

# Palms Australia

## Annual Report 2014-2015

# President's Report: Called to Solidarity with the Real

The last AGM in October 2014 saw the election of three new board members - Kristina Gunawan, Brendan Joyce, and Peter Smyth. Continuing on the Board from the previous triennium were myself and Ivapene Seiuli and of course our Executive Director Roger O'Halloran. I was humbled, honored and somewhat daunted to be given the role as the new President of the Board, taking over from Benjamin Oh. I would like to acknowledge and thank Benjamin for his guidance and hard work over the previous 3 years and for the gentleness and wisdom he brought to this organisation. His turn of phrase provided welcome inspiration many a time. Recent constitutional change was approved for three non-elected directors to be appointed to the Board, thus allowing Palms to encourage links with important church institutions that share our interest in solidarity volunteering. We are delighted to welcome Bishop Eugene Hurley, Prof. Marea Nicholson and Fr. Thomas McDonough. Hopefully as a new Board we can embrace the responsibility of helping to guide Palms Australia through potentially challenging years ahead staying true to our Vision and Mission.

It's **amazing what an organisation like ours can achieve** when a dedicated lot of 'actors' come together to **work for justice**, even with **very limited resources**. Whether it is about advancing gender equality through the promotion of women's leadership in Zambia, or the reduction of infant/maternal mortality in Timor Leste, or rebuilding hope through education and health support for children whose lives have been devastated by poverty, abuse, civil unrest and disease in South Africa - these are just some of the remarkable works that we have managed to advance together.

Firstly I would very much like to thank our workers at the 'coalface'. Palms participants are currently placed in Timor-Leste, Kiribati, South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand-Burma, and Samoa. Whether it is assisting refugee students with their English and academic skills on the Thai-Burma border, co-ordinating medical science research and teaching at a university in PNG or training and mentoring teachers in Timor-Leste, our group of committed volunteers are at the forefront of our vision of people cooperating across cultures in order to help achieve a just, sustainable, interdependent and peaceful world free of poverty. There is so much behind the scenes work that enables a Palms volunteer to get to their placements with the necessary skills and preparation and to remain out in the 'field' and we must thank Roger O'Halloran and his wonderful team at Palms headquarters for their tireless work and dedication to the cause. Palms is wonderfully blessed to have the staff, office volunteers and interns that we do. Finally I would like to thank our patrons, fellow directors, members, partners and especially our donors for their ongoing support and commitment, which ultimately enables all this good work to continue.



President Dr Antony Faa with his wife Elia at Palms' 2014 Solidarity Awards.

One new initiative for Palms this year was the organisation and promotion of a Round Table Discussion that was held at the Australian Catholic University on Friday 10th April 2015. The topic, *Global Volunteering: Enhancing mission and development programs*, brought together representatives from most of the Catholic Church organisations involved in overseas volunteering, aid and development for the first time and was an ambitious attempt to begin a 'whole of Church' approach to International Mission and Development Volunteering. Most participants reported finding the discussions very positive. One of the outcomes was a recommendation to develop a joint Charter of Principles for Volunteering and Immersions. Another positive was the establishment of a working group to take forward other possible areas of collaboration.

Richard Rohr is a Franciscan priest who writes a daily meditation that I have just started to follow. On Wednesday 26th August he wrote, "*An overly protected life – a life focused on thinking more than experiencing – does not know deeply or broadly. Jesus did not call us to the poor and to the pain only to be helpful; he called us to be in solidarity with the real and for our own transformation. It is often only after the fact we realize that they helped us in ways we never knew we needed. This is sometimes called 'reverse mission'. The ones we think we are 'saving' end up saving us, and in the process, redefine the very meaning of salvation.*". Palms volunteers do leave their "protected life" to "experience" life in "solidarity" with a "poor" community. I also know that many Palms volunteers come back from the field realising the truth of "reverse mission" – that their growth and own "transformation" has been far greater than what they expected, and this will greatly enrich their lives and flow onto their home communities. It is this vision of two communities involved in mutual formation through a Palms volunteer that continues to inspire, sustain and enthuse all of us who are involved with our unique organisation.

*Dr Antony Faa  
President*

# Director's Report: Cultivating Community Connections



Recent years have seen unsettled times for many efforts in international mission and development. It has been difficult to meet with budget expectations; however Palms' loss in financial year 2014-15 is less than in the two previous years. Given that our

donor base is small, government funding is unreliable and the alternative of drawing down on reserves is unsustainable, some years ago we began identifying paths to a balanced budget.

