O'Sullivan Centre
NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2021

www.theosullivancentre.org.au
info@theosullivancentre.org.au

P.O. Box 3046
Ivanhoe North, Vic. 3079

JDN Nutrition Educators teaching young mothers about hand washing in their local community.

Feature article:

The O'Sullivan Centre is an organisation started by ex-YCW members with the aim of initiating and supporting actions that are directed at addressing injustice.

This newsletter features one of the major action areas that the O'Sullivan Centre Centre has been supporting in Timor-Leste since 2014 when two members Bernadette McEvoy and Jenny Lauritsen assisted a group of young Timorese to establish Juventude ba Dezenvolvimentu Nasional (JDN).

JDN is a local youth organisation that engages young people (18-24) in skills development to address the issues young people face in everyday life, including COVID-19 prevention, nutrition education, gender inequality and lack of skills and employment. The ongoing development of JDN is a major focus of the O'Sullivan Centre through seeking funding and support for JDN and also providing practical support to the work of Bernadette and Jenny.

Welcome to the latest edition of our Newsletter

It has been a while since we have put out a newsletter but a lot has been happening through the work of the O'Sullivan Centre since we last sent a newsletter to you.

In particular, a key focus of the Centre has been supporting the work of Bernadette McEvoy and Jenny Lauritsen in building Juventude ba Dezenvolvimentu Nasional (JDN), a youth development organisation in Timor-Leste. JDN has been focused on community-based education on COVID-19 prevention and nutrition education, action on sexual harassment, workshops on adolescent reproductive health plus supporting income generating initiatives (Dili History and Culture Tours and a translation service).

JDN now has 8 regular staff and a large number of members who are available for specific project work. Some small grants of less than $10,000.00 plus regular contributions through the O'Sullivan Centre are funding this work, which requires significant resources. So any support you can give is most welcomed.

As for people all around the world our ways of working and communicating about this work have been transformed since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The O'Sullivan Centre continues to make available workshops for community service organisations on building social inclusion. Sessions were delivered for St Kilda Mission by John Bonnice during recent years. John is also delivering workshops and self-refection sessions for organisations on understanding and addressing the impact of white privilege, racism and building reconciliation.

Also on the Executive of the O'Sullivan Centre are Peter Gartlan and Joe Magri. Both are active in social justice issues with Peter moving from his work in financial counselling with Aboriginal communities in the NT to bushfire recovery work and ongoing consultancies. Joe is busy in his new role as Accreditation Policy Manager with a Foster Care Agency and actively supporting the work of the Australian YCW. Peter and John are also directly involved with different aspects of the AYCW's work. You can read more about the AYCW on: https://www.ycw.org.au

This newsletter includes updates on some of this work including:

- An article by Peter Gartlan about his work on the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse - pages 3, 4.
- An article about John Bonnice's work with the Bendigo Reconciliation Committee on Addressing Organisational White Privilege - pages 5, 6
- An summary of the work of the O'Sullivan Centre in Timor-Leste during 2019 and 2020 - pages 7-11
- An invitation to support the work of the O'Sullivan Centre.

Also if you get a chance please take a look the O'Sullivan Centre website. There are regular updates on the work of the Centre. The link is: https://www.theosullivancentre.org.au/

John Bonnice, Chair of the O'Sullivan Centre

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

The following article was written by Peter Gartlan following his consultancy work implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was established in 2013 by the Australian Government to inquire into and report upon responses by institutions (government and non-government) of instances and allegations of child sexual abuse in Australia.

Over a five-year period, the Commission was contacted by 16,000 people and heard more than 8,000 personal stories in private sessions. More than 4,000 individual institutions were reported as places where abuse occurred.

The final report to the Federal Government, delivered in December 2017, called it a national tragedy.

The National Redress Scheme

In response to a recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the Commonwealth Government established a National Redress Scheme (the NRS) for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.

The purpose of the NRS is to provide justice by way of redress to people sexually abused as children within an institution. Redress comprises of three components:

1. A monetary payment
2. Access to ongoing counselling and
3. A direct personal response

Redress payments will range from $ nil to the cap of $150 000, with the average payment expected to be around $80 000. The NRS needs to be seen as one option for survivors to take – other options such as suing the offending institution and taking common law action still exist.

Importantly, the NRS process is a paper based. This means that survivors will not be subjected to cross examination or questioning of what they said, rather the application will be assessed in its own right.

The NRS commenced in July 2018 and will run for 10 years.

