



**AUSTRALIAN  
BUSINESS VOLUNTEERS**

# PERSPECTIVES

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ISSUE 2 2016

**STRENGTHENING BUSINESSES AND, THROUGH THEM, COMMUNITIES**



Photo credit: Jerry Galea

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## AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS VOLUNTEERS IN INDONESIA

This issue of Perspectives focuses on Indonesia, a country to which ABV has sent hundreds of volunteers since the mid-1990s. As is discussed later in this issue small businesses employ a large proportion of the Indonesian population. There is a huge need for the sort of business capacity building which ABV volunteers provide to enable these small businesses to become more efficient and sustainable. With this background ABV is looking to renew our focus on Indonesia and deliver many more assignments there in the coming years.

In the first article we focus on a successful *Your Enterprise Scheme* (YES) business skills and mentoring program we recently ran on the Indonesian island of Lombok in partnership with the German aid agency GIZ. Next we look at how ABV has leveraged a corporate pro-bono program and the Australian Volunteers for International Development program to help improve Bandung's water supply.

The following article looks at Australians' perceptions of Indonesia, asking 'why don't we get to know the neighbours better?' in the context of a new report by the Australia-Indonesia Centre. In another article we go back to an Indonesian disability organisation more than a year after a volunteer left to look at the long term impact a business management focused assignment can have.

*Sarah O'Connor*  
CEO

## STRENGTHENING THE SMALL BUSINESS SECTOR IN LOMBOK

Many of our regular readers will be aware of ABV's YES (Your Enterprise Scheme) program. All of our recent YES programs have focused on the Pacific. March 2016 however saw ABV delivering a YES model program in Indonesia, in partnership with Germany's aid agency GIZ. The month-long program which interspersed five one-day workshops with face-to-face mentoring took place in Mataram, on the island of Lombok.

Implemented by volunteers drawn from ABV's registry of senior business professionals and small business owners ABV has run nearly 40 YES model programs across Indonesia and the Pacific. As they are all highly experienced business people themselves, ABV's volunteers are effective in mentoring and building the capacities of small businesses. For each program the content is tailored to meet the needs of the particular audience, and because of its importance to the Lombok economy, ABV made sure this program met the needs of the tourism and hospitality industry.

Twenty three participants took part, each the owner or manager of a tourism-related business. Gracia, who owns 'Tropicalola', was one of the eager participants, seeing the program as a great opportunity to gain insights from business professionals. In Gracia's words, "The workshops and our meetings have opened up my mind". Tropicalola produces and markets a unique range of cosmetic products suitable for tourists, and online sales. Since commencing the business in January 2016 Tropicalola has combined low cost production methods with in-house label and packaging design.

Gracia constantly engaged with the ABV volunteers Jan Norton and Allan Kindt during the program, seeking advice and putting new skills and knowledge into practice. Within weeks Tropicalola had received an offer to supply wedding souvenirs, had significantly increased stock levels both in outlets and on-hand and secured additional outlets. While success is never guaranteed Tropicalola now has business management practices in place which will be vital to growth.

ABV focuses on working with small businesses under the YES program and other development models as its mission is to enable a strong and vibrant private sector, and small businesses are absolutely essential to broad-based economic participation. In the words of a recent UN-WTO International Finance Corporation report – 'small and medium enterprises are the missing link to inclusive growth'.

SMEs are a huge part of the Indonesian economy providing around 97% of employment, but they only make up 58% of total GDP, and 16% of exports. Statistics like these indicate there should be significant opportunities for SMEs to become more efficient, access international markets and at the same time build a more inclusive and equitable Indonesia. Indonesian and international experts understand this. ABV was funded to deliver this YES under the Sustainable Regional Economic Growth and Investment Program (a collaboration between GIZ, the Indonesian national planning board BAPPENAS, and local authorities). With our increased focus on Indonesia ABV will be looking to partner with business and donors to deliver many more similar programs across the country in the coming period.

