



The Kokoda Track Foundation

Kokoda Track Foundation:

What we've been up to over the past 12 months

The Kokoda Track Foundation is an Australian philanthropic organisation which aims to repay the selfless help given to Australia during WWII by the 'Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels' of Papua New Guinea by helping to improve the lives and futures of their descendants.

They were there for us during our darkest hour.... Now it's our turn to lend a hand.

OUR WORK IN EDUCATION

This year, we have continued our successful **Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel Scholarship** program taking the number of scholarships we have provided to date to over 1,400. This year alone we are supporting 320 children on scholarships, enabling them to get an education they otherwise would not be able to access. Two years ago the PNG Government announced “Free Education” and we thought that this would mean changing the focus of our scholarship program. Unfortunately, free education has only been implemented in a handful of our schools in the catchment region and the majority of schools are still charging expensive school fees. As more schools transition across to Free Education, we will transform our scholarship program into a ‘rewards’ and ‘incentive’ based system, i.e., our scholarship students will be supported with school resource packs, solar lights, excursions and other educational rewards. In the meantime, we are continuing to award school-fee scholarships to students on the basis of academic merit, gender equality and family need. The scholarship scheme has made an extraordinary difference over the years and enrollment rates have doubled across the region and girls are now attending school in the same ratio as boys.



Our **School Resource and Infrastructure** program has continued this year and is literally keeping schools open and properly resourced. We are again supporting 40 elementary, primary and secondary schools across the catchment region with the educational resources that they require to operate, including stationery, furniture, library and textbooks, curriculum resources and maintenance items. At the beginning of the year, schools are given a ‘budget’ that they can spend at any time throughout the year. This budget is allocated on the basis of the size and need of the school and the Foundation’s Executive Director and Programs Manager collect information about this need during the previous year. School principals and teachers are given a choice in what items they purchase with their funding allocation every year to ensure that the resources are relevant for that school’s priorities and needs. In 2013 we also introduced a new component to the program - the Rich Learning Environment Scheme – this is a feature component of our Certificate of Elementary Teaching where elementary teachers are encouraged to establish a “Rich Learning Borrowing Corner” in their classrooms. Children are allowed to borrow items from the corner when they are in the classroom and must return them when they have finished. At the beginning of the year we delivered these rich learning materials to all elementary schools in the catchment region and teachers have reported excellent results.



This year we have also continued our **Teacher Salary Incentives Program**, which has been running for 3 years now. This year we are supporting the salaries of 25 elementary and primary teachers along and around the Track – keeping schools open that would otherwise close. Prior to the O’Neill Government taking over 12 months ago, the previous Provincial Education system was in complete disarray. The Government payroll contains hundreds of phantom names and thousands of teachers across the country do not get paid. Whilst the O’Neill administration is reviewing the situation and seems committed to addressing the issues, the current reality of the situation means that there are still many teachers in our region who cannot access a salary to work in their local school. Without this small wage, teachers are forced to make their livings in the gardens and schools ultimately close. In 2013 we are supporting 25 teachers in 20 schools across the catchment region. These schools are: Kokoda Elementary, Ononda Elementary, Alola Elementary, Gorari Primary, Gorari Elementary, Efogi 1 Elementary, Efogi 2 Elementary, Doboduru Primary, Doboduru Elementary, Manari Community, Isurava Elementary, Buna Elementary, Enivilogo Elementary, Kovello Elementary, Abuari Elementary, Kokoda Pre-School, Sanananda Elementary, Naduri Elementary, Waju Elementary and Ambene Elementary.



We have significantly increased our investment in our **School Buildings Program** this year due to the urgent need of many schools in the catchment region. School buildings is a relatively new program area for the Foundation; however we recently discovered that a number of school building promises made by Government agencies (AusAID and PNG Provincial Government) and trek operators have gone unfulfilled and our teachers were teaching in facilities that were made from bush materials and were run down and completely inadequate for quality learning. Over the past 12 months we have constructed the Alola Elementary School, the Naduri Elementary School, the Enivilogo Elementary School and two classrooms at the Buna Elementary School. (We also built the Efogi 2 Elementary School in 2011). These villages now have a permanent classroom from which their teachers can operate and their children can attend.



