



REACHING OUT

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STAND IN THEIR SHOES

These children are victims of overpopulation, corruption, exploitation and ethnic rivalry. They live with disease, poverty and war. In developing countries such as South Sudan and Kenya hope is hard to come by.

It is through education, basic health services, training in community development and occupational skills that the situation can be changed. This is happening but it requires help to be sustained and to be increased.

CAN WE ASSIST THEM TO FIND A BETTER LIFE AND GIVE HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE?



CER computer room



Maasin ear testing



PROJECT UPDATES

OCEANIA

Comunidade Edmund Rice *East Timor*

The computer program in the hills above Dili at Railaco Leten is funded by the Edmund Rice Foundation and is supported by Inverell Rotary. The program entails teaching, programming and maintenance. Inverell Rotary built the Computer Centre and provides sessions of intensive training once a year. A staff of 4 people under the supervision of CER operate the Centre. Each week 30 students and adults are given training opportunities. A curriculum has been developed to enable students with no experience at all to negotiate computer skills. CER accepts donations of computers, adapts them to local requirements and distributes them as needed to schools, individuals and groups. Recently an AV projector was added so that instruction of groups can take place to support the individual learning programs.

A much valued contribution by CER to the local people is the health program.

This is funded by the Edmund Rice Foundation and supported by the Knights of Malta. Working with the Government Health Department, CER conducts a health service out of a clinic situated in the village of Railaco Leten.

CER co-operates with the service provided by the Jesuits in Railaco Villa. The Health Department provides a doctor, nurse and administrator. It also maintains the clinic and provides medicines. CER provides a nurse, mid-wife and ambulance driver. CER provides an ambulance as a mobile clinic and a second ambulance for taking patients to hospitals.

Edmund Rice Services *Maasin, Philippines*

The Edmund Rice Services community development project continues to grow. The identification of 8 barangays (districts) for Community Based Inclusive Development - 4 in Maasin and 4 barangays outside of Maasin has been completed. Barangay health nurses and officials were visited to introduce the activity. They welcomed the activity very much. Amongst individuals and family members volunteerism is encouraged in this activity. Anyone who has a heart for those Persons With Disabilities in a certain community will contact their local council to enlist themselves as volunteers. ERS will facilitate the training and skills enhancement for them to be involved.

Other activities have included -

- Care for Self, Others, and Mother Earth Seminars for all Grade IX (Year 9) boys and girls students. Modules such as the Dignity of the Human Person, External and Internal Health, Addictions, Avoidances, Growth in Social Relationships, Care of Mother Earth, were done with the students.
- Ear and eye health education sessions/ trainings were conducted for parents and teachers. It aims to educate and empower parents and teachers on proper eye and ear care, hygiene/ sanitation and good nutrition.
- Training for staff provided – skilling by Red Cross First Aid staff of ERS staff for response in time of calamity.
- Primary Eye and Ear Screening training to teachers, and barangay officials, with the aim to empower the people in the community to eventually do the screening by themselves.

Edmund Rice Services *Kabankalan, Philippines*

A big day for the Community Development Program of ERM Kabankalan was the second General Assembly held in the Kabankalan Cultural Centre. 21 communities were represented on the day. The CDP team had spent about 2 weeks in preparation and the communities had practised their presentations. It was good to see more of the senior men turn up to join the women and children. Health needs seem to be paramount with the nearest health clinic being about 90 minutes away both walking and mountain motor bike. The opening ceremony highlighted the theme 'Go light your world, carry your candle'. The 21 presidents were invited to assemble on stage receive their special community candle lit from the main candle and then recited together an oath of allegiance to their communities. The presentations highlighted the good news stories of the program. These include 19 established communities maintained with regular meetings at which

problem solving for the community is dealt with. The beneficiaries are 205 families.

Some impacts of the program:

- 14 of 19 communities have fully repaid their loans and building savings for livelihood and basic needs.
- Each community has a small emergency fund.
- A gradual paradigm shift from individual attitude to communal sharing is observed.
- Communities are responding to needs of other communities.
- Many non-members in every community benefit from the livelihood projects – rice, groceries, medicine.
- Many leaders now taking responsibility for serving people.



Callan teaching signing

Callan Services National Unit Papua New Guinea

All of the 19 Callan Inclusive Education Resource Centres and the Callan Inclusive Education Institute (a teacher education institution focussed on special education training for in-service teachers) are under the National Education Board.

Callan Services National Unit is the only NGO in the network and it acts as the lead and coordinating institution, trains Resource Centre staff members in community based rehabilitation, carries out monitoring and evaluation of services, advocates on behalf of the services and takes a lead as needed in developing new frameworks for improvement of health services and education for children with particular disabilities.

CSNU tries to ensure that: children with disabilities are identified as early as possible, that staff members in resource centres are well trained in Sign Language (or in skills/knowledge for other disabilities) and in the case of deaf children it is facilitating the rapid expansion of new signs.

