



CHURCH CONNECTIONS

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2014 TO JUNE 2015



UnitingWorld
connecting communities for life



WHO ARE WE?

The Church Connections Unit is part of UnitingWorld, the international partnerships agency of the Uniting Church in Australia. Our vision is to see transformed communities who honour God, experience hope and wellbeing and live free from poverty and injustice.

Our mission is to help the people of the Uniting Church connect with our overseas partner churches. We support our partners as they minister among people and address difficult issues in their local communities. As we foster relationships between people in Australia and across the world, we see lives mutually transformed.

CONTENTS

National Director's Report	04
Chair's Report	05
2014/15 Snapshot	06
Financial Report	12

WE VALUE:

PARTNERSHIP

We give generously and receive humbly, committing to change and growth over the long term.

INCLUSION

We actively promote equity for all, ensuring no discrimination due to age, culture, gender, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or social or political affiliation.

FULLNESS OF LIFE

We believe the good news of Jesus means justice and hope for all, particularly for those who are oppressed or vulnerable.

INTEGRITY

We are ethical, accountable and open in our relationships and work practices.

MUTUAL RESPECT

We're sensitive to context, mindful of power imbalance; we recognise difference and celebrate diversity.

SUSTAINABILITY

We care for creation and seek to build resources for the future.

NATIONAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT



The 2014/15 year saw Church Connections reach new levels of collaboration with our overseas church partners. This was highlighted in the unique Partners' Statement that was jointly crafted at the Uniting Church in Australia's Triennial Assembly in July 2015 – in which 27 of our overseas church partners pledged to work in respectful, reciprocal relationship, together addressing the needs of their churches and communities.

More than ever before, our role has become that of the facilitator – a trusted friend and a means through which our partners can share their stories, their learning and resources.

As we work together in this way, both our partners and our own Uniting Church have the chance to create new networks, sharing our expertise and building up our Christian witness and mission. We are both better equipped to share the message of God's love for all people and address the crucial issues our world is facing.

Our partnerships are our unique strength, defining our work and setting us apart. We're grateful that each of you is committed to walking with us into our shared future. My sincere thanks go out to the many wonderful supporters of our work across Australia. Your continued faith and generosity is making a huge difference to the lives of people and their church communities across the Pacific, Asia and Africa.

Rob Floyd
National Director, UnitingWorld

CHAIR'S REPORT



In 2014/15, we appointed a new National Committee for Church Connections complementing the skills of our established committee members and providing us with additional expertise in law, financial management, communications and administration. I warmly welcome our new members and graciously thank those who retired during the 2014/15 financial year for their loyal and diligent service. You can see who the members of the National Committee are on our website:

www.unitingworld.org.au

The Church Connections Unit continued to strengthen over the 2014/15 year. We welcomed Dr Sureka Goringe as Associate Director in November 2014 and together worked with our overseas church partners to reinforce our commitment to the global church and ensure our programs remained robust, effective and highly transparent.

These programs act out our shared, life-changing mission. We're supporting our church partners as they place women into positions of leadership, harness the potential of youth in Zimbabwe and provide ministry and care to thousands of newly baptised Christians throughout China and remote North India.

We're supporting the ministry of those who care for some of the most vulnerable, and together, we're nurturing the life and spirit of our growing global church.

I'm immensely proud of the work of UnitingWorld Church Connections, and once again, I'd like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated staff, past and present members of our National Committee – and as always, the faithful work of our overseas church partners. It is an honour to walk with you.

Dr Andrew Glenn
Chair, Church Connections Unit, UnitingWorld



2014/15 SNAPSHOT

EQUIPPING CHRISTIAN LEADERS

Our Equipping Christian Leaders program spans the Pacific, Africa and Asia and strengthens our church partners' capacity to address the issues facing their communities.

Leadership in a Changing Climate

This is a new project, supporting our Pacific partner communities to address the impacts of climate change. We help church leaders develop and teach hopeful theologies of creation and stewardship, and provide training in pastoral support, trauma counselling and disaster preparedness. The program enables the church to be an agent of change, inspiring faithful action and preparing vulnerable communities for adaptation and re-location.

In 2014/15 year, we launched the project by re-establishing the Tuvalu Climate Desk in the Congregational Christian Church of Tuvalu and funding a Tuvalu-based climate change officer. We also developed a collaboration with the Pacific Conference of Churches, bringing together a regional team to conduct workshops around the Pacific on climate adaption and disaster preparedness.

Pacific Women's Leadership

Over the period, we continued to support 14 women to study in theological college across five Pacific nations, paving the way for these women to become powerful leaders in their churches and communities.

Christian Leaders in Asia

Christianity in Asia is growing at an extraordinary rate. Our program supports our church partners as they face both the challenges and incredible potential of their growing ministries.

These programs are flexible; adapting to the needs of the partner church and sharing the skills and resources unique to each partner community.

In the Eastern Himalayas in India, our partners are developing programs to equip leaders ministering in a Tibetan-Buddhist majority culture. The program includes training in theology, counselling, information technology, government policy and management. We ran

a South Asian partners conference (India and Sri Lanka), fostering regional co-operation and doing management training.

