

## EBPP CHILDREN'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACHIEVEMENTS IN ART, CRAFTS, CREATIVE WRITING AND KARATE

By David Booth MBE & Eric Broad

**Pride radiates from the children in all our schools** as they develop their skills in Indian ink paintings, hand weave dried vetiver grass into export quality bags, hone their creative writing skills and vigorously practice INKAI karate - determined to get black belts, and eventually be Indonesian champions.

The first in their remote communities to benefit from our integrated education programmes in Bunga (1999), Cegi (2000), Pengalusan (2000) and Manikaji (2001), these children are now structuring their futures and plan to establish local cooperatives that EBPP will encourage, nurture and promote. They don't want to leave their village to compete with thousands of other youths for non-existent jobs in Denpasar. They **can** create model programmes, become entrepreneurs and be centres of learning – “to train the trainers”. We continuously strive to empower them to lead present and future generations towards sustainable social and economic development, as replicable models for other impoverished communities.



Since we established EBPP in July 1998, the parents requested “education for our children” as their priority to develop their communities and guide them from abject poverty to sustainable social and economic development, prioritising the health and education of their children.

This report highlights some of the major leaps the children have taken, thanks to commitments their parents made in their 1998 partnership with EBPP: 100% motivation and participation in solutions they chose for their future. We just guide them with integrated education, relevant awareness programmes, appropriate

technology transfer, strategic long-term visions and the power of ownership!

A major milestone for EBPP children was their art exhibition launch at the Three Monkeys Cuisine and Art Café in Ubud on 14<sup>th</sup> June entitled: “**Mountain Villages in Black and White Ink**”.

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## Children's Art Development and Ubud Exhibition on June 14<sup>th</sup> 2009

### EBPP Art Programmes inspire all children to explore inner creativity

We introduced art classes in all of our schools within one month of children starting, as a standard curriculum subject. It was clear within 2 years in each of our 6 schools that the children had created their own unique styles, to the point where I could say "This is from Cegi", or "This is from Manikaji". Our widely read and internationally used book, "The Art of Learning by Doing", published in 2005, was inspired by our children's art, illustrating every aspect of their unique village lives from waking, eating, farming, sickness and recreation. Their art classes have become a tool for students and teachers alike to explore their inner passion and creativity, inspiring illustrations of the beautiful surrounding landscapes featuring blue mountains and orange skies. Some of our most passionate children sketch and paint at home, illustrating events in their home lives. With no television, video games or places to go to in their 'free time', art is the favourite pastime and hobby for many children.

### Art Exhibition: "Mountain Villages in Black and White Ink", Three Monkeys Café, Ubud



Inspired by talented young Yogyakarta artist, Suratmin Bagus Priyo, who volunteered his time for 2 days in September 2008 to train the children in EBPP schools, our children used techniques Bagus taught to share their own take on reality. Their paintings of tiny hamlets, terraced hillsides, Balinese temples and a life far from the bright lights of modern Bali illustrated their unique creativity, pride and desire to open their remote mountain environment to the outside world.

The turnout at the event saw people coming from all over the island to show their support for the children and to purchase paintings to take home. Nine of our children were there to meet the guests and talk about the programme and their paintings. We hope that this is the first in a series of public events that will bring attention to the amazingly unique art that is rapidly developing in the village, each of our schools having their unique styles, and could very well become one of many successful career paths for EBPP's talented children.

***BREAKING NEWS!*** Whilst our children's art exhibition was scheduled to last in Three Monkeys Café until July 31<sup>st</sup>, all of our children's 48 paintings hanging in the exhibition in Ubud **sold out by today, July 2**. In just over two weeks, we have had an overwhelmingly positive response to our children's wonderful village art. This is a tribute to the striking artistic abilities of our children, the quality of instruction by our dedicated art team and a great display of the local interest and support for this programme. We hope to have more paintings hanging there, so please, drop by and take a future master home with you!

## **PRESS RELEASE: The Jakarta Post on EBPP Children's Art Exhibition Launch**

The following article was published in *The Jakarta Post* on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009, covering the Art Exhibition launch and the other events on that day, reflecting the overall success of the East Bali Poverty Project programmes:

***"Village crafts future through art, education"***

***Trisha Sertori, The Jakarta Post, Ubud | Wed, 17/06/2009| Bali***

*A decade ago, Desa Ban village in Karangasem, Bali, had literacy rate of only 15 percent, with most residents untouched by education or modern healthcare. Yet the young people in what has been named Indonesia's poorest region are now up-and-coming artists and*