This year has also been an enormous year of developing and piloting our Certificate of Elementary Teaching via our **Teacher Training Program**. Over the past 24 months we have conducted 4 pilot training courses with a cohort of elementary teacher trainees in the development of the curriculum for the Kokoda College. Our main achievements to date include:

- Developed innovative, action-based learning programme for the Kokoda Track Foundation's new Certificate of Elementary Teaching;
- Transformed the existing 6-week Government program, and the Foundation's previous 10-week pilot program, into a 12-month Certificate of Elementary Teaching;
- Piloted 20 weeks of this new training program with a cohort of 50 elementary teachers (16 weeks theoretical learning

and 4 weeks practicum);

- 20 week program conducted across 4 training sessions (7 weeks, 7 weeks, 3 weeks, 3 weeks) and content, course work, and practicums expanded to be a 12 month program ready to start in February 2014;
- Teacher trainees report being satisfied with the course and learning programme;
- Teacher trainees report being satisfied with the wider learning environment and hospitality of host community;
- Progressive learning outcomes were achieved;
- Course continues to be revised and improved as a result of teacher trainee feedback.

This course is currently going through a full review and accreditation process with the PNG National Department of Education. It will operate out of the new Kokoda College facility from February 2014.



Over the past 12 months we have also coordinated the placements of 14 volunteers via our **Volunteering Program for Teachers**. These volunteers were posted into our elementary and primary schools in the catchment region and conducted professional development, mentoring, in-service training and other practical assistance for the teachers and schools. Our shortest volunteering placement was 1 week and our longest was 2 months. Teacher volunteers were posted to Kagi, Naduri, Alola, Abuari, Isurava, Kokoda, Kou Kou, and Gorari schools. Eight of these volunteers were qualified teachers and assisted teachers in the classroom. Six of these volunteers were tradespeople and they assisted us with our school building construction projects. One group of volunteers also installed solar lights onto the Naduri Elementary School.



2013 was also the third year of our **Archer Leadership Scholarship Program**. We again called for applications from final year tertiary students across PNG and received in excess of 80 applications. 10 of the applicants were shortlisted and invited to interview in Port Moresby. Six final students were awarded with the leadership scholarships: Netty Daemuna (Law), Maggie Isaac (Nursing), Samson Walizopa (Business Management), Eleanor Maineke (Education), Anthony Kubei (Pharmacy) and Sarah Griffin (Environmental Science). The students are currently halfway through their yearlong, intensive, experiential leadership development program and completed their exchange program to Sydney in June 2013.



OUR WORK IN HEALTH

Our work in health has continued and expanded over the past 12 months. We have continued our **Training Program for Community Health Workers** and this year we are supporting six more students to undertake the Diploma of Community Health Work at institutions across PNG. All trainees are currently in their second and final year of the training and the cohort comprises: one female from Alola, one female from Abuari, one female from Sogeri, one male from Buna, one female from Manari and one female from Efogi. They will graduate between January and July 2014 and will then be posted into the Track aid posts to provide health services for local communities. We still have a long waiting list of people who are interested in and eligible to undertake the Diploma of Community Health Work and they will begin their studies at the Kokoda College as soon as the School of Health is operational.