The 2012-13 financial year was bolstered still by Government funding that finished during that period. During 2013-14 we tested a number of streams of potential income and learnt much about effective means that were consistent with core business rather than taking our energies in other directions. While a lag in the expected outcomes of strategies means we did not achieve our target in 2014-15, strategic refinements and enormous efforts from staff started to produce results. It has been our best financial result in three years.

For 2015-16 we have been bold enough to shoot for a balanced budget. In particular a reconception of our CommUNITY Initiative as CommUNITY Connections is showing some **good signs of achieving the first objective of Palms Mission** as well as producing income. More focus is being given to **improving understanding in Australia of the objectives of volunteer requesting communities**. This is being led by existing supporters who realise the mutual benefits of building relationships between Australian and international communities

This model has been engaging Palms, *Friends and Partners with East Timor* in Brisbane and the Atabae community in Timor Leste for **over 12 years**. The relationship has assisted the placement of **seven volunteers**. In the ongoing dialogue about the ways to best achieve development outcomes sought by the people of Atabae, **relationships of understanding, acceptance and care have developed to enrich the lives of all**. It has taken a little reflection and mindfulness to appreciate how and why this has worked.

Palms Patron Gary Stone spoke of the importance of this relationship at the solidarity awards dinner in October 2014 and during Palms' field trip in June 2015 the people of Atabae highlighted the **relationship** as the **most encouraging element** of the engagement.

It was this that encouraged Palms to ask returned volunteers and current donors to invite their friends, family and Australian communities to gatherings where we could introduce them to communities currently requesting volunteer assistance. It is clear that much will be gained in future years by engaging more returnee and donor communities, as well as assisting new volunteers and Encounter participants to facilitate similar community gatherings.

In 2014-15 a significant effort from our staff has been needed to start building a network of other agencies and congregations within the Catholic Church. If successful it also will assist to recruit, prepare and send more volunteers to meet the many requests we get from overseas communities and may ultimately assist us to become eligible for taking out a future government contract. Despite Palms volunteer placement costs being just a little over a third of the cost of the those in Government's volunteer program our engagement with AusAID three years ago was essentially terminated because they believed it was not cost effective for them to partner a small agency.

The attention given to this mission and development network has drawn efforts away from recruitment of volunteers in the short-term and as such the numbers of volunteers sent to support requesting communities has dropped. We hope this is only some short-term pain to achieve long-term gain. The continuing conversation will require more workshops and meetings, but if the result is more communities realising the benefit of volunteer assistance in their programs and potentially influencing the Australian volunteer program to higher order values it will be very worthwhile.

The staff have not only given big efforts in the past year they have brought a great balance of tremendous experience and clever approaches to achieving the strategies. It is as small a number of employees as we have ever had, but with increased contributions from interns and office volunteers it has been a period of coordinated effort and achievement like never before. As we press forward with our mission we will bring more of the Palms growing network into fully participating in our vision of *"people cooperating across cultures in order to achieve a just, sustainable, interdependent and peaceful world free of poverty."*

Thanks for the support of all, especially the international volunteers at the heart of our witness to such a world. May the spirit that binds us continue to bring Palms network into even more effective cooperation in 2015-16.

*Roger O'Halloran*  
*Executive Director*

# Palms Australia Volunteer Placements

## July 2014-June 2015

During July 2014 – June 2015 Palms Australia has supported **29 volunteer placements**, 14 in education, 9 in Administration/Finance/Community Development and 6 in Health. Delivering **6,384 days** of service to **21 partner organisations and communities** across Timor-Leste, Thailand, Kiribati, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Zambia, Ethiopia, Kenya & South Africa.

### ***Increasing Educational Access and Opportunities***



**Fourteen volunteer teachers over 3,237 days have focused on and achieved:**

- Increased knowledge and understanding of teaching pedagogy; curriculum development and implementation
- Development of library resources and increased access
- Tutoring tertiary students at Masters, Bachelor and Diploma levels of education
- Providing vocational support and training of teachers and students in electrical education

Sam Haddin (Palms volunteer in Bedois, Timor Leste) with *Escola Primaria* students

For the last 20 months Sam Haddin and Guida Cabrita have been providing professional support for teachers and students across two catholic primary schools in Bedois and Sabracalaran. With the introduction of a newly developed 'activity based' Ministry of Education curriculum, Sam and Guida's knowledge and expertise have been well utilised and has provided a very good foundation for Timorese teachers to continue to build skills and knowledge across these two schools.

