



ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16







Floating markets in Nga Nam, Vietnam where we help operators improve waste management and link farmers to markets to sell produce



ACFID  
MEMBER

#### Code of conduct and complaints

Action on Poverty is a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (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 Chief Executive Officer at [info@actiononpoverty.org](mailto:info@actiononpoverty.org). Our complaints handling policy can be found on our website [www.actiononpoverty.org](http://www.actiononpoverty.org). 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](mailto:code@acfid.asn.au). Information about how to make a complaint can be found at [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au).

*Cover photo: Alice from Chikuni, Zambia is part of a project helping people living with HIV and their carers to generate an income and grow kitchen gardens.*



# Our vision

## A just world through community partnerships

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## ABOUT US

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### OUR STORY

Established in 1968, Action on Poverty is an independent, secular, fully-accredited Australian non-government organisation. We alleviate poverty in developing countries by helping people to help themselves. We work with local partners that are independent agencies employing local professionals as we believe this approach is the most cost-effective and sustainable.

### OUR MISSION

To be a leading agent for poverty alleviation through effective, community-based development.

### OUR VALUES

As we work towards achieving our mission, we commit to the following core values:

- upholding the dignity and human rights of every individual
- dealing truthfully, honestly and transparently at all times
- supporting communities to help themselves
- undertaking activities that address the needs and interests identified by the people with whom we are working
- being accountable to all our development partners
- operating with a spirit of collaboration in achieving common objectives
- maximising the impact of donor contributions
- respecting the environment
- providing challenging, supportive and safe work environments where people can improve their skills and knowledge.





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## REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

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### CHAIR | JOHN ROCK

For the second year in a row Action on Poverty achieved a turnover of more than \$10 million. While we would not want to be judged simply by our turnover, this was a remarkable achievement given the environment in which we are operating.

This year saw the end of the eight Millennium Development Goals. While much progress had been made in eradicating poverty during the 15 years of their operation, there is still a huge amount of unfinished business. They have been replaced by 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will guide the development agenda until 2030. The question is: will they be funded and, if so, how?

The foreign aid environment is more hostile than at any time in recent memory, with both government and the public retreating from their obligations and generosity. A very disquieting xenophobia is permeating politics in most western countries and this sadly translates to neglect of the needs of the millions who live in poverty in other parts of the world. There has been a hardening of conservative social values that will leave many poor and marginalised populations isolated. According to the World Health Organisation, there are still 1.8 billion people drinking contaminated water and 2.4 billion lack basic sanitation. Ten per cent of the world's population suffers from chronic undernourishment.

Even the notoriously generous nations of north and western Europe have diverted money to deal with the huge refugee crisis they are facing. There is a global target for developed nations to allocate 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income (GNI) to official development assistance. Despite all its woes, the UK managed to exceed this target, while Australia has stuck to the low end of the list with the cuts made by the current government bringing us down to only 0.22%. This is nothing short of disgraceful. Sweden donates more than six times as much as Australia. To make matters worse, there is even less funding available for non-government organisations (NGOs) like us who are capable of delivering cost-effective impact at the community level.

For Action on Poverty, this means that our excellent and acclaimed Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) program has ended and there will be no more funding to continue this important and valuable work. For the first time since 1999 there are no funding opportunities specifically for Africa that we can apply for. The only Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), funding we now receive is through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

The Action on Poverty Partnership Program has been central to our work this year and we spent a lot of time and effort on its operation and structure. We are now ready to expand the program and take on new partners. Central to working with partners both in-country and in Australia is our determination to adopt and implement best practice development. Part of this is about adhering to policies on issues such as child protection, fraud prevention and counter terrorism, and we have undertaken training with partners in these areas.

The accreditation that we are required to pass every five years in order to receive DFAT funding was due for assessment this year. Accreditation is a rigorous process requiring a huge amount of work by staff. It ensures Australian NGOs operate to the highest levels of good development practice and have the right management and governance structures in place. This time we passed with flying colours, obtaining another five years of full accreditation – a testament to both the leadership of Christine Murphy and the dedication and hard work of all of the staff. On behalf of the Board, I thank the whole team for the tremendous work they do in these difficult times. They are enthusiastic, skilled and totally committed to their work.

The Board has also worked hard this year, strengthening governance through heightened attention to risk and assessing its own performance. Board members take their responsibilities very seriously and devoted considerable amounts of their own time to Action on Poverty, especially during the intense DFAT accreditation process. I thank them for their hard work and support.



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## REPORT FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | CHRISTINE MURPHY

For almost 50 years we've collaborated with others to help people achieve their own goals, however humble. We continued that mission this year, focusing on making new connections – from building international relationships with our overseas partners to working with everyday Australians.

I'm pleased to report that our name now also reflects what we do. Action on Poverty has long been our tagline and in 2016 we put it front and centre. We no longer have to explain what we do when we introduce ourselves: the name says it all.

One of our major projects this year was achieving re-accreditation with DFAT. Accreditation takes place every five years and covers every aspect of our work: governance, programs, financial management and more. It's incredibly important because it's proof to our supporters that our work is of the highest standard.

I'm delighted to report that we maintained full accreditation status after three days of scrutiny from DFAT reviewers. Thank you to everyone – the team effort was amazing. For a small organisation like ours, the assessment is both a validation of five years of work and testimony to the professionalism of our staff. It also means we can continue to apply for grants from the Australian Government, even though opportunities to do so have decreased significantly in the last few years.

We continued to offset declining DFAT funding by diversifying our funding base. However, one of our biggest challenges is maintaining a balance between our commitment to keep fundraising costs low while also ensuring we are competitive and have the resources we need. The environment is tough and the competition for funding is fierce. Having said that, our Action on Poverty Partnership Program has grown and, with increased support from businesses, philanthropic trusts and the general public, our turnover remained fairly stable this year.

Corporate support from the Atlassian Foundation and Seaco were essential for developing early education programs in Cambodia. Similarly, we are grateful for the support of Norman

Disney & Young (NDY) and Hunt and Hunt, who both hosted corporate events for us.

In the Pacific, our Cyclone Winston Appeal helped those devastated by the worst cyclone to ever hit Fiji. With our partner in Kiribati, we have also helped people on remote outer islands improve their food security and access safe water.

In Africa, we wrapped up the five-year Australian DFAT funded AACES program, which helped over 57,000 households increase their income and food security, and access sanitation and health services. This surpassed our beneficiary target by 56 per cent, with women in particular gaining greater economic empowerment and reporting fewer incidences of domestic violence.

Our work in Asia goes from strength to strength, with Justin Alick taking up the position of Asia Program Manager this year from Ragna Gilmour. In northern Vietnam, our community-based tourism projects reached more beneficiaries than ever, while in the south, researchers completed the pilot phase of the Eliminate Dengue project and are preparing to implement a new phase on the mainland near Nha Trang City.

Dr Bryan Humphrey, a long-time Action on Poverty volunteer, led an extensive research project documenting the many activities supported by our livelihood programs in Cambodia, so we can scale up successful models next year.

I would like to acknowledge all the partners we work hand in hand with, and the Action on Poverty team that drives all these programs. Jerry Cole joined us this year to head up the program team after Vanessa Zulueta left the role of International Program Director to take up a new position in Cambodia. We thank Vanessa and Ragna for their contributions to our development program.

The Board, as always, deserves special mention and is to be commended for all the work it does keeping a steady hand on the tiller in these challenging times. It ensures our governance is second to none. Equally, our volunteers, members and supporters continue to help us make Action on Poverty a reality.



Education for people with disabilities in Mozambique



Women focused cooperative in Myanmar



Conservation agriculture in Malawi



Education in Zimbabwe

Nepal  
Bangladesh

Ethiopia

Kenya

Tanzania

Zambia

Malawi

Zimbabwe

Mozambique

97,343  
people in Africa  
benefited from our  
clean water programs



Through our network  
of partners, this year  
we directly served over  
**545,000** people





Learning about finance in Vietnam



Early childhood education in Cambodia



Improving agriculture in Timor Leste

108,173  
people in Asia  
benefited from our  
education programs

Myanmar  
Laos  
Vietnam  
Cambodia

Kiribati

Solomon  
Islands

Timor Leste

Papua New Guinea

Fiji

Australia

AOP SYDNEY



Clean water beneficiaries in Fiji



Fundraising events in Australia

103,448  
people benefited from our  
health programs in the Pacific



Farmers' produce sold at market in Timor Leste

## OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

This year marks the end of our Strategic Framework 2014-16. The framework set our priorities and provided clear direction in four key areas, ensuring that we delivered life-changing programs, forged valuable partnerships, inspired others to take action and continued to grow as an organisation.

