to three communities, trained 31 mentors (many of whom are survivors) and supported 65 female survivors of GBV and rape.

The Mbokodo Club is transforming lives across these communities. Senior participants like Mikhe have become mentors within their community,

**"I talk to them, tell them never to let anyone bring them down because they're stronger than that."**





# Celebrity Chef COOKING FOR RUBEN

**Jeffrey Tan OAM has enjoyed an extraordinary culinary career having cooked for royalty, heads of state and world-famous celebrities across Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Australia.**

While he continues to travel the world teaching and entertaining in the kitchen, Jeffrey's greatest passion now is his Cooking for Charity initiative. Since its creation in 1996, he and his colleagues at Cooking for Charity have raised just on \$5 million for a range of wonderful causes including nearly \$100,000 for ERFA partner the Ruben Centre in Kenya. This extraordinary work has seen him awarded an Australian Centenary Medal, two Australian Day Awards (Jagajaga and Menzies) and an Order of Australia Medal.

Jeffrey was introduced to the Ruben Centre fundraising group, The 500 Supporters' Group, in 2015 and has become a mainstay of its fundraising, donating over a dozen exquisitely prepared and presented dinner parties

for 10 as major auction items at the Group's AFL and Spring Racing Luncheons at the MCG in Melbourne.

In May 2021 Anthony Jackson, another longstanding and very generous member of The 500 Supporters' Group, was the winning bidder for this wonderful auction item.

Supporting Ruben Centre has become part of the Jackson family DNA as it was only a few years earlier that Anthony's son, Aidan was volunteering at the Ruben Medical Centre during a break in his medical studies at Melbourne University.

Having seen off a cholera outbreak early on, Aidan was pleased to be joined for a couple of weeks by his father and his brother ... and they were both very happy to be working outside the clinic!

Anthony and his wife, Grainne, and their guests enjoyed a spectacular birthday dinner party at home courtesy of Jeffrey and his renowned team of chefs and wait staff. As Anthony and Grainne enthused,

**"it's more than a dinner, it's a total experience".**

The next 500 Supporter Group Luncheon will be held at the MCG on Wednesday 11th May– join us and, who knows you may be next in line to have Jeffrey and his team cooking at your place! ■







## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Boys in poorly resourced communities of South Africa are regularly exposed to gangs and violent 'role models' at an early age. One of the effects of this exposure is persistently high levels of violence towards women and girls.

The Justice Desk uses holistic methods to address gender-based violence (GBV) in South Africa. The Ntsika yeThemba (Pillars of Hope) Project supports young men to defend women's rights in their communities and works towards building safer communities for all. In 2021, 35 young men and ten mentors attended regular education sessions and empowerment workshops to challenge GBV and become pillars of hope in their communities.

Young men like Tshepo are now empowered to speak up and stand up for human rights. Tshepo said,

**"In my township, at first I couldn't see if someone was abused, but now I can see the problem and I can help out. I want to stand up for other people's rights."**



## Thank You JOHN BECKINSALE

After 2 years as Programs, Policy and Risk Officer for ERFA, we farewell John Beckinsale. John has been instrumental in providing design support, monitoring and evaluation of ERFA partner projects. He has done exceptional work in maintaining and updating ERFA's policies and practice, ensuring ERFA maintains best practice development standards and ensuring our partners are supported to comply with these. For ERFA, John has been a man of many hats, of which none were too big. His work was performed with precision and dedication. In his 2 years with ERFA, John became an integral part of the team and a key person for our partner programs and the ERFA Board.

John has brought incredible passion and drive to his position with ERFA and he will be missed by our team and his peers. We know, as John returns to full time study, that he will continue to do great things and we wish him the very best for the future ■

# Removing BARRIERS



## TO PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATION SUPPORT DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

Edmund Rice Community & Refugee Services in Victoria supports students from culturally diverse backgrounds by providing them with access to free learning support and social activities.

During the COVID lockdown, the ERFA supported ERCRS homework club needed to move online. One grade 4 student, Deng, actively engaged in online break out room sessions with 2 mentors and one other student. An intelligent and normally quiet student, Deng found these smaller group sessions to be an extremely positive experience. She says

"I felt confident to say what I think and to participate because I am surrounded by people I trust ...

I work hard to succeed so that I can continue doing homework club."



## DID YOU KNOW...



## ERFA'S *Impact*

Each year ERFA produces an Impact Report which shows statistics on how your donations are making an impact. This edition of Reaching Out has statistics showing our impact with the full report available via the QR code.