*"Guida and Sam help to prepare the teachers for the new curriculum. They have both adjusted to our culture very well, and can now speak tetun. They help our schools very much and are very respectful of our culture.."*

*Fr Alberty  
Parish Priest of Bedois*

## *Health Care Delivery and Health Worker Training*

### **Six volunteer health placements over 1,097 days in Zambia, PNG, South Africa & Ethiopia have focused on and achieved:**

- On the job training and tutoring of health practitioners in hospitals; universities; care centres; and rural clinics (Zambia; PNG; South Africa & Ethiopia)
- Increasing awareness through the development and delivery of health/education projects across all volunteer placements.
- Development of outreach services to provide support for children going from care back to their families.
- Providing managerial/institutional support and capacity building in clinic care and management.

Sr Matilda Mubanga (National Health Coordinator) “...Dr Yates has imparted medical skills not only to our small staff at Cardinal Adam Memorial Hospital but as well to the various Catholic health institutions and government Medical University. Dr Yates contributed to healthy communities through promotion of preventative medicine (eg. Malaria prevention in Chikuni Rural Health Centre). This knowledge and awareness has contributed to rural farmers being healthier and therefore more productive and better able to support their families. He also helped prevent many maternal deaths by being able to perform caesarean operations. His work will remain valuable to the recipients of the gift of life brought in through his surgical skills. Dr Yates will also be remembered as a promoter of healthy environments as well as passionate bird watcher!”

Dr Stephen Yates with colleagues and students at the University Teaching Hospital – Lusaka, Zambia



*“My work is divided between Cardinal Adam Hospital, Lusaka, working in the Emergency Department of the National Hospital, and teaching 4th Year Medical Students at The University of Zambia. The weeks are very full! Every few weeks I travel 4 hours out of Lusaka to help out at the 100 bed hospital in Chikuni, a Catholic Mission station. I spend a week there, mainly helping in the wards, as well as providing some teaching and supervision to junior staff.”*

*Dr Stephen Yates, Palms Volunteer*

## ***Building Individual & Organisational Capacity***



Esther Sim providing on the job support and training in financial management (MYOB) for OHM staff member Mana Dina in Maliana, Timor Leste.

**Nine volunteer placements providing 1,869 hours of training and mentoring to assist building individual and organisational capacity in administration, finance and community development programs. Volunteers in Zambia, Timor Leste & Kiribati through their work with diocesan and NGO staff have achieved:**

- Implementation of systems & processes for financial management (accounting systems and software training).
- HR and business management for income generating projects.
- Implemented and increased knowledge in technology use.
- Development of policy and procedures.
- Sustainable strategic planning processes, inclusive of gender awareness.
- Improvement of overall program reporting and monitoring & evaluation

Esther Sim and Paul Tan have been working across two placements for eighteen months: the Diocese of Maliana and Organisation Haburas Moris. In both organisations they have collaboratively established systems and processes for financial management (set up accounting systems and introduced and provided training in accounting software), HR, guest house and project/business Management.

*"Esther and Paul have helped the Diocesan staff of Maliana to set up a good system in management, procedures, policies and training us in MYOB. They are really a blessing for Diocese of Maliana. ."*

*Fr Norberto Soares  
Treasurer  
Diocese of Maliana*

# Community Engagement

## July 2014-June 2015

### Palms 3rd Solidarity Awards : Palms Orientation 2015

#### *Love, Peace and SOLIDARITY*

Palms' 3rd Annual Solidarity Awards Dinner was held on Saturday 11th October 2014 at Australian Catholic University, Strathfield. The Solidarity Choir set the tone perfectly for a great celebration of the positive work and contributions of the many affiliates of Palms Australia. On the theme of Love, Peace and Solidarity, our speakers, Deacon Gary Stone and Hajji Maha Krayem Abdo invited and challenged guests on the true meaning of loving one's neighbour, giving inspiring examples of the great potential for transformation through the integration of mission and development they each had experienced in their own work.

SOLIDARITY! A rousing welcome by the Solidarity Choir



#### The 2014 Solidarity Award Winners

Roy Boylan Award:	Helena Charlesworth
Damian Keane Award	Colleen Malone
Cyril Hally Award:	Dr Paul & Bridgette Barrett
Community Engagement Award:	Pollyanna Forshaw
Development through Relationship Award:	Columban Mission Institute and Edmund Rice Pacific Calling
Donor Contribution Award:	Anonymous by request

On a clear spring evening the ACU's spacious grounds and architecture lent a certain gravitas to the occasion which still had room for fun cross-cultural games and an auction of artefacts, contrasting neatly with the formalities. Another successful engagement of the Palms family which raised approx. \$6000 after expenses.

Hartzer Park in the NSW Southern Highlands hosted Palms' 96th Orientation course from January 9th to 17th, 2015. This year the course attracted 11 participants who had travelled from SA, QLD, Northern NSW and Papua New Guinea.

