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a tribute to bali's unsung heroes

Whilst Bali is a world-renowned holiday destination, often deemed as a paradise, there is little in the way of public healthcare, understanding or funds to help the severely disadvantaged.

Behind the glitz and glamour of Bali's south, there is a myriad of orphanages that house many underprivileged children, and those with disabilities. And it's not a secret that poverty has been shown to negatively influence the health and development of these unfortunate people in a number of ways.

Fortunately there are those who dedicate their lives to help thousands of unfortunate individuals and families out there. These people are the island's unsung heroes, the champions who protect, feed, medicate, shelter, educate, and nurture the poor, the disabled, and the sick to improve their lives and escape poverty.

The education system in Bali is not in the best place right now. So, many charitable organisations on this island are doing a remarkable job to break this vicious cycle by educating these children and giving them options to look at better employment opportunities in the future. Among the great individuals who brought positive changes by making education accessible to underprivileged children in Bali are **Margaret Barry** (Bali Children Foundation), **Timothy Cameron** (Stella's Child), **David Booth** (East Bali Poverty Project), **Timothy Cameron** (Stella's Child) and **Alice Matulesky** and **Brenton Whittaker** (Bali Kids). Other than children, women too are given a fighting chance through the Bali WISE program, run by **Mike O'Leary** (ROLÉ Foundation).

In addition to education, poverty has also caused people to struggle with daily life, even down to the most basic food necessities. Due to their economic conditions, they lack nutrition and vitamins which affects their mental, physical, emotional and social health. So many children and adults have medical threats, many of them are severely disabled, with no access to healthcare. Some have even never seen a doctor, despite suffering from serious ailments.

Carrying a mission to care for the least fortunate people on this island by providing medical care, therapy, treatment

and ongoing support are these remarkable individuals: **Robin Lim** (Bumi Sehat Foundation), the late **John Fawcett** (The John Fawcett Foundation), **Robert Epstone** (Yayasan Solemen Indonesia), **Mary Northmore** (Yayasan Senyum Bali), and **Gaye Warren** (Bali Pink Ribbon).

Furthermore, the living conditions in some remote areas of Bali are extremely harsh with no jobs available and no income to its people. Take Muntigunung for an example. Located high on the rugged north-eastern slopes of Mount Batur on the northeast of Bali, people here are struggling to survive in a dry and desolate landscape. The nearest source of fresh water is at the lake by Mount Batur, which takes 5 hours walk to reach there and back. Without good water supply, an estimated 5,000 people living in that area suffer from poor nutrition and health ailments.

Then came **Daniel Elber** with his first project, 'Future of Children'. Together with Yayasan Dian Desa, he then established the Muntigunung Community Social Enterprise to initiate a Muntigunung Development and Livelihoods Programme. This programme has successfully constructed 20 buildings to harvest and store rainwater in specially designed tanks to provide a year-round water supply, securing clean and sustainable water for every household, every day. Today, these buildings also provide a place for the community to produce a number of high-quality handmade products, including handcrafted hammocks, handmade bags, handmade purses and hand-woven lontar baskets.

Heroes can always do with more support; why not be a sidekick? Feel free to search for the mentioned organisations above and see how you can lend a helping hand. **!**



John Fawcett (1932 - 2017)
Founder of **The John Fawcett Foundation**



Alice Matulesky
Co-founder of **Bali Kids**



Robert Epstone
Founder of **Yayasan Solemen Indonesia**



Timothy Cameron
Founder of **Stella's Child**



Mary Northmore
Founder of **Yayasan Senyum Bali**



David Booth
Founder of **East Bali Poverty Project**



Margaret Barry
Founder of **Bali Children Foundation**



Gaye Warren
Founder of **Bali Pink Ribbon**



Daniel Elber
Founder of **Muntigunung Community Social Enterprise**