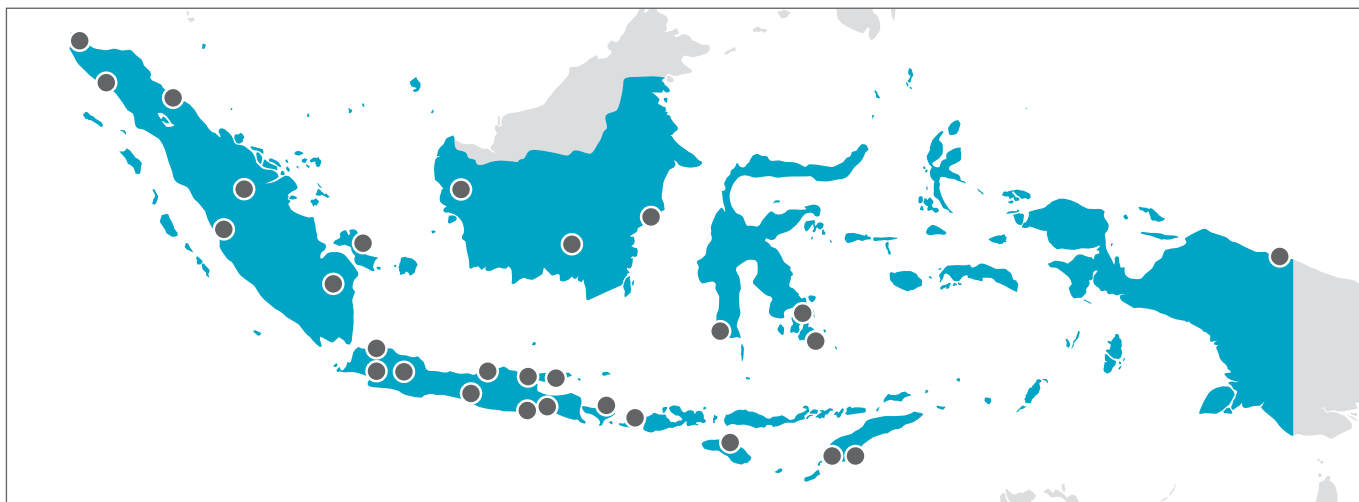
*Patrick Reeder*

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"The workshops and our meetings have opened up my mind" - Gracia

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## ABV KNOWS INDONESIA



ABV volunteers have worked with organisations right across the archipelago from Banda Aceh in the west, to Jayapura in the east, and from Kupang in the south to Pontianak in the north.

## ABV IN BANDUNG: LEVERAGING CORPORATE AND AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS FOR DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

ABV has combined the expertise of pro-bono IBM employees and skilled Australian volunteers to help improve an Indonesian city's water supply.

### The issue

Bandung on the Indonesian island of Java has far from optimum fresh and waste water systems. PDAM, the city's water utility, estimates its services reach around 72% of the city's population, and then only intermittently with water supply being switched on and off across the city at different times during the day. PDAM's water supply systems also face numerous challenges such as low water pressure, inconsistent water quality, and illegal connections which increase the risk of cross-contamination, reduce the quality of treated water, and cause havoc to supply planning. These infrastructure issues combined with inefficient administration systems mean that typically less than half of the drinking water produced finds its way to a paying customer.

The Central Government has an ambitious target of supplying water to 100% of the population by 2019, but with a rapidly expanding population and a growing commercial base, reaching that target is only becoming more complicated.

### The solution

Delivering a city's water supply is highly complex, requiring not only infrastructure but advanced management and monitoring systems. IBM specialises in analysis and finding innovative solutions to complex problems, so when PDAM was given the opportunity to host a pro-bono IBM Corporate Service Corps (CSC) team the water utility seized it.

Australian Business Volunteers (ABV), an implementing partner of IBM's CSC program managed the CSC team's placement at PDAM. The team whose highly talented members came from Belgium, Brazil, India and the USA spent

four weeks with PDAM looking at ways to reduce illegal connections, reform administrative procedures, improve cost efficiency and optimise technologies.

As well as facilitating targeted training in data analytics, cloud computing, IT infrastructure, root cause analysis, and project management, in the final week of the placement the team produced a comprehensive report based on interviews and feedback from approximately one hundred staff and PDAM customers. The report contained a number of significant recommendations with a focus on ways PDAM could address the quality, profitability and reach of its services.

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**"The Central Government has an ambitious target of supplying water to 100% of the population by 2019..."**

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John Cartwright and PDAM staff Abun Gunaway at PDAM's water purification plant Tirtawening office, Badung, West Java.  
Photo credit: Harjono Djoyobisono



## The follow-up

ABV remained in contact with PDAM and in the months following their departure it was clear that the CSC team had had an impact. In line with the report recommendations, each of PDAM's departments had reviewed their roles, responsibilities and systems to ensure that no replication was occurring, and coordination between sections had increased. Additionally PDAM was using IT solutions to track water usage by supply stations and customers, and to identify issues and necessary repairs.

To build on the CSC team's work, in collaboration with PDAM, ABV developed two assignments to be realised by skilled Australian volunteers under the Australian Volunteers for International Development Program (AVID).

