

Newsletter

December 2016

Partners in Aid

Enduring, Capable Communities

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Partners in Aid project reports.

SEDS, Symbiosis and Sinangpad project reports are all in the coming pages. Read on to learn more about the work you support.

Simones

The annual Bright Luncheon raised almost \$5000!

It's always a fabulous day out at Simone's of Bright, raising funds for the ABWU in Kolkata.

Details of the lunch, with photos of the fun, can be found on page 4.

World Food Day - 2017

World Food Day at Bayles is something to look forward to, so save the date:
Saturday February 18th.



It's almost Christmas! We have some gift ideas detailed on page 9 that might help sort out your Christmas shopping list.



SEDS Project Report

Amanda Stone – Project Director

Tank Desilting

There is never a shortage of demand for tank desilting in Andhra Pradesh where SEDS works. This year another 2 tanks were desilted, allowing them to be replenished with rain when it eventually came.

The villages to benefit this year were Chinnakodipalli (133 Farmers, 2650 Loads, 14000 cubic metres of soil excavated) and Kandukurlapalli (94 Farmers, 2255 Loads, 9900 cubic metres of soil excavated). As you can see, a total of 227 farmers and their communities, benefitted from this project and an additional water storage capacity of 23,900,000 litres was added. Having access to fresh water for crops, animals and household supply is essential and this PIA funded project is highly valued and the funds are much sought after.

This work is painstaking and time consuming.

Tanks are enormous and only a relatively small section can be dug out in any one year. The best section for desilting must be identified and marked out. Then heavy machinery (funded by PIA) is

used to excavate the silt (23,900 cubic metres this year) which is then



Marking out

replaced onto agricultural land to increase fertility. The excavated area is now capable of storing water run-off

when rains come annually.

Tank desilting has also been integrated

with the Low Carbon Farming project to magnify the benefits to farmers.



Excavation



Increased water capacity

Honey Beekeeping

Bees were introduced to farms earlier this year as an income supplement for farmers but also to increase fertilisation of crops.

This year has seen training of 61 farmers in bee keeping and 10 hives distributed free of charge. It's a project in its infancy with no results as yet, but it's an example of the ongoing work to diversify farmers' productive activity and income,

and an example of how willing local communities are to embrace new ideas.



Training in bee keeping

Low Carbon Farming

Each year since the LCF methodology was validated in 2012, more and more farmers have joined in the project, receiving training in sustainable agriculture, keeping diaries of their farming practices which are used to demonstrate Carbon Emission Reductions, and forming farmer groups to share practices, support each other and pool their emission reductions. Despite drought and crop failure from time to time, and the very slow progress of a monetarising tool to allow trading to commence, the number of farmers has grown from 800 in 2013, to 927 in 2015 and 1140 in 2016.

NABARD, the National Bank for Agricultural and Rural development, has been supporting a group of farmers in the 3 years to 2016 and SEDS is currently linking another group in with NABARD.

With the Cool Farm Tool accredited this year, SEDS is anticipating that next season's crops will finally provide tradeable carbon credits and all that solid preparatory work will start to pay off. This is

very new and ground breaking work, something SEDS is no stranger to. There have been lessons learned which others who follow their lead will benefit from, but the overall benefits to current and future generations of farmers will be tangible.

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SEDS Visit Report

Lyn Pickering – SEDS Sponsorship Director

Hello everyone,

Ian and I recently returned from our most recent trip to India, where our hopes and expectations continue to be met, and still excite and inspire us. Each visit brings new ideas, and at times challenges, but we meet them head on. What we give in terms of our time and energy is reciprocated by those we have regular contact with, and visits to the villages and the schools is always rewarding and at times fun. We visited villages with Mani, as well as the Low Carbon Farming and watershed work. This continues to benefit the local communities, and is something Ian has always taken a keen interest in. The weather this year was much milder than usual with a lot of cloud which promised rain, but delivered little, so temperatures were a little cooler.

After initial discussions with Mani I had a number of areas I wished to concentrate my attention this year. These included visits to some new schools, to check on the attendance of students and to check back on attendance at the SEDS monthly activities, and to meet the new Principals and teachers to the area.