This year we have also expanded our **Community Health Worker Salary Incentives Program** and are now supporting eight Community Health Workers throughout the region to operate the aid posts that were previously unstaffed. Via these community health workers (who undertake a 2-year training diploma) mothers can access appropriate antenatal and postnatal care, immunizations and vaccinations, family planning options, and improved reproductive health. Furthermore, community health workers can address many of the major diseases that contribute to maternal and infant mortality in communities such as anaemia, malaria, nutrition, and postpartum haemorrhage. They also address communicable diseases including pneumonia, malaria, TB, syphilis, diarrhoeal diseases, meningitis, and HIV that account for 50 per cent of deaths in PNG each year. It is our strong belief that a community health worker needs to be based in every village in PNG that isn't within reasonable walking distance to a neighbouring village with appropriate health staff and facilities. These community health workers are currently based in the following posts:

- Manari aid post – regular patrols to Naoro 1, Naoro 2, Loni, Iorabaiwa, Madilogo
- Efogi health centre – regular patrols to Efogi 2, Enivilogo, Hailogo
- Naduri aid post – regular patrols to Kagi, Maraba, Daoi, Templeton's Crossings 1 & 2
- Abuari aid post – regular patrols to Isurava, Alola
- Sogeri National High School clinic – open to students, staff and Sogeri community
- Buna aid post – regular patrols to 11 catchment communities (including Buna 2, Sanananda, Doboduru)



As well as supporting the community health workers, we are continuing to provide support to aid posts, health centres and the Kokoda Memorial Hospital via our **Medical Supplies and Infrastructure Program**. The Foundation responds to the needs of these posts when the Government channels fail to operate effectively. We priorities the posts where our community health workers are currently based and ensure that they have enough supplies to operate. Of all of our aid posts, Buna aid post

currently sees the largest number of patients (between 50 and 70 per day) and has received significant support over the past 12 months in order to keep the CHWs operating. We also continue to support the Kokoda Memorial Hospital on an 'as required basis'.



This year we also introduced our new **Brighten a Smile Program** which has been an enormous success. After sending a volunteer dental team across the Track in 2012, we discovered that 95% of adults and 63% of children (aged 6-7 years) across the Track region had decayed teeth. Dental pain and related issues were rated as the number one health concern of villagers. In response to these alarming statistics, we partnered with Dr Barry Reed to develop and roll out a toothbrushing awareness and education program to 35 elementary and primary schools that the Foundation currently operates in. We developed an education program (based on a successful intervention operated by the Queensland Government in Indigenous Australian communities) and trained our community health workers to administer the program. We also distributed 6,000 toothbrushes and toothpastes to the children attending the 35 schools across the region and the children now participate in daily toothbrushing classes. Even weekly toothbrushing has been shown to reduce caries by up to 70%.



This year we have also supported 16 volunteers to undertake **Health Volunteering Placements** in the Kokoda Track villages. These health volunteers do not undertake clinical work; instead they provide mentoring, professional development, training, and in-service for our community health workers. Over the past 12 months we have particularly focused on the following skills development: maternal health and midwifery, breastfeeding, upkeep of aid post facilities, malaria prevention, dental hygiene, eye care, awareness and encouraging villagers to seek treatment, health, hygiene, and cleanliness around village, and immunisations. One medical team worked with local community health workers on a large-scale immunization patrol and immunized 3,200 people against Hepatitis B in Oro province.



OUR WORK IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

This year we have continued a number of programs in the area of 'community development'. Our **Village Food Security and Agriculture Programs** are continuing to operate and provide vital support to villages across the Oro Province. We are currently operating a large-scale seed multiplication nursery from Sariri Village in Oro Province which supplies the improved, robust strains of crops that we are distributing throughout the Province. The project involves the establishment of seed nurseries and training centres that grow and multiply improved and diverse strains of crops and train villagers in agricultural and planting techniques that will increase the likelihood of their gardens surviving through flooding periods. Training is conducted by our Project Officer – Elijah Sarigari - and focuses on techniques that are critical for successful agricultural production during flooding periods that many communities in Oro Province have not had to deal with until recent times. For example, digging drains to remove water from saturated soil and planting certain crops in mounds to raise their roots above the saturated soil. Importation of a greater diversity of more robust crops is also vital to improving the agricultural biodiversity of the region and improving food security for flood-prone communities



In the last 12 months, we have again responded to flooding in the Oro Province via our **Disaster Relief and Preparedness Program**. Oro Province was again hit by severe flooding in January 2013 and over 32,000 people were directly impacted by the floods. During this period, villagers' food gardens were submerged in water for up to two months and as a result villages struggled to access a sufficient supply of food, clean water, and health and hygiene support. This year we again partnered with the Red Cross PNG. KTF distributed rice and various crop seedlings and tubers whilst the Red Cross distributed clean water catching equipment and medical supplies to aid posts.