We helped  
29,963  
people  
improve  
their  
livelihoods





# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2014-16

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

# 1

### DELIVER INNOVATIVE AND QUALITY PROGRAMS



- ▶ Helped our strategic partners build their capacity to manage programs and develop resources
- ▶ Completed the Vietnam strategy and obtained Board approval
- ▶ Completed the Africa strategy and obtained Board approval



# 2

### FORGE PARTNERSHIPS THAT ADD VALUE

- ▶ Reviewed regional partnerships and implemented recommendations
- ▶ Developed new partnership criteria and partnership review tools
- ▶ Developed and rolled out new Action on Poverty Partnership Program



# 3

### INSPIRE AUSTRALIANS TO TAKE ACTION ON REDUCING POVERTY



Increased donors by 800 per cent since 2012-13



New volunteer policy



Changed our name to **Action on Poverty**



Over 1500 followers on social media



# 4

### PROGRESSIVELY STRENGTHEN ACTION ON POVERTY



- ▶ Maintained full accreditation with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) following review
- ▶ Increased revenue to over \$10M a year
- ▶ Increased unrestricted reserves by 10 per cent each year





Mr Vann Chan Hoy from Veal Veng in Cambodia makes a living raising cows and growing peppers, sesame, cucumber, morning glory and papaya

## FOOD SECURITY

According to the United Nations, one in eight people in developing countries is chronically malnourished. The fragile food systems of these countries are especially vulnerable to climate change – this year, drought has reduced the corn crop in southern Africa and the rice yield in south-east Asia.

Our programs tackle food security by addressing climate vulnerability, improving soil fertility, reducing land loss and damage, and improving farmers' access to seeds so they can develop their own agribusinesses. We partner with farmers, food companies, research institutions and government agriculture departments to develop regional approaches that not only reduce hunger but also improve long-term livelihoods.

### HIGHLIGHTS

In Africa, acute food insecurity is expected to continue into 2018 due to El Niño. In Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe we helped over 90,000 people improve their food security through the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) by installing irrigation systems, introducing food storage facilities, linking

farmers to markets, and training farmers in climate-smart techniques such as conservation agriculture, intercropping and agro-forestry.

We used the lessons from AACES to scale up successful agriculture models and introduce drought-resistant crops through an Australian Government funded food security project in Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique. This project helped 20,315 people access new technologies to increase food production on limited land and adapt to the frequency and severity of climate change.

Action research was integral to implementing these evidence-based projects. We partnered with private and government research institutions as well as the business community and smallholder farmers to collectively identify innovative ways to address the threat of climate change and food insecurity.

In Vietnam, our livelihood and economic empowerment projects also helped remote communities improve their food security. Potato, honey, rabbit, cow and pig farmers increased their produce so they could feed their families and sell the surplus at market.



# 33,000 people in Malawi are now more food secure



## CASE STUDY | TIMOR LESTE

Fatima is a young mother from Bobonaro Municipality in rural Timor Leste. When the village's irrigation system broke down and left everyone without water, Fatima was forced to make daily trips to the market – an expensive and exhausting journey.

We teamed up with Timor Aid to help Fatima's village address their food and water shortages by repairing the irrigation system. This provided the village with a reliable source of clean water.

We also invited 35 farmers, including Fatima, to participate in a training course to learn basic agriculture and animal husbandry skills tailored to the region. Farmers learned how to select and grow vegetables suitable for the soil and climate.

"The course taught me very useful techniques, such as how to build fences around crops to prevent damage, and how to cover seedlings with palm leaves to protect them from the harsh midday sun," said Fatima.

The village built new kitchen gardens, chicken coops and fish farms, using locally sourced materials. They make a small profit by selling surplus crops at market, and use those profits to buy items they can't produce, such as oil and onions.

"I also learned how to keep track of my profits by book-keeping," said Fatima. "I am very happy with this training and proud that I can now feed my family nutritious meals every day."

In Kiribati, we worked with local partner Foundation of the South Pacific Kiribati (FSPK) to increase household food production on Marakei and Aranuka Islands. We helped build six kitchen gardens; developed 250 gardening pamphlets in local languages; and trained communities in nutrition, home gardening and animal husbandry. Villagers established five committees and created two community development plans to continue improving their food security. Farmers were so enthusiastic about their new skills that they organised a small gardening competition on Aranuka Island to celebrate locally grown produce.

With Timor Aid, we introduced 275 farmers to simple and sustainable farming practices, which improved nutrition and food security for three villages in Bobonaro district. Farmers improved production by planting seasonal crops and used their vegetables to prepare healthier meals for their families. They also learned how to raise chickens and constructed chicken houses and small fish farms. Livestock helped farmers further diversify their income and generated fertiliser for existing crops.

"It's shocking that  
nearly half of all  
children under five  
suffer from chronic  
malnutrition in Timor  
Leste, one of our  
nearest neighbours."

CEO Christine Murphy



Tea cooperative in Phu Tho, Vietnam

## LIVELIHOODS AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Although the number of people living in extreme poverty has halved over the last 25 years, more than 800 million still struggle to access adequate food, clean drinking water and sanitation.

We empower people to create their own long-term livelihoods so they can meet their basic needs. Our work often targets women, who are far more likely to live in poverty because of unequal access to paid work, education and resources.

Our finance and livestock schemes help farmers access the capital they need to grow their businesses and feed their families. We also help farmers learn new agriculture skills, access markets and obtain reliable information through a mobile business platform.

### HIGHLIGHTS

We established two new projects in Zimbabwe that helped 120 households secure sustainable livelihoods through farming.

We successfully trialled a project in Mutoko to fatten livestock through pen-feeding. Cattle are traditionally left

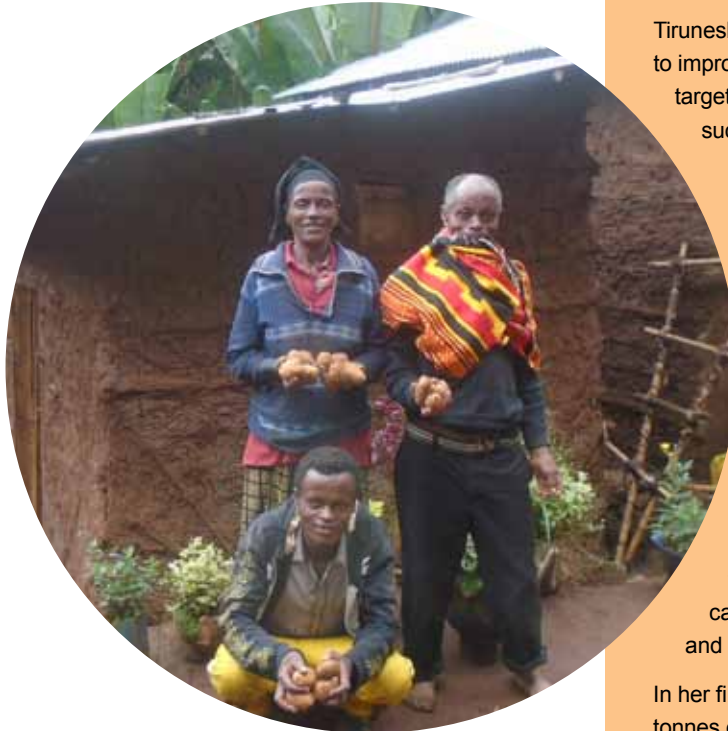
to graze openly, but pen fattening improves the condition of livestock so that an adult steer's live weight can grow from an average of 120kg to 250kg, fetching a higher price.

After networking with buyers at a district fair, livestock farmers sold nine cattle at auction. The Department of Livestock Production and Development now holds livestock auctions every three months, resulting in increased income for farmers. Meanwhile, peanut farmers sold 80 bottles of peanut butter a week, earning USD\$230 per month, and signed a long-term supply agreement with a local boarding school. We also helped train both livestock and peanut farmers in project management, record keeping, marketing and finance. We encouraged women in particular to join and lead management committees.