As with all Orientations, the much familiar sessions devoted to cross-cultural engagement, language, personality, health and security still allowed discussion and workshops to develop in unique and exciting ways. The Palms staff became just as much participants in an organic, interactive process, producing unpredictable but positive outcomes.

Palms intern, **Liesje Barratt** gives thanks to those who contributed: *"Without the help of our excellent presenters, returned volunteers and Father Jack, all who gave freely of their time, this course would not be possible. I know our participants found all their sessions informative and entertaining, in particular Graeme Mundine's session on Indigenous Perspectives. Father Jack's warmth, kindness and humour and the amazing food provided by the OLSH Sisters who live at Hartzer Park all helped to nourish our bodies and our souls."*

This year's Orientation produced four field placements (Samoa and Timor Leste) with a number still discerning. Its success can also be attributed to the event's venue and timing. The facilities and accommodation at Hartzer Park were most comfortable and suitable for Palms' needs; the grounds providing space for the group to bond in recreation as well as quiet areas of reflection; and the Southern Highlands location also meant temperatures were mild and cool, especially for January.

#### Palms Encounters

This year saw four Encounter groups visiting Palms volunteers and partners in Timor Leste, beginning in July 2014 with a group of teachers organised by the Catholic Education Office and led by Roger O'Halloran. Other trips followed in September and April, then our May Encounter again hosted 8 undergraduates as part of their Development Studies with Australian Catholic University. Response and feedback to the Encounter program is overwhelmingly positive -and quite encouraging- as one participant writes:

*'The Encounter was a life changing experience for me. It reaffirmed my commitment to go and volunteer for a longer time. ...In Atabae and Maliana it was wonderful to meet children and families and the volunteers from Palms. Our little holiday on Atauro was a wonderful way to start the trip and Barry was inspirational! Loved Timor Leste!! Would love to lead an Encounter in years to come after spending volunteer time there.'*

Palms Encounters would not be possible without the support of our partners and volunteers. Special thanks are also due to the inspirational Barry and returned volunteer guides June, Pollyanna and Marilyn.

# SUMMARISED FINANCIAL REPORT 2014-2015

## PALMS AUSTRALIA (A Company limited by guarantee)

### Board Information

The names and details of Board Members in office during the financial year and until the date of this report are as follows.

Name	Date of Appointment	Qualification	Experience
Antony Giles Faa (President)	11 October 2014	BMedSc., MBBS.,	Senior Medical Officer at Warwick Hospital, and former Palms' volunteer in Manus Province Papua New Guinea (PNG) where Antony was one of two doctors responsible for the care of 32,000 people
Roger O'Halloran	27 November 2001	B. Arts, Grad. Dip. Ed., M. Ed.	Executive Director at Palms Australia, and former Palms' volunteer in Western Samoa
Kristina Gunawan (Treasurer)	11 October 2014	CPA	CPA accountant with extensive financial and management experience, and former Palms' volunteer in East Timor
Peter Smyth	11 October 2014	Lawyer	Lawyer and former Palms' volunteer as legal counsel to Divine Word University in Madang, PNG
Bishop Eugene Hurley	11 October 2014	Commission Committee, Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference	Bishop, Port Pirie Diocese 1998-2007 Bishop, Darwin Diocese 2007-
Prof Marea Nicholson	11 October 2014	Dip Teach; Grad Dip Ed St; BA; M Ed; PhD	Associate Vice Chancellor, Australian Catholic University
Brendan Joyce	11 October 2014	BSc; Grad Dip Ed; Grad Cert RE; M. Int Soc Dev.	Global Education Advisor NSW/ACT for Caritas Australia, former Palms' volunteer in Bougainville, PNG.
Ivapene Seiuli	22 October 2011	B Soc. Work, M. Int Soc Dev.	Two years working with AusAID in Samoa, continued her relationship with Palms Australia, as In-Country Manager of Palms volunteers in Papua New Guinea from 2007 – 2010, based in Port Moresby, Goroka and Alotau
Rev Thomas McDonough CP	13 February 2015	Council, Yarra Theological Union; VP Catholic Religious Australia	Passionists Provincial Superior, Holy Spirit Province; and the Vice President of the Catholic Religious Australia National Council

For a copy of the full financial report for the year ending 30th June 2015 please contact Palms Australia on +612 9518 9551.

