



# Newsletter

June 2016

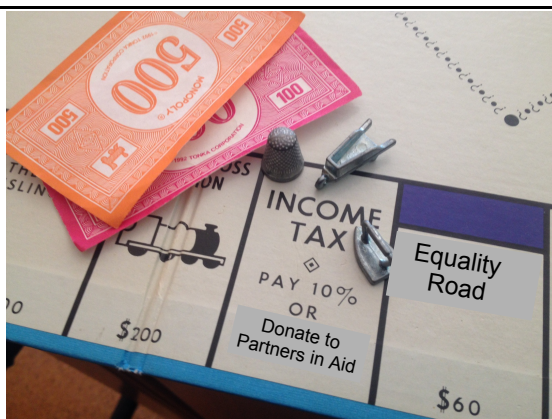
## Partners in Aid

Enduring, Capable Communities

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**Get in before 30<sup>th</sup> June to make a donation and get an income tax deduction!**

If you have lost track of how much you have donated this year, contact us at [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au) and we can give you a report.

**New sponsorship trial. Contact Bangladesh Director Graham Moore if you know a group in Australia who might like to sponsor a women's self help group in Bangladesh. See Symbiosis Report for more details**  
[admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au)



**Read about how your donation leads to a safer climate via the Low Carbon Farming project in the SEDS report**



**Sinangpad Healthy Village project in the spotlight. See Cecily's report inside**



## Sinangpad Healthy Village Project

Dr Cecily Neil – Project Director

A new 3-year partnership agreement has just been negotiated with the Sinangpad Association to enable the NGO to continue implementing the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project.

This project is now in its ninth year. By the end of 2015, 56 communities – representing some many thousands of people – have been engaged in the Project and have undertaken activities to improve health in their village. Improvements in environmental sanitation are now being sustained in at least 46 of these communities. The action plans that communities have developed have involved everything from constructing sanitary toilets, penning pigs and learning how to care for previously free roaming, self-foraging pigs once penned, and holding a large formal communal marriage for older couples with families who were married in traditional ceremonies not recognized by the Filipino health insurance scheme and who, as a consequence, cannot obtain family benefits for medical expenses. While not exactly related to environmental sanitation, given the importance of health insurance in enabling people to seek professional health care, the latter activity highlights how important working closely with the communities has been to enable them to understand the barriers to good health in their community, determine their own priorities and devise ways wherever possible to overcome these barriers themselves.



The vision of the Sinangpad Association, as set down in the new agreement, remains basically the same as that of the past nine years: namely, the

commitment of all villagers in Kalinga to making their life healthier by creating and sustaining a village environment that has



fewer health risks, thereby reducing the incidence of environment-related food and water-borne and vector-borne diseases. Sinangpad Association members believe that this vision can best be achieved by investing in bringing about behavioural change, and helping communities make the most of their human potential and existing resources. The purpose of the Project therefore continues to be:

- to inform communities about community health development, thereby stimulating residents' commitment to adopting healthier behavioural practices with respect to environmental sanitation;
- to build villagers' capacity, confidence and sense of responsibility with respect to reducing local and household risks to their health;
- to help communities to both identify physical barriers to sustained behavioural change with respect to health, decide on their priorities with respect to removing these barriers, and then to facilitate **their** achievement of what **they** decide they want to do,
- to provide ongoing mentoring and support to villages, once they have begun making changes, and
- to encourage local government willingness to support and help sustain community health initiatives.

The one major change in the new Agreement is that Val Pis-o will no longer be an employee of the Project. Val has given tremendous service to the project over the last nine years, spending many weekends, as well as weekdays, hiking into mountainous villages with no vehicular access. During this time, as well as admiring her work commitment, we have shared the joy of her marriage and the arrival of a delightful little daughter, Thea. Val has now taken full-time



employment with the Local Government, but promises that she, along with other Sinangpad members, is fully committed to continuing to work on the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project on a voluntary capacity. We wish Val every success in her new job, and look forward to continuing a long and worthwhile association with her as the Sinangpad Healthy Village Projects gradually engages more and more Kalingan villages. (There are still another 96 villages in Kalinga that the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project has not yet reached!)