The past 18 months have also seen KTF embarking on an excited new initiative called **Lighting Up The Track**. Currently, only 7% of Papua New Guineans are connected to the electricity grid. The large majority of rural communities must rely on burning unhealthy campfires, dangerous and expensive kerosene, or living in total darkness. Over the past 18 months, we have distributed over 4,500 solar lights to every adult living along and around the Kokoda Track. These lights are waterproof, dustproof, and shockproof and last for 15 hours on half power and 8 hours on full power from a full day's solar charge. Their batteries are rechargeable and only need to be replaced every 2 to 3 years. The solar lights have had an extraordinary impact on the villagers' lives and livelihoods: children can do their homework after dark for the first time ever, mums and dads can work on small businesses, women are safer, and respiratory problems are reduced. We are now hoping to take the lights even further throughout the Oro and Central Provinces.



OUR WORK IN MICROBUSINESS

This year we have also continued our exciting **Pawa Givim Meri Project** and extended it to include a **Microlending Scheme**. Via these initiatives we are working with women's groups along and around the Kokoda Track and empowering them with the skills, confidence, and resources they need to establish successful microbusinesses. Via Pawa Givim Meri, we support women's groups to establish small catering businesses along the Track. The women participate in small business workshops, cooking classes, and literacy classes and are then supported to set up shop fronts from which they can sell snacks to passing trekkers. The project has seen many women along the Track earn regular incomes from their businesses; they are not yet ready to be upgraded to full catering services as the women only want to open their stalls when it suits them – not all year round.



After the success of our Lighting Up The Track and Pawa Givim Meri initiatives, this year we decided to pilot a new microlending scheme. Microlending and microfinance in PNG have traditionally been very unsuccessful. This is due to a range of reasons including the PNG wantok system, entrenched corruption and bribery, the mountainous terrain, and the low status of women. We decided to pilot a unique microlending scheme for PNG where we did not make loans of cash; but rather loaned boxes of solar lights to women's groups. The women's groups were trained in small business skills (such as basic accounting and record keeping, customer service, and setting profit margins) and were also trained in how to perform simple maintenance and repairs on the solar lights. They then sold their lights and services to members of their communities and surrounding villages. The women had to sell the lights at a profit and repay the original cost of the light to the Foundation. To date, 100% of the loans have been repaid to the Foundation and the project has been an enormous success.



KOKODA COLLEGE

This year we have also embarked on our most ambitious project to date: the creation and construction of the Kokoda College. The College will be a state-of-the-art training facility, based in Kou Kou Village, that will train urgently needed teachers and health workers for PNG. The College will operate a School of Education, that will train elementary teachers (1 year diploma) and primary teachers (2 year diploma) and a School of Health, that will train community health workers (2 year diploma).

Eight containers worth of pre-fabricated building materials have been shipped to PNG and will be on site ready for the large-scale build in October and November 2013. Teams of Australian and PNG volunteers will travel to Kou Kou village to construct the College. The College will be ready to open doors in February 2014.



TENKYU TRU!

All of this work has only been possible thanks to the generous support of our financial donors and in kind partners. On behalf of the board of the Kokoda Track Foundation and the communities along and around the Kokoda Track, may I extend a warm thank you for our generous support over the past year. You are creating long-lasting change and helping to improve the lives and futures of the descendants of the great Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels.



www.kokodatrackfoundation.org