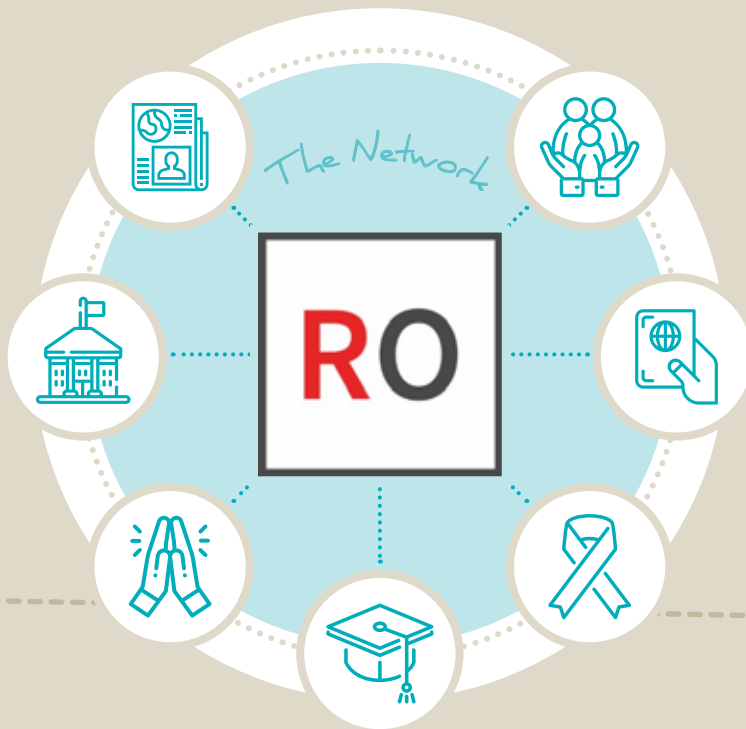


## THE ORIGIN STORY:

# RETHINK ORPHANAGES AUSTRALIA

ReThink Orphanages Australia: Better Solutions for Children, is an Australian, cross-sectoral coalition working to prevent family separation and the unnecessary institutionalisation of children. Our members work with and provide support, based on the latest evidence, to governments, organisations and individuals to redirect overseas aid and resources to help achieve this aim.



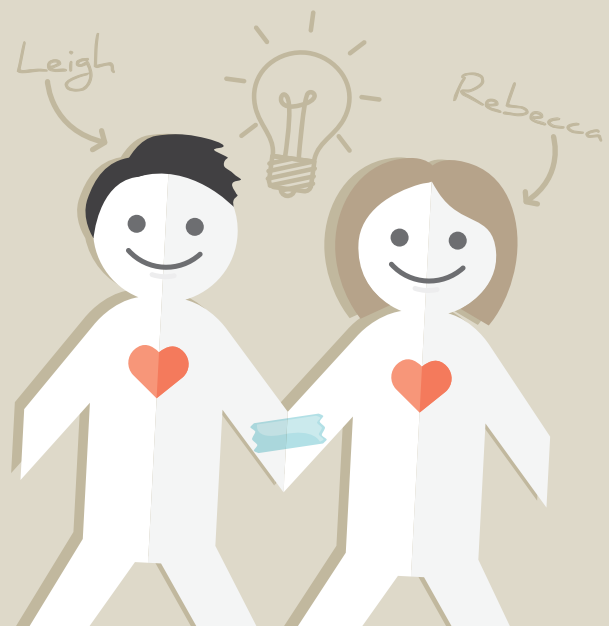
ReThink Orphanages Australia is represented by members from international aid and development, tourism, philanthropic, education and faith-based communities and works with stakeholders from a range of sectors including government and media.

ReThink Orphanages Australia is uniquely positioned to take action on issues related to the alarming numbers of children being unnecessarily institutionalized in developing countries. We are working toward a world where children are no longer unnecessarily separated from their families and placed in institutions.

## OUR HISTORY

In 2015, two child protection advocates – our co-founders Leigh Mathews (ALTO) and Rebecca Nhep (ACCIR), came together to create a solution to address Australia's impact on the institutionalisation of children overseas, in response to the proliferation of orphanages and the associated increase in voluntourism they had witnessed in their work.

As members of Better Volunteering, Better Care (BVBC), the global initiative established to address the issue of orphanage volunteering, Leigh and Rebecca adapted the cross-sectoral model employed by BVBC to create the country-hub concept. They were awarded a seed funding grant to establish the hub by the Better Care Better Volunteering Initiative co-chaired by Better Care Network and Save the Children UK.



