

BRISBANE BASED SOCIAL ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT WORKSHOP DEEMED A SUCCESS

The Australian Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability (AISEA) presented the two-day Brisbane-based workshop in mid-August so as to assist organisations to be more accountable and to better perform in relation to people, the planet and their local community*. John Pearce from Social Audit Network UK (SAN) co-facilitated with AISEA director Marcelle Holdaway from Queensland. Varied forms of support were gratefully received from Mission Australia and Maleny Credit Union.

An enthusiastic group of people took part in the class. Organisations represented were Job Futures, Mission Australia, IMPACT Make Your Mark, Maleny Credit Union, Main Roads, Caloundra City Council, Food Connect, the University of Queensland and Melbourne-based Pamodzi Consultancy. During the two days participants worked their way through the SAN three step accounting and auditing framework. This is a model especially suited to organisations whose core business is social. A Social Accounting and Audit Manual was provided as a learning tool during the class - later to serve as a valuable resource to assist with implementing the framework in their own organisations.

Some participants were very well versed on the SAN framework while others were entirely new to it. Facilitators aimed to accommodate the various levels of knowledge. Group work was a strong feature of the class, and, judging by participants' responsiveness this was both stimulating and informative. Also incorporated were informative presentations from Mission Australia and Food Connect.

Three participants said the following about the workshop.

The workshop 'was extremely valuable and interesting. Although fairly new to me, MCU has been involved in TBL reporting and social audits for a number of years. The training will enable us to enhance and add even more value to what we already do. Spending a number of days with a group of people from organisations who are committed to making a difference was very motivating and worthwhile'. Annette Boseley, General Manager, Maleny Credit Union.

'As people are becoming more aware of issues such as climate change they start making choices about the organisations they support or trust. TBL accounts are an excellent avenue for measuring non-financial impact and making organisations accountable.' Jessica Kelly from Caloundra City Council

'The variety of learning activities and interactions with other participants was a fun way to learn about the process. TBL accounting is a straight forward way to account for the impacts of what you do.' Henrietta McAlister, Consultant Main Roads

Applying the framework undoubtedly confirms the good work your organisation already does, drives improvement and is fun.

* Best known in Australia as triple bottom line accounting (TBL), and in the 'third sector' in the UK as Social Accounting and Auditing (SAA).