

Newsletter

June 2018

Partners in Aid

Enduring, Capable Communities

Partners in Aid Ltd
ABN 50 006 946 550

PO Box 42, Narre Warren LPO
VIC 3805 Australia

Phone: 03 9704 6315
Email: admin@partnersinaid.org.au
Web: www.partnersinaid.org.au

Make a positive impact on someone's life and claim at tax time

The Australian government provides each Australian with a tax rebate for donations to certified charitable organizations such as ours, for donations over \$2 per financial year. It's a great way to support what you are passionate about changing in the world and not breaking the bank.

That means that most Australians are eligible to reduce their taxable income.

Support any of our key projects such as:

- [SEDS Low Carbon Farming](#)
- Singangpad Healthy Village
- Symbiosis Bangladesh River project
- ABWU

And be eligible to receive money back after June 30 when you lodge your tax!

For large donations please confirm with your tax agent that you meet the criteria for the rebate.

Low Carbon Farming in Southern India



\$9,300 raised

89%

GOAL \$10,500

23 donations

since Jan 2018

[donate now](#)

Fundraising for
[Partners in Aid Ltd](#)



Partners in Aid
Enduring, Capable Communities

Our Vision: Enduring, capable communities
Our Mission: To improve living standards, capacity and resilience in developing communities with a focus on the Indian sub-continent. To fund and facilitate social and environment projects and child education sponsorship with local partners.



Crowdfunding for Low Carbon Farming a (Qualified) Success!

Amanda Stone – Project Director

In March we launched our second crowdfunding campaign to raise funds for the pioneering Low Carbon Farming project at SEDS in southern India.

With a fundraising goal of \$10,500, we have reached 89% of our target with \$9,300 raised. This is a great effort but we urgently need to find that extra \$1,200.

The Low Carbon Farming Project

- Trains small land holding farmers in sustainable farming practices. These are “the old ways” which farmers readily adopt
- Ensures the “inputs” and “outputs” for each farm are documented so it can be demonstrated that these sustainable methods are producing high crop yields
- Ensures these practices are accredited with the United Nations Framework which enables the carbon emission reductions to be translated into an income
- Provides an additional income source for poor, marginal farmers
- Improves the soil quality and reduces greenhouse gases

SEDS

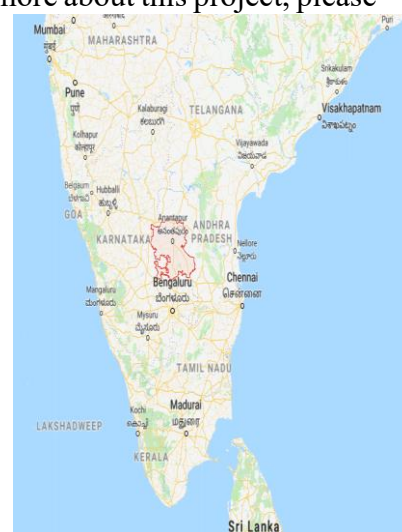
SOCIAL EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

This project promises to further lift large numbers of farming families out of poverty and into sustainable incomes from agriculture. It needs continued funding to support farmers to continue to meet the requirements of the UN Framework.

With the end of the financial year, we'd love you to consider a one-off donation to this project. If 4 supporters donated \$300 each, or 8 supporters donated \$150 each, we would meet our target.

Our donation page: <https://www.mycase.com.au/page/168912/low-carbon-farming-in-southern-india> Alternately, you can donate directly to our bank account and we will receipt you directly. Details are on the back page of this newsletter.

If you'd like to know more about this project, please don't hesitate to contact me (Amanda Stone) on 0437 004 446. Board members Daniel Bentley and Anne-Marie Maltby have also recently visited the project and have more to say in the coming pages.



Anantapur District, in the middle of the Deccan Plateau

SEDS - Project Visit Reports

Daniel Bentley – Partners in Aid Director

In February I visited our partner SEDS, to experience the great work Manil and her team are doing in rural India.

Upon arriving in Andhra Pradesh, it was really eye opening to see just how much of an impact the SEDS organisation is having in the community. The majority of the many trees in the area, which historically was barren and dry, were planted by SEDS, and seeing the positive benefits of the dams and Low Carbon Farming (LCF) initiatives we are helping fund, are having on local farmers and the environment, was very satisfying.