In Indonesia, we support the Artha Wacana Christian University in Kupang to provide scholarships to students from poor backgrounds and help raise their teaching standards through facilitating visits from volunteer academics. In Timor Leste, we support our partner church in the training of their Sunday school program, filling a gap where an entire generation of teachers were lost following independence.

In China, we assist the China Christian Council to train theological teachers and leaders, who in turn support more than 70,000 newly established churches and hundreds of thousands of newly baptised people. Our partnership focuses on teaching theology, joint conferences, scholarships for post-graduate studies in Australia and the training and support of aged care personnel.



Young Christian Leaders in Zimbabwe

In rural Zimbabwe we support the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to protect and train at-risk youth through five day workshops on leadership-training, Bible study, decision making, counselling, entrepreneurship, peace and conflict resolution and HIV and AIDS awareness.

In March and June 2015, our partner conducted a series of workshops, reaching more than 180 young people, nine of whom have disabilities and 21 of whom were from minority groups.

“As a physically challenged youth of Zimbabwe, I benefited though this workshop. I am very thankful to you our good friends in Australia.

Through this workshop I have seen many doors opening for me because I am now able to think on my own. I am now capable of thinking outside the box and can face any challenge without fear. This workshop has boosted my confidence to the extent that as a physically challenged young woman, I can start my own project or business at any time.”

Ministry in the Margins

In a remote community in the Eastern Himalayas, 63 children attended school, many for the first time, as we helped the Church of North India complete the building and opening of a new school. The school employs seven local teachers and three support staff.

In Fiji, over 100 children from a squatter settlement received basic school supplies through the Methodist Church in Fiji to assist them to attend school. We also supported two students from this community to go to university.



Growing Global Relationships

UnitingWorld Church Connections has a unique approach to global partnership. We offer members of the Uniting Church the chance to meet, share skills and spend valuable time with our overseas partner communities.

In 2014/15 we facilitated nine InSolidarity Exposure trips, enabling 58 members of Australian churches to connect with six different overseas partner churches. These groups visited congregations, schools, community projects, youth and adult groups. There was

much learning about each other, faith sharing and forming of long-term friendships.

We filled 37 overseas volunteer placements with 13 different partner churches.

Over 2014/15, the Church Connections Unit hosted nine leaders from our overseas church partners to attend Australian conferences, facilitated nine members from our Australian church community to visit significant gatherings overseas, and spoke at 14 national and international church conferences.





THANK YOU!

To the many Australian congregations who helped make this happen – and to those who gave their time, expertise and money to support our shared work.

In particular, our thanks go out to the **QLD Uniting Church Health staff**, who have generously supported **nurse training at Helena Goldie Hospital**, Solomon Islands.

Ringwood Uniting Church, VIC one of our long-time supporters, has generously donated towards **volunteer placements and life-changing projects** in Fiji, Timor Leste, China and India.

Southern Gold Coast Uniting Church, QLD who fundraised for **Seghe Theological College** in the Solomon Islands.

Turrumurra Uniting Church, NSW who continuously support our newly established school in the Eastern Himalayas.

Proserpine Uniting Church, QLD who sold hundreds of locally-made lip balms to fundraise for the **Nanuku Squatter Settlement** in Fiji.

The **Dostana Group** who support the **Kangra Girls Hostel** in India

Glebe Road UC in Ipswich who generously support our **work in Timor Leste**.



THANK YOU!

To everyone who has helped grow life-giving connections between the Uniting Church in Australia and international partner churches through **INSOLIDARITY** exposure visits, **EXPERIENCE** volunteer placements, and student, faculty and clergy exchanges.