In Vietnam's Soc Trang province, the Community Development Fund helped women secure loans for livestock, pay for nutritious animal feed, and buy equipment to turn pig bio-gas into energy for cooking, lighting and other everyday needs.



“I reduced the 'hungry season' by two months and used my income to purchase a cow and a sheep.”  
Tirunesh, Ethiopia



Our small livestock pass-on scheme continued to deliver big benefits to families in Vinh Thanh village, where farmers reported profits of USD\$220 a year. Village leaders educated people about the benefits of bio-gas over coal or timber, helping to improve the health and environment of the entire community.

A new tea cooperative showed great promise, with five households from Phu Tho province working together in a new tea drying and packing facility that includes a furnace dryer, spinning crusher and vacuum sealer. The cooperative means the households can work together to process and sell more tea than they could individually.

In Cambodia, our partner the Cambodian Women's Crisis Center (CWCC) continued to empower women in urban areas to set up small enterprises such as sewing groups. These businesses not only help women achieve economic independence but also reduce their vulnerability to gender-based violence. In Myanmar, we supported women's cooperatives established by Credit Union Foundation Australia, which provide financial literacy and savings groups in the Yangon region.

Tirunesh, 41, is a mother of six from the Gamo Gofa district of Ethiopia, where low rainfall, land shortages and poor roads make growing food and travelling to markets difficult. Tirunesh makes a living farming potatoes and, before we met her, was using traditional agronomic practices and local seed varieties that were prone to disease.

“When I did harvest potatoes, they were poor quality and I couldn't fully feed my family from August to November, the main food gap in the area,” said Tirunesh.

Tirunesh was selected for a training program to improve her potato production. The program targeted women, who often face challenges such as lack of land due to local traditions.

Tirunesh learned new agronomic techniques, such as how to manage pests and store crops. She planted new potato seed using the ploughing, ridge-making and weeding techniques she had learned. The project also helped farmers preserve potatoes for a minimum of four months by providing basic materials such as nails and iron sheets to build storage facilities. Tirunesh paid for the rest of the locally-sourced materials and hired a carpenter to build her 'dark storage' facility and avoid post-harvest loss.

In her first season, Tirunesh harvested three tonnes of potatoes, yielding 15 to 20 tubers per plot on her quarter-acre.

“The new potatoes are disease-resistant, high-growth and have a good yield,” said Tirunesh. “Before the construction of the dark storage, I kept the potatoes under the soil and that exposed them to disease and reduced the shelf life of the product.”

In her last season, Tirunesh sold 500kg of potatoes for USD\$95 and kept 25kg for the next cropping season. She allocated the rest for household consumption.

“I reduced the 'hungry season' by two months and used my income to purchase a cow and a sheep.”

The animals helped Tirunesh diversify her income and put money aside for her children's education.

“My family and I are very lucky. We have food for four months and a good income from the local market.”



Youths in Bua province with tools provided by the Cyclone Winston disaster appeal

## ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

People already experiencing poverty and exclusion are hit hardest by climate change, which increases the risk of natural disaster, floods, droughts and disease. But addressing the impacts of climate change has never been higher on the international agenda, following the 2015 Paris Climate Change Conference (COP21) and the adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Our approach recognises that reducing the risk of natural disasters is essential for truly sustainable development. We help communities increase their resilience, recover from disaster and strengthen infrastructure in some of the world's most vulnerable countries, including Fiji and Vietnam.

### HIGHLIGHTS

In February 2016, Cyclone Winston swept across Fiji. The worst cyclone in Fiji's recorded history killed 42 people and flattened tens of thousands of homes. Our disaster appeal brought in over \$20,000 from foundations and the public to help rehabilitate devastated villages in Bua province in northern Fiji.

Collaborating with Partners in Community Development Fiji (PCDF), our recovery effort focused on Nadi district, where infrastructure, crops and houses were destroyed. We provided basic carpentry and agriculture tools, including nails, hammers, saws and knives. These items are communally owned and evenly shared so every household has access to them as needed.

With agriculture devastated, villagers were relying on food from shops. Because their root crops, such as sweet potato, dalo and cassava, would not be ready to harvest for months, we provided seeds for long beans, eggplant, tomato, cucumber and cabbage to help with nutrition and variety during this time of food scarcity.

While a natural disaster may only span a few hours, the recovery process lasts long after the media coverage has ended. We worked throughout this period not just to offer immediate relief but also to equip communities for long-term recovery.

In Vietnam, we scaled up successful climate change resilience and adaptation projects in Soc Trang and Ha



# We helped 3,252 people in Vietnam adapt to climate change

Tinh provinces. Soc Trang province, located in the heart of the Mekong Delta, is highly vulnerable to salt water intrusion from rising sea levels. Through economic empowerment training and micro-loans, we helped over 1,000 farmers, particularly women, create their own adaptive livelihoods, such as farming alternative crops that are salt water-resilient and using bio-gas from pig farming.

Salinisation is also destroying soursop – a popular fruit common in the region. We collaborated with a soursop cooperative to conduct a market analysis and use local knowledge to graft the coveted fruit variety to a related but salt-resistant rootstock. The hybrid flourishes in salty swamps and may provide a sustainable source of income for farmers if the project is scaled up in the future.

We also implemented environmental awareness campaigns in Soc Trang, Ha Tinh, Hoa Binh and Dien Bien provinces. This involved working with schools and youth unions to educate the whole community in climate change and environmental protection. Students identified priorities in their villages and engaged with local groups to develop action plans.

The Mekong Delta has long been known as south-east Asia's rice bowl, producing 50 per cent of Vietnam's rice. But climate change is having a devastating impact on the region, with sea levels rising and pushing salt water inland to pollute previously fertile rice paddies.

Ms Nguyen Thi Le comes from Soc Trang province – one of the poorest in the Delta. Like most of her neighbours, Ms Le has always farmed rice, but salt water damaged her crops so badly that her yield was almost non-existent. She could barely cover the cost of food and considered pulling her children out of school because she couldn't cover their tuition.

Like so many others, all Ms Le needed was access to technical knowledge and capital. Through our micro-financing scheme, Ms Le borrowed AUD\$400 and learned how to start a small agribusiness that was more climate resilient. She began planting nang, a grassy plant popular as a vegetable. Nang thrives in brackish waters and provides a higher economic return than rice, creating a more sustainable livelihood for Ms Le and her family.

During harvest, Ms Le and her husband wake up at 1am to collect the young nang shoots, trim them and pack them in 100kg bundles for the traders to collect at 4am. Despite the hard work, Ms Le jokes about her accomplishments and looks towards the future.

"Growing nang is hard work – even harder than growing rice," said Ms Le. "But thanks to the loan, we can afford school fees and to buy new shoes for the kids. For the first time we're not living day to day and we are able to cover our monthly loan repayments. Next year, I'll be applying for an even larger loan."





Key stakeholder meeting at Kopondoro, Zimbabwe maternal waiting home

## GOVERNANCE

Long-lasting poverty alleviation is impossible without good governance. Marginalised communities often suffer the most from poor governance, including lack of communication, corruption and inadequate policy.

We build strong relationships based on mutual trust and respect to encourage active citizenship, increase social accountability and build vibrant civil societies. We equip people with the tools and knowledge to advocate for themselves, from increasing access to information on communities' legal rights to training advocacy groups in how to represent their members' interests. We work with communities to design the models that best suit their needs, relying on local knowledge to improve existing governance structures.

### HIGHLIGHTS

In Vietnam, many construction projects are overseen by community members as a way of giving a voice to all citizens. These community leaders, organised into Community Investment Supervision Boards (CISBs), are often farmers who know little about construction or even their rights as projects overseers. Based on previous success with tools such as the Citizen Report

Card, this year we piloted a user-friendly handbook to help CISBs monitor important public investments such as roads. The handbook provides practical tools for social accountability and project management. CISBs are not only better equipped to monitor the development of community assets, but also more aware of their legal rights. Working with the Vietnam Fatherland Front (VFF), we helped facilitate dialogue between community, government and construction companies to ensure CISBs could report on their findings.