## DID YOU KNOW...



ERFA has two highly experienced financial professionals in our Nairobi office. Grace Wanjugu and Benard Mutuku work together to support our programs in building their financial capacity and their reporting capabilities.







# Interview with

# TOMMY NYAWIR



## Can you tell us about your background?

At 14, I had finished primary school, worked hard and scored good grades. My family however were incredibly poor, and faced daily struggles to buy even the most basic needs like food and clothing. Paying the school fees required to send me to secondary school was simply an impossibility.

Devastated, I resigned myself to the fact that I would never finish my education, until I met a stranger (an angel) one morning, who after a short encounter offered to pay for my secondary school education.

I will never forget the glorious moment when the stranger handed me an envelope with money enough to pay for the rest of my secondary schooling! I ran home and gave the envelope to my parents who immediately enrolled me into secondary school. Four years later, I graduated and won a scholarship to study at a local University where I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sustainable Human Development. To this day, I don't know the name of the man who helped me, all I remember is he was from Ireland and his generosity created the opportunity for me to finish school and eventually move myself out of the slum.

Armed with a passion to give others the same hope, I founded The Mirror of Hope, a Community Based Organisation

offering a range of innovative educational initiatives to disadvantaged children, youth and women, living in Kibera. My passion and energy cannot be described in words. It is captivating. My ability to share my story in such a raw, authentic and vulnerable way allows me to fully connect with those around me, inspiring them to work hard so that one day they too may be able move out of Kibera Slum.

I am fortunate to be married to Judy, an incredibly driven and supportive wife. Together we have two adorable children.

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

I was invited by my long time mentor, Br. Tom Kearney to spend time with a group of participants of ERFA's Gone Fishing immersion program. Br Tom introduced me to the then ERFA CEO whom I had a very nice chat with about ERFA and what it does. I realized how Mirror of Hope's vision aligned with ERFA's vision and I made the decision to apply for partnership, which was granted. To date, we have been able, through ERFA, to impact many lives through our educational initiatives.

## What inspires you most in your work?

I am inspired by my own story growing up and the story of the stranger who

saw the potential in me and granted me an opportunity to continue with my education when I was on the verge of giving up. I made a deliberate decision to create similar opportunities for as many children as possible whose stories are similar to mine or even worse. I wanted to create a ripple effect.

I am inspired by the students who have successfully gone through the Mirror of Hope sponsorship, graduated and moved themselves and families out of the deplorable living conditions in the slums.

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

I am awestruck by Edmund Rice's educational charism which highlights the primacy of God, cultivates a communal ethics of care and is committed to humanized action based on Justice. Through my interaction with Edmund Rice Foundation and coupled by my own encounter during my early years, I believe that I am a better and compassionate person who never wants to stop at anything less than caring for others and making sure that those I passionately work for are truly liberated through education. Through ERFA I have learned to be more accountable and to be a good steward of the resources that are entrusted to me by our benefactors for our beneficiaries ■



# BUSINESS START UPS *for Women*



Women in Kibera are the backbone of their families and the community. However, nearly 80% of women living in the largest slums of Africa rely on odd jobs to make ends meet and sustain their families. To secure additional income, women often establish a business. However, these businesses face many challenges and often fail.

Through the Women's Empowerment Program, Mirror of Hope is changing women's lives in Kibera by equipping them with business-skills training and support. In 2021, 145 women and 83 small businesses participated in the program.

Women like Beatrice were equipped with vital business operations skills and provided with a pathway to becoming self-reliant.

"The weekly group forums are very helpful to my embroidery business.

I get an opportunity to compare myself with other members to establish if I am on the right track."

Judith, a second-hand clothes seller, had started numerous businesses that failed after a short time. However, after participating in the program, she now has the skills and support from Mirror of Hope to succeed.

Women in the project now have the business skills to sustain a new source of income which, in turn, helps them support their families and enrich their communities ■

## IN 2021, ERFA ACHIEVED GREAT THINGS WITH YOUR SUPPORT!



**1,922,184**

*Funding*

disbursed  
to programs globally



**51,765**

*People*

directly impacted and  
hundreds of thousands  
more indirectly



**27,457**

*Women & Girls*

were supported in education,  
economic empowerment,  
health, vocational training  
and mentoring



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

To help our environment and cut unnecessary costs, we invite you to sign up to receiving this newsletter by email at: <https://mailchi.mp/erf/reachingout>





**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**

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 donation to be allocated by ERFA 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**



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with your credit card details



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