⊗ ***The scale of the devestation is shocking***

⊗ ***It is estimated that at least***

- 60,000 individuals will be eligible to access the National Redress Scheme,

of which·

- 40,000 were sexually abused in non-government institutions (mostly church) and
- 20,000 were sexually abused in government institutions

⊗ ***There are not many stadiums in Australia that can hold 60,000 people.***

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Knowmore Legal Service

Knowmore Legal Service (https://www.knowmore.org.au) is a free specialist legal service funded to assist survivors at various stages during the redress process – prior to the lodgement of the application, during completion of the application, after the receipt of a determination and to consider any possible review.

Knowmore is a national legal service that employs approximately 110 staff, comprising lawyers, counsellors and Aboriginal Engagement Advisors. It has offices in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth.

Peter Gartlan from the O'Sullivan Centre has worked with Knowmore during 2019, identifying and addressing the financial implications of receiving the lump sum. This includes – impact on Centrelink payments, impact on debts and how best to maximise the benefit of the lump sum.

Knowmore Legal Service

In the first 12 months of the NRS, Knowmore Legal Service received:
· 18,500 calls of which 4 500 are current clients
· 25% of clients are indigenous
· 61% are male
· 25% are aged over 66

Knowmore Legal Service can be contacted on 1800 605 762.

The comment below is from Catherine, a 97 year old woman who sought assistance from Knowmore Legal Service.

> *"To me, the redress money is not so much about the money but rather an acknowledgment by those who offended to all of us who suffered.*
>
> *It has taken 91 years to get any recognition for wrongs to be righted".*

ABOUT KNOWMORE

Redress support services mini-site

December 21, 2020 Author: knowmore

A secure mini-site filled with resources to help redress support services navigate the National Redress Scheme application process, including a community board where members can post questions and discuss issues.

Addressing Organisational White Privilege

The following article is by John Bonnice, Chair of the O'Sullivan Centre Board. John is also Co-Chair of the Bendigo Reconciliation Committee and is a facilitator of forums on organisational white privilege, cultural self-reflection sessions and Conversation Circles.

During Reconciliation Week in May 2018, the Bendigo Reconciliation Committee organised a range of Conversation Circles with the focus on creating dialogue between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal around issues of mutual concern.

One of the Conversation Circles centred on exploring what it means for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and agencies to work in partnership. In exploring the issue of partnership, it quickly emerged from the feedback of Aboriginal people present in the Conversation Circle that a key barrier to true partnership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people/agencies was the failure of mainstream organisations to recognise and address the impact of organisational white privilege that exists in mainstream organisations.

Whilst it is commonly recognised that white privilege exists for individuals, the issue of white privilege existing for mainstream organisations is not recognised, discussed or explored. It was agreed at the Conversation Circle in May 2018 that there was a need for a resource that enabled mainstream organisations to start the process of reflecting on their 'organisational white privilege', the benefits that exists for organisations by virtue of this privilege and also a resource that supported actions, which addressed the impact of 'organisational white privilege'. The Bendigo Reconciliation Committee worked on the development of such a resource, which was completed in September 2018. The resource was titled'Identifying and Addressing Organisational White Privilege'.

The aim of the resource is to support organisations in exploring the nature of organisational white privilege, the circumstances in which it exists and provide some questions that organisations could use to explore their 'organisational white privilege' and its impact on Aboriginal people. It has been hoped from these discussions within organisations that this will lead to actions which address the impact of 'organisational white privilege'.

To see the resource link to https://innovativeresources.org/exploring-organisational-white-privilege/

In addition to the resource, the Bendigo Reconciliation Committee has also developed a 2-hour workshop for organisations to explore the issue of 'organisational white privilege' using the resource as the basis for the discussions. The workshop focuses on the following areas:

- Reflection on the main tenets of white mainstream culture, the benefits received from this culture, and areas of mainstream culture that impact on Aboriginal and the Torres Strait Islander people.
- Reflection on nature and benefits of white privilege with a focus on organisational white privilege.
- Reflection on how white privilege influences professional practice and the impact of organisational white privilege.
- Identifying the barriers and opportunities for change in organisations that would enable organisations to become more culturally safe and competent.
- Future areas of action by mainstream organisations.

Bendigo Reconciliation Committee

Addressing Organisational White Privilege

Over the past 2 years, on behalf of the Bendigo Reconciliation Committee, John has conducted the organisational white privilege workshop with 8 individual agencies plus 4 other workshops involving multiple organisations.