Jenni was born deaf and she is 5 years old, from a small village and has 3 deaf sisters. Their mother discouraged the four deaf girls not to go around in town, because relatives and the community believed it was the "sanguma" or spirits that changed them when they were babies. But after home visits and encouragement to the mother by the staff members of Fatima Resource Centre and being taught basic sign language, they are now happy going to school, learning new things and meeting friends.



PROJECT UPDATES AFRICA

Star Support Group *Yambio, South Sudan*

The war continues in South Sudan but Br Fred Otieno and those working with him continue this program for support of the victims of HIV/Aids.

"My name is Eva Yabongo. When my husband died of HIV and I found that I was positive and had 2 small children I didn't know what to do. Friends took me to STAR for help. STAR taught me to have hope and where to find help. I am able to grow vegetables on the STAR garden land. They teach us how to be good farmers. I have joined the savings group and am able to put some money away from my vegetable selling.

Now I can provide food for my children and afford to send them to school. STAR made this happen. I help other clients at STAR to be able to do the same.

My name is Bernadito Yuba. All my family died from HIV or were killed in the war. As an orphan I was taken to STAR. They found a family to take me in and provided help for me. At the STAR monthly gatherings I learned to have hope and to work for the future. They took me to their tailoring training. So now I can make clothes for the family who took me in and other clothes for selling at the market. STAR has a savings group where I learn how to look after some money."

Comboni Hospital *Nzara, South Sudan*

The political instability and at times warfare continues with insecurity in the area especially on the roads. Recently in another part of the country a nun was murdered who was also a medical doctor. The loss of medical services is disastrous. St Therese Hospital at Nzara continues to provide wonderful service. From January to June this year 15,000 outpatients and 1800 inpatients have received not for profit treatment e.g. life saving Malarial treatment is 5ssp (South Sudan pence) for a Child, 10ssp for Adult, compared with 400ssp at the government hospital in Yambio. The patients at Nzara are saved from an "economic death sentence". The hospital now has solar power built and donated from Australia. Adequate power supply is bringing 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.

The County Commissioner on seeing the completed solar power system was so impressed by the generosity of the donors he arranged the provision of an additional 10 hectares for the hospital which will allow further development of one of the few functional hospitals in South Sudan.

Provision of adequately trained nursing staff remains a priority. The Comboni Sisters have 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.

Education for Life *Eldoret, Kenya*

EFL continues to offer 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 Savings & Internal Loans Communities (SILC) enables sustainable mutual support towards self-help.

"My name is Anneth Khaemba. I am a single mother living positively with HIV. I was blessed with four children and I take care of my sisters and my brother's children who passed on some years back. I joined EFL program when I was very weak and my health was deteriorating. EFL helped me with life support drugs.

With the big family and no work, EFL stepped in and paid school fees for the orphans, bought them uniforms and food.

I joined SILC and have benefitted a lot through it. I'm able to save and get a loan from the group that I'm using to operate my small business of preparing detergent liquid soap.

As an EFL client I get a chance to share my challenges with fellow clients and this helps me to move on with life. I want to thank the EFL program for helping me and my children. May God bless our donors."

Ruben Centre *Nairobi, Kenya*

The Ruben Centre offers a range of services to the people of the Mukuru slum. It is the centre of various programs and is a life line delivering health, education and other services to many of the Mukuru slum dwellers. The idea of a community radio station emerged as yet another way that

Ruben could live out its name of being a Centre for the people. A radio station operated by the local people for the local community bringing information on security, health, community events, education, youth affairs and various other community events would surely help Ruben achieve its mission of bringing about a just and empowered Mukuru Community. The application was thrown out at the time, but later the Communications Commission of Kenya was to suffer the same fate, due to corruption and infighting. Then in a characteristic moment of enthusiasm Br Frank O'Shea decided to apply again for this licence, but now to the newly created Communications Authority of Kenya.

The Ruben Centre representatives were taken to the Director General who personally explained the reasons for not being able to give a licence as well as adding there is a court injunction preventing new radio stations licences being given. He then promptly left his office and returned with a signed document (not a licence) which allows Ruben Centre FM to go on air and transmit. Now the work begins to become operational.



Edmund Rice Sinon Secondary School *Arusha, Tanzania*

Edmund Rice Sinon Secondary School has made its mark in the Young Scientist Tanzania (YST) competition. YST is an annual exhibition and competition in Tanzania. It involves school students across the country in demonstrating their innovative ideas and showcasing their scientific talents. This year ERSSS participated in the competition for the first time. When the invitation was extended to the school, the administration embraced the idea of giving the students an opportunity to explore and participate. Surprisingly, more girls were interested in the project compared to boys, and indeed they took their time to prepare. They then presented their project to the whole school two days before going for the competition. During the presentation at school, all students and staff were fascinated by Nancy and Grace's brilliant ideas. They were vocal and answered the questions posed by the audience confidently. The competition, which was said to be very tight, was held in Dar es Salaam.

