

Grameen Gazette #21

Grameen Gazette, the Newsletter from **Grameen Australia** – the organisation empowering people to change their lives through the implementation of innovative Microfinance and Social Business Projects.

Grameen Australia is part of the Grameen/Yunus family founded by Professor Muhammad Yunus, the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

Visit our website at www.grameen.org.au for all the news and information on our activities including Current Projects and Case Studies

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CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Help us empower today's poor to become tomorrow's entrepreneurs

As the holidays approach, we at Grameen Australia reflect with gratitude on the year that has passed and look ahead with hope to the year to come.

Gratitude to you for your care for your fellow man and woman, for your support of our work to alleviate extreme poverty, for the time and money you have so generously entrusted to us. Gratitude to Professor Yunus and the Grameen and Yunus global family, for shining a light onto what is possible when we use business as a tool of empowerment and an expression of selflessness. And gratitude to our teams in Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Australia, who devote themselves daily to unleashing the power and potential in some of the world's most disadvantaged people.

In this season of giving, I'd like to share a story about Juliet, owner of a sewing business in Manila

I first visited Juliet at her home in Manila, a small two-room space built from discarded materials with walls of plywood supporting a leaky tin roof whilst the floor is just stone and gravel. She lives in Tay Tay, a resettlement community in a flood prone area. The monsoonal rains tear through Juliet's home several times a year bringing with them damage, destruction, and frustration.



Juliet's home is missing a floor - in her mind a small sacrifice to make, when the choice is for her daughter to complete school. Her workshop is a table outside her front door, with a small overhanging of roof to protect her machine. But the bareness of her home does not reflect the joyful determination within Juliet to one day achieve her goal of seeing her daughter live a safe, secure life of opportunity.

When Grameen Australia visited Juliet's community in Tay Tay last year she was quick to realise the possibilities. She successfully completed her training and was one of our first borrowers.



Juliet is now our dynamic and inspirational Tay Tay Centre Leader. Her sewing business is part of a larger social business Association of 20 women, established with support from Grameen Australia.

On a recent trip to Manila, I met up with Juliet and 8 of her borrower group leaders. I asked them, "What would you do if you tripled your income?" After a stunned silence at the possibility, Juliet's first words were, "I would help so many people!"

But how could a person earning USD 6 a day even conceive of helping so many people?!

Juliet went on to explain ...

"If I tripled my income, my business would have to be really successful. I would employ many more people, and they would make their own money. And I would have so much extra. So if my neighbour needed help with their family, I could say yes."

Juliet is now on her third loan, with her capacity to manage debt significantly increasing from Php 6,000 (USD 127) to Php 10,000 (USD 211). Her most recently loan is Php 18,000 (USD 380) enabling her to significantly expand her business.





What we see, every day at Grameen Australia, are people like Juliet. People full of hope and promise, determined to work, determined to help, determined to thrive.

In this season of giving, Juliet is a shining light of generosity.

In this season of giving, will you help us spark the light in another Juliet in Manila?

Juliet is one of a thousand entrepreneurs we have supported over the past year. Our goal in 2016 is to triple our support, reaching thousands more women like Juliet throughout the slums of Manila. **Your donation of just \$25 per month will fund one entrepreneur with a first loan, setting her and her family on a path to security.**

Please join us in giving a hand up out of poverty for thousands of families in 2016. Together we can fulfill Professor Yunus' dream of putting poverty in museums.

The Grameen Team