*Students from six schools, established by the UNESCO-endorsed East Bali Poverty Project (EBPP) across Desa Ban, were in Ubud on Sunday for their first exhibition, "Mountain Villages in Black-and-White Ink", aimed at raising awareness of their desolate region and raising art development funds.*

*Arts and entrepreneurial skills have given Desa Ban students choices for their future, says EBPP founder David Booth, MBE.*



*Forty-one Chinese ink works on paper showcase the students' talents, tapped recently by Yogyakarta artist Suratmin Bagus Priyo. The works are considered staggeringly well crafted for artists new to this difficult and unforgiving medium.*

*Recording life around Desa Ban, one poignant piece shows a one-legged man and his buffalo, while others focus on village life, the sea, religious duties, celebrations and temples.*

*Desa Ban students also visited Neka Museum and had art lessons with local artist Pranoto and his wife, Kerry Prendergast, while in Ubud.*

*"These kids are so keen to learn about art techniques that they were up and ready to go by 6 a.m.," said Janet Malloy who hosted the eight students in Ubud.*

*The development of this impoverished region is a three-phase plan, said Booth. The third phase is to reforest the slopes of Mount Agung and Mount Abang, which were stripped bare by the eruption of Mt. Agung in 1963. The event also affected more than 3000 families in Kubu district, where Desa Ban is located, Booth said.*

He added the devastation to Desa Ban was never recorded due to the region's remoteness. "People were growing only cassava and corn. When I first came here over a decade ago, the people had never seen a teacher or a doctor or midwife," said Booth, who was named a Member of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II for his role in eradicating poverty and helping develop Desa Ban.

"My aim was to eliminate poverty and improve health, nutrition and education."

So successful was the EBPP that teacher Yeni Mance, from Flores, is working in Desa Ban to gain the experience needed to take its models back to her isolated island.

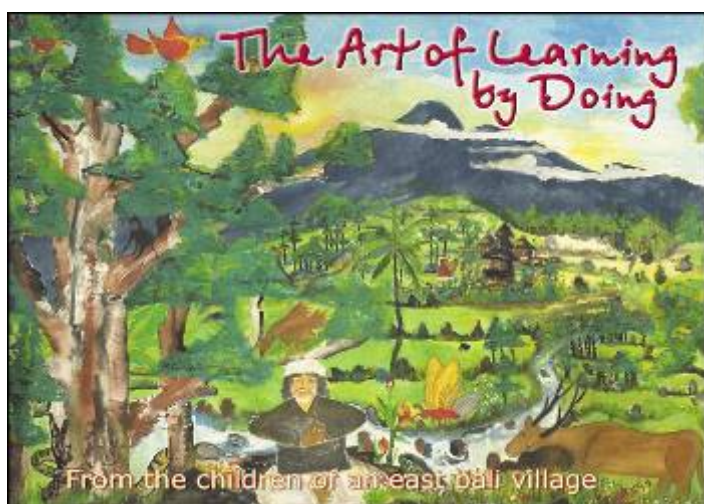
"The kids here have lunch, milk and a multivitamin tablet daily. The tuition and books are free. They do creative writing in English and Indonesian. I hope one day I can also help the people of my village," said Yeni, who led her Desa Ban students to the first and third spots at the provincial Buku Pertamaku (My First Book) competition.

The winner of that competition, 13-year-old Ni Ketut Muri, hails from Desa Ban's poorest and most isolated area of Pengalusan, yet still managed to defeat students from six other regencies.

The exhibition runs from June 14 to July 31 at Three Monkeys, Cuisine and Art Café, Monkey Forest Road, Ubud. For more information, email the EBPP at [info@eastbalipovertyproject.org](mailto:info@eastbalipovertyproject.org).

## Teacher's Guidebook for "The Art of Learning by Doing"- Soft Launch

Since publishing *The Art of Learning by Doing* educational art story book in 2005, documenting EBPP children's integrated education programmes development from 1998 to 2005, many people worldwide using *The Art of Learning by Doing* (TAOLBD) asked for curriculum modules to enhance the book's educational value. A Teacher's Guidebook was needed, requiring funds.



We proudly launched the **Teacher's Guidebook** to our (AOLBD) book on 14<sup>th</sup> June at Three Monkeys Café, sponsored by Dutch couple, Ted Alleman and Roel van Leeuwen on the occasion of their Bali wedding on 8/8/2008. Ted & Roel are now also sponsoring a Workbook to accompany the TAOLBD and Teachers Guide. This then forms a complete educational package, designed for middle school children of all countries and social levels, whether in rural or urban areas. With 22 lessons in 7 chapters, we designed the Guide to be practical, participatory and interactive, thus

challenging all children.

