Nigel Heywood | Community Development and Research Manager | Initiatives of Change Australia
South Sudan | Reconciliation | Diaspora | Peacebuilding

Nigel Heywood originally comes from Manilla, Australia, where his family has farmed for four generations. He studied Visual Arts at The Australian National University in Canberra. From 2001 – 2012, he worked in leadership training and community development programs with Initiatives of Change (IofC). Based in India for three years, Nigel took on the coordination of these programs as they expanded their fieldwork into more than 20 countries throughout Asia, the Pacific, Eastern Europe and Africa. This established an ongoing network of social entrepreneurs with around 100 graduates that continue to deliver peace and development projects globally.

Through contact with communities recovering from conflict, Nigel began to focus on reconciliation and dialogue work between ex-militia and victims. This led to work in the Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka and the training of 200 Peace Mobilizers in partnership with the South Sudanese Government in 2013. Nigel co-facilitates workshops for the South Sudanese Australian Peace Initiative in Melbourne.

From 2013 – 2017, Nigel worked with the Red Cross Emergency Services in Australia, designing and delivering training programs to 1000+ volunteers, particularly focusing on service needs and psycho-social well-being of the community during emergencies.

Nigel is passionate about peacebuilding work, storytelling and the creative alternatives that come out of a community when it decides to respond with non-violence. He studied Visual Arts at The Australian National University in Canberra and recently completed a Masters in Folklore and Conflict Resolution at the University of North Carolina.

He commenced as Community Development and Research Manager, Initiatives of Change Australia in January 2020.