John Cartwright who has several decades experience in operational, project and business management was placed with PDAM as a Project Management Advisor in early 2016. Taking cues from the CSC team's report John has focused on building the senior management's project management skills so as to enable them to project manage improvements to operations, in particular bill collection, and internal communications and coordination.

Michael Dorahy who undertook the second AVID assignment is a 40 year veteran of the Australian IT sector.

His assignment which was directly related to the CSC's team key recommendations around the improvement and use of data, focused on strengthening PDAM's organisational capacity in data analytics. Michael spent the majority of his time driving forward a project to implement a Geographical Information System. When rolled-out a GIS system will greatly improve the ability of PDAM to produce and access reliable, easy to understand data about infrastructure, water flows and customer locations. Following on from recommendations by the CSC team around improving integration between the IT Plan and the PDAM Master Plan, Michael also helped lay out next steps to ensure that IT development projects were driven by and reflected the needs of the business rather than the IT department.

## The future

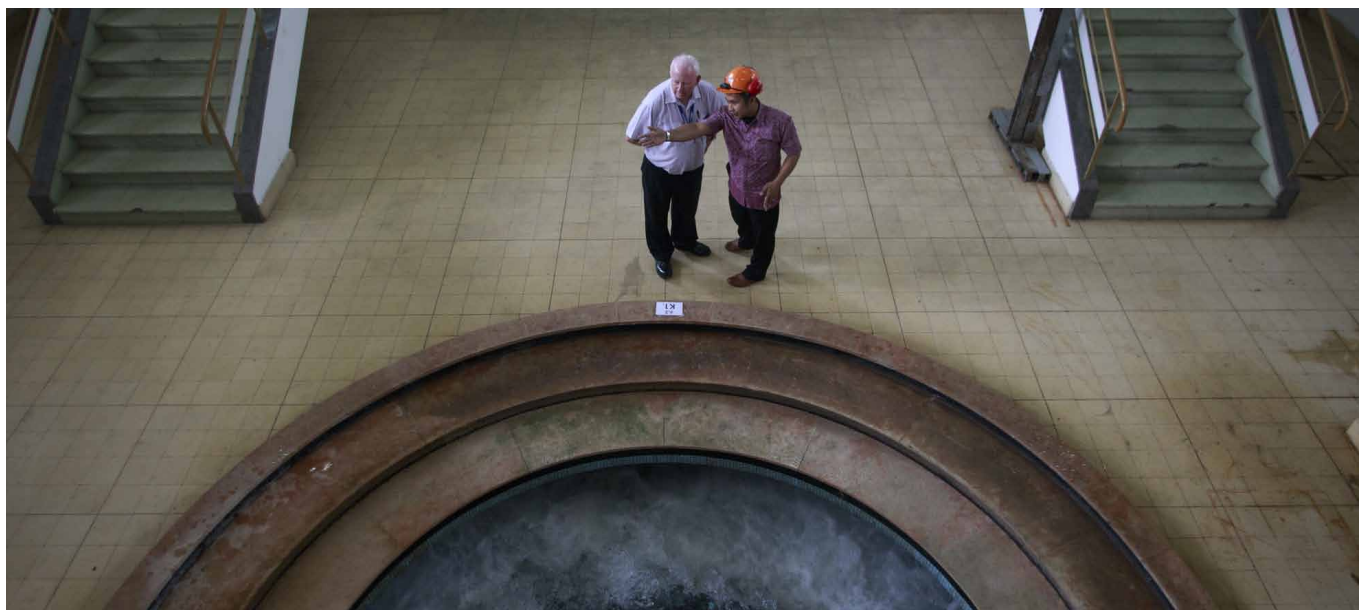
The Central Government's goal of supplying 100% of Bandung's population remains a long term one but the capacities built and recommendations provided by IBM and the Australian volunteers have played a substantial part in assisting the utility on its way. ABV will continue to maintain the partnership and provide additional volunteer assistance.

*Patrick Reeder*

*The Corporate Service Corps is an IBM program which sees groups of employees placed on pro-bono community-based assignments in emerging markets. ABV has been an implementing partner of the program since its inception in 2008. Around 500 employees participate in the program each year, making it the largest program of its type in the world.*



*The Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program is an Australian Government initiative. Michael and John's assignments were developed by Australian Business Volunteers who are working in consortium with Australian Volunteers International, a delivery partner of the AVID program.*



John Cartwright and PDAM staff Abun Gunaway at PDAM's water purification plant Tirtawening office, Badung, West Java.  
Photo credit: Harjono Djoyobisono

## WHY DON'T WE GET TO KNOW THE NEIGHBOURS BETTER?

Indonesia is a democratic country of 255 million people. It has 17,500 islands, 300 ethnic groups, and 300 distinct languages. It is an archipelago stretching 5000 kilometres from east to west where you can find ancient Buddhist stupas, Hindu temples and mosques, crumbling Portuguese and Dutch forts, jungles, coral reefs, tigers, birds of paradise, dragons (and at one time hobbits) and 129 (!) active volcanos. In other words Indonesia is an interesting place, but many Australians know little or have mistaken perceptions of our giant neighbour.