Discussions during these workshops the following has emerged:

- Organisational white privilege has not been on the radar of mainstream organisations.
- There is a need for greater reflection by mainstream organisations on the nature of organisational white privilege and its impact.
- Organisations are not aware of the cultural bias that they operate from and the impact this has on the relationship and work with Aboriginal and Torres Islander people.
- Organisations and their staff need to look at their values, beliefs and attitudes around the issues of racism, white privilege and what it means to work in true partnership with Aboriginal people/community/agencies.
- Organisations need to rethink their approach to reconciliation and partnership work with Aboriginal people and communities. Indeed, the starting point may need to be reflection on the cultural bias and covert racism that many organisations are operating from.

In summary, the workshops have highlighted how much work needs to be done by organisations in addressing organisational white privilege and the current lack of thinking on this issue.

For further information on the resource 'Identifyingand Addressing Organisational White Privilege' and how your organisation may start on the journey of reflecting on organisational white privilege please contact John Bonnice on jbcb54@tpg.com.au

National Reconciliation Week

don't keep
history a
mystery
learn · share · grow

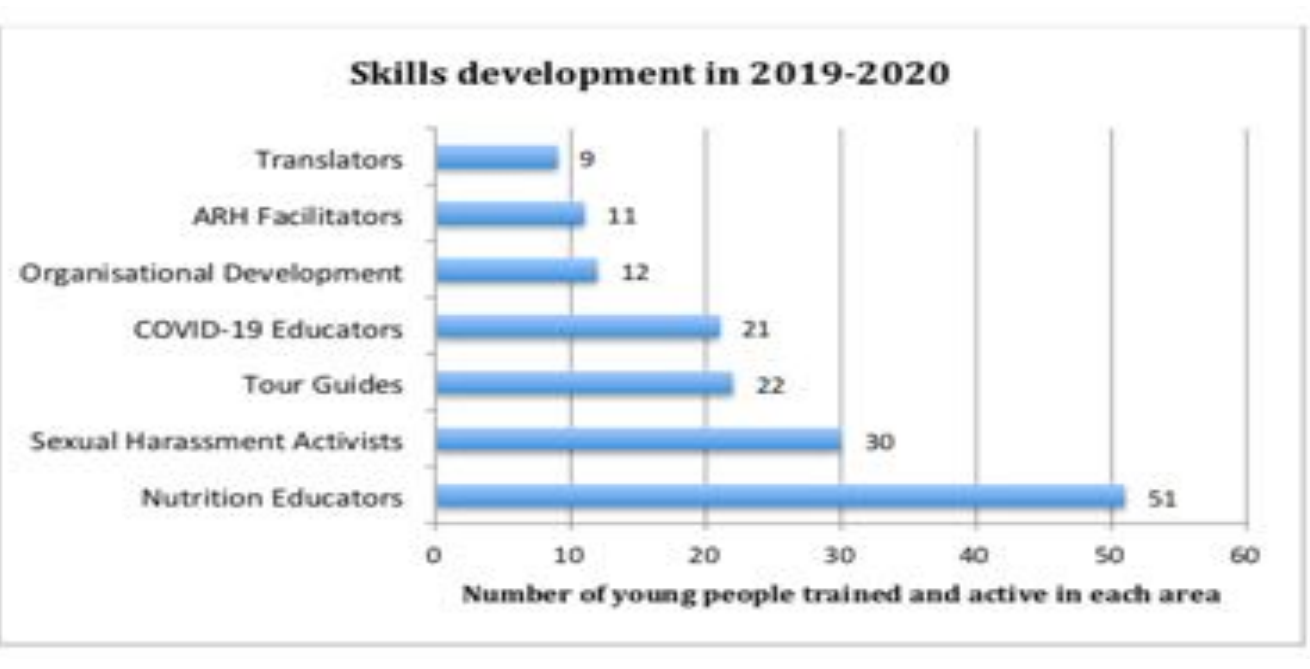
The O'Sullivan Centre at work in Timor-Leste

For the past 7 years the O'Sullivan Centre has been supporting Juventude ba Dezenvolvimentu Nasionál (JDN), a youth development organisation in Timor-Leste that was started by a group of young Timorese in 2014 through the assistance and support of two Board members of the O'Sullivan Centre, Bernadette McEvoy and Jenny Lauritsen. Both Bernadette and Jenny continue to provide training and direction for JDN as the focus of their work in Timor-Leste.

The aim of JDN is to engage young people (18-24) in skills development to address the issues young people face in their everyday lives.