# Financial Statement

**PALMS AUSTRALIA**  
**OPERATING STATEMENT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2015**

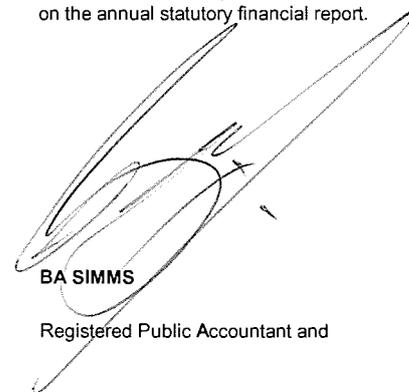
<u>REVENUE</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Palms Donations and Gifts	212,978	222,228
Grants		
Other Australian	57,920	78,500
Investment Income	26,777	33,058
Other Income	<u>154,422</u>	<u>144,333</u>
<b><u>TOTAL REVENUE</u></b>	<b><u>452,097</u></b>	<b><u>478,119</u></b>
<u>DISBURSEMENTS</u>		
Palms Overseas Programme	415,515	485,589
Palms Community Education	78,930	45,586
Domestic Programs Expenditure	<u>29,596</u>	<u>51,638</u>
<b><u>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</u></b>	<b><u>524,041</u></b>	<b><u>582,813</u></b>
Disbursements over Revenue	(71,945)	(104,693)
Reserve - Unrealised Gain on Investments	9,415	8,321
Funds available for future use at the beginning of Financial Year	<u>873,324</u>	<u>978,018</u>
<b><u>FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR FUTURE USE AT THE END OF FINANCIAL YEAR</u></b>	<b><u>810,794</u></b>	<b><u>881,645</u></b>

**Independent Audit Report**

To the members of  
PALMS AUSTRALIA  
**Scope**  
I have audited the summarised financial report of PALMS for the year ended 30th June 2015 in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards.

**Audit Opinion**

In my opinion the information reported in the summarised financial report is consistent with the annual statutory financial report from which it is derived and upon which I expressed an unqualified audit opinion in my report to the members dated 3rd September 2015. For a better understanding of the scope of my audit this report should be read in conjunction with my audit report on the annual statutory financial report.



**BA SIMMS**

Registered Public Accountant and

Company Auditor  
02 9874 1697

SYDNEY  
3-Sep-15

*Full financial audited statements are available upon request*

\* There have been few expenditures by Palms to secure donations. Public donor support for Palms has come through awareness raised in conjunction with volunteer recruitment and community education, or appeals where costs were borne by other organisations.

**- PALMS AUSTRALIA**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**AS AT 30 JUNE, 2015**

<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Cash	61,769	79,961
Investments	818,686	806,642
Property Plant & Equipment	13,993	17,190
Other Debtors	30,730	12,700
Prepayments	5,787	55,660
Other	<u>1,898</u>	<u>7,659</u>
<b><u>TOTAL ASSETS</u></b>	<b><u>932,862</u></b>	<b><u>979,812</u></b>
<u>LIABILITIES</u>		
Trade and other payables	19,788	16,509
Revenue Received In Advance	23,000	0
Provisions	<u>79,279</u>	<u>81,658</u>
<b><u>TOTAL LIABILITIES</u></b>	<b><u>122,068</u></b>	<b><u>98,167</u></b>
<b><u>NET ASSETS</u></b>	<b><u>810,794</u></b>	<b><u>881,645</u></b>
<u>EQUITY</u>	<b><u>810,794</u></b>	<b><u>881,645</u></b>

**PALMS AUSTRALIA**

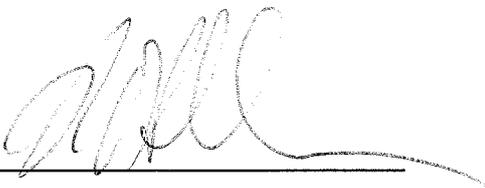
**(A Company limited by guarantee)**

**BOARD DECLARATION**

In accordance with a resolution of the Directors of Palms Australia the Board declares that:

- 1 In the opinion of the Board:
  - (a) The financial statements and notes of Palms Australia have been prepared in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001; and
  - (b) Giving a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30th June 2015 and of its performance for the year ended on that date;
  - (c) Complying with Accounting Standards and Corporations Act 2001, the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991, and the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct.
- 2 There are reasonable grounds to believe that Palms Australia will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

On behalf of the Board



Roger O'Halloran  
Executive Director



Brendan Joyce  
Director

Sydney  
03-Sep-15



**Palms Australia**

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AUSTRALIA

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ABN: 33 001 882 337



**Palms Australia** is a public company (ACN 001 882 337) limited by guarantee whose legal structure is voluntary, not-for-profit and non-government. We are committed to living up to our values in all that we do. We value honest feedback, or any critique you might have about the way our team have implemented the Palms program.

If necessary our Executive Director or President can be contacted in confidence, using our secure web form located at <http://www.palms.org.au/about/contact-us/>.