



NEWS

In this edition...

PiCCA's new project
Project updates
PiCCA friend receives an Order of Australia
Benefits of clean cooking stoves

Welcome PiCCA supporters

At the start of 2020, PiCCA was planning its year like any other. PiCCA personnel were planning visits to Vietnam to check in on the final stages of the chicken raising project with partners, Hearts for Hue and to Cambodia to assess the potential for a new partnership project there. As usual, we had submitted our books to our auditor in preparation for our Annual General Meeting.

Then came Covid19. Trips cancelled, plans changed, and the Annual General Meeting held on-line. These are insignificant matters in the face of the devastation that the virus has wrought, and is still yet to unleash, across the globe. 23 million cases, close to a million dead and the worst of it yet to come before things get better. The catastrophe is also undoing years of development gains. In June, the World Bank estimated that the Covid related economic contraction is pushing between 71 and 100 million additional people into extreme poverty (measured at the international poverty line of \$1.90 per day).

As daunting and traumatic as it all is, we at PiCCA think it is useful to focus on the things we can do, rather than surrender to despair in the face of all the things we cannot. Since its inception PiCCA has chosen to focus on small and practical projects that make a positive difference in health, education, livelihood, women's safety or food security outcomes in the communities where we work. PiCCA has done this together with like-minded partners in those communities. That is what PiCCA is continuing to do.

PiCCA has near completion projects in partnership with communities in Bangladesh, Bougainville and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Our 2020 project promoting hygiene and sanitation in Quang Nham is about to be launched with partners Hearts for Hue in Vietnam and there are already a number of potential new partnerships in our pipeline for 2021 and beyond. Much of our work for the time being will be negotiated online but it will carry on.

To our members, donors, partners and supporters, thank you so much for your inspiration, resilience and goodwill. In challenging times, please stay safe and strong.

Announcing PiCCA's 2020 project

COVID-19 has meant that a proposal to examine a potential partnership project in Cambodia could not be progressed this year. PiCCA members agreed to revisit that possibility next year. In the meantime, members supported the idea of working with an existing PiCCA partner.

PiCCA is pleased to announce that we will be again be working in partnership with Hearts for Hue in 2020. Our new project in Vietnam is to be called Promoting Hygiene and Sanitation in Quang Nham Commune. Quang Nham is a mountainous area 75 km from Hue city. About 4,500 people live there with 97 percent from minority TaOi and Paco ethnic communities. Approximately half of all households are living in poverty and 64 percent use makeshift latrines, like those below, (or have none at all) which cause health and environmental problems. In particular poor sanitation and hygiene have led to high incidences of preventable diseases which undermine other attempts to improve health and economic development.

The project will construct 15 toilets and shower systems and supporting septic tanks for some of the poorest families in Quang Nham. The families will be trained and assisted to construct the facilities offering a skills development component as well as ownership of the project work. In addition, 50 women and men will be trained to deliver sanitation and hygiene training to local children on an ongoing basis. It is hoped this will help in the immediate campaign to restrict the spread of Covid19 as well as enhance the long-term health of the entire community.

PiCCA's contribution to the project will be AUD \$15,000.



Updates on current projects



Vietnam

In 2018, PiCCA initiated a chicken farming project in partnership with Hearts for Hue (H4H) in Vinh Phu, Vietnam. The project aimed to improve the living standards of people with disability by providing support and training in developing chicken farming businesses.

As reported in our last newsletter, the project was completed earlier this year. We have been in touch subsequently with H4H to discuss a potential new project together (see item above) and to check on the

safety of the community. H4H advise that social distancing, hygiene, hand washing, contact tracing and other measures familiar to us all are in place in a number of areas. In Hue all meetings of over 20 people have been cancelled. Happily, all participants in the Vinh Phu chicken program are reported safe.

Congo



In the same year (2018), PiCCA and partners Kyeema Foundation and AusCongo began a chicken vaccination program in Mbuji Mayi in the Kaisai-Oriental province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A series of vaccination campaigns have been rolled out since with local vaccinators delivering an ever-increasing sphere of protection for village chickens against the devastation of Newcastle disease. This has enhanced both income and food supply for local farmers and their families.

We have just received word that a solar fridge purchased with a donation to PiCCA from travel specialist Encompass Africa has now been installed. It has been a long and

complicated journey to get the fridge on site but now that it is there, vaccines can be kept locally, reducing the need to make the 1000 km journey to and from Kinshasa where the vaccinations are produced.

The Kyeema Foundation has told us they have found funding to support further vaccinations rounds for another year.

The plan is that with the supply of vaccines now assured for a while, the vaccinators who have been trained under the original project will actualise a sustainable business model, charging small fees for their service, the profits from which will be used to maintain the supply of vaccines and to continue the program into the future.



Bangladesh

A new dental service and eye clinic in the heart of Dhaka have been established, thanks to PiCCA and partner Symbiosis Foundation. Symbiosis was in the process of organising a new driver training service, with PiCCA funding, when COVID hit. Services had to be suspended during lockdowns, which have now been eased. Unfortunately, the country has also had the worst flooding in a decade. Symbiosis are doing their best to look after their staff, volunteers and beneficiaries in these difficult circumstances.