One of the biggest issues is lack of skills and employment. For this reason JDN focuses on building employability skills and capacities through on-the-job training as nutrition educators, sexual harassment activists, peer educators on COVID-19 prevention and adolescent reproductive health (ARH) facilitators. Part of the training involves participants using their skills to engage other young people in activities to improve the various situations they face in daily life. 3,500 young people participated in JDN activities during 2019 – 2020. As well, trained tour guides lead JDN's History and Culture Tours and translators provide professional translation services, with both initiatives generating income for those providing the services and for the organization. When the State of Emergency was announced in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic many changes occurred in our way of working and continue to affect most project activity, particularly the demand for History and Culture Tours.

The table below includes a summary of professional skills gained during 2019-2020.



In the course of a year's work JDN aims to address the systemic issues that persist in creating obstacles for the healthy and productive development of young people and their society.

Important achievements during 2019 and 2020 include:

- An **Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH) curriculum,** which was developed and piloted with 170 secondary students during 2019 and 2020, was approved by the Minister of Health for national roll out in 2021.
- A proposal for a **Code of Conduct for public transport drivers** that we discussed with female Parliamentarians was presented in National Parliament in September 2020.

In 2021 JDN has the following priorities:

- Engaging an increasing number of sexual harassment activists in community-based education and action.
- The introduction of a Code of Conduct for all drivers of buses and taxis to reduce the incidence of sexual harassment on public transport.
- The employment of youth nutrition educators at all Community Health Centres in Dili Municipality to facilitate community-based peer education of young mothers.
- Continued community-based education of young people on COVID-19 prevention and vaccination promotion.

The O'Sullivan Centre at work in Timor-Leste

A summary of JDN's achievements during 2019 and 2020 is included below.

- Nutrition Education

51 youth Nutrition Educators provided peer-education for 2,100 young people, mainly young mothers through their participation in 144 community-based activities organized by JDN. With funding from the World Health Organisation (WHO) educators worked with Nutritionists from the Municipality Health Service, community leaders and some NGOs to educate young mothers attending health services in local communities; to provide workshops in neighbourhoods where young mothers were trained to organize similar community-based education; and to organize large nutrition expos in Dili and Manufahe Municipalities, including a Healthy Lifestyle Expo attended by 700 young people in Dili. JDN educators also developed a Nutrition Toolkit to promote the messages in the Ministry of Health's Food Based Dietary Guidelines including 8 interactive tools that are used in community-based education. On-line education during the COVID-19 State of Emergency on how to prepare nutritious meals reached over 12,000 young people through weekly FaceBook posts.

Adonia preparing a nutritious meal to share on JDN's healthy recipes posts.

- Preventing Sexual Harassment

During 2019 and 2020 JDN continued building its commitment to reducing sexual harassment by engaging a team of 30 young women in training as sexual harassment activists. They collected 80 case studies and educated 195 young women about sexual harassment laws, and skills to use when faced with this situation. A petition for a Code of Conduct for bus and taxi drivers in Timor-Leste was signed by 1,280 young women. Our proposal was discussed with Women members of Parliament who presented it to the National Parliament in September 2020.

HAPARA
ASEDIU
SEKSUÁL

In late 2020, 30 young women signed up as sexual harassment activists who are educating their families and friends, promoting these rights wherever they and continuing to recruit more activists. These activities are supported by the Blue Mountains East-Timor Sisters.

The O'Sullivan Centre at work in Timor-Leste

- Education on COVID-19 Prevention

When the Government of Timor-Leste declared a State of Emergency to protect the population against the COVID-19 pandemic there was a great deal of fear and uncertainty. JDN members talked about growing discrimination against certain groups and wanted to learn more about the coronavirus. Working within the new restrictions and with funding from USAID, 21 COVID-19 trained youth educators used electronic and face-to-face means to educate their peers, families and neighbours. 26 COVID-19 prevention education workshops were held during the year educating 430 young people on respiratory and hand hygiene practices, how to recognize and respond to COVID-19 symptoms, reducing stigma and skills to build healthy relationships. One Youth Educator presented this work at the virtual Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in October and the role of another Educator can be read at: https://www.jsi.com/preventing-the-spread-of-covid-19-in-timor-leste-through-peer-education/

Participants from a very remote part of Timor-Leste involved in a COVID-19 prevention activity led by JDN peer educators.