We also developed a social accountability resource centre that will connect civil society organisations (CSOs) with each other to share best practices and increase awareness of shared issues. The resource centre will be launched online, connecting CSOs to relevant, up-to-date information and with each other.

In Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, our Shared Futures project addressed food security, maternal and child health, water and sanitation, and governance issues. To ensure the ongoing success of these projects, we trained communities in social accountability and governance. This built the capacity of marginalised groups, particularly women, to lobby for their own



# 4,149

## people took part in governance projects



services, conduct research, and share their knowledge and resources. Communities also established advocacy committees, which work at both local and national levels.

As a result, we measured significant improvement in household access to food, water, sanitation and health services. In particular, changes to sanitation policy in Malawi and Zimbabwe provided an opportunity to train primary health workers in basic obstetrics and establish local management for water point maintenance and repairs. Also the local government in Mutoko included costs to support the development of maternal waiting homes in their own budgets in response to the increased demand from local communities.

In the Solomon Islands, we continued our work with the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) on the Bridging the Gap (BTG) project in Faumamanu village, Malaita province. The BTG project links villages with local government authorities to jointly address development issues faced by rural communities. We trained 140 people in developing partnerships with government to enable them to undertake important community projects. We also ensured all members had the opportunity to voice their opinions on local development planning and action.

Ms Dinh Thi Hong from Da Bac, Vietnam was nominated by her commune to be part of the CISB. The CISB is a community group under the VFF, which monitors public investment in the commune, such as construction projects.

Ms Hong and the other CISB members did not have experience or knowledge in monitoring public projects. The group tried their best to evaluate the construction materials, but simply had to guess whether the quality and quantity were sufficient. Without an understanding of the process of monitoring, the Board drafted minutes of their activities to submit to the commune People's Council, but no further actions were taken as a result.

We developed a handbook to guide Ms Hong's group and other CISBs on how to monitor important public projects in their communities. The simple and easy-to-use handbook describes the monitoring process, provides checklists to monitor each stage of construction, and gives detailed guidelines on what to inspect and report.

After training with Action on Poverty and the provincial VFF in March 2016, Ms Hong and the group now have a greater understanding of the CISB's role, rights, and responsibilities.

They applied the methods from the handbook to monitor the construction of the hamlet's culture house. An evaluation of the house designs revealed the entrance was in an impractical location. Using methods from the handbook, Ms Hong facilitated a dialogue with the contractors and investors of the culture house to discuss their findings and present recommendations. At the conclusion of the dialogue, the contractors committed to adjust the design upon the people's request.

"We found the training very practical and changed the way we do monitoring," said Ms Hong, who was nominated as vice head of the CISB in May 2016. "After the training, I have tools to apply to further monitoring assignments and feel much more confident to practice our legitimate rights."



## HEALTH

Everyone has the right to high quality health care, but for people living in low-income countries, affordable care is often out of reach. Lack of nutritious food, clean water and decent housing only make the problem worse, with 16,000 children dying every day from preventable diseases.

Focusing on child and maternal health, our work combats some of the biggest killers in low-income countries – dengue fever, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

### HIGHLIGHTS

In Timor Leste, we continued working with Bairo Pite Clinic (BPC) to diagnose and treat tuberculosis (TB) as early as possible through household screenings. Funded by the English Family Foundation, local health care workers conducted 1,675 screenings and diagnosed 22 children with TB, which would previously have gone undetected. Another 324 children were identified as high risk and commenced Isoniazid Preventative Therapy (IPT) to significantly reduce their

lifetime risk of developing active TB.

Also in Timor Leste, we continued our support of Programa Assistencia ba Moras Mental (PAMM). PAMM helps people from rural areas who suffer from mental illness, such as depression and anxiety, to access quality mental health services. Qualified counsellors visited 114 people and their families to provide counselling, social assistance and education.

We also worked with PRADET's Psychosocial Rehabilitation Centre to help 13 people experiencing trauma, mental illness and other problems to participate in everyday life. They attended the Centre three times a week for classes in cooking and social skills or for community outings.

In Zimbabwe we helped three communities build their own maternal waiting homes to prevent childbirth death. In these communities, women who give birth at home have a high risk of childbirth death because of poor hygiene conditions and lack of



# 172,047

## people gained better access to health care

access to emergency care. Trained nurses at the homes provided essential ante- and post-natal care, taught communities about the dangers of giving birth at home, and offered classes in nutrition and breastfeeding. They also tested women for HIV and administered treatment to prevent transmission from mother to child. With the introduction of the maternal waiting homes, far fewer women risked home births, with institutional deliveries increasing from 24 per cent to 87 per cent.

In Bangladesh, we continued to support the Glencoe Foundation's Walk for Life project, which trained 75 health professionals from 21 clinics in Dhaka district in clubfoot management. After the training, 822 new clubfoot patients were enrolled in the program and 1,011 feet treated.

In Vietnam, we continued our support of the Eliminate Dengue project in partnership with Monash University and the Vietnamese Government. This global research project uses naturally occurring bacteria to reduce the ability of mosquitoes to transmit harmful viruses such as dengue fever and Zika. This year, researchers collaborated with local health authorities to identify dengue cases. They found only one confirmed case of dengue on the island despite a peak year of dengue incidence in nearby Nha Trang City. Findings from these studies will be crucial for planning for the next phase of the trial, which will see the release of dengue-resistant mosquitoes in Nha Trang City.



When Pauline was pregnant with her first son, Carlos, she was forced to make the long journey from her village in Kopondoro to the district hospital.

"I was in the hospital for two weeks and I had to sleep on the floor," said Pauline. "I had to bring my own blankets and there was nowhere to cook my own food."

In Zimbabwe, many women give birth at home because they live too far from a hospital or can't afford the fees. If they do make the journey, they often have to walk or travel by ox and cart once they are in labour. They are almost 100 times more likely to die of childbirth complications than Australian women.

With help from Action on Poverty and our local partner Community Technology Development Organisation (CTDO), Pauline's whole community built a life-saving maternal waiting home. Each household moulded 50 bricks and everyone submitted their bricks to the village chief, who kept records.

The home took just six months to build, and the whole community felt a sense of pride and ownership.

"It's ours because it helps our families," said Pauline's mother-in-law. "We are the ones that built it and we are very proud of it."

Pauline was the first to give birth in the new home – she delivered her second son there, a healthy boy named Clive. Prior to the birth, she walked just 1.5km to the home where she could rest, undergo pre-natal tests, deliver her baby with the help of trained nurses, and receive breastfeeding and nutrition training.

"I had a bed and a place to cook food. I participated in exclusive breastfeeding classes and I was taught to breastfeed the baby every two hours.

"The maternal waiting homes are closer than the hospital, which means you don't have to travel so far and have somewhere to stay. Travel to the hospital can be risky to the baby or you could give birth along the way."

Sister Dengezi, a community health nurse at the district hospital, said maternal waiting homes have seen a huge reduction in home births.

"The maternal waiting homes have become a forum to understand the needs of women, from nutrition to how rest helps the growth of a foetus," said Sister Dengezi. "Sharing with each other in the homes helps women's psychology. There is also better adherence to exclusive breastfeeding leading to improved infant survival."



Water reservoir at community garden in Kawere, Zimbabwe

## WATER AND SANITATION

In developing countries such as Malawi, it's common for women and girls to walk several kilometres a day just to fetch water for their families. Without access to boreholes, protected wells and other clean water sources, many of these families are at high risk of contracting water-borne diseases. In fact, 80 per cent of illnesses in the developing world are caused by poor water and sanitation.

Water security and sanitation are a vital part of our work. Partnering with local communities, we drill borehole wells, refurbish broken water systems, construct latrines and install rainwater harvesting systems. We also train local water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) committees to repair their community's water points so the systems will keep operating long after we leave. The committees also play a central role in educating people about safe hygiene, such as washing hands, and help them build their own latrines.

### HIGHLIGHTS

Through the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES), we helped over 97,000 people in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe to improve their access to water, including 52,000 women and girls. By drilling 38 new boreholes, repairing another 121 and working on 78 wells, we reduced the distance people have to travel to access clean water to just 360 metres.

We also established over 300 WASH committees and trained all members in maintenance, leadership and financial management so communities can repair their water points and adopt better hygiene practices. The project targeted local artisans to help maintain water facilities and established revolving funds to purchase spare parts when needed.