One of the key activities Partners in Aid fund are the desilting of the dams, once they become full of soil through erosion from the rains. I was amazed to see dams that had been recently desilted that were full of water and experience the positive impacts that has on the local farming community and the environment. Even more so, I wasn't aware how rich in nutrients the silt that is taken from the dams is, and the benefits that it



A recently desilted dam at SEDS

provides when it is applied to farm land. I visited one farm that was growing tomatoes and they had a section of tomatoes that were grown using a layer of the silt on the soil, and next to it was the same type of tomato planted at the same time, but without silt. The difference was remarkable. I would say the section of tomatoes with the silt produced 3 times the yield of the non-silt area. A great example of the high returns we get from providing the funding to desilt these dams.

I was also really interested in learning as much as I could about the LCF initiatives SEDS are pioneering. After going through the program in detail, seeing the data that has been collected about each farming plot and seeing the outcomes the training is having on the local farming

community, it further reinforced why this is a critical program for us to support into the future.

The SEDS team really are doing some great things over there, and seeing the impact of what our members, donors and team are having by partnering with the SEDS organisation was highly motivating and fulfilling. Thank



Daniel, some LCFers and their produce!

you to Manil, her team and her family for having me during my stay.

Anne-Marie Maltby – ABWU Project Director

After hearing about SEDS for many years, I thought I had a pretty good idea of the scope of what they do but it turns out that I really didn't! There's a lot of info on their website but nothing compares to firsthand experience. I learned a lot on my visit and thought I'd share some of the things I didn't know about SEDS:

- Yes, we know that they do tank desilting, land revegetation and a lot of other things but the variety, extent and impact they have had is quite amazing and much greater than I had realised. They have had a major direct impact on several hundred villages and indirectly on the entire region.
- Many of the projects that SEDS started have been so successful that they have been taken over by the government and implemented on a much larger scale in other districts and beyond. This included a lot of healthcare and education initiatives.
- The greening of the area and other initiatives have reduced flooding significantly with the hills holding a lot more of the water that used to pour down onto the flat areas. In turn, the water in the hills slowly leaches down and creates a slow supply of water after the rains have finished.
- The microclimate of the area is slowly changing which is important as SEDS is situated in the second driest area of India. Species of wildlife that hadn't been seen for years have started to return.
- The biogas initiative has now installed more than 5,000 biogas converters. That means 5,000 households that no longer rely on firewood or bottled gas. The firewood was a big issue as, not only was it polluting, wood was cut down from precious trees. There are a few types of converters but, in their simplest form, all you need is the manure from two cows, a covered pit and some pipes.
- Rajen initially came to the area as a volunteer and was so concerned about the area that he decided to stay and try to change it. He and Manil started SEDS with minimal money and, with the support of a few friends, have built it into a powerful instrument of change. They have been able to achieve an astonishing amount from very little and I am so glad that we support them and know that we contribute to these great outcomes.



Women finishing work for the day

SEDS – Child Sponsorship

Lyn Pickering – SEDS Sponsorship Director

GREAT RESULTS from our eighteen Year 10 students again this year. The students are now on their long and always hot summer holidays, and for the majority of them, they will also be planning their next step to College for Year 11 and 12. With ongoing Government and family support the students will have this opportunity to progress to higher levels of education.

Two girls have again come through this year with excellent results of 9.7 and 9.3, from a possible 10. Of the eighteen students who sat their Year 10 exams, thirteen were girls and five were boys. Two other girls failed a subject, but they were able to re-sit the exam. Their results are not yet available.

I find I am still excited each year waiting for the Year 10 results. Watching our own four ‘children’ complete their education, marry and then have children, most of whom

are at school, makes me appreciate more what we have been able to offer our own family. The same opportunities are not always available in India, but expectations from students and their families is bringing about change.

Results for our students through SEDS, from LKG, UKG (kinder classes) and Years 1 to 9 will take some time to arrive as the schools will not begin to release these results until the new school year which begins in the middle of June. Reports from the schools are not given to students other than those on our program, so they do not see this as a priority.

I hope you share some of my excitement in knowing that sponsoring the education of a child does have very positive affect on the students, who now can dream of a future outside the poverty of many of their families.