*Community planning session*



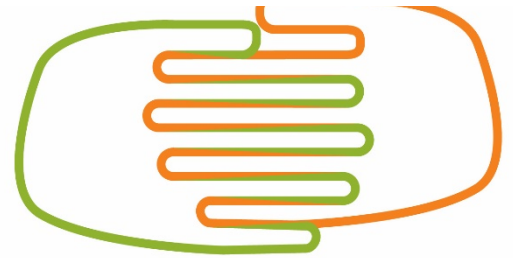
*Free roaming pigs before capacity development*



*New latrine to work against open sanitation*



*After training on penning and caring for pigs*



Anne-Marie Maltby – Project Director

## VISIT TO ABWU January 2016 Joy Handley

I visited ABWU in late January this year. It was the shortest time I have spent there due to other commitments. I had 3 other ladies with me from Alpine Women's Group in Bright.

I visited all the Vocational Projects; Cutting Tailoring and Machine Knitting, which we have been funding for 22 years and I am always delighted to see a new group of girls being so enthusiastic about what they are learning and so keen to show me what they have achieved. Given the facilities they have, the old treadle sewing machines and fairly basic tools they do some amazing work! My friends were quite overwhelmed by what they were doing so much so that they all bought something much to the delight of the girls and their teacher. Patrizia Simone of "Simone's of Bright" Restaurant who so generously has been providing the Italian Luncheon in Bright for 16 years was so taken with their aprons that she ordered 50 to be made to use in her Cooking Classes where she will explain to her students where they came from and about ABWU. She is hopeful most will make a donation towards our fundraising! The aprons have been made and arrived a few weeks ago. Patrizia is quite delighted with them.

*Simones*

While we no longer fund Weaving or Block Printing, it is great to visit these projects as we did fund both at different times when they were struggling financially and it's wonderful to see them now self sufficient and still doing amazing work. Again the ladies were very impressed and purchased more items from each making everyone extremely happy.

When we visited the Balwadi Crèche, we went into the pre-school section which is for littlies 3-5. They were all so well dressed and clean and so involved in what they were doing we were all a bit

## Partners in Aid

gobsmacked. They were reciting the alphabet and counting as well as some doing very good drawings. For their annual sales these little children make lovely cards a lot using pencil shavings to shape what they want. Very very clever. We were all astounded at how well behaved they were. Sitting at their desk doing their work, not talking and moving around and disrupting others! It was very pleasing to see and it was obvious they were not 'putting it on' just for us. Over the years I have visited all the classrooms and all the children are very well behaved and do their work very diligently.



Their Annual Sports Day took place while we were there and I was asked to be the 'special guest'! This meant I had to present all the prizes at the end and also make a speech. It was an honour to be present for all of this. They all have so much talent and enjoy themselves so much! A happier group of children, young adults and elderly I have never seen. It makes me happy to know that what Partners in Aid are providing is used and appreciated in a very positive way and encourages me to continue fundraising and finding new sponsors for as long as I am able.

Following is a snippet from the Children's Welfare Home:

Since the inception in 1932, All Bengal Women's Union, a voluntary Social Organization has been



working ceaselessly for the betterment of the less privileged women and children in moral danger. We provide them with shelter, health checkups, and education in schools and colleges and also with various types of Vocational Training. Our vision and mission is to reach out to the most vulnerable section of society and to mainstream them into society with dignity.

For their proper rehabilitation the Institution expands its activities from time to time according to its need.

Currently we have 141 resident girls. During this academic year 19 girls are attending Balwadi Crèche, this is for children under school age and those up to seven who have not had access to any education. 47 girls attending ABWU Primary School, 50 girls are attending middle / higher secondary school, 4 girls are attending Special education classes. A significant number of girls are attending Skill Development & Vocational Training in addition to their regular schooling. They also attend extracurricular activities like, Karate, Dancing, Singing, Drawing, Dance Movement Therapy, Hockey, Krav Maga, and Computer.

