

IN BRIEF

LEADING THE WAY



Australia's leadership in the campaign to clear and ban landmines reaches an important milestone. Australia also leads on poverty reduction.

Australia took over the role of president of the Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention in September 2006. Australia was elected to this position at the Seventh Meeting of States Parties, an honour which recognises Australia's strong support for the elimination of landmines.

'Conventions do not implement themselves of their own accord,' says Australia's Special Representative for Mine Action, Teresa Gambaro. 'They require grit and determination to be universally and fully implemented. The mine ban convention is backed by a partnership of states, organisations and survivors full of such determination. Australia is very proud to be part of this partnership and to have the opportunity to represent it as president.'

As with mine action, Australia is also taking a lead in alleviating poverty in the region. 'Our aid program is going through a massive period of expansion since

the Prime Minister pledged to double our aid budget to \$4 billion dollars a year by 2010,' says Teresa Gambaro who is also the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

'Progress is being made. This financial year Australia will spend around \$3 billion on programs that make a major difference to people's lives such as improving health care, keeping more children in school for longer, and preventing and treating the diseases that stifle development and devastate families – malaria, influenza and of course HIV/AIDS.

'We make a real difference for real people. Australians can be justifiably proud.'

ABOVE LEFT: The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Australia's Special Representative for Mine Action, Teresa Gambaro, speaking at a function at the Seventh Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention in Geneva.

Photo: James Nation

KAMPUNG KIDS

INDONESIA: In Jakarta a charity is helping to feed hundreds of the city's undernourished and neglected children.

The charity Kampung Kids has been going for about seven years. It was started by some local people and expatriates distressed at the increase in poor urban children during the economic crisis of the late 1990s. They began by making and distributing soup and rice to about 150 local children. From these simple beginnings a small but dedicated community organisation has grown. Today Kampung Kids is a children's community centre providing school scholarships, nutrition and medical care to underprivileged kids in eight *kampungs* (poor urban areas) in south Jakarta. Orphans living on the streets and children whose parents are on very low incomes visit the centre almost every day.

The excellent work of Kampung Kids is funded entirely by donations and could not exist without the help of volunteers such as Australian Paul Hehir. With his partner, Bernadette Whitelum, who heads AusAID's tsunami assistance to Aceh, Paul lived in Jakarta for 18 months. Disturbed by the number of neglected children in his suburb who clearly did not have enough to eat, he resolved to do something about it.

His answer was to join Kampung Kids. As in other developing countries, poor children who have neither support nor protection face a bleak future. He began by cooking meals every



day for nearly 50 malnourished children and went on to build a nutrition program. His dedication and example soon encouraged other expatriates to join him. As Bernadette and his friends attest, he was determined to give needy children a better start in life.

There's no doubt Paul made a huge difference to many young lives – generously he gave his friendship, shared his skills and offered guidance. The kids all knew 'Mr Paul' and would greet him warmly when he turned up to serve meals or clean up. Other expatriates are grateful to him for showing them a way they too could help the poor children of Indonesia.

Yet tragically Paul's contribution was cut short. In late 2006 he was killed in a motorcycle accident. In a single shocking moment Kampung Kids lost one of its greatest champions and the aid program a supporter with an unwavering belief in development. Paul Hehir's untimely death is a reminder that aid partnerships extend well beyond the immediate players. They have a way of drawing in others committed to making the world a better place.

ABOVE: Paul Hehir with one of the local kids. Photo: Bernadette Whitelum/AusAID

CLEAN-UP THE WORLD DAY

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: Representatives from the Government of Papua New Guinea, Australian counterparts and the local community joined millions of volunteers around the world to help 'clean up'.

Looking along Port Moresby's Ela Beach it seemed everyone had come to help clean up. Among the keenest were members of the *Yumi Lukautim Mosbi* (Let's Look after Moresby) project.

The result of a partnership between the local government, law and justice agencies and surrounding communities, the Let's Look after Moresby project reaches out to the city's young unemployed people, particularly young men. By

providing opportunities to earn an income, such as carrying out street maintenance for the local council, and by placing a strong emphasis on crime prevention, the project is achieving two things. It's engaging young people in useful employment and, at the same time, developing a vibrant community spirit.

AusAID supports the *Yumi Lukautim Mosbi* project as part of its Law and Justice Sector Program.



Picking up rubbish along Ela Beach in Port Moresby as part of 'clean up the world day'. Photo: Jenny Max/DFAT



Women's Eye on Peace II celebrates women's photographs of peace from around the world. The exhibition is organised by IWDA (International Women's Development Agency) and sponsored by AusAID see page 16.

ABOUT FOCUS

Focus magazine is published three times a year. Each edition has a different theme. This time it's 'partnerships' (January to April 2007 vol 22 no 1). The next edition (May to August 2007 vol 22 no 2) will have 'humanitarian aid and disaster relief' as its theme.

Current distribution of *Focus* is 60,000 copies. *Focus* may also be viewed and downloaded at <www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/focus>

HANUABADA GAMES

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: Energy and enthusiasm were on display at a village in Central Province.

The Hanuabada Games were hosted by the Hagwa HIV Working Group, one of 36 community groups conducting HIV prevention and awareness activities around the country. The event was held in honour of visiting rugby league players – the Papua New Guinean Prime Minister's XIII (the Kumuls) and the Australian Prime Minister's XIII (the Kangaroos).

Kumul greets Johnson Kuike, Wesley Benny, Paul Aiton, Jeffrey Mausl and Alphonse Kapil watched enthusiastically as children from one of the biggest villages in the province showed off their teamwork and ball skills. Popular Australian rugby league players



Luke O'Donnell, Paul Gallen, Amos Roberts, Robbie Farah and Shane Tronc also enjoyed the sports action. Prizes of autographed rugby balls, netballs and t-shirts were awarded to all.

Between events the visiting rugby league players talked about HIV awareness and ending violence against women. Many also took the trouble to visit AusAID-funded community

programs around Port Moresby. Using sport, music and education, these programs are helping young Papua New Guineans make better life choices. Staying healthy by protecting against HIV infection is the number one goal.

Congratulations all round. The games helped to raise HIV awareness and were also a great sporting success. Photo: Denise Chang/AusAID