

PiCCA funds classroom in Nepal

On 5 June, PiCCA Members voted to provide \$10,000 funding to build a multi-purpose classroom in Tawal, Nepal. Tawal is located in central Nepal and is only 20km away from the epicentre of the devastating earthquake which struck in April 2015. The original school and all the houses in the village were destroyed.

PiCCA is partnering with the Hilly Region Development Club (HRDC), a local volunteer organisation that manages development in the Tawal area, and the Nepal Australia Friendship Association (NAFA) which has done outstanding development work in Nepal for 25 years. NAFA has strong relationships with HRDC. A photo of Kanchha Tamang, HRDC President, is on page 2 of this newsletter.

The Tawal community has placed a very high priority on replacing the school, which services Tawal and surrounding villages. There are 430 students at the school from nursery to Grade 10 who currently are being taught in makeshift accommodation and tents which are completely unsuitable for long term use, and especially problematic during the monsoon season.

The new classroom will be used as a computer room and science lab. It will also serve as a meeting room for the local community.

PiCCA is proud to be involved with this project.

“This project is part of broader efforts to rebuild the whole school, and other schools and infrastructure destroyed in the earthquake. All of the new classrooms will be earthquake resistant and be protected from landslide by a gabion wall currently being built.”

*- Rod Setterlund
President, NAFA*



Tawal School before the earthquake

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Message from Kanchha post earthquake: “Before earthquake our Tawal village it was, now only in memory. Makes me sad to type it.” Photo taken in destroyed classroom.

Tawal

Getting to Tawal from Kathmandu is an adventure for visitors. There’s a road trip lasting 3+ hours on a highway/part goat track, followed by 4 hours on a 4 wheel drive track that would challenge Bear Grylls, followed by a 3 to 4 hour hike uphill (Nepali flat, the locals like to joke).

The people of Tawal originally came from Tibet about 400 years ago. They are predominantly Buddhist with Christian and Hindu minorities. Most of the 1,000 villagers (and 2,000 nearby locals) are subsistence farmers but the village has big plans to develop commercial cultivation through a cooperative. This project began recently but all the village’s infrastructure was destroyed in the earthquake (including a recently built micro-hydro scheme).

Despite these crushing setbacks, people are rebuilding and looking to the future.

Beans growing in Swaziland

PiCCA’s project in Swaziland is making good progress. Ruldoph Mazaya from AMICAALL, our partner in Swaziland, has let us know that the caretaker is on-site, all the available fencing material has been installed on the farm, a borehole has been dug, and a proportion of land has been ploughed and beans have been planted.

The food produced on the farm will be used to feed up to 4,000 vulnerable children through 49 Social Centres which provide at least one meal a day and early childhood care and development. Some food will also be sold commercially to sustain the farm into the future.

Work still to be done includes completing the fencing and installing an irrigation system. Planting maize (corn) which is the staple food for locals has not been feasible to date because of the drought in southern Africa.



PiCCA’s 2016 AGM

PiCCA’s Annual General Meeting was held on 5 June. In brief, the main outcomes were:

The existing Directors – Stephanie Bolde-man, Warren McMillan, Steve Maguire and Tiziana Miceli were reappointed for a two year term.

The Chair’s report included an update of PiCCA’s projects, governance and future directions.

The Treasurer’s report included details of donations raised, membership fees, and funds allocated to projects.

Grant Thornton’s statement of PiCCA’s audited accounts were accepted.

More information available from PiCCA, see contact information on the final page of this newsletter.

The Congo

PiCCA Directors Stephanie Boldeman and Steve Maguire recently met with Pastor Constantin Mukendi, founder of the AusCongo Network, a Brisbane based NGO which supports development work in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

It was decided that executive members of both organisations would meet to exchange expertise and knowledge. More information about AusCongo Network is at

<http://www.auscongo.org/>

Thank you

PiCCA would like to acknowledge the Year 10 Business students at Lutheran Good Shepherd College, Noosaville who, for the second year in a row, donated the proceeds from their business development assignment to PiCCA (\$234). Thanks also to the Head of Humanities at the school, Mrs Emma Kleinberg.



Better than MasterChef ... cooking in Manna

Hear the women of Manna

PiCCA's project in Sri Lanka is helping women-headed households to move out of grinding poverty through a commercial catering social enterprise. Hear directly from these women by clicking on [this](#) link.

While the women are busy building up the business from a temporary base in the village of Manthai West, plans to construct and outfit a permanent commercial kitchen are well underway. Business plans, land use approvals, architect designs, and costings for the build have all been finalised.

PiCCA is helping our Sri Lankan partner, Bridging Lanka, to seek funding to progress to the next stage which involves building and outfitting a commercial kitchen. If you know anyone who may be interested in supporting this activity, please contact PiCCA's Secretary Steve Maguire on 0458 799129.

Meet PiCCA Member

Helen Atkinson



I had the privilege of growing up in the beautiful surroundings of northern Tasmania. However I always wanted to explore what life in other places was like and lived in Melbourne, and Perth before moving to Queensland where I have lived and worked in several regional cities, but mostly in Brisbane. I love all the capital city has to offer. I also had a couple of years living in Malaysia, which provided an opportunity for new experiences, wonderful food and plenty of travel in that part of the world.

I studied Early Childhood Education at QUT and went on to postgraduate studies to include Management. I am passionate about supporting families, with a focus on strategies that provide children with the support they need to reach their full potential. I've worked as a service provider, a teacher of children, a manager of non-government organisations, and had a long career in government.

Since living in Malaysia I have not taken our way of life in Australia and all the opportunities we have available to us for granted for one single day. The experience has inspired me to always try and overcome obstacles taking one step at a time, and to believe small actions can make a big difference.

I am inspired by some wonderful people I have met along the way and that is what has led me to PICCA. I love the idea that when good people come together and work toward a common goal it is amazing what can be achieved, and I think the projects PICCA has supported demonstrate that.

Since retiring from the paid workforce, I have become a member of Soroptomists International. It has a focus of empowering women and girls and implements some amazing projects to achieve this, all over the world. I volunteer as a Hospital Based Visitor, and enjoy the opportunity to support and share time with patients who are in hospital for a long time but have family too far away to visit often.

Contact Us

Give us a call or drop us a line if you'd like more information about any of PiCCA's activities.

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