



Edmund Rice
FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA

Liberating Lives Through Education

2021

IMPACT REPORT

Liberating Lives Through Education

A YEAR IN *Review*

We work with under-resourced and vulnerable communities, helping them to reach their aspirations and create sustainable solutions that leave lasting impacts.

Edmund Rice Foundation Australia (ERFA) is a trusted international aid organisation. Our vision is for access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. We work to achieve this by supporting people to identify and take collective action on important issues in their community.

Through the generous support of Australians, ERFA helps communities tackle issues surrounding access to education and employment, community education, and the protection of fundamental human rights.



Mother of disabilities education student at ER Centre Nairobi

IN 2021

We delivered



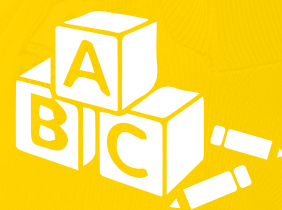
skill-building and vocational training to support employment opportunities



human rights and advocacy training for poorly resourced communities



life-skills training and social development skills for disadvantaged communities



early childhood, primary and secondary education for communities affected by poverty

In another year of the pandemic, we walked with communities and faced challenges together.

7 countries



ERFA worked in: Australia, India, Kenya, South Africa, The Philippines, Timor Leste and Zambia





51,765 people

directly impacted the lives of people and hundreds of thousands more indirectly



Partnered in delivering
20 projects





\$2,078,070

disbursed for education to liberate lives



27,457 women & girls



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



661 people

living with disability were directly supported



734 employed

people in paid and volunteer work directly supporting communities

STORIES OF *Strength*

Amplifying voices for human rights



Ntsika yeThemba participants attending consent workshop during their GBV empowerment project

Boys tackle 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.

“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.”



Two of the TJD's Ntsika yeThemba Participants after filming the Ntsika yeThemba impact video.



Mbokodo Club participant, South Africa

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.”

Life-skills training for teens

Langas is an informal settlement in Eldoret, Kenya. It faces significant disadvantages. A cruel cycle of crime, marginalisation, exclusion, human rights violation and abuse permeates this community. Edmund Rice Eldoret Empowerment Program (EREPP) provides life skills and human rights training to help teenagers in the community identify and achieve their aspirations.

Through EREEP's life skills training, youths like Martin have learned to capitalise on their strengths.

“Most of us did not know how to deal with peer pressure. Just to fit in, we had to engage in some destructive behaviours. I am glad the EREEP team is here to support us. We were exposed to new habits. We have gained so much from the counselling sessions and learnt a lot that will be our guide in life outside of school.”

The training has helped participants develop healthy social interactions, leadership skills and personal growth.

Safeguarding children training also extends to parents. Through this community-based approach, many families are experiencing growth and positive change, which benefits the entire community.



ERFK's Richard Patris at ER Camp, Eldoret, Kenya



Mlokodo Club participant, South Africa

Bringing business aspirations to reality



Women's Empowerment Program participant in her tailoring business

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 believes she has the skills and support from Mirror of Hope to succeed.

These women now have the businesses skills to sustain a new source of income which, in turn, helps them support their families and enrich their communities.



Cultivating success

ERFA partnered to establish the 'Beans of Hope' project in the Railaco villages in the Ermera District of Timor Leste in 2015. In 2018, ERFA formed a new partnership with Mary Mackillop Today to provide additional support to farmers. The project stands as a model of successful sustainable development, growing to include 665 farmers working together to create a bustling vanilla bean industry.

Farmers who previously learned about financial literacy and farming techniques are now learning new skills to support their families and community. The project's next phase is to build the farmers' capacity to establish and manage cooperatives, enabling them to grow, process, package, and sell vanilla competitively and independently.

“This project has established a sustainable industry, bringing significant economic impact to the region and long-term benefits to local communities.”



Image top and above: Vanilla farming "Beans of Hope" Timor Leste

Connected communities

Connection through sport

Sport brings communities together. It helps to facilitate cultural and social connectedness. The ERCWA Multicultural AFL Umpiring Academy in Mirrabooka, Western Australia, offers children and young adults a safe pathway to join Aussie Rules and make community connections. Many culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) participants who began with little knowledge of the sport are now dedicated officiators or players. Significantly, they've developed strong social bonds within their community.

15-year-old Aasha reflected,

“I never had the opportunity to play sports as it was not culturally accepted where I came from. But since joining this program, I have found my passion and so many new friends. I intend on being involved for as long and as far as this program can take me.”

ERCWA Junior Umpire



ERCWA Umpire Academy



Maternal & Child Health at Ruben Centre, Kenya

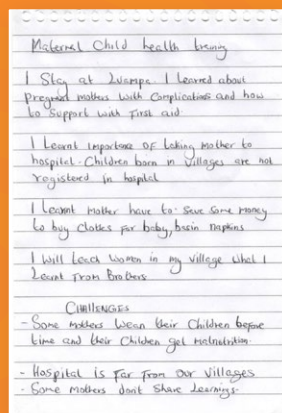
Community-led maternal and child health

Nearly 40% of women in the Western Province of Zambia do not seek necessary health care assistance, with devastating consequences.

The Community Engagement Project (CEP) addresses health practices amongst women and adolescent girls aged 15-49. Working in partnership with the Ministry of Health, 400 women and 200 adolescent girls across three remote villages attended intensive courses in approved health care practices. Workshops focused on health education for pre and postnatal care, teenage pregnancy, and general education relating to COVID-19, hygiene, and sanitation practices.

Of the 600 participants, 90 'champions' were selected from the community to gain further education and certification as trainers. 'Champions' were then attached to rural community health centres to mentor other women and adolescent girls in their communities. Amongst the champions is 15-year-old Ruth, who is educating fellow adolescent mothers on maternal and child health care.