Our goal is to introduce TAOLBD to government schools in the impoverished East Bali regions and are presently training a core group of EBPP teachers to "Train the Teachers" in the key aspects of the book, primarily chapters 3 and 4 on Health and sustainable organic farming. We hope the Bali Provincial Education Department will support this initiative by buying sets of the books and sponsoring teachers from elementary and junior high schools to join a teacher's training course. We are optimistic that we can replicate our successful health, nutrition and integrated education models but do need funding to support our efforts.

**PLEASE CONTACT US FOR MORE DETAILS IF YOU CAN SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE**

## EBPP Children get 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place in Bali-wide "My First Book" Contest

Creativity, passion and a love of nature shone through the stories our 12 children submitted for the "Buku Pertamaku" contest early this year. They showed talents that had surely been untapped for generations in this previously isolated mountain region, proving that young children, when provided

with relevant and integrated education and an enjoyable learning environment can develop in the most challenging situations.

The competition was open to children from 6 to 15 years old; books must be 16 or 24 pages long; have themes of love, friendship and the environment; and be fully illustrated. Quite a challenge!

Our children entered with an outside chance, competing with children from government and private schools in 6 of Bali's provinces. It's thrilling that from 67 entries, our children got 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places!

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ni Ketut Muri, EBPP Pengalusan School, age 12 : Title "Kasih Ibu"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> I Ketut Rendah Ardana, EBPP Jatituhu School, age 13: Title "Si Kerbau dan Jalak"



Most satisfying for our team, children and communities is the winner: 12 year old Ni Ketut Muri, with her sentimental story, *Kasih Ibu* (Mother's Love). This is the touching story of a mother hen who struggles with her many young chicks through many trials and tribulations, to a very happy ending. It's a moving story that in many ways mirrors Ketut's mother's difficult life, raising Ketut and her many siblings well before EBPP started to help, when Pengalusan hamlet was the most isolated and forgotten hamlet I have ever known – and everywhere they went was on foot. What a long way they have come, and with such great achievements. Love, passion and determination are their by-words and keys to success.

***I am sure you join me in saying Congratulations! to our amazing children!***

## **Vetiver Grass Recycled for Quality Handicraft Business Opportunities**

One of our key challenges in Desa Ban was how to permanently stabilise steep and sandy slopes to enable the building of roads and schools, form terraces for organic farming on the steep mountain sides and prevent landslides. We solved all of these daunting tasks with one magical plant: Vetiver Grass (*Chrysopogen zizanioides* – formerly *Vetiveria zizanioides*). The fast growing and deep penetrating root system can do more to stabilize an ecosystem than may even seem possible. Vetiver grass is clearly the gift that keeps on giving. Apart from its bio-engineering, soil and water conservation role, all parts of the plant, from the roots to the stalks, have many other functions, including making handicrafts, roof thatching, medicinal purposes and it goes on.

After our first vetiver harvesting in December 2000, we introduced vetiver handicraft skills to all our children but did not have the expertise to develop high quality vetiver products. Our children loved making things from the grass and roots and clearly there was great potential by 2008 to develop community based businesses for our senior high school children – and to pilot the first ever women’s cooperatives in the region. But we needed expertise.



The top Vetiver handicraft trainers were in Thailand and were keen to help, but only available for 2 weeks in October 2008. They specified a maximum 25 people, enabling us to assemble three women from 4 hamlets, 3 children from 3 of our schools and 4 EBPP staff. The Thai experts guaranteed to train our group to make high quality vetiver grass products that could eventually sell, locally and internationally. The 2 week programme included all steps from preparing and treating, preserving and dyeing the vetiver grass through to the weaving and shaping techniques, whether for dolls, hats, bags or other designs.

Our trainees had to commit at the start of the course to use their new skills to train fellow villagers, along with all of the children in school, in these handicrafts. With people now trained in the basic art of vetiver handicrafts, and so much vetiver grass that can be readily available, the sky is the limit for this to become a new source of village wide income. The added advantage is that we are the first in Indonesia to develop these skills, and will have a unique niche in the market!

EBPP will continue training and developing the children’s a women’s groups skills and identify potential markets to sell the vetiver products, now in its infancy, but, as we always say, one step at a time. All proceeds from sales will go back into the village to help further funding for this and other programmes that will lead towards a more enriching future for the whole community.

## **Creative Writing for High School Children: Journalism and other Potential Careers**



Since EBPP established their partnership with the communities in 1998, a key goal was to offer our students opportunities outside their essential school curriculum as life skills, hobbies and most importantly, even as potential careers.