With Community Technology Development Organisation (CTDO) in Zimbabwe, we built accessible



# Over 17,500 people gained better access to clean water in Mozambique

latrines in schools, helping almost 9,000 students. We also ran community sanitation sessions that reached 37,000 people and resulted in 1,272 new household latrines. Sanitation and hygiene training taught 26,000 people that hand washing prevents water-borne illnesses that cause diarrhoea – the leading cause of death for children under five. In Malawi, 31 villages began to work towards eliminating open defecation, with community demand triggering government sanitation programs.

In the Pacific, we partnered with local organisations in Fiji, Kiribati and Timor to address climate trends and design projects that will help communities adapt to climate change in the future. Working with the Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Kiribati (FSPK), we ran a pilot project to increase household access to clean drinking water on Marakei and Aranuka Islands – the first of its kind in these areas. We helped install water catchment systems that improved clean water access, crop irrigation and nutrition in 26 communities. These communities also developed their own water safety plans and set up water committees to ensure the quality and availability of water even in dry periods.

## CASE STUDY | FIJI

Mereia is a 50-year-old woman from Bua province. Her village suffers from long dry seasons and receives very little seasonal rain. Existing water facilities couldn't meet the needs of her community and very few people knew how to maintain their water systems. Typhoid and diarrhoea were very common, making clean water supply an urgent issue.

Together with Partners in Community Development Fiji (PCDF), we worked with Mereia's village to improve their capacity to manage their water and sanitation facilities. We introduced technical skills to manage water resources, including maintenance procedures and conservation methods. We also installed 11 rainwater harvesting facilities to increase the amount of clean water available to the community.

Mereia's village formed a water point committee to look after their water system. Mereia was elected treasurer of the committee last year. The committee oversees the maintenance of the main water pipe and is responsible for testing the main water supply to ensure it is not contaminated. Mereia also encourages her community to reuse their dish water in the garden and not leave their taps on.

"I've noticed a decrease in the number of water-borne diseases in my community since the training," said Mereia. "I'm very proud of my role on the committee and want to make sure everyone continues to have access to clean water."

Mereia is very thankful for the support her community has received. Her community is now working together to purchase more sanitation facilities, including flushing toilets.





Sa Reap, 28, is a member of a women's self-help group in Kra Lanh district, Siam Reap province, Cambodia

## EDUCATION AND GENDER

Creating gender equality and investing in women is one of our highest priorities in rural regions where women are often poorer and more vulnerable than men.

Education is not only a way to reduce poverty but also a basic human right. In many marginalised communities, women are the primary breadwinners and caretakers of their families. When women have access to education and can participate in business and community life, they increase their earning power and improve their families' livelihoods, reducing poverty for future generations.

Through agribusiness training, scholarships, literacy programs and other opportunities, we strive to change patriarchal mindsets and practices that exclude and devalue women. We focus on providing opportunities for women through education, protecting women from human trafficking and domestic violence, and helping women create their own livelihoods to reduce reliance on their husbands so they don't fall into poverty should

there be a separation or death. We also educate men so they become change agents and help progress the position of women and girls in their communities.

### HIGHLIGHTS

We helped hundreds of women escape sexual abuse and domestic violence by supporting women's crisis centres and self-help groups in Siam Reap province in Cambodia and Lae province in Papua New Guinea. The centres provide safe shelter, emergency medical care, counselling services, and literacy and vocational skills training. Aside from helping survivors of gender-based violence and those at high risk, the centres also educate men, train community leaders, help women set up their own livelihoods and offer scholarships for girls.

In Cambodia and Laos, we worked with Room to Read to expand a comprehensive literacy program that included building schools and libraries, training teachers, publishing thousands of books and learning materials, and running national reading programs.



## CASE STUDY | CAMBODIA

“Panha has developed remarkably over the course of the year . . . She has a strong relationship with her friends.”

Ms Sokha, Cambodia



We partnered with Matesabroad and Cambodian Volunteers for Community Development (CVCD) in Phnom Penh to educate disadvantaged communities in Khmer and English literacy, mathematics, computing, geography, history, science, environmental studies, social morality, and health and hygiene. Our partners Seaco and the Cambodian Organization for Children and Development (COCD) also renovated a school in Samruong commune. Seaco volunteers built new walls and roofing, and installed two toilets and wash basins. Since the renovation, teachers have noted an increase in student numbers and enthusiasm, with over 80 pupils enrolled. In addition, our partners Aide et Action, COCD, Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE) and Library for All each undertook a one-year education-focused pilot project funded by the Atlassian Foundation.

This year, we revised our gender policy and created a gender action framework. All staff undertook training in gender analysis and gender programming, and our livelihood, education and economic empowerment programs all targeted women.

We also held gender awareness training for our partners. Our Asia and Pacific partners carried out self-assessments, appointed Gender Focal Persons, and developed or improved their gender policies.

Panha's mother moved to O'Som village in the remote Veal Veng district to work on a nearby plantation. Veal Veng is close to the Thai border, where human trafficking is a real threat to children. The district lacks infrastructure and access to basic health and education services, and almost half the population lives in poverty. Because they lived too far from a preschool, Panha, who is five years old, didn't get to play, develop social skills or receive the basic education she needs before starting primary school. Many children Panha's age are kept home or taken to work with their parents to labour in the fields. When they start primary school, these children are already behind and many have to repeat the first few years. Unsurprisingly, this leads to high drop-out rates.

We worked with Atlassian Foundation and COCD to bring four preschools and 15 home-based preschool programs to Veal Veng. Panha's mother can now take Panha to preschool on her bicycle, where she is learning to read, write, practice good hygiene and sing songs.

“Panha has developed remarkably over the course of the year,” said Ms Sokha, Panha's teacher. “She is becoming a brave girl who has a strong relationship with her friends.”

The preschools not only teach literacy and numeracy skills, but also offer health checks and teach families about nutrition. With a preschool education, children are far more likely to stay in school and increase their chances of escaping the cycle of poverty.

“Every AOP project includes education and training - it is key to creating sustainable change.”

CEO Christine Murphy



*Nomadic women of Tanzania discussing the importance of permaculture for dietary diversity with our partner Testigo*

## PARTNERSHIPS

Action on Poverty is committed to working in partnership, as we believe we can achieve more by working collaboratively with others. Our Action on Poverty Partnership (APP) Program helps our partners access resources, learn skills and gain local knowledge so together we can support grassroots initiatives that make a real difference.

### HIGHLIGHTS

This year the APP program made huge strides. Together, we:

- ▶ trained over 350 health professionals in the Ponseti Method to treat clubfoot in Bangladesh and treated over 1,300 children, giving them a future free from disability
- ▶ enrolled 170 children from the remote Veal Veng district in Cambodia in local or home-based preschools so they get the best possible start to their education
- ▶ helped over 1,000 Cambodian families improve their standard of living through creating savings groups, livestock schemes and training opportunities
- ▶ built a new school for 100 students, including 50 girls, in Cambodia, to replace the old, unsafe school building
- ▶ improved childhood literacy outcomes through specialist teacher training for almost 100,000 Year 1 and 2 students in Cambodia and Laos
- ▶ helped 150 Cambodian girls get an education so they can escape slave labour and trafficking
- ▶ gave almost 600 children and 40 teachers from ethnic minorities in remote Vietnam access to clean water and basic sanitation facilities
- ▶ renovated two schools and provided over 900 children and their teachers with basic school supplies, helping to increase attendance in remote regions of Vietnam
- ▶ trained 221 Vietnamese Government officials, police officers, and village and community leaders in child protection
- ▶ rescued 80 Vietnamese children, women and men from exploitative labour, forced marriage and sex work
- ▶ represented 16 human trafficking survivors in 12 court



## CASE STUDY | VIETNAM

cases, leading to 28 traffickers being sentenced in Vietnam

- ▶ helped 358 domestic and sexual violence survivors access services in Papua New Guinea
- ▶ provided health care to over 100,000 people in Timor Leste and delivered 1,200 babies safely
- ▶ provided psychosocial support for 24 women prisoners in Gleno prison, Timor Leste
- ▶ ran community education sessions in Timor Leste to raise awareness of mental illness
- ▶ upgraded 42 teachers' skills to benefit 1,500 students in schools in Natarbora, Timor Leste
- ▶ trained over 200 Masai women in growing their own vegetables to improve their nutrition
- ▶ built two new boreholes at schools in Thyolo, Malawi so 2,000 children and surrounding communities have access to clean water
- ▶ installed rainwater tanks and taught earthwork techniques to mitigate flood damage to a village of over 7,000 people in Kenya
- ▶ trained 300 Kenyan community members, teachers and primary school students in permaculture.