experts/specialists

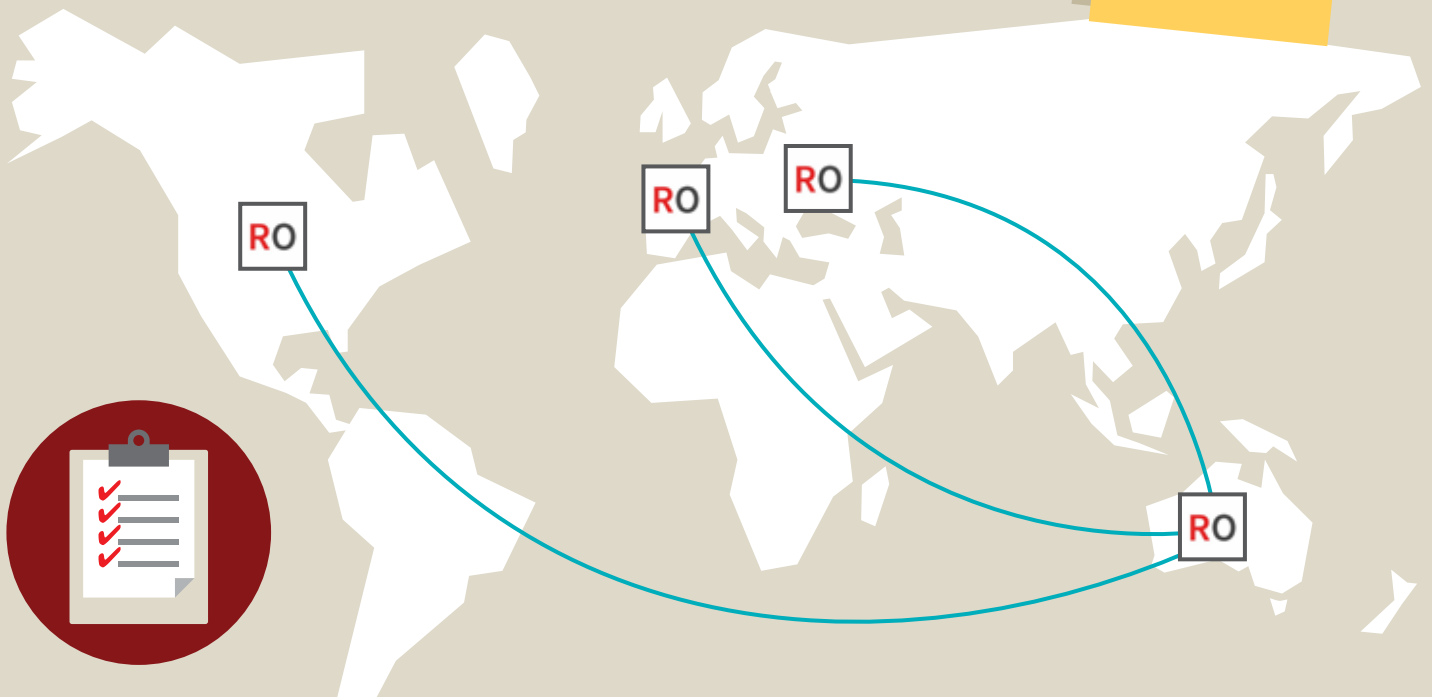
Bringing together a core group of experts/specialists from different sectors, Leigh and Rebecca launched the ReThink Orphanages Network (Australia) in January 2016. The original Steering Group included Leigh Mathews (Coordinator), Rebecca Nhep, ACCIR, Karen Flanagan AM, Save the Children Australia, Kate van Doore, Griffith Law, Tara Winkler, Cambodian Children's Trust. Liz Manning from Intrepid and Andrea Nave from Forget Me Not joined the Steering Group in late 2016.

Between 2016 and 2018, ReThink Orphanages Network Australia grew its membership to 27 organisational members from diverse sectors, as well as individual members working on this issue.

The Steering Group worked tirelessly to raise the profile of this issue across Australia and has taken the lead on highlighting the intersection of orphanage trafficking with modern slavery within Australia, and continues to engage with government on this issue.

**Together with ReThink Orphanages members, we have achieved the following:**

- Intrepid Group's removal of visits to orphanages on Intrepid trips
- World Challenge's withdrawal from orphanage trips
- Projects Abroad's withdrawal from orphanage trips
- Inclusion of orphanage trafficking and tourism in Modern Slavery Inquiry
- Inclusion of orphanage trafficking and tourism in the Modern Slavery Bill
- Input to DFAT Smart Volunteering Campaign
- Tourism sector events
- Education sector events – national and international
- Faith-based sector events
- Inclusion of orphanage volunteering at the National Education Council meeting 2018



**IN 2017, DUE TO THE SUCCESS OF RETHINK ORPHANAGES IN AUSTRALIA, THE MODEL WAS REPLICATED AND FURTHER COUNTRY HUBS WERE ESTABLISHED IN CONNECTION WITH BVBC IN THE EU/UK AND US.**

**In 2018, a decision was made to unify and capitalize on the growing momentum behind the ReThink Orphanages name. The global BVBC working group and EU, UK and US hubs were all brought under the ReThink Orphanages brand, creating;**

- ReThink Orphanages Global Working Group
- ReThink Orphanages Network Australia
- ReThink Orphanages Network UK
- ReThink Orphanages Network EU
- ReThink Orphanages Network US

**[AU.RETHINKORPHANAGES.ORG](http://AU.RETHINKORPHANAGES.ORG)**