Mike Dredge with counterparts during a fisheries management assignment in Madura, East Java  
Photo credit: Jerry Galea

A few weeks ago I attended the presentation of an Australia-Indonesia Centre (AIC) report on Australian popular attitudes to Indonesia since 1945. The main finding was that Australian views about Indonesia have 'functioned on a dual track', with many Australians expressing a desire for closer relations with Indonesia while nurturing a deep suspicion that Indonesia poses a threat. Another finding was that anxiety about Indonesia is compounded 'by widespread ignorance about Indonesian society and the widespread (false) assumption that Indonesia is militaristic and possibly expansionist.'

One of the AIC paper's recommendations was that 'programs encouraging travel and people-to-people relations between Australians and Indonesians (should) receive widespread support', and 'to avoid the risk of conflating experiences of Bali with Indonesia, these programs should aim to expose Australians to other parts of Indonesia'. This recommendation fits well with ABV's development strategy, as over the next few years ABV is looking to expand our presence and the number of partnerships we have in Indonesia. While the primary aim of our assignments in Indonesia will be to achieve our organisational mission,

in doing so we hope to do our little bit to improve people-to-people contact and understanding. ABV is focusing on Indonesia because it aligns with Australian Government's emphasis on engagement with Indonesia, but also because we see real opportunities to leverage existing ABV activities there, in particular our work with IBM.

Many ABV volunteers do already know Indonesia quite well. Since the mid-1990s when ABV first began organising assignments in Indonesia, hundreds of ABV volunteers have worked with organisations right across the archipelago from Banda Aceh in the west, to Jayapura in the east, and from Kupang in the south to Pontianak in the north.

Although ABV volunteers are generally interested in Indonesian assignments a few have raised security concerns, and this is of course something that must be closely monitored. In general however people who I have spoken to about their

volunteer experiences in Indonesia are effusively positive about this vast and varied country. For example Peter Buckley has been on two volunteer assignments in Indonesia. For him the dominant culture of Indonesia is one of "diversity, tolerance, and good humour".

"I found everyone to be overwhelmingly friendly" he said when ABV spoke to him about his experiences. "Everyone, especially kids want to have their photo taken with you. People want to practice their English, so will often slip in beside you and become an unofficial guide".

Asked about his view on security issues he said, "In terms of likelihood, my concerns are in descending order of probability; sickness, road injury, personal safety, and a long way down the list - acts of terrorism." "I took the usual precautions they talk about during the briefing. If you follow these (don't display wealth and jewellery, walk against traffic flow, avoid dark places, etc - many of the things you would do in Australia) there should be no difficulties."

I have to admit being a bit jealous talking to people about visiting Indonesia. I went there on a gap year trip and having hung-out with orangutans and gibbons in the jungles of northern Sumatra, played soccer on the beach with kids from Nusa Lembongan, sailed the coral filled sea off Sumbawa, been guided by an imam around a mosque that fits 250,000 people in Jakarta, and spotted dragons on Komodo Island, I would love to have an excuse to go back there!

It is worth getting to know the place if you see an opportunity to do so.

*Patrick Reeder*

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"I found everyone to be overwhelmingly friendly" - Peter Buckley

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## HELPING AN INDONESIAN DISABILITY NGO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

It has been around two years since Australian volunteer Linda Echentille travelled to Indonesia to work with the not-for-profit organisation Yayasan Penduli Kemanusiaan (YPK) under the Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program, funded by the Australian Government. Founded in 2001, YPK assists people with a disability to be independent, improve their health, optimise their abilities, and recognise their importance in society.

When asked how he remembers the experience the organisation's founder and director 'Bapak' Purnawan Budisetia chuckles and shakes his head. "We were stretched, we were working overtime to get everything done". He describes the 10 weeks that Linda was in-country as being very hard work, and at times even exasperating. Linda and YPK were working to a very tight schedule, trying to complete a great deal in a short period. Now, after all is said and done, would he do it again? Definitely.