Vinh grew up in a very poor family and as a young child sold candy on the streets of Hanoi to make money to support his mother. Now 16 years old, he is a very special young man.

Vinh was introduced to us through Blue Dragon Children's Foundation (BCDF), a Hanoi-based non-profit that rescues children in crisis. BCDF and Action on Poverty work in partnership to share resources, raise money and deliver more effective outcomes for kids at risk.

With our combined support, Vinh was encouraged to go to school and attend classes at the BCDF Drop-In-Centre, where we offer life skills and career workshops, and vocational training.

Vinh is now studying in Grade 9 and has completed a variety of classes at the centre including hip hop, martial arts and a barista course. After graduating from the barista course, he found a part-time job at a coffee shop where he is recognised for his hard work and going the extra mile.

Managing time and motivation can be a major obstacle for kids returning to school. But Vinh has been able to effectively balance studying, working and attending activities at the Drop-In-Centre. A caring and confident young man - he has even become a youth leader.

His favourite quote is: "Diligence is the mother of good fortune," which he learned from his own experience.

### OUR PARTNERS:

Aide et Action	HIAM Health
Alola	Kampuchean Action for Primary Education
Bairo Pite Clinic	Library for All
Bega Valley Advocates for Timor Leste	Lotus Outreach Australia
Blue Dragon Children's Foundation	Matesabroad Foundation
Cambodian Organization for Children and Development	Partners in Community Development Fiji
Cambodian Volunteers for Community Development	PRADET
Cambodian Women's Crisis Center	Room to Read
Chikuni Mission	Sailing Tri Netra
Community Technology Development Trust	Solomon Islands Development Trust
Concern Universal	Testigo
CUFA	Timor Aid
Femili PNG	Vita
Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific International	
Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Kiribati	
Glencoe Foundation	
Happy Villages	





## INSPIRING AUSTRALIANS

As an Australian-based organisation, we seek to inspire those around us with the incredible stories of change we see every day in our work. We've seen disadvantaged rural villages transformed with community-based tourism and children's futures changed forever with family support to stay in school.

These changes couldn't happen without the Australian public, who support us in many ways - from making a donation, volunteering and attending our events, to fundraising on our behalf. In recognition of this, we made 'inspiring Australians' a strategic direction for our organisation and seek to improve our engagement every year.

### HIGHLIGHTS

This year we changed our name from the Australian Foundation of the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific (AFAP) to Action on Poverty (AOP). This rebrand was an important step that made our name simpler and more memorable among our donors.

We held two events to raise money and awareness for our projects with the support of corporate partners. Our Good Start to the Weekend event in December 2015 was held at the offices of our pro bono lawyers Hunt and Hunt. The event gave supporters the opportunity to take in the beautiful views of Sydney Harbour and hear our partner, the Cambodian Organization for Children and Development (COCD), talk about how early education is breaking the poverty cycle.

Our Mother's Day event in May 2016 was jointly organised with our loyal supporter, Norman Disney & Young. They generously hosted the event in their North Sydney office, where over 60 people listened to the stories of working mothers from around the world. We received raffle prizes from various local businesses in support of the event, which raised money to build a maternal waiting home in Zimbabwe.

We also took part in Sydney's City2Surf event in August 2015, with a dedicated team of staff and supporters



## CASE STUDY | DIANNE DREW

taking on the iconic fitness challenge to raise money for clean water in the Pacific. A group of Australians also trekked through pristine Da Bac, Vietnam, where we have our community based tourism project.

An amazing group of volunteers organised fundraisers for us. Raising over \$36,000 to build a women's shelter in Cambodia, West Australian volunteer Astrid Chapman organised a series of events including movie nights and bake sales. Tamworth resident Dianne Drew and her granddaughter Saya also raised over \$2,000 to build a water harvesting and filtration system for a school in Vietnam. The dynamic duo raised money by asking for support from their friends on social media. Similarly, the Brayshaw family organised the Lantern Festival raising over \$5,000 to support our work in Cambodia.

Two Australian volunteers, Peter Button and Dr Bryan Humphrey, were placed in-country to directly implement projects and support our partners in Vietnam and Cambodia. Their work involved research, training, mentoring and project management.

In Australia, volunteers Calli Miller, Andrea De Sousa and Lisa O'Connor provided incredible support with administration, graphic design, policy work and human resources. We also received generous pro bono support from Hunt and Hunt lawyers, Image Media Services, Prometix and the Simpatico Network.

Led by volunteer Jessica McKenzie, we continued to engage with the public by sharing stories on social media, and our audience grew to over 1,500 fans across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. We also gained media coverage in newspapers and websites promoting our events and projects.

We held three fundraising appeals, which asked donors to support three vital projects: preschool education in Cambodia, relief for those affected by Cyclone Winston in Fiji and the maternal waiting home project in Zimbabwe. Compared with last year, donations to AOP's programs rose by over 75 per cent, reflecting our increased endeavour to keep supporters informed of how their donations are making a difference to people's lives.



One of our most loyal supporters, Dianne Drew, has been fundraising for Action on Poverty for over 20 years. In her own words she shares why she is inspired to help others in need.

*This year my eight-year-old granddaughter Saya and I teamed up to raise \$2,000 for a school in Pu-Nhi, Vietnam. With our combined efforts, we quickly surpassed our target and raised enough money to install a water system for 60 students at a kindergarten, and provide winter clothes, scarves and boots for another 30 children at the preschool.*

*I'm absolutely thrilled that Saya is interested in tackling poverty and injustice. I've been working with Action on Poverty for over 20 years and in that time I've helped install a well in Nam Ha, provided medical supplies to Vietnamese clinics and sewing machines to a disabled school, built a bakery in Zambia called Stream of Peace, and helped fund pilot projects for the African Women's Program.*

*My work started in the early '90s when I was volunteering as a tutor at the British Aerospace training school in Tamworth, helping Asian students who were having difficulty with spoken English. One of my first students, Dang, was from the Red River Delta in the north of Vietnam. He was the youngest of 11 children and was brought up on a fishing boat. He often spoke of the need for a water supply and medical equipment in his village, so just before he left to go back to Vietnam my friends and I had a 'well party' to raise money. A couple of years later, I went with two friends to see 'our well' located just outside the small village hospital.*

*Soon after I returned, I found out about Action on Poverty. At that time, they regularly shipped medical equipment to developing countries. The people working there were very impressive and the fact that it was a secular organisation appealed to me.*

*That was the start of my relationship with Action on Poverty. Since then, I've often spoken about their work at Rotary, Lions, Zonta and police functions, and organised fundraising events such as concerts with soprano Annalisa Kerrigan. Money from our concerts has funded many pilot projects, such as maternal waiting homes in Zimbabwe.*

*I feel motivated by Action on Poverty staff – they work incredibly hard to bring about change by empowering people, especially women.*

*I'm now trying to pass that same passion on to the next generation, including my grandchildren. My advice to people wishing to fundraise is to link up with a reputable organisation and start with an achievable goal. If you have the passion, you can do it too.*

Dianne Drew



Board (left to right): Jeanneste Sutanto, Denis Wolff, John Kell, David Brett, Dr Angeline Low, John Rock, Prof Jock Harkness.

## OUR ORGANISATION

We are committed to ensuring our work is effective. We do this in a number of ways, including: attracting and retaining well-qualified staff; developing new programs based on evidence and previous learning; participating in relevant learning forums; and resourcing peer learning activities within our program work.

As part of our commitment to understanding our impact and continually building the effectiveness of our programs, this year we conducted gender, fraud and child protection training with partners in Fiji, Timor, Kiribati, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia and Malawi.