- Adolescent Reproductive Health

An Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH) curriculum including 2 short films and a song was designed and developed at the request of the Ministry of Health and with funding from USAID. After the educational materials were piloted by 11 trained facilitators with 170 secondary students in Covalima Municipality the Minister of Health approved the materials so they are now being used nationally. According to one facilitator, being involved in the whole process, was an important educational experience itself:

"*Youth don't openly talk about adolescent reproductive health and most people feel shy or reluctant to talk about it. Our trainings are interactive and we use games, role plays, and even songs to help them feel at ease and comfortable to discuss these topics – and it works*".

Further information can be found at: https://www.jsi.com/engaging-young-people-as-adolescent-reproductive-health-educators-in-timor-leste/

- Self-Financing Employment Initiatives:

JDN History and Culture Tours

JDN's tour guides led 145 tours for 413 people who did one or more of JDN's History and Culture Tours during 2019-2020. Twenty-two young people who were trained as tour guides gained a deeper understanding of their history as well as customer service skills, communication, presentation skills, time management skills and new confidence as a tour guide. Experienced tour guides continue on-the-job training and supervision, as each new guide gains experience. All guides continue learning about their history and culture as they share information about the Santa Cruz Massacre, the role of women in the fight for independence, the issues being addressed by JDN today, and their own experience of important cultural practices while visiting churches, monuments, cemeteries, art, music and recreational places. Unfortunately, the impact of COVID-19 drastically reduced the number of people travelling to Timor-Leste and the demand for tours during 2020.

Tour guide Romario discussing aspects of the country's fight for independence at the Chega Exhibition .

The O'Sullivan Centre at work in Timor-Leste

- Organisational Development

Twelve JDN members gained technical, project management, community engagement, finance, reporting and writing skills while working on a full-time or part-time basis to plan and implement JDN's activities. Currently 8 leaders are working with small teams to engage more young people in each project so that they also learn new skills that they can apply in their lives. A Coordinating Team consisting of 11 representatives from priority areas meets every two months to report on outcomes and discuss future activities. JDN representatives report to quarterly Board meetings that consist of 3 Timorese adults with relevant expertise, 3 JDN leaders and 2 advisors. JDN members are regularly invited to present information or participate in various events as a youth representative, including in a 1.5 hour live streamed Talk Show about resolving nutrition problems, while 3 others were interviewed on Café Dadeer (Timor's Today Show) in October.

Some of the 700 young people who attended JDN's *Be Healthy Expo*that included 15 educational and activities.

- Leadership Exchange to Australia

As part of building the leadership capacity of JDN, the O'Sullivan Centre has supported the exchange of JDN leaders to Australia. Exchanges have occurred since 2017 but in 2020 were postponed due to COVID-19.

The yearly exchange involves bringing JDN leaders to Australia (Adelaide) with the aim of providing opportunities for exchange and dialogue between the JDN leaders and Australian young people on the challenges facing young people in both countries. The visit by JDN leaders to Australia has been done in partnership with St Aloysius College, Adelaide and with the financial support of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide Charitable Trust.

John Bonnice, Chair of the O'Sullivan Centre with Elga, Aldo, Nelfia and Romario during their 2019 visit to SA.

Activities during the exchanges have included presentations to groups of students at Catholic Colleges in Adelaide, meeting with other groups of young people from the Aboriginal community, YCW, and Timor-Leste Student Association.

In 2021 due to the COVID travel restrictions the leadership exchange will be delivered through the use of online presentations and discussions.

How you can support JDN?

JDN currently employs 8 young people to lead the various activities and programs run by JDN. This requires significant funding in addition to implementation and organisational costs. You can contribute to the work of JDN by making a donation via the O'Sullivan Centre. The link is: http://www.theosullivancentre.org.au/