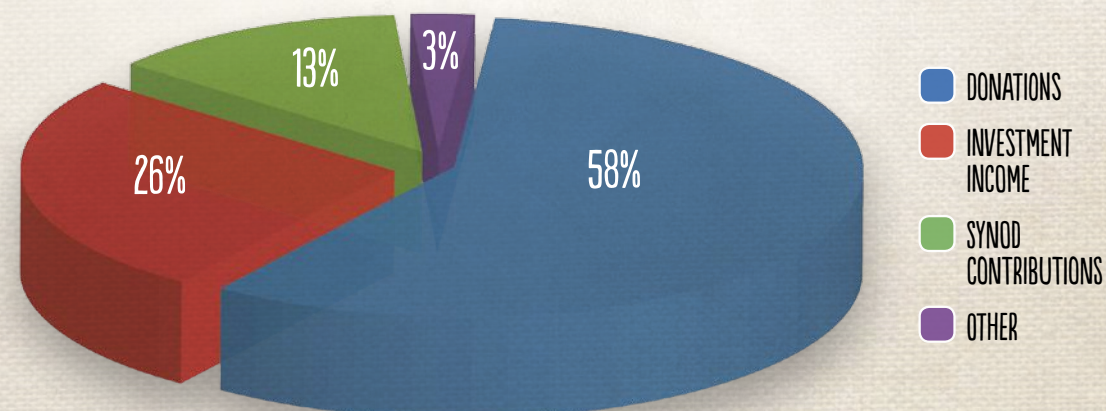


STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	12 months to 30 June 2015 \$	18 months to 30 June 2014 \$
REVENUE		
Donations and gifts		
Monetary	1,004,212	1,366,807
Non-monetary	-	-
Bequests and Legacies	-	-
Investment Income	449,377	744,982
Synod Contributions	221,516	736,742
Other	52,628	49,774
Total revenue	1,727,734	2,898,304
EXPENDITURE		
Programs with Church Partners		
International programs		
Overseas grants to partners	336,215	507,460
Program Activity & Support Costs	678,176	1,152,740
Community education	-	-
Fundraising costs		
Public	260,193	258,021
Government, multilateral and private	-	-
Accountability & administration	449,807	951,753
Non-Monetary Expenditure	-	-
Total Church Partnership Programs Expenditure	1,724,391	2,869,974
Domestic programs expenditure	-	-
Total expenditure	1,724,391	2,869,974
Excess/(Shortfall) Of Revenue Over Expenditure	3,343	28,330
Amounts recycled to profit and loss on disposal of available-for-sale financial assets	(58,602)	(121,561)
Net fair value gain/(loss) on available-for-sale financial assets	33,726	190,152
Total other comprehensive income/(deficit) for the period	(24,876)	68,591
Total comprehensive surplus/(deficit) for the period	(21,533)	96,922

WHERE
THE MONEY
COMES FROM
YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2015



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 JUNE 2015

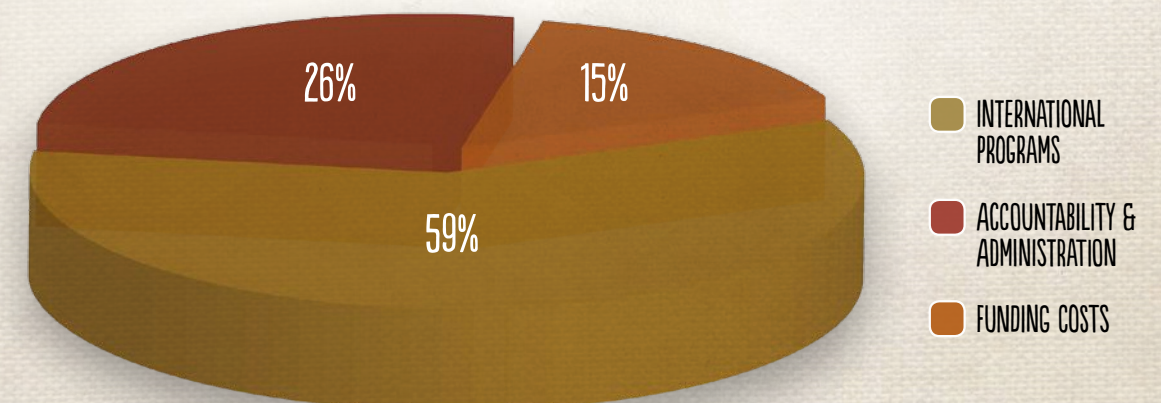
	30 June 2015 \$	30 June 2014 \$
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	4,991,398	4,313,938
Trade and other receivables	56,665	58,986
Other current assets	72,525	64,924
Total current assets	5,120,588	4,437,848
Non-current assets		
Financial assets	2,287,739	2,948,594
Property, plant and equipment	2,164,823	2,215,019
Total non-current assets	4,452,562	5,163,613
Total assets	9,573,150	9,601,461
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	65,770	52,542
Provisions	41,554	53,123
Other current liabilities	10,720	10,687
Total current liabilities	118,044	116,352
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	19,732	28,202
Total non-current liabilities	19,732	28,202
Total liabilities	137,776	144,554
Net assets	9,435,374	9,456,907
Equity		
General Fund	951,105	1,323,371
Designated Fund	518,393	801,272
Endowment Fund	1	278,600
Specific Fund	2	3,023,195
Capital Fund	1,957,575	1,928,835
Financial Asset Reserve	165,276	190,152
Asset Revaluation Reserve	1,911,482	1,911,482
Total equity	9,435,374	9,456,907

1. Endowment funds are capital tied and only interest earned will be used on the programs

2. The specific funds at the end of FY 2015 includes trust funds amounting to \$1.3M where UnitingWorld Church Connections acts as the trustee

The above financial accounts reflect UnitingWorld Church Connection's core organisational functions. This is not a direct extraction from the audited financial statements. A full set of the Church Connections audited financial statements for the 12 months ended 30 June 2015 will be provided on request and available on our website.

WHERE
THE MONEY
GOES
YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2015





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UnitingWorld is an agency of the
National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia

The UnitingWorld Church Connections Unit has a process for handling complaints. If you would like to read our complaints policy, lodge a complaint or give any other feedback, please email info@unitingworld.org.au or phone (02) 8267 4267.

All photographs taken by UnitingWorld staff, volunteers and overseas partners in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. All photos are used with permission.

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