We also undertook several evaluations, including a value-for-money assessment in Africa that looked beyond the usual economic indicators. The study

found the work we support was both economically and socially cost effective. The study also tried to define what "value" meant to the various stakeholders involved especially to the people we are trying to assist. The study highlighted the complex and diverse understanding of "value-for-money" across cultures. These findings then fed into a large evaluation of our Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) program in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, which concluded this year. One of the program's biggest successes was in maternal and child health. We are continuing to work with the local government to scale up these programs.

In Asia, we undertook a large research and internal reflection process with partners in Cambodia, Vietnam and Myanmar, focusing on livelihoods and economic empowerment. This research was led





by Dr Bryan Humphrey, who previously worked with us in Cambodia. The study highlighted a wide variation in success across our projects. It was also a useful opportunity for representatives from our partner organisations to come together and share findings and experiences to compare models. This helped us to streamline our projects. The study also emphasised the importance of trust as a key factor in the success of projects.

In the Pacific, we evaluated our pilot programs in food and water security in Fiji with Partners in Community Development Fiji (PCDF) in order to scale up in future.

Our Australian program staff participated in gender, outcome mapping, and value for money assessment training this year.

## BOARD

### **Mr John Rock (Chairperson)**

B.Sc. Hons, Retired Sales and Marketing Consultant

### **Mr John Kell (Vice Chair)**

M Env Stud, Environmental Studies, LLB BA (Hons), FAICD: Partner Hicksons Lawyers

### **Dr Angeline Low (Treasurer)**

PhD, MMgmt., B. Econs. Hons, MAICD; Research Affiliate, University of Technology

### **Prof. Jock Harkness (Director)**

MBBS DCP (Lon); FRCPA; FASM Microbiologist, St Vincent's Hospital

### **Mr David A Brett (Director)**

BSc(For) (ANU), MAgr (Syd); Consultant International Development

### **Mr Denis Wolff (Director)**

M.Sc Environmental Management; NSW Dept of Transport

### **Mrs Jeanneste Sutanto (Director)**

Bachelor of Commerce, Accounting and Finance, Macquarie University; Senior Manager PwC

## SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM

**Christine Murphy** Chief Executive Officer

**Christine Pollard** Finance Director

**Jeremy Cole** International Program Director

**Ta Van Tuan** Vietnam Country Director

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	2016 (\$)	2015 (\$)
<b>REVENUE</b>		
<b>Donations and gifts</b>		
- Monetary	6,514,329	6,209,209
- Non-monetary	51,813	19,112
<b>Legacies and bequests</b>	0	0
<b>Grants</b>		
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	2,903,344	2,953,197
- Other Australian	634,877	1,153,421
- Other overseas	254,583	244,717
<b>Investment income</b>	38,997	56,298
<b>Other income</b>	38,304	282,371
<b>Revenue for international political or religious adherence promotion programs</b>	0	0
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>10,436,247</b>	<b>10,918,325</b>

### NOTE 1: ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

This financial report is derived from the company's annual statutory report for the year ended 30th June 2016 which is available upon request.

### NOTE 2: REPORTING STANDARDS

The following financial reports have been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in the ACFID Code of Conduct. For further information on the Code, please refer to the ACFID Code of Conduct Implementation Guidance available at [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au).

### NOTE 3: NON-MONETARY EXPENDITURE can be broken down as follows

Professional Pro Bono Legal support	6,608
Professional Pro Bono Administration support	2,000
Professional Pro Bono Fundraising support	7,500
Professional Pro Bono IT support	16,000
Volunteers - Project Management support - 4 days	1,077
Volunteers - Fundraising support - 53 days	12,107
Volunteers - Human Resources support - 24 days	6,521
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51,813</b>

### NOTE 4: OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

AOP had no other comprehensive income for the 2016 and 2015 financial years.

	2016 (\$)	2015 (\$)
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>International aid and development programs expenditure</b>		
- Funds to International programs	9,213,128	9,315,251
- Program support costs	479,783	695,716
Community education	0	8,601
<b>Fundraising costs</b>		
- Public	150,777	151,411
- Government and multilateral and private	6,221	10,335
<b>Accountability and administration</b>	384,718	364,911
<b>Non-monetary expenditure</b>	51,813	19,112
<b>Total international aid and development programs expenditure</b>	<b>10,286,440</b>	<b>10,565,337</b>
<b>International political or religious adherence promotion programs expenditure</b>	0	0
<b>Domestic programs expenditure</b>	0	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>10,286,440</b>	<b>10,565,337</b>
<b>EXCESS/(SHORTFALL) OF REVENUE OVER DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>149,807</b>	<b>352,988</b>



# DEFINITIONS

## WHERE OUR SUPPORT COMES FROM

**Donations and Gifts:** Monetary and non-monetary contributions from the Australian public, trusts and foundations.

**DFAT Grants:** The Australian Government's overseas aid program.

**Other Australian Grants:** Grants from all Australian institutions other than DFAT.

**Other Overseas Grants:** All grants sourced from non-Australian institutions.

**Investment Income:** Income from interest and other income earned on investment assets.

**Other Income:** Fundraising events, sponsorships, foreign exchange gains.

## WHERE THE MONEY GOES

**Funds to International Programs:** Funds actually remitted overseas to aid and development projects.

**International Projects – Program Support Costs:** Direct costs of project management in Australia including salaries of program staff in Australia, project design, monitoring and evaluation.

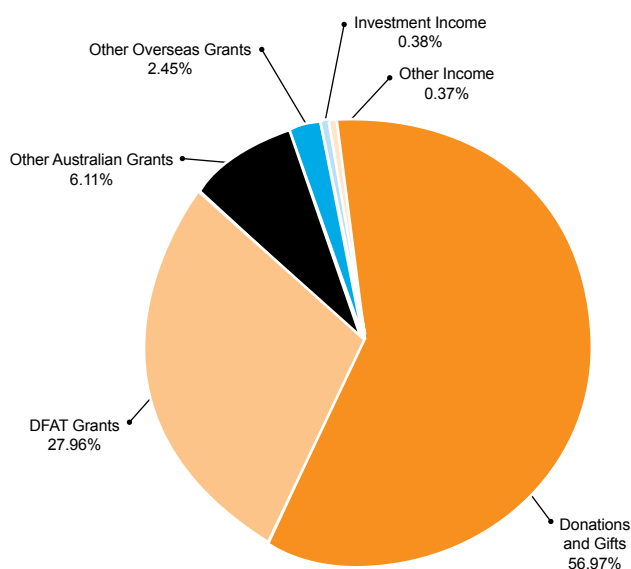
**Community Education:** Costs related to informing and educating the Australian public of, and inviting their active involvement in, global justice, development and humanitarian issues.

**Fundraising – Public:** All costs related to the purposes of raising funds from the public including salary costs of fundraising staff and production and mailing of fundraising materials.

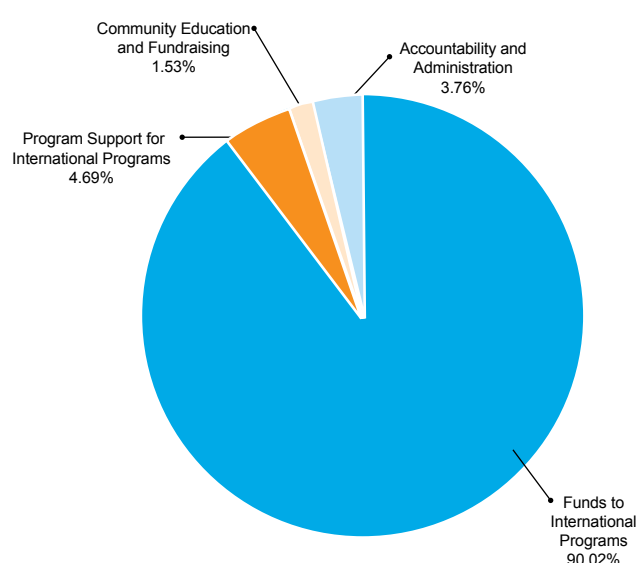
**Fundraising – Government, Multilateral and Private Sector:** Personnel and related costs involved in the preparation of funding submissions and reporting against grants.

**Accountability and Administration:** Relates to the overall operational capability of AOP, such as audit fees, personnel, IT, finance and administration costs, insurance premiums and membership to peak bodies.