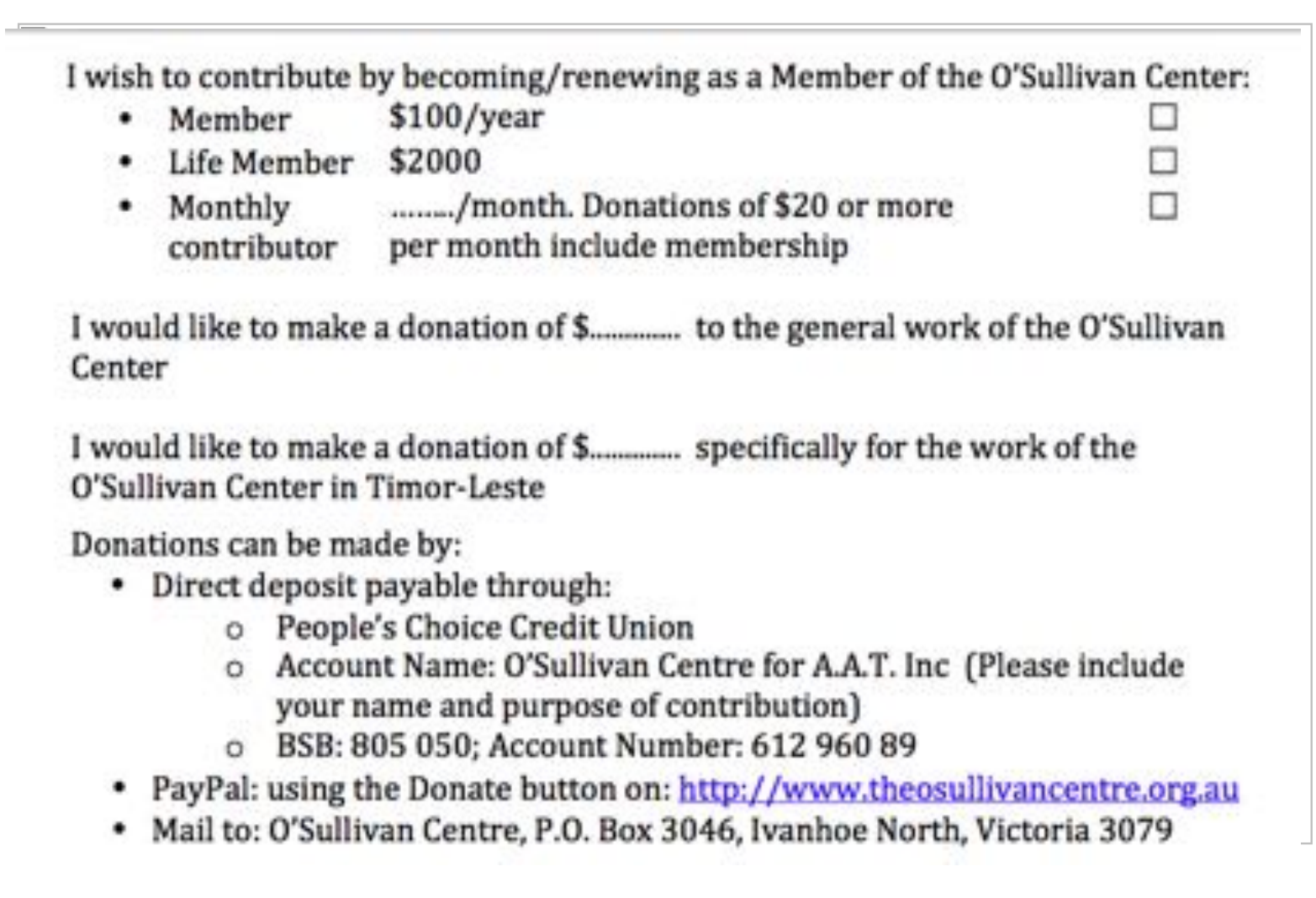
Please indicate in your payment the donation is for the work of JDN Timor-Leste.

Further information

For further information on JDN and the O'Sullivan Centre please contact:
Jenny Lauritsen on jlauritsen44@gmail.com
John Bonnice on jbcb54@tpg.com.au
FB: JDN Timor-Leste

And Finally...

Subscription Invitation



I wish to contribute by becoming/renewing as a Member of the O'Sullivan Center:

- Member $100/year ☐
- Life Member $2000 ☐
- Monthly contributor ..../month. Donations of $20 or more per month include membership ☐

I would like to make a donation of $............. to the general work of the O'Sullivan Center

I would like to make a donation of $............. specifically for the work of the O'Sullivan Center in Timor-Leste

Donations can be made by:

- Direct deposit payable through:
  - People's Choice Credit Union
  - Account Name: O'Sullivan Centre for A.A.T. Inc (Please include your name and purpose of contribution)
  - BSB: 805 050; Account Number: 612 960 89
- PayPal: using the Donate button on: http://www.theosullivancentre.org.au
- Mail to: O'Sullivan Centre, P.O. Box 3046, Ivanhoe North, Victoria 3079

O'Sullivan Centre for Action, Analysis and Training

Get in touch with us:

P.O. Box 3046,
North Ivanhoe, Vic. 3079

info@theosullivancentre.org.au