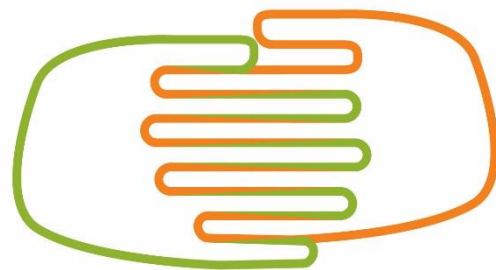
Another area I was keen to follow up on was students who had either been selected by SEDS staff, or were recommended by a school/teacher. A number of students arrived at the farm to seek support with a parent or grandparent. With 30 children completing Year 10 this year I wished to

bring back some new profiles of students to offer donors who have been so generous in sponsoring these older students, some since the start of school, and several newer sponsors.

I am very pleased with our pass rate for the Year 10 students this year. Twenty nine students passed Year 10 with one fail. Gowthami, a girl from a village, topped our pass rate this year. Once a student completes Year 10 they move on to Year 11 which is referred to as 'College'. Because monitoring is more difficult we have taken the decision to not offer regular sponsorship, however consideration is given to students who we believe deserve the extra support to continue, and can be checked on regularly. This year five students have continued with sponsorship support.

On several of our school visits I was joined by Ian, two Social Work students from Australian universities, and two Psychology students from Belgium - all who were on three month placements at SEDS. They appeared to gain something from these experiences, and it was good to discuss the visits later. A good experience for everyone.

A successful and rewarding visit, and one to remember.



Anne-Marie Maltby – Project Director

ITALIAN LUNCH IN THE COURTYARD

Joy Handley

The 17th Annual Bright Luncheon was held in mid-November, with Joy Handley once again organizing a wonderful fund raiser.

The money raised: \$799 (Auction); \$1487 (raffles); \$2650 (ticket sales and donations)

\$4936.00

TOTAL



Unfortunately, Joy could not attend as she was unwell, we wish her a speedy recovery. The montage of photos here shows what a fun day it was – if ever you're in Bright in November, I think it would be well worth dropping in.



Sinangpad Healthy Village Project

Dr Cecily Neil – Project Director

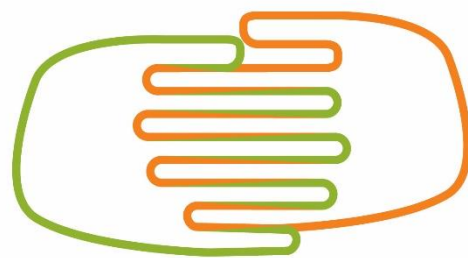
This was intended to be a very positive article reporting, as 2016 draws to a close, on the latest achievements of the members of the Sinangpad Association and the communities with which they have been working. Although Partners in Aid can no longer afford to pay a full-time community organizer to facilitate the Sinangpad Health Village Project, the Sinangpad volunteer members, including Val Pis-o, have continued to work hard throughout the last year, expanding their coverage of Kalingan villages, advocating at Provincial and Municipal meetings for the inclusion of their community health development strategies into government policies, and involving the local government Rural Health Unit staff more and more in monitoring the outcomes of Sinangpad involvement in their local communities, and mentoring the leaders of these villages, where appropriate.

However, in October this year, Kalinga was hit by a Signal#5 typhoon. This was much much stronger than most typhoons that affect the region, and people were not prepared for the devastation it caused. Fortunately, casualties were relatively few. Val and Rose and other Sinangpad members and their families are all safe. However, in many of the villages, most structures were destroyed, including homes, sanitary latrines, community data boards and government structures such as schools, day care centers, and Barangay Health Stations. Roads



have been blocked, and it is not anticipated that electricity services will be fully restored in the capital before December. The rice crop – the mainstay of both the regional and local subsistence economy – is mostly gone.

Quite a lot of the small-scale, health-related infrastructure which community members constructed with the help of Sinangpad funding for purchase of cement and other materials is now gone. However, the emphasis of the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project has always been to invest in behavioural change to a much greater extent than physical structures. Thus it is hoