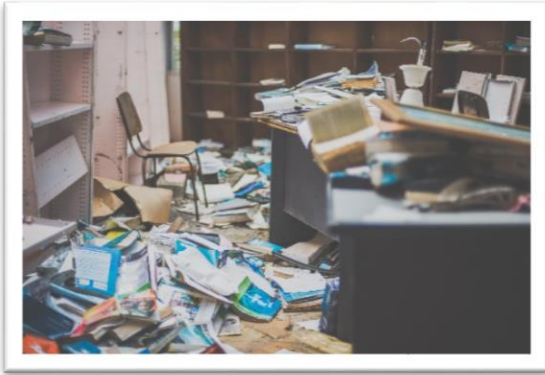


# a Girl & her world

## ANNUAL REPORT 2016



2016 was our biggest year yet in ways we could not have anticipated.

On February 19<sup>th</sup>, the strongest cyclone ever to make landfall in the Pacific tore through Fiji, the eye of the storm passing directly over one of the 'a Girl & Her World' communities of Raki Raki. It was a long night as we tried to imagine the best possible scenario but our fears were confirmed when we learned that our beloved Coordinator Urmila and her family had lost

their homes, their animals and all their possessions and had been badly injured and emotionally traumatised. It was days before we had any news of the 62 Girls we support - Many of them were also hurt and 8 of their families lost their homes.

We were overwhelmed immediately following the cyclone by the generosity and kindness of strangers - within 48 hours, 2 volunteers based in Suva were in Raki Raki doing a rapid assessment of our families and locating everyone as well as transporting water, torches and supplies for Urmila and her family and some of the 90 people she was sheltering with in an evacuation centre. They did not receive medical or other assistance for 5 days. It was a tense time and many tears were shed between us.



We were also stunned by the generosity of our A Girl & Her World Sydney community. We raised over \$30,000 in the months following Tropical Cyclone Winston and we can't thank you enough for digging



deep and supporting the recovery efforts. We received donation ranging from \$10 to \$2000 from individuals of all kinds ranging from school students to long-time supporters to a 96-year-old lady who sent a cheque for \$100 in a handwritten card. We were so touched by people's giving – the families we work with in Fiji are known and loved by our team and this was a very personal experience, we were so grateful to our Australian supporters for coming alongside us to help!

# a Girl & her world

The German International School Sydney outdid themselves and raised more than \$11,000 which was used to rebuild Urmila's home and I joined a group of their students on a 4-day trek across Fiji's beautiful interior mountains in May. During this time, they were able to see the impact of the cyclone but also the fruit of their fundraising efforts, enjoying a meal with Urmila's family one evening in what was still a construction site then, but what has become a lovely new concrete house for Urmila, the first one for her family. And it is cyclone proof!

We were able to replace income generating projects that had been lost in the cyclone - seeds and gardens, chicks and coops, materials for weaving mats – restoring hope for many of our Girls' mums who didn't know what they would do next. In September, a follow up training was held for them to reassess where they are at in their small business journey now that things are starting to settle down again. Many of them now have the confidence to continue with their work and are enormously grateful for your help.

*It was a joy to hear that many of the Girls put their school uniforms and books in plastic bags and held on to them during the cyclone. They understand the value of their education and the opportunities it will lead to...*



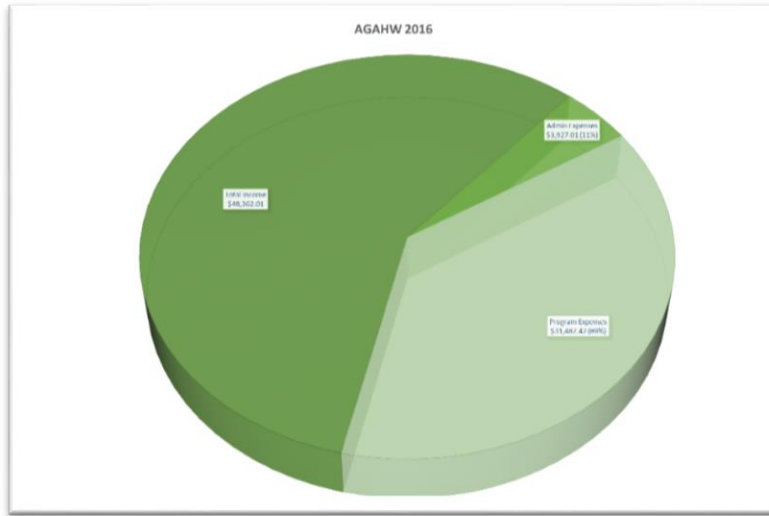
In August, Urmila hosted a Canadian intern, Victoria, in her home who surveyed a number of Girls and their mums, asking about menstrual health and hygiene as this is an area we are interested in working with our community on in 2017, we'll keep you posted. Periods can be a barrier to education as Girls can stay home with pain or because of access to adequate sanitary protection but also proper sanitation in school. Not to mention the impact of sanitary items on Fiji's pristine environment. We are listening and talking and hoping to support a locally led solution.

We are planning to send around 65 Girls back to school in 2017. We will need your continued support to do this. THANK YOU to those of you who give regularly, who support our call outs for specific needs and hold fundraisers in your schools and homes and communities. Thank you to the regulars who buy our

Christmas cakes and gifts in kind and donate at this time of year, it really does make a difference.

As we are a volunteer run organization, the only paid team member is Urmila in Fiji, we are always looking for people to help out with social media, admin and fundraising – if you'd like to support us in this way, please let us know at [info@agirlandherworld.org](mailto:info@agirlandherworld.org) or through social media.

## Financials



### Just so you know:

Admin includes things like getting business cards printed, caps made, or paying for (heavily discounted) digital and promotional costs. When our Fiji based volunteer team get together we cover their costs to do so.

Program costs include the costs of getting girls back to school such as school fees, uniforms, shoes, bags, stationary, travel expenses, sanitary pads, one off homework costs such as internet usage or printing. It also includes a 2 day per week allowance for our in-country Coordinator Urmila at the Fiji award rate and her costs

for running the program such as a mobile phone allowance and transport. Program costs also cover expenses associated with setting families up with income generating projects.

A lot of our work is done by volunteers contributing time, resource and skill in kind and is not reflected here by income and outgoing figures. When our Sydney based team travel to Fiji, we cover our own costs. We never hand out cash to anyone and have accounts with a number of local businesses who provide the above items for the girls to collect. Money is transferred to Urmila through Western Union as it is cheaper than through a bank. One of the members of our local volunteer team is a Police Officer and will accompany Urmila to pick up transfers when the amounts are large and need to go straight to the costs of a chicken coup or to a school for fees for example.