Prior to Linda arriving, YPK Bapak Purnawan describes the staff culture at YPK as being "like a bull" – that is, head down, charging forward delivering services, but with less focus on long-term strategy or direction. Linda was able to work with YPK to create an enduring range of documents and procedures including a Five-Year Strategic Plan, a risk management approach and monitoring and evaluation policy and procedures.

YPK have taken this advice on board, giving them a sense of security and methodology which they did not have before. Bapak Purnawan says that he and YPK are exceedingly "grateful and happy" to have had Linda assist them.

A second Australian volunteer - Robert Hill - is currently with YPK on an assignment focused on building new funding streams for the organisation.

In Robert's words, upon arriving "I was quite taken aback by the detail and clarity of the strategic plan that Linda had helped them develop. As an outsider at the time, it was easy to understand and allowed me to hit the ground running right from day one of my time here". According to Robert "today YPK are not only proud of their first Five-Year Strategic Plan document but it has become the guiding light for the future direction of YPK."

Developing new ways of obtaining funding and sponsorships was envisioned in the strategic plan, so Robert's assignment follows on from the work undertaken by Linda. This is a good example of the benefits of placing multiple volunteers with host organisations on short assignments over an extended period. In Robert's words; "Linda laid the foundations by introducing the strategic planning function, so what logically followed from the plan's objectives is for me to introduce marketing and sponsorship management skills. Despite different assignment briefs, multiple volunteers can deliver continuity to an organisation. As one skillset develops, it may be taken to a higher level or other management skills may soon be needed in an organisation. It is also important for the organisation as they get exposure to different management styles."

According to Robert "YPK is a well-run organisation, who have really taken

advantage of the volunteer assistance it has received." As part of his brief to develop new funding streams Robert is assisting YPK to develop a social enterprise. With small and medium enterprise development being central to ABV's mission, ABV is looking forward to continuing to develop assignments to assist YPK into the future.

*Petra Wiesner &  
Patrick Reeder*

The Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program is an Australian Government initiative. Linda and Robert's assignments were developed by Australian Business Volunteers who are working in consortium with Scope Global, and AVI, delivery partners for the AVID program.

**Australian  
Volunteers**  
FOR INTERNATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT



YPK Staff: Arik, Diah, Gede, Purnawan, Yuni and Naning at YPK's facility in the Annika Linden Centre, Denpasar, Indonesia. Petra Wiesner

## POSTSCRIPT ON PERCEPTIONS OF PNG

Readers may recall the article I wrote in the last edition of Perspectives on the perceptions of PNG.

We have received an extremely positive response from our readers to the article with people contacting us to share their experiences of PNG with us. Bevan Sharp who has been on 14 assignments in PNG (yes - 14) said that before he went the first time an old-hand told him that if he could last several months or so he "would be hooked on PNG for life". Joan and Roy Smith talked about their many assignments in PNG, saying "we made a lot of friends in the various places where we worked – Wewak, Vanimo, Alotau

and Kumgi and we felt we got more out of this than we gave". They went on to say "While we were warned about how dangerous PNG was, we never felt threatened".

Given the recent student protests and the response by the PNG police, it is incumbent on me to reiterate the sentiments of the article. We cannot ignore the challenges PNG faces, particularly in the lead up to the election in 2017. However, we should also

recognise the changes taking place forty years after independence. As reflected in the feedback we have received, we have found that ABV volunteers are invariably happy to return to PNG and gain a further understanding of a country which is so close to Australia in proximity yet is extremely complicated with over 800 different language groups and cultures.

*Sarah O'Connor*



Photo credit: Debra Plueckhahn





**AUSTRALIAN  
BUSINESS VOLUNTEERS**

## AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS VOLUNTEERS

Among international development NGOs, ABV is unique in its focus on strengthening business and economic institutions with a vision of alleviating poverty through inclusive economic growth.

ABV's private sector focused development projects are impactful and cost-effective because they are implemented by volunteers drawn from its registry of senior business professionals and small business owners. Our volunteers bring extensive experience to each project along with an independent and altruistic approach that guarantees effective and authentic skills transfer and mentoring.

Shared Value is the new term for how we've been working for the last 30 years. We have always engaged the private sector and leveraged private sector investment to create shared outcomes for businesses and communities.

With long-term experience implementing capacity building programs using different models, ABV collaborates with our partners to create effective programs which are customised, needs-based, and community driven.

ABV is a proud member  
of the Australia – PNG,  
Australia-Pacific Islands, and  
the Australia-Fiji Business  
Councils

**Australia-Pacific  
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 **Australia-Papua New Guinea  
Business Council**

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