Bougainville

While cases are rising in PNG, the Hako Women's Collective report that, as yet, they have not had any cases of COVID in Haku, at the northern tip of Bougainville. Fortunately, they have been able to continue many services, including the PiCCA-funded rice mill, as well as domestic and family violence services. Local government elections are being held right now and some of the women have been employed as election monitors.



COVID-19 in PiCCA partner countries
as at 22/8/20

Country	No. Cases	Population	%age Cases
Bangladesh	292,625	164,689,383	0.1777%
Viet Nam	1,014	98,338,579	0.0010%
Democratic Republic of Congo	9,811	89,561,403	0.0109%
Nepal	31,117	29,136,508	0.1068%
Papua New Guinea	361	8,947,024	0.0040%
Eswatini (formerly Swaziland)	4,189	1,160,164	0.3611%

PiCCA friend receives an Order of Australia



PiCCA offers heartfelt congratulations to Marilyn Havini AM, for receiving an Order of Australia award in June for her significant services to the international communities of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville.

PiCCA is proud to have worked with Marilyn and the rest of the Hako Women's Collective

(HWC) in Bougainville over the last 3 years.

Marilyn is an indefatigable supporter of the people of Bougainville where she has lived on and off for more than 40 years. She was a foundation member of HWC which is now the preeminent non-government organisation in North Buka.

HWC works on multiple fronts to support the community, including training on parenting, human rights, disability, agricultural skills and more. It provides direct services in the areas of domestic violence prevention, library services, food security, rice milling, office supplies and a canteen. HWC is an advocate for women's leadership and participation in all aspects of life in Bougainville. It has also worked to support participation in elections and the recent independence referendum.

There is so much to Marilyn's story: a cross-cultural romance and marriage to the late Moses Havini (a much loved Bougainville leader), living in the village, being adopted into the Nakas Clan, the Bougainville war, advocating for peace, documenting human rights abuses, designing the Bougainville flag, and much more.

Benefits of clean cooking stoves

Did you know the use of open fires and solid fuels for cooking causes nearly 4 million premature deaths per year? Women and children are disproportionately affected. The health, environmental and financial impacts are frightening.

PiCCA has been thinking about these issues recently and are fortunate to have 3 members who have experience in clean cooking stove projects.

Tony Blake was exploring small business opportunities for semi-retirement when he went to the Canton Export Fair in Guangzhou in 2012. "I came across a stand selling biomass stoves. I had never heard of a rocket stove before. They can be used recreationally, and

they're big business in the USA for 'preppers', but the core purpose behind the technology is to offer better alternatives to open fire cooking."



Clean cookstoves are a relatively simple and cost-effective intervention. "Many people think that electricity and/or LPG are the solutions but there are still over 800 million people worldwide without access to electricity. Electricity is impractical in many places and where it is available it is often unreliable and unaffordable," says Tony. "And over 40% of the world population that has access to LPG cannot afford it."

There are many different cookstoves, including biomass and solar models, as well as stoves built from local clay, sand and cement. The latter option was successfully used by the

Nepal Australia Friendship Association in the remote Hilly Region in Nepal. Expert Nepali trainers travelled from Kathmandu to the region to skill locals in making the stoves from easy-to-access materials.

NAFA President and PiCCA member, Rod Setterlund OAM, explains "The local community were really concerned about the amount of wood they were using for open fire cooking. It's usually the women who collect firewood, and they were having to go deeper in the jungle. They were worried about their safety too, particularly if they fell or encountered a big cat." It was important to get the design right, to suit the local materials and the way meals are cooked.



"We were really pleased to hear the users of the improved cooking stoves say they needed 30-50% less wood and were spending less time cooking," said NAFA's Evaluation Officer, Dr Deb Setterlund OAM. "They also liked that there was a chimney to take smoke out of their house and they felt their health was better." The risk of burns was also significantly lower.





Tony, Rod and Deb agreed that training is very important, preferably with the cooks, to help them adjust and glean all the intended benefits. Deb said "Even after the initial training, people had follow-up questions, so we realised households need ongoing support. We also found it was important to offer some incentive for the people promoting and installing the stoves, to encourage more households to change."

Tony worked with the Secretariat of Pacific Community office in Fiji, implementing cookstove trials in Kiribati and Tuvalu. From his experiences there, Tony says "The most

important factor is ownership by the participating group. There's little point having good intentions and 'telling' people what they need. The stoves also have to be affordable. I've seen projects fail if the stoves are free or heavily subsidised. If people pay for their stove, there's more tendency to use it."

Tony is now a member of the International Standards Organisation Technical Committee for clean cooking and pre-COVID-19 travelled to many symposia around the world. "All of these meetings have given me the opportunity to meet some amazing people doing amazing things, and they form a great worldwide network of knowledge and resources."

PiCCA is currently exploring the possibility of a cookstove project in Bougainville. Tony sent some 'demonstrator' models to Haku for the women to test, and so far the response is 'we love them!'



The PiCCA philosophy

Supporting locally-driven and locally-managed projects in less-developed countries overseas, projects that are addressing issues at the heart of a problem, projects that are designed to be self-sustaining over time and build the skills & expertise of local people.

We learn as much as we give. We offer our overseas partners a bridge to financial and non-financial resources (e.g. advice, useful contacts through our networks). And we absolutely love what we do!

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