



Newsletter No. 17

November 2014

Welcome to the latest news from Bamboo. A great deal has been happening over the past few months, since the last edition. We hope you find this newsletter of interest.

Conference in Bandung West Java

The Directors have, for some time, wanted to arrange a meeting of our partners in Indonesia and as many Directors from Australia as were able to travel. After much advance planning, this took place on the 17th and 18th of October and was attended by representatives from all three of our partner organisations, both of our official representatives from all three of our partner organisations, both of our official representatives in Indonesia, Colin Singer and Duncan Graham, as well as the Chair of Bamboo Peter Johnston, Vice Chair Adam Peaty and Director Bob Dannatt from Perth.

This was the first occasion that the partners had all met together and the event was a resounding success. Many issues were explored, ideas, exchanged and changes proposed. The two day "conference" (as we now call it) was an outstanding success as far as we were all concerned and we decided to have another in about 18 months. Our major objective was to ensure that, where possible, we would all operate in as similar ways we could. In fact, it became clear that there were differences and usually these differences were because of local issues, which we respect. We were able to explain the Policies Bamboo developed, while our partners told us about local issues they dealt with. We all left feeling we were working well together and that we understood each other better, although we all took away some matters we needed to think about; this is the essence of working in partnership.

A word of thanks is due to Helen Lok for organising morning and afternoon tea, coffee and lunches and to Erlinawati Graham for translating while Dr Ong of Geoservices kindly allowed us the use of his house.

As is usual, the Directors paid for their own travel and accommodation. It is not our policy to pay for these expenses from Bamboo funds, all of which are donated.

"It's not a handout, It's a hand up"



Participants at the Bandung Conference October 2014

Tax Deductibility

Our application has been submitted and we now await a positive outcome to the approval process, hoping that it will not take too long. We feel that our application is a good one and that we have presented a sound proposal, but both the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Australian Tax Office have to approve it.

Annual General Meeting

You have received your invitation to attend Bamboo's AGM, which will be held on the 25th of November at 7pm. The venue is 35 Hay Street Subiaco and we hope that many members and supporters will be able to come. Thank you to those who have registered apologies and proxies.

Fundraising Supporters

Given that Bamboo depends on getting donations to carry on its micro credit work, the Directors agreed that we needed a group of supporters to take on this essential work. We have been very fortunate that two of our supporters Clare O'Connor and Nathan Dyson have agreed to form the nucleus of a fundraising group and Peter Johnston will be the Director representative on the group. Clare (an accountant) and her family

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Bamboo Micro Credit

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spent over 3 years in Indonesia and she is enrolled in post graduate studies at the University of New England in Indonesian Language, while Nathan graduated from Murdoch University in Asian Studies, with a Major in Indonesian Language. He will be pursuing his studies at UWA next year

We have met once already and some good ideas have been generated, so you can expect to hear about how we think we can generate additional funds for Bamboo. We would especially appreciate any suggestions from our supporters and would also like to hear from anyone who would like to join the group.

Email oztrack@gmail.com if you are interested.

Bamboo Board of Directors

After 5 years as a Director, Wayne Geddes has decided to step down from the Board.

Wayne's contribution to the Board has been significant and he brought to the position his considerable experience in small business. As one director said, he also brought his delightful sense of humour to Board meetings, which we greatly appreciated. We thank him for his involvement and wish him well in his retirement from Bamboo.

We welcome Rachel Wilson as a Director at Bamboo. Despite being a Director of the Subiaco based Accountancy firm MSquared and specializing in taxation matters, often involving overseas travel, Rachel has found time to take the lead in completing our application for tax deductibility, as well as other tasks. Her connections with the ATO will, we hope, prove useful. She grew up in Singapore and attended school there, which has helped her in negotiations with Asian firms and encouraged her interest in Indonesia.

Partner Profile

PESAT was established in 1992, with the objective of providing clean water and sanitation to villages in the hills around Bandung in West Java. Since then, PESAT has installed water systems into many villages in the area.

Installing clean water systems to villages involves more than the physical work involved, PESAT has had to connect with the villagers and help them to understand that they had to take responsibility for not only the installation, but also the ongoing maintenance of the system, especially the electrically managed pumping system and the costs involved. This involved developing and maintaining relationships with the villagers, particularly about financial matters.

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PESAT managed a small micro finance operation alongside its main operation, as they recognised its value to the villagers. The relationships they built underpinned management of the funds.

In 2012, while in Bandung, Peter Johnston was contacted by Helen Lok, one of the founders of PESAT, suggesting we may be able to cooperate in expanding their micro credit program. This approach was well timed, as our previous arrangements had recently broken down and we were about to withdraw from Bandung.

I called her immediately I got her email, arranged to meet her and other members of their Board the following day, which I did. I also met with their Executive Director Krishnan Muhamad and we found that we had much to offer each other. This approach and meeting was well timed, as I was scheduled to leave Indonesia the next day, but our discussions were so fruitful that we were able to continue to discuss forming a partnership over the course of that year. PESAT now has a thriving micro credit program which Bamboo funds, involving currently 19 borrowers and loans totalling Rp IDR 60 Million (AUD \$ 6,000), with great potential for expansion, given their connection with over 20 villagers where they have completed a water installation.

Bamboo Micro Credit (Inc)
www.bamboomicrocredit.org.au

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