I visualised a creative writing course in 2005, with the concept of each of our 4 schools at that time developing their own school/hamlet newsletter. As all of our junior high school children were good at writing, and many quite good in English, I wanted to open another creative avenue apart from art. They all liked talking, had a great sense of humour

and had great confidence. It was difficult. We didn't have the human resources nor did we have any electricity, thus no computers.

In early 2009, having solar power in 5 schools and with the help of our American volunteer, we have finally compiled a creative writing course curriculum, piloting initially in our Cegi and Pengalusan schools.

A big part of the course is teaching the students about journalism. We have taught the children how to conduct interviews, what questions to ask while putting together a news story, and the process to go through in writing a successful comprehensive article. Over the past few months we have brought many visitors from outside the village, ranging from student volunteers from a



Singaporean high school, to parents of so of our volunteers, to donors of EBPP, for the kids to interview them and hone their journalistic skills.

Our American volunteer is also significantly improving our children's command of English. Most of the interviews are conducted in English, and then articles written in both Bahasa Indonesia and English.

Our children can now often use laptop computers, donated by Annika Linden Foundation (for our education team) and by Tjeerd Hoekstra's community in Holland for a few hours a day. It is staggering how quick they have adapted - and put me to shame in what they can do with layouts and font styles for their articles!

Thanks to the solar power in Pengalusan and Cegi schools, we are now able to start teaching basic computer skills to our students. The children are now learning a wide variety of skills to empower

them for the future.

The ultimate goal of the creative writing course is for the students to compile and publish a monthly newsletter, with articles about all the happenings in their schools, hamlets, babies born, cows sold, important ceremonies etc. They will write a variety of issues on daily life in their specific hamlets that will not only be their "local newspaper" but also, hopefully, open opportunities for them to write for Bali newspapers – and even, hopefully one day, The Jakarta Post!

We are educating the students through every step of the process, including photography and computer layout so that soon they will be able to do each step of the process, from choosing topics to write about to laying the newsletter out on the computer, on their own.

The excitement from the students around this project has been amazing, and it is just one more of many ways that we have found to tap into their creative minds and allow them to explore the vast realm of possibilities that are available to them.

### **Karate development: EBPP Children Aspire to be INKAI Karate Champions**

“Don’t your children want to play football?” many people asked since we started our integrated education programmes in 1999. My standard response was “There is no land flat enough in the whole village to even make *half* a football pitch!”



With such a steep and often rugged terrain surrounding most of the areas in our Desa Ban hamlets, we had to think outside the box for the physical education we could offer the children. Physical fitness, aerobics, stretches, running-on-the-spot, push-ups and the like were the daily standard. We wanted something better and more challenging.



Basketball near the school seemed good, but so often the ball got lost, rolling down the 100’s of metres of sheer drop below. Volleyball courts were set up and we bought quite a lot of nets and balls. But, again, the balls either got lost or punctured, and the nets became monuments to lost hope.

Research in 2006 showed Karate as the best, most practical and most beneficial sport. The children do not need equipment, land or large groups to play/participate. The solution was clear. We located a 2<sup>nd</sup> Dan Black Belt INKAI karate instructor who was excited to return to his native Karangasem to train our students in karate, a comprehensive martial art that combines exercise

with an unequalled level of physical and mental discipline. He started full time in December 2007, going to a different EBPP school each day, and, was able to launch the official INKAI karate branch in our Regency, gaining official status for our children to enter in all regional and national competitions.

All of our children joined the programme with incredible enthusiasm and were very excited when they started learning the moves, the Japanese language commands that dictate the physical styles, but more so, getting their prestigious “dogi”, the uniform, emblazoned with the INKAI logo, and defining them as professional trainees.

As with all of our programmes, the children are attaining astounding results. Every 4 months the students have a belt exam that allows them to move up to the next level of honours in karate. On 12<sup>th</sup> July 2009, 90 of our students had their next “belt” exam when all graduated to their next belt. There are 8 belts in INKAI Karate and we proudly have many children at all levels but many boys and girls now on the 5<sup>th</sup> (brown) and 6<sup>th</sup> (brown one stripe). Within the next 9 months some of the students will have an opportunity to become the first black belts in the history of their village and county.

Our dream, as is theirs, is that within maximum one year, a few of our girls and boys will have their **black belts** and, in the near future we hope that some of our top karate athletes can compete in provincial and national competitions, which could even lead into entry into the Asian Games! What a great achievement after only 6-8 years of the opportunity of even going to school! We are so proud of our children.

For more information on any of East Bali Poverty Project activities or if you would like to support us, please call David or Tri at (0361) 410071, email us at [info@eastbalipovertyproject.org](mailto:info@eastbalipovertyproject.org), or check out our homepage at [www.eastbalipovertyproject.org](http://www.eastbalipovertyproject.org).