Nancy Godfrey and Grace Temu (both in Form 3 as day students from struggling families) made themselves and the school proud as they secured first position in the category of Technology. Nancy and Grace invented a simple vegetable-cutting machine which drew favorable attention from many people. The Minister for Education in Tanzania, was present as guest of honour, and was fascinated by the simple device which is meant to simplify the task and reduce cost.



Edmund Rice Sinon Secondary School young scientists



Br Beausang Catholic Education Centre

Embulbul, Kenya

Providing vocational education opportunities for both students and wider school community has been a goal for the school since it began. Thanks to the support of ERFA and the Lions Club, this will soon become a reality with the construction of a trade workshop. Work is well advanced. Regular inspections and progress report meetings have been held. Supervision of the work has been excellent. Student and community interest in the project is considerable. 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. Discussions with the Parish regarding 2017 community courses have taken place.

A farewell assembly was held for 2014 Head Boy and top KCSE student Rick In – Soo who will be travelling to the United States in a few weeks to commence University study. Rick who was awarded an Equity Bank scholarship as a result of his outstanding KCSE, was also successful in securing a scholarship to study Computing Science at Swarthmore College in Philadelphia. Rick spoke to the students about the importance of setting goals, not underestimating what you can achieve and the need for consistency and commitment in your studies.

Mary Rice Centre

Nairobi, Kenya

MRC is an oasis of hope for children living with disabilities. It offers effective education and therapy services to these children, and empowers parents with the skills and knowledge to live with children with special needs.

Tina lives in the Kibera slum with about 1.5million people. There is no sanitation. To have a disabled child means that you are cursed. Most or all the fathers then become absent. Tina has 4 children and her 2nd child Franklin is disabled. Women in Kibera hold no currency, they have no rights and for almost all of them no jobs. Somehow Tina has to survive and feed her children, whilst looking after Franklin who she is devoted to. Her husband left her after she had Franklin. She has only occasional electricity, and has to walk to buy her fresh water each day. She has no job, no status and no income. She does whatever she can to feed her 4 children. Each day she walks 2.5 km to the Mary Rice Centre, where Franklin is looked after. Tina does cooking in the MRC, to offset the small cost of MRC looking after Franklin. Tina is one of the strongest, most determined ladies. Every hour is filled with the hope she will find a way to feed her children. She is 28 and has only this daily struggle to look forward to, with what would be too much for most to contemplate and bear.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS 2016

- October 7** 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
October 8-18 Gone Fishing

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



A SCHOOL'S EFFORT

St Patrick's College, Ballarat, has a rich tradition of fundraising. Edmund Rice Day 2016 was no different, with all the College coming together to raise funds for Edmund Rice Foundation, Edmund Rice Camps, Caritas, Wendouree Exodus Community, and St Albans Edmund Rice Community & Refugee Services.

On May 5th the boys attended school in casual clothes to mark the event. The day began with a celebratory Mass, before the students walked around Victoria Park and Lake Wendouree, and the day culminating with a host of boys showcasing their extensive and wide breadth of talents in *St Pat's Has Talent*. Such activities are a staple of Edmund Rice Day at St Patrick's. However, the true foundation of this day is built upon the community's ability to foster and nurture the school's collective good will and also see this good will in the form of doing for others. The students were able to raise \$34,000 to put towards the chosen charities, crowning an overall successful day and exemplifying the College's ability to positively influence the community around us.

At the later Justice Assembly all the College witnessed presentations to the respective charities. This was set in reflections of readings from the Brothers' Chapter on the agenda of service for our world and Pope Francis' challenge to reach out in mercy.



EDMUND RICE CAMPS – AUSTRALIA

Edmund Rice Camp Executive Officers from all across the country converged in Adelaide for the annual Edmund Rice Camps National Conference. The four-day program was a chance for the group to come together, share experiences, and explore a variety of issues including national collaboration, sustainability, and Edmund Rice identity. The group was immersed in a blend of reflective and formation activities, as well as practical and operational planning elements.

Responsible collectively for 80 camps per annum with 800 volunteer leaders, many who do several camps each year, provide for 2,000 participants – needy children and adolescents. Participants are referred by Social Welfare agencies and other child caring organisations. Results from surveys of participants show that these children feel and are more confident and positive as a result of the camps and enjoy a seldom experienced sense of happiness. Volunteer young leaders go away with a greater sense of contributing to the broader community.

The Executive Officer from one State reflected:

Working within an Edmund Rice Ministry is more than just a job, negotiating the tension between the demands of the corporate world and the compassionate response to needs in our community and also drawing connections back to our roots were major themes of the conference. I think it is fair to say that the week away gave all of us time to refocus, re-evaluate and revisit both the business model with which we lead our ministries and how to listen to our heart as it guides us both as mentors, leaders and most importantly people in the world today.



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



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