



Completion Report

AUS-MUD-PCH-P01, Australia
Reporting Period: 2017

Prison Chaplaincy

Budget: \$15,000 funded (from the original \$20,000 for this one-year project)

A men's support group.

Update:

This project supported the only indigenous prison chaplain who visited seven prisons in south-east Queensland. The proportion and number of young aboriginal men in these prisons means that this service is incredibly vital. The chaplain also offered post-release support and encouragement to offenders, to reduce their chances of re-offending, and to help them establish a positive life once released.

One of the things we have appreciated is that the prison chaplain is himself indigenous and relates well to those he is working with. He has a heart to help and has been doing the work with minimal pay, whilst working part-time to afford the visits. This project has allowed him to focus more on the inmates and recently released prisoners.

Aboriginal offenders are over 25% of the prison population in Queensland, despite being less than 10% of the population. Until this project there was no other First Australian chaplain in the prison system in south-east Queensland. Rates of depression and suicide among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men are extremely high and this project has provided the opportunity to walk alongside these men once released, giving hope for a better life.

There have been several challenges with this project as the Chaplain ran into 'red tape' within the system that prevented him completing his duties within the prisons, however he was able to use his many connections to work with men once released and support the families of prisoners. We have connected with our partner by phone and agreed to complete the project for \$15,000. The funds have been used to provide some living expenses, fuel, transport and phone, enabling the Chaplain to do his work.



Our partner said, "Through this project I have been engaging with not only the prisoners but the families as well. I have helped families in practical ways in organising appropriate services for them such as food, transport, cleaning, counselling, housing, health and legal support. I have also focussed on persons released from jail. Altogether I have been in contact with over 1000 people."

Through this project there has been improved mental health and moral outlook amongst first Australian inmates, encouragement to pursue living a different life upon release with moral support and appropriate connections and improved health of inmates (self-harm and drug use).

Left: Boys Fishing Trip

Thank you for supporting this needed but challenging work.