

## **New board reflects skills and diversity**

**29 April 2016**

The election of three new directors following a rigorous recruitment and selection process demonstrates continuing commitment to maintaining a high-skill and diverse board, East Timor Hearts Fund chair Ingrid Svendsen said.

East Timor Hearts Fund's Annual General Meeting last night (28 April 2016) elected new directors Nicki Patten, Sarah Danne and Sophie Clarkson, for three year terms. All have legal qualifications, as well as broad governance, NGO, business and government credentials.

Nicki is a governance and legal senior manager with major not for profit human services provider Baptcare, and her background includes work with World Vision in Timor-Leste; Sarah works with Macquarie Bank and is a former Company Secretary of Etihad Stadium; Sophie is a senior legal officer with the Federal Government, has an extensive background in not for profits, and is currently based in Timor-Leste.

"These appointments, combined with the skill and experience of continuing directors, mean we are well positioned to grow and deliver on our ambitious program," newly re-elected director and Board Chair Ingrid Svendsen said.

"This year we expect to partner to deliver Timor-Leste's first rheumatic heart disease prevalence study, along with an expanded preventative penicillin program. We are also actively working toward partnering to organise visiting cardiac surgical teams.

"Our board is now better placed than ever to provide governance oversight to manage risk and effectively deliver these more complex projects and service delivery areas."

Ingrid noted that the East Timor Hearts Fund board now had greater gender diversity, and was significantly more youthful, than most Australian corporate boards and many in the not for profit sector.

"At a time when many corporate boards still have little or no female representation, it is particularly exciting to appoint on merit three outstanding women directors," Ingrid said.

"As well as having a female board chair, our board is now 55 per cent female, which is a significant increase and very much in line with our culture as a modern and dynamic organisation."

Other board members are co-founder and medical adviser Dr Noel Bayley and Ana Saldanha (both re-elected for further three year terms); and Philip Fitzpatrick (re-elected as Company Secretary), surgeon Andrew Cochrane and Bill Appleby.

Ingrid paid tribute to retiring director Julie Kean, a foundation board member, who the board unanimously lauded for her exceptional contribution to the organisation since 2012.

**More information about the board is at [www.easttimorheartsfund.org.au/about-us/the-team/](http://www.easttimorheartsfund.org.au/about-us/the-team/)**