Image of Indian school from Shutterstock <https://goo.gl/images/c9GkLh>

Sinangpad Healthy Village Project

ALDRIN D. SIWAO, MD - Municipal Health Officer (Pasil, Kalinga) (nb. this report has been edited by Partners in Aid for brevity)

Being in public health, it is our mandate to promote health related activities and prevention of diseases in the community. It has allowed us to deal with individuals directly in the community whether they are indigenous, marginalized or people requiring special assistance. All of them need our attention. Let me then share our Pasil experience in the context of a community and how it has developed into a better and inspired society influenced by Sinangpad.

I was employed as a Municipal Health Officer of Pasil (Kalinga) in 2006. Programs of basic services are often neglected. This was a challenge that led us to look for partners to better service the needs of the various indigenous people. Since we share the same concern in promoting community health development, the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasil decided to sign a memorandum of understanding to partner with the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project (SHVP).

The partnership with Sinangpad Healthy Village Project has an integrated approach covering the health and health-related problems of the community. The strategies focus on addressing the top health problems in the community, such as construction of additional water sources, pigpens and sanitary toilets, health promotion, and green training on environment sanitation. It also addresses nutrition issues, and the problem of inaccessible and expensive medicines through herbal/vegetable gardening and advocacy of the Community Health Care Financing Scheme to important stakeholders. The Sinangpad Healthy Village Project



provides community health training, assists communities develop action plans, provides some funding for materials necessary for the community to construct basic health-related infrastructure and offers ongoing monitoring and mentoring. It also organized an community health task force to keep the environment healthy, clean and green. As a support to the project, the Municipal Government Unit provided funds for the construction of water systems and some additional sanitary toilets. The Provincial Health Office offered their technical expertise in community organizing. The Regional Health Office likewise contributed by providing plastic toilet bowls to support the program. It was a concerted effort from all stakeholders. The Municipal Agricultural Office provided vegetable seeds for the backyard gardening, and the veterinary office vaccinated dogs against rabies and impounded astray animals.

The program in general was a success. Firstly, the community became aware of government programs, especially those relating to health. They also became aware of how to care for the environment through the training run by Sinangpad, and the importance of self-reliance through backyard gardening and the construction themselves of household toilets, pigpens, improved drainage etc. Secondly, the number of households with sanitary toilets increased from 46% to 83%. Thirdly, in the municipality, which has had the

second highest number of malnourished children in the province, the number suffering from malnutrition has gradually declined. As a result of these improvements, two of our Barangays got first place and two got second place in the search for the Healthiest Barangay in the Province of Kalinga between 2009 to 2014.

Truly, our experienced with the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project has moved us to act together to achieve our desired goals. Although during the implementation, there were clashes of minds, contrasting ideas, violent reactions from the community, hesitations and resistance to change but at the end of the day, we came up with a common objective in the best interest of the community. Indeed, our working together as a team was a success as shown in our accomplishments.



Keep in Touch



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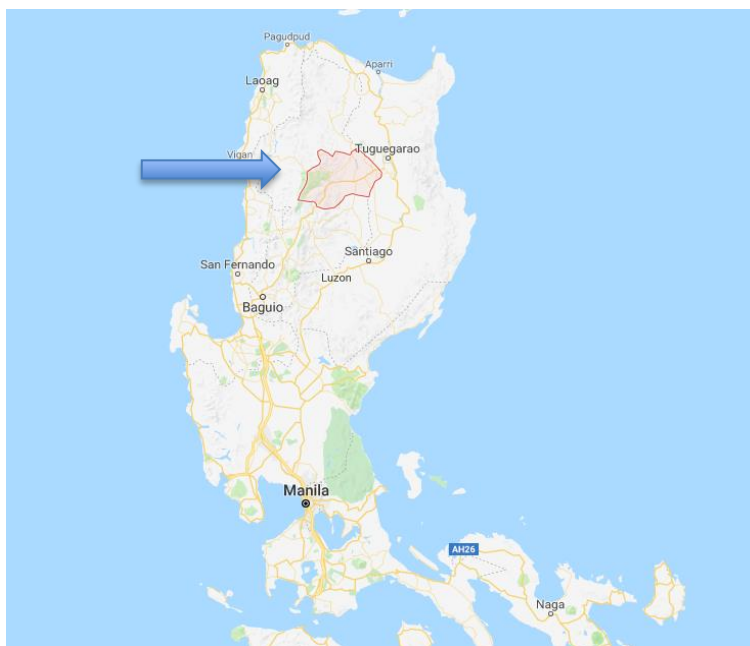
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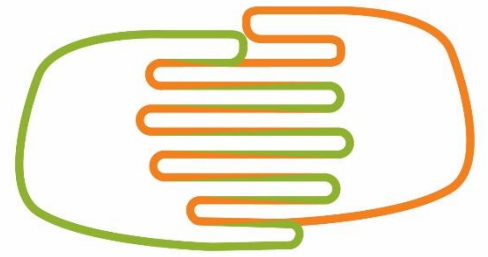
Kalinga Province in relation to the capital Manila

A note on photos used in our newsletter

Partners in Aid have policies in place to protect those we help – such as our Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct. As such, we do not publish images of children under the age of 18 without parental consent, nor do we publish a child's name. Our policies are regularly endorsed by ACFID.

Unless otherwise noted, photos are taken by Partners in Aid Directors and Project Coordinators. Where an image is sourced from the Internet, we will reference it as such.

If you have any questions on our policies, please contact us via email admin@partnersinaid.org.au or by phone on 03 9704 6315.



Time to have your say

Graham Moore - Project Director

We are nearing the end of our current three-year agreements with Symbiosis Bangladesh and are in the process of negotiating new project agreements. Our current projects are two-fold. The first, called TTIS, is directed at technical training, primarily of women, to develop skills in sewing and associated social, health, and business skills in order to start an income generating activity for themselves and their family. For most of the participants, this was their first opportunity to do anything like this because of lack of school education and experience. This project is based in the city of Mymensingh, 150km north of Dhaka.

The second project, called the Jamuna River Development Project, is based on ephemeral sand islands and banks of the Jamuna River about 150 km north east of Dhaka. The project works mostly by forming groups of women from small rural communities who are largely illiterate and have very precarious means of support for their families. These groups, which operate for a long duration, up to 6 years in some cases, start by learning basic literacy, health, legal, and numeracy skills, but then meld into support and savings groups to assist each

Partners in Aid

other commence income generating opportunities in their community. The project also supports pre-school and primary education for children that do not get that opportunity from government operated schools. Finally, the groups also participate in technical training programs such as sewing, kitchen gardening, and toilet construction in order to improve health and self-sufficiency.

If you have an interest in contributing your ideas or indicating your priorities to the Partners in Aid Board and Symbiosis Bangladesh, then this is a great time to have your say. Please contact Graham at symbiosis@partnersinaid.org.au with your comments, or to arrange a time to speak. Even just an indication that you like the current direction is valuable feedback.

As an organisation Symbiosis Bangladesh has the capacity to do a lot more of these activities so we are constantly looking for new donors and bequests to support the projects. Currently we fund projects to the tune of around \$30,000 per annum which mostly comes from many annual donations of a

couple of thousand dollars or less. If you, or any of your contacts are interested in becoming more substantive donors of projects like these we would like to discuss this further with you. If you would like to enter into a sponsorship arrangement with a new community group where we could facilitate a more intimate information exchange with the group, we could also help establish this.

Remember, these donations are all tax deductible. Get in before about June 30th so we can receipt your donation this financial year.



TTIS Training



Disability Seminar

ABWU

Anne-Marie Maltby - Project
Director



A number of ABWU sponsors have been advised that their sponsored girl has been returned home. The Indian government has changed and tightened policies which have had a direct impact on ABWU. With the recognition that educating girls is a prerequisite for eradicating poverty, they have implemented a scheme called Kanyashree which aims to keep girls in school longer and reduce the incidence of early marriage. It provides approximately \$15 annually direct to school girls from low income families and also a one-time grant of \$500 to be paid when girls turn 18, provided that they are engaged in academic or vocational training and are unmarried. It may not seem like much to us but it is a significant incentive to an impoverished family.

Last year the United Nations awarded the West Bengal government first prize in public service for this scheme. It was chosen from 552 projects from 62 countries which clearly indicates the value that the UN sees in it.

In conjunction with the scheme, the government no longer allow shelter homes to take girls who have families no matter how disadvantaged. The theory is that the Kanyashree scheme will support these girls' education at home. The only girls who can stay are orphans, girls sent to ABWU by the courts

and those assessed as being at risk in their own home.

Transfer to the After Care Home is no longer automatic. These girls cannot continue with their education and stay at ABWU after the age of 18. We are currently sponsoring several girls who are continuing their education but living away from ABWU.

The tighter regulations have resulted in ABWU being forced to return many girls to their homes. The ideal situation is always for girls to live at home if possible and ABWU will continue to monitor their situation and have them assessed if major concerns arise.

Although ABWU always have concerns about their girls that leave, they hope that the Kanyashree scheme will have a great impact on West Bengali girls staying at school and waiting until at least 18 to get married. There are always more girls needing care than there are places available. In the meantime, sponsorship will continue to support the care of ABWU's remaining and many new girls.

ACFID Code of Conduct



ACFID
CODE

The ACFID Code of Conduct is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice that aims to improve international development outcomes and increase stakeholder trust by enhancing transparency and accountability of signatory organisations. Partners in Aid is committed to the Code, of which we are a signatory and have been for many years.

If you feel Partners in Aid has breached the ACFID Code of conduct you can visit <http://www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/complaints> to make a complaint directly to ACFID.

Complaints Policy

All complaints should be addressed to the Board Chair and will be treated seriously, acknowledged promptly and resolved within 2 months.



Partners in Aid is proud to be registered with the ACNC, a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, and registered with Consumer Affairs Victoria. Whilst compliance is an onerous task for a volunteer organisation, we are committed to maintaining transparency, in which you can be confident your funds are going to where they are needed most – to those in India, Bangladesh and the Philippines.

You can make a donation to Partners in Aid through PayPal. You can select a specific item, such as fish fingerlings for tanks in India, or a general donation. Making a general donation gives the Board of Partners in Aid the greatest flexibility in using your contribution. Please use the comment field in the Paypal form if you would like your general donation to go to a project or item not listed on our donation page, at this link:

. <http://partnersinaid.org.au/how-to-help/>

PayPalTM

Please help us spread the word about Partners in Aid by passing this newsletter on to family, friends and colleagues once you have read it.

Thank you.

Make a Donation



Using the
secure engine of
GiveNow.com.au

GiveNow is an initiative of the Our Community Foundation, a not-for-profit program established through the financial support of www.ourcommunity.com.au and Westpac. Their manifesto is:

"You have the power to make a difference, to build a better community, to shape our country, our world."

Partners in Aid is registered with them, which means you can make a donation using their secure, online portal at this link:

<https://www.givenow.com.au/partnersinaid>

As we have noted in earlier newsletters, you can enjoy quality wine and support Partners in Aid projects at the same time. For every case of wine sold, a proportion goes directly to Partners in Aid, with no overhead costs.

For further detail, go to:

<http://www.goodwillwine.com.au/charities/partners-in-aid>

You can order wines or buy gift vouchers.



Membership is only \$25 a year, and goes a long way in our administrative costs, ensuring donated funds go to the projects not postage stamps!!

Membership also entitles you to vote at our AGM, or nominate a proxy.

Membership is due on June 1st of each year. Please contact us if you're interested in taking on a membership.



Partners in Aid Donation Form



Partners in Aid

Donations

I would like to make a general donation to Partners in Aid

\$

I would like to make a donation to (circle/note where applicable):

ABWU (books/self-defense training support)

\$

SEDS (Sustainable Agriculture)

\$

Symbiosis Bangladesh (stationery/garden/sewing machine/women's group support)

\$

Sinangpad Healthy Village Project (toilets, vegetable patches, community health)

\$

Child Sponsorship

I would like to begin/continue (please circle) to sponsor a child at ABWU/SEDS (Cost is \$260 per child per year, + optional annual gift \$20)

___ children

x

\$260/280

=

\$

Membership

I would like to begin/continue (please circle) to be a member of Partners in Aid

\$ 25

Total amount enclosed (donations and child sponsorship)

\$

EFT details: Partners in Aid, BSB/Acct: 033686/162354, with your surname as reference. Please email admin@partnersinaid.org.au to arrange a receipt and confirm where you would like the donation directed.

If paying by cheque, please make it out to Partners in Aid and send to PO Box 42, Narre Warren LPO, VIC 3805

Name for receipt: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email (for internal use and occasional updates): _____

Gifts of \$2.00 and over are tax deductible (receipt will be issued)

Thank you for your support