In the After Care Home the girls studying at College(University), Nursing and Higher Education continue to do very well. As always some do better than others.

One girl in ACH is in 2<sup>nd</sup> year studying Botany her subjects are Zoology, Botany and Chemistry, her college have organised excursions to Botanical Gardens, Zoo and Indian Museum. She is also studying spoken English and in her first course she attained 91% and is now into her 2<sup>nd</sup> course. She is very determined to succeed and is to be commended as her family background is far from ideal! Her mother also resides at ABWU. She was unwell when they arrived at ABWU but with medical intervention her health is much improved and she is now a house mother at CWH. This is an excellent outcome for them both.

Another girl who is in 2<sup>nd</sup> year University studying Bengali honours is also teaching Bengali, English, Math, Drawing at an ABWU Outreach Programme in the slums. In her Centre, there are 25 children, all first-learners. She has an Asst. Teacher to help her manage the Centre.

She has also become a Trainer of Krav Maga – Israeli self-defence system for nearly one year

now. She provides training to some girls of our shelter homes, for which she receives a stipend every month. Not surprising her ambition is to become a teacher! She is an active girl and wants to make Sports her career.



*Self confidence through self defence*

Currently 5 girls are at University (one in 1<sup>st</sup> year, 4 in 2<sup>nd</sup> year and 1 in 3<sup>rd</sup> year)!

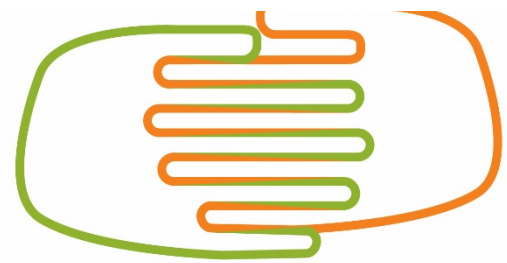
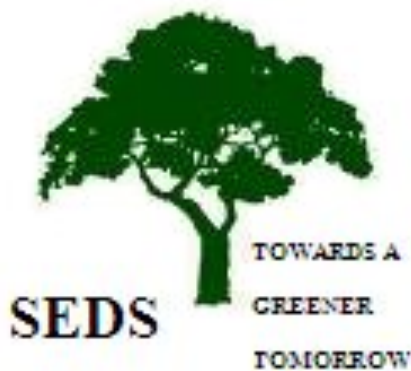
2 girls have successfully completed 3 ½ years Nursing Training and are now fully qualified and now enjoying their nursing.

Another 4 girls are studying Nursing (2 in 2<sup>nd</sup> year and 2 in 3<sup>rd</sup> year)! A wonderful achievement for all.

These are girls that we currently sponsor; others also do well through sponsorship through other avenues. I am happy to give Case history details to anyone who would be interested in sponsoring a girl at ABWU. It is a very rewarding experience.

The highlight for me was meeting my sponsored girl, Mita Das, who is blind and who has done so very well. Mita was married 13<sup>th</sup> December last year and she and her lovely husband came to meet me. I am so happy for her. Her husband is a lovely gentle man, totally devoted to her and has had his home set up especially for her to manage. He is partially blind and is a school teacher. The care he took of Mita and I was very touching. She never stopped smiling!

Nor did I! To be honest... I also cried!!!



## Partners in Aid

So, had they been able to start trading yet? When would farmers and their families begin to benefit financially?

The answer to the last question was simple. No income just yet.

The last step in this very new field of Low Carbon Farming is to establish a technique for assigning a monetary value to greenhouse gas emission reductions from agriculture. This had not been done. However a technique called a “Cool Farm Tool” has been developed and was recently accredited by the UNFCCC. This is a great step forward which SEDs farmers are ready to take advantage of.



*Checking farm registration details*

### **Of Silkworms, Bees and Fruit Trees** *Sustainable Agriculture empowering farmers and improving livelihoods at SEDs*

When I arrived at SEDs in late January, I was eager to see how the ground-breaking Low Carbon Farming project had progressed.

Since my last visit, the basics had been put in place. Farmers had been trained in Low Carbon Farming techniques by long term SEDs staff member Mani, and were documenting their practices in specially designed diaries.

