

Orphaned survivors of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami receive a permanent home

Children planting a garden at the Children's Care Centre

Father Chris Riley is proud to advise that the permanent Muhammadiyah / Youth Off The Streets Overseas Relief Fund Children's Care Centre in Banda Aceh, Indonesia is now open. Officiating at the opening ceremony was Australia's Ambassador to Indonesia, Mr Bill Farmer and the Vice-Governor of Aceh, Mr as well as the Chairman of Muhammadiyah Dr Sudibyo Markus, Father Chris Riley (CEO) and Tony Stewart MP (Chairman) of Youth Off The Streets Overseas Relief Fund.

The Children's Care Centre is the result of a partnership between Australia's charity organisation, Youth Off The Streets Overseas Relief Fund and Indonesia's second largest Muslim welfare agency, Muhammadiyah. The partnership was formed when the two organisations worked together to provide aid in the direct aftermath of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami.

Children having dinner in the new dining room

Since February 2005, the two organisations have been operating a semi-permanent Centre that has consistently cared for over 50 children who were separated or unattached from their primary carers as a result of the tsunami. The partnership has also now completed the construction of a new permanent Children's Care Centre with the capacity to house and care for 80 children.

"This is a huge achievement," said Father Chris Riley, CEO and Founder, Youth Off The Streets, "It is the first time that children and teenagers in a Muhammadiyah orphanage in Indonesia will be housed in cottage style accommodation with a house parent who is dedicated to providing care for the children in each cottage," he said.

Children help with tree planting

“We are thrilled this wonderful project has finally completed, and that Australian generosity to our tsunami appeal has allowed the Children’s Care Centre to become a reality. We thank all the supporters who have helped us give these children a home. We are especially grateful to Clubs across NSW and ClubsNSW who have donated over \$1 Million to this project,” he continued.

Over the last 4 years, ten cottages have been built with each cottage having four bedrooms to sleep eight people. Other construction has included a central lounge area in each cottage for relaxing and doing projects such as homework, a Mosque, an administration office and communal dining hall and kitchen.

Fun game of volleyball at the Centre

Outdoors, a central sporting field allows lots of fun and games after school and on weekends while part of the land will be used for some agricultural activities, including crops, cattle and fresh water fish farming. Eventually it is hoped that the sale of some of this fresh produce will go towards the running costs of the Centre, as well as providing food for the Centre’s young residents.

Over the course of the Centre’s operation, 9 residents have progressed to vocational and tertiary studies at universities in Aceh. These students now live outside the Centre, either on campus or in private accommodation with the support of the Youth Off The Streets Overseas Relief Fund’s ACEH Scholarship Program, supported by ClubsNSW.

To read more about a day in the life of the Centre, its history and view photos, please [click here](#).