## REVENUE



## EXPENDITURE



## NOTE 5: HOW PIE CHARTS ARE DERIVED

Pie chart category income and expenses percentages are derived from AOP's Statement of Comprehensive Income categories (excluding donations in-kind). AOP's Statement of Comprehensive Income follows the ACFID format with financial definitions for each category.

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016**

	2016 (\$)	2015 (\$)
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,563,844	3,658,985
Trade and other receivables	13,135	17,076
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>2,576,979</b>	<b>3,676,061</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Other financial assets	10,757	12,440
Property, plant and equipment	25,539	36,942
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>36,296</b>	<b>49,382</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>2,613,275</b>	<b>3,725,443</b>

	2016 (\$)	2015 (\$)
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	50,242	1,220,377
Current tax liabilities	4,416	115,705
Provisions	72,137	44,278
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>126,795</b>	<b>1,380,360</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Provisions	6,437	14,847
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>6,437</b>	<b>14,847</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>133,232</b>	<b>1,395,207</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>2,480,043</b>	<b>2,330,236</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
<b>Reserves</b>	<b>3,870</b>	<b>3,870</b>
<b>Retained earnings</b>	<b>2,476,173</b>	<b>2,326,366</b>
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>2,480,043</b>	<b>2,330,236</b>

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016**

	Restricted funds (\$)	Unrestricted funds (\$)	Harold Webber Memorial Fund (\$)	Pre-incorporation reserve (\$)	Total (\$)
<b>Balance at 1 July 2014</b>	<b>1,772,896</b>	<b>200,482</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>1,977,248</b>
Adjustments or changes in equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other comprehensive income for the year	0	0	0	0	0
Excess of revenue over expenditure	102,042	250,946	0	0	352,988
Other amounts transferred to or from reserves	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Balance at 30 June 2015</b>	<b>1,874,938</b>	<b>451,428</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>2,330,236</b>
Adjustments or changes in equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other comprehensive income for the year	0	0	0	0	0
Excess of revenue over expenditure	(59,136)	208,943	0	0	149,807
Other amounts transferred to or from reserves	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Balance at 1 July 2016</b>	<b>1,815,802</b>	<b>660,371</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>2,480,043</b>



## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Action on Poverty (AOP) achieved a surplus of \$149,807 for the 2015-16 financial year. Total revenue decreased by 4.7 per cent from \$10,899,213 in 2014-15 to \$10,384,433 in 2015-16. Total expenditure also decreased this year by 3 per cent, from \$10,546,225 in 2014-15 to \$10,234,626 in 2015-16.

AOP's relationships with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) remained an essential partnership for ongoing funding with the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) and the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). 2015-16 was the last year of the five-year AACES program and AOP received \$1,079,139 to undertake development activities in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Based on support from the Australian public, the ANCP grant of \$1,824,205 from DFAT helped AOP undertake its own development activities across Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Donations rose by \$305,119 this financial year, from \$6,209,209

in 2014-15 to \$6,514,329 in 2015-16. AOP appreciates this support from its wide range of donors.

During 2015-16, AOP spent \$10,286,440 on delivering overseas aid programs across Africa, Asia and the Pacific. This represents a decrease of \$278,897 from the previous year. Program support costs for 2015-16 were \$215,933 less than 2014-15, largely due to the scaling down and conclusion of several programs.

Administration and fundraising expenses remained steady at \$541,716 (\$526,657 for 2014-15). AOP received \$51,813 in pro bono and volunteer support in 2015-16, an increase of over \$30,000 (\$19,112 in 2014-15).

AOP is pleased to report that restricted funds remained steady at \$1,815,802 as of 30 June 2016, while unrestricted funds grew from \$451,428 at the end of 2014-15 to \$660,371 in 2015-16.

### TABLE OF CASH MOVEMENTS FOR DESIGNATED PURPOSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Cash available at beginning of year (\$)	Cash raised during year (\$)	Cash disbursed during year (\$)	Cash available at end of year (\$)
<b>Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)</b>	1,214,315	9,311	1,051,813	171,813
<b>Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES)</b>	270,552	1,836,979	1,982,599	124,932
<b>School and Library Building Program</b>				
- Cambodia	188,991	2,861,655	2,915,814	134,832
- Laos	61,776	1,445,481	1,469,884	37,373
<b>End Dengue Program Vietnam (EDPV)</b>	207,962	434,877	494,988	147,851
<b>Total for other non-designated purposes</b>	1,715,389	3,964,161	3,732,507	1,947,043
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,658,985</b>	<b>10,552,464</b>	<b>11,647,605</b>	<b>2,563,844</b>

*The Table of Cash Movements is only required to disclose cash raised for a designated purpose if it exceeds 10 per cent of total international aid and development revenue.*



**HOUSTON & CO Pty Limited**  
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**Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial  
Statements of The Australian Foundation For The Peoples Of Asia And  
The Pacific Limited "AFAP"**

The accompanying summary financial statements as set out on pages 30 to 33, which comprises the summary statement of financial position as at 30 June 2016, the summary statement of comprehensive income, summary statement of changes in equity and table of cash movements for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial report of AFAP for the year ended 30 June 2016. We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on that financial report in our report dated 10th November 2016. That financial report and the summary financial statements do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on that financial report.

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Australian Accounting Standards. Reading the summary financial statements, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial report of AFAP.

**Management's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements**

Management is responsible for the preparation of a summary of the audited financial report prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards.

**Auditor's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summary financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810 *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

**Independence**

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

**Opinion**

In our opinion, the summary financial statements derived from the audited financial report of AFAP for the year ended 30 June 2015 are consistent, in all material respects, with that audited financial report, prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards.

Owen Houston Registered Company Auditor No 4548

Dated: 10th November 2016

*Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation*

The audit was conducted by Houston and Co P/L Chartered Accountant. Owen Houston is a Registered Company Auditor (No. 4548) and is a Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia (ICAA). For further details contact the auditor at Suite 4/113 Willoughby Road, Crows Nest NSW 2065 or phone (02) 9906 2088



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## COMPLIANCE AND REGULATION

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Action on Poverty (AOP), like all Australian charities and not-for-profit organisations, operates in a highly regulated environment, and complies with a range of laws, regulations, licences and codes of conduct to demonstrate accountability to the community and our stakeholders.

### AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS COMMISSION (ACNC)

The ACNC is the independent national regulator of charities. AOP is registered with the ACNC and complies with financial and organisational reporting obligations and governance standards. Please refer to [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au) for details of these obligations and standards.

### THE AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE (ATO)

The ATO has given AOP Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status as an Overseas Aid Fund, granted AOP exemption from Income Tax, and provided concessions for Fringe Benefits Tax and GST.

### DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE (DFAT) ACCREDITATION

DFAT is responsible for managing the Australian Government's official overseas aid program. AOP is a fully accredited and

trusted recipient of funds from DFAT. The DFAT accreditation process is thorough, robust and undertaken every five years. It involves a detailed assessment of AOP systems, operations, management capacity, governance and linkages with the Australian community against a set of agreed criteria.

### AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (ACFID)

ACFID is the peak body for aid and development NGOs, and its Code of Conduct upholds the highest standards of ethics, effectiveness and accountability. AOP is a member of ACFID and a signatory of the ACFID Code of Conduct. For further information on the Code, please refer to the ACFID Code of Conduct Guidance Document available at [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au).

### FUNDRAISING

As required by state fundraising laws, fundraising licences are required by many of Australia's states to raise funds within their borders. AOP is licensed to fundraise in all states and territories, and complies with the requirements associated with these licences, including annual reporting to particular states.

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## OUR SUPPORTERS

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By working in partnership, we achieve effective development that is inclusive, sustainable and cost-effective. We give special thanks to all the Action on Poverty partners and sponsors who helped us mobilise millions of dollars in 2015-16 for grassroots initiatives that help thousands of people find their own way forward.

### INSTITUTIONAL

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Irish Aid  
Monash University  
USAID

### OTHER DONORS

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Thunderbird2 Foundation

### PRO BONO SUPPORT

Hunt & Hunt Lawyers  
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Prometix  
Simpatico Network

*One supporter has chosen to remain anonymous in this report.*



*The Australian Foundation for  
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Trading as Action on Poverty*

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