Data collection and management systems had been established; details of crops planted, the amount and type of fertiliser and pesticide used, and the crop yield were being collected and collated by Imran, the SEDs Project Officer. This methodology had all been accredited.



*Famer Group meeting to discuss Low Carbon Farming (LCF)*

The farmers had formed a company as a legal entity to trade emission reductions and were meeting regularly.

The good news - the benefits to farmers of this new way of working were very clear from my field visits to farms, to farmer group meetings, and in a



farmer company meeting held on a Sunday with the rural development bank NABARD.

- Sustainable agriculture techniques were proving very successful. Using home - made fertiliser and pesticide from readily available materials such as neem plant extract and cow urine, was both economic, better for the environment and people's health, and ultimately producing better crop yields.
- The farmers' groups were discussing and sharing new ways of adding value to their modest businesses. We visited a large indoor silkworm farm. Fruit trees are now included in the programme, and SEDS is introducing bee hives to farms (see later article).
- The farmer company is exploring ways of improving the collective advantage of the group through a loan from NABARD for a storage shed, to enable them to sell stored products when the price is right, not when they have to because they have no storage.
- SEDS is assisting farmers improve their practices through the use of mobile technology which is being met with enthusiasm.



*Silkworm farming, value-adding to farmers production*

### **The Bees Have Arrived!**

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, the first of the bee hives arrived at SEDS. An initiative of Rohith Joshua, bee hives are being introduced to farmers in the SEDS Sustainable Agriculture programme, to improve pollination of crops and of course to produce beautiful honey as additional income for farmers. As there is very little use of artificial pesticides, deadly to bees and other insects, the SEDS area is ideal to pilot this initiative.



*Inspecting fruit trees, now included in LCF*

The empowerment of farmers through the Sustainable Agriculture programme and now the Low Carbon Farming project has been the success story at SEDS in recent years and has been made possible by a **small bequest** to Partners in Aid which helped with the seed funding. SEDS is seeking further funding to help continue the project past 2016 and we will be launching a fundraising campaign shortly. Please look out for details in future newsletters.



*Bee-keeping provides food directly and through fertilization of crops.*

Wild bees exist in Andhra Pradesh of course, and a number of hives were spotted around the SEDS farm in January. But the ability to locate hives where pollination is needed, and to collect the honey will be another boost to improving livelihoods for farmers, their families and communities.



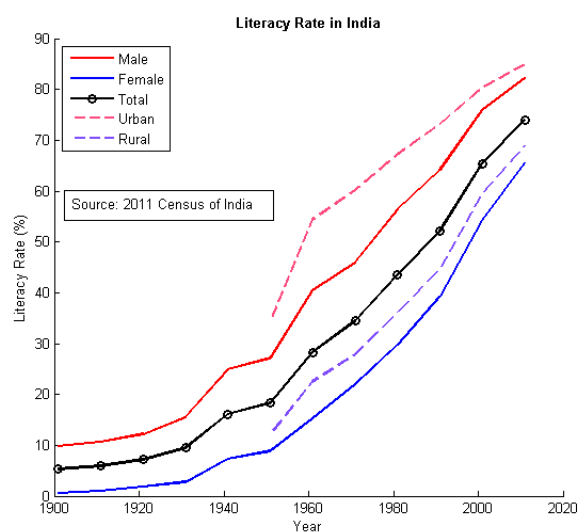
Amanda Stone  
SEDS Project Director

## Child Sponsorship news from SEDS in India

The school year has come to an end and the students are on their summer school holidays in India. They are experiencing some very extreme temperatures in the SEDS area, one of the driest states in the country. The high temperatures dry up water resources and affect the electricity supply on a daily basis, making life even more of a struggle

than the usual daily effort for many. On occasion SEDS might be lucky to have six hours of power per day.

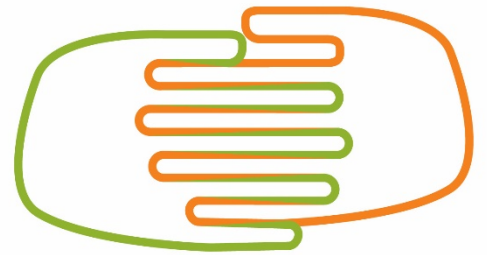
An email from Manil reported some great results for our Year 10 students. Twenty-nine students sat their Year 10 exams with 22 girls and 7 boys in this group. **Twenty seven** of the students have now passed their Year 10 standard with a number receiving very good results. The two students who failed will have the opportunity to re-sit a failed exam. Rural girls are the bottom line on this graph. Partners in Aid and SEDS is giving them a chance



The trend over recent years has been for the students to continue their education beyond Year 10, and the majority will now do that with Government support. The sponsored children were chosen from the villages in the area of SEDS work, and come from disadvantaged and impoverished families. This makes their results all the more exciting, as they often study under very difficult conditions. I hope our readers share my excitement in knowing this. The individual donors can be happy with the knowledge that they have given a child an education, and now the right to look ahead to a better future.

Lyn Pickering: Director – Sponsorship at SEDS

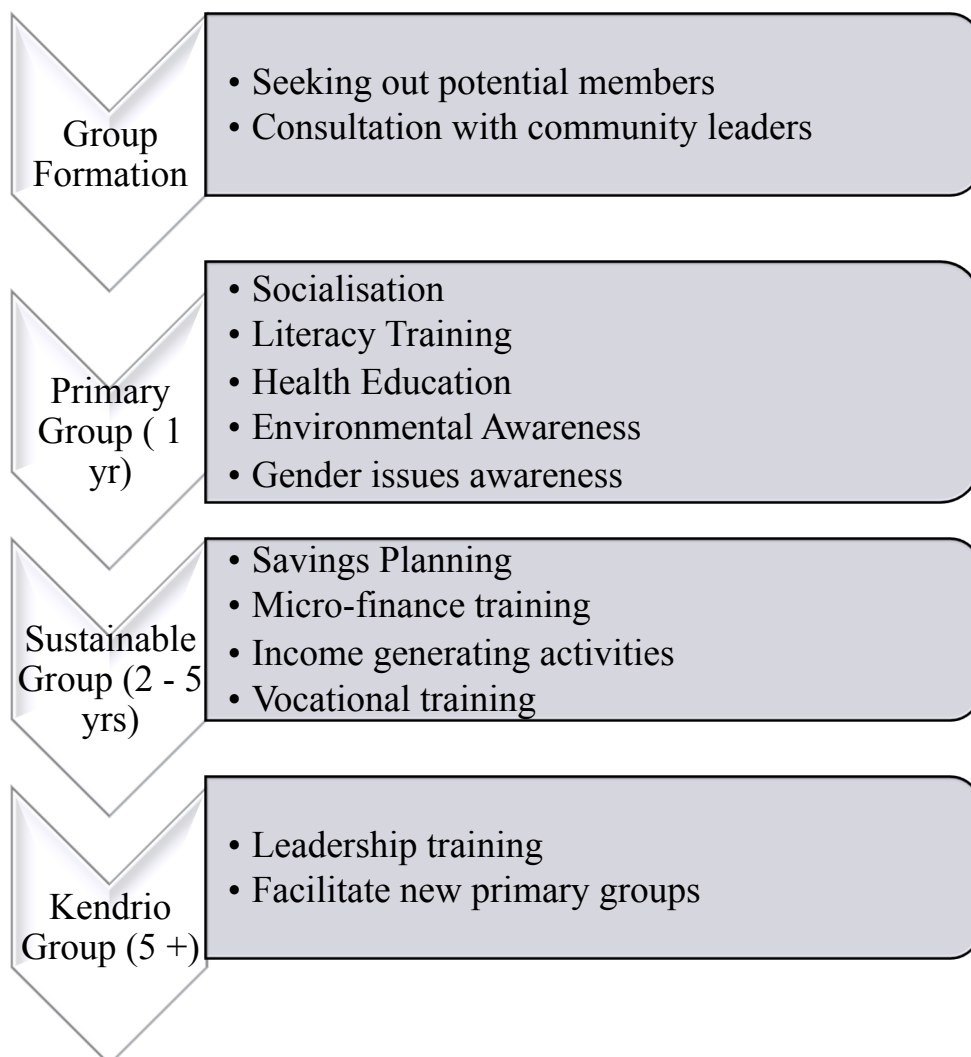




**Exciting new opportunity to  
connect to a Bangladesh  
community**

**Partners in Aid**

One of the ways that our partner Symbiosis achieves its aim of developing the capacity of communities to lift themselves out of poverty is by forming women's groups on the sand islands (chars) of the Jamuna River. The figure below shows the stages from group formation through to a group creating leaders to repeat the cycle.



During my visit to Bangladesh I discovered something of the dynamics of this process and the determination of these women to support each other as they strive to improve the lives of their children and families. During discussions with Symbiosis staff we brainstormed ways in which we could try to help this process and to provide a closer association between Partners in Aid donors and the ultimate recipients of benefits of the donations. The way we resolved to try to achieve this was by developing a sponsorship relationship between a women's group in Bangladesh and a donor group in Australia. We felt that this would enable a much greater understanding of how the women's groups operate and potentially open the possibility of communication and shared understanding with the donor group.

In order to develop this idea Partners in Aid and Symbiosis want to conduct a trial of group sponsorship. Symbiosis staff have identified the **Rajonigondha Women's Group** (pictured below) in the Kazipur sub-district of Bangladesh to take part in the trial. This particular group is in the 'sustainable' phase. We are seeking a group in Australia to take part in the sponsorship trial. The

Australian group could be a service club, a family Christmas club, a book group, a tennis team, or any other fairly stable group of people who are interested in making a real difference to people who find themselves in a very different situation to themselves. We are looking for the group to donate or raise \$500 per year for 3 to 5 years. This level of funding is enough to enable the Rajonigondha Women's Group to pay for the services of a facilitator and trainers, plus some seed funding to enable the financing of income generating activities.

If you are interested in this trial, or know of a group who may be interested, please contact Graham Moore by email at [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au) to get more information on this initiative.

If the trial is successful, we would like to expand the arrangement to partner with many more women's groups

Graham Moore – Project Director



Rajonigondha Women's Group



## ACFID Code of Conduct

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.

Keep in Touch	
	<a href="http://www.partnersinaid.org.au">www.partnersinaid.org.au</a>
	<a href="https://twitter.com/PartnersinAid">@PartnersinAid</a>
	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/PartnersinAid">Partners in Aid</a>

## End of Financial Year

As the end of the financial year approaches, Partners in Aid is urging people to consider a charitable donation that could boost their tax return while supporting our life-changing work.

All donations of \$2 or more to Partners in Aid are tax deductible (and we will send a receipt for your payment), with donation statistics revealing June 30 is traditionally the most popular day of the year to donate to charity. A donation towards any of our projects would be very much appreciated by our overseas partners, and of course it's also fine to make a general project donation if you prefer, or set up a child sponsorship for ABWU or SEDS. You can donate using the form on the last page of this newsletter, or make a secure online donation using PayPal (see the website for more details).

## Goodwill Wine

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 details go to <http://www.goodwillwine.com.au/charities/partners-in-aid> – you can order wines or buy gift vouchers.



## Membership

Annual Membership for 2016/17 is now due. Membership is only \$25 a year, and goes a long way in our administrative costs ensuring donated funds go to the projects not accounting and insurance costs!

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

## 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 (orphan trip/sewing supplies/books/self defense training support)

\$

SEDS (stationery/health check-up/bee hives/sustainable farming support)

\$

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

\$

Sinangpad Healthy Village Project (toilets, sustainable farming, community health)

\$

### Child Sponsorship

I would like to begin/continue (please circle) to sponsor a child at ABWU/SEDS (Cost is \$240 per child per year)

\_\_\_ children

x

\$240

=

\$

### 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)**

If paying by EFT please email [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au) for bank account details. If paying by cheque, 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***