This community-led response empowers women to provide support and access assistance in remote villages. Rural health clinics have reported increased consistency in the attendance of young mothers and children, bringing untold benefits to the community.



Educating future leaders

Sudanese take refuge in education

Despite having its own hardships, Kenya harbours many refugees from neighbouring countries torn apart by war. Residing in the slums of Nairobi, many of these refugees have shown a strong desire for education. An opportunity has appeared thanks to the support of community members and the Edmund Rice Catholic Education Centre (ERCEC).

In 2021, students from the war-torn countries of Somalia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo attended ERCEC to continue their education. Faheem, a Sudanese refugee, said,

“Our hope has been rekindled even though our country is ravaged with war and unrest.”

Access to education provides opportunity. Asim is a recent graduate and has since returned to South Sudan, gaining employment to help with rebuilding efforts. Reflecting on his success, Asim noted,

“The school and its education gave me a sense of belonging and sense of security.”



Remote learning during lockdown

The Edmund Rice Community and Refugee Service in Victoria, Australia, provides educational support to children in need. Children like Sima (a grade four student) usually attend homework club diligently as it provides the vital assistance, mentoring and language support she needs. However, as COVID-19 related lockdown began, she missed homework club for three weeks. Fortunately, students could resume their learning online and reconnect with their community and peers.

Sima commented,

“Homework Club is so important to me. It keeps me up-to-date with my school work and gives me time with my friends so I don't feel isolated and lonely. I look forward to it, whether it is online or in person. It's fun.”

Empowering the young leaders of tomorrow

Edmund Rice Ministries Foundation, Philippines Inc. facilitated leadership and life-skills development training to cultivate young leaders in Barangay Libertad. Participants become part of a guided network to support, nurture, teach and learn from each other.

In 2021, 22 youth leaders were provided with life-skills development training to improve their learning, grow their knowledge-base and improve their self-confidence. Youth leader Queenie said,

“The training has enhanced my self-confidence, and I am able to find a reason to participate in the community activities.”

Youth leaders have since implemented social advancements making a positive difference in their community, including mentoring younger children and delivering gender equality training for their peers.



Education session, Philippines

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE *Development*

In 2021, ERFA continued to evolve and grow as an international non-government organisation (NGO) with the UN Sustainable Development Goals at the heart of our work.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



2021 also marked 10 years for ERFA as the national entity and successor of the Christian Brothers' Foundation for Charitable Works (CBFCW).



Students at camp, ER Centre Nairobi, Kenya



Vision

Our vision is for access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, supporting empowered communities that determine their own futures.



Purpose

Our purpose is to support the education of the most vulnerable. ERFA's focus on education includes life-changing learning opportunities for children, financial literacy, farming and trade skills, health and human rights services and advocacy for adults. We walk with individuals and communities towards sustainable change.



Values

Presence

- Relationships built on integrity, mutual respect, trust, accountability and transparency
- Standing in solidarity with the disadvantaged and those living in poverty
- Belief in the equality and dignity of all persons

Compassion

- Our fundamental response is compassion which awakens us to our responsibilities and compels us to take action to eradicate poverty and suffering
- Being sensitive to and informed by the culture, experience and hopes of local people

Liberation

- Empowerment through education which promotes human development and increases the capacities of local people to break the poverty cycle and determine their own futures

PROJECT *Partnerships*

Your donations create lasting impacts for communities.

In order to achieve our vision, ERFA's priority is to partner in community education projects with a clear goal and exit strategy to ensure sustainable outcomes.

ERFA's aim is for whole communities to become stronger and more confident in controlling or exerting influence over the issues affecting their lives. The community has full involvement and leadership in planning, developing, delivering and evaluating community initiatives.

ERFA also partners in the delivery of community-based projects where partner organisations deliver skill-building initiatives in specific areas such as:

- literacy
- vocational training
- microfinance
- human rights, and
- advocacy training.

ERFA does not partner in the delivery of projects for evangelisation or partisan politics. Robust policy and process also ensure that we (and our partners) do not knowingly or unwittingly support terrorist activity.

ERFA does not fund welfare activity or provide support to individuals or families. From time to time, ERFA will provide humanitarian assistance in emergency situations.

ERFA's approach to programming aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



Sustainable Development Goal #1

To end poverty in all its forms everywhere.



Sustainable Development Goal #4

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



Inclusive education, PNG



Teacher at ER Catholic Education Centre, Kenya

MAKING A *Lasting Impact*



1. The program staff listen to the community and help them design projects to address their needs.



2. The program submits a project design, partnership and funding application to ERFA.



3. ERFA provides design input and feedback.



4. ERFA assesses the application against criteria and our vision.



5. ERFA's Board finalises partnership and funding decisions.



6. Programs report and funds are disbursed quarterly.



7. ERFA provides feedback and training.

ERFA Project Design and Funding

ERFA helps to design community-led projects. We seek to harness a community's existing assets, capacities, and strengths towards achieving sustainable community development.

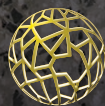


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— ♦ —
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ACFID
MEMBER

Edmund Rice Foundation (Australia) is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, which is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice. As a signatory we are committed and fully adhere to the ACFID Code of Conduct, conducting our work with transparency, accountability and integrity. To lodge a complaint against our organisation, please email the CEO at ceo@erf.org.au. Our complaints handling policy can be found on our website. If you are not satisfied with the response and believe our organisation has breached the ACFID Code of Conduct, you can lodge a complaint with the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee at code@acfid.asn.au. Information about how to make a complaint can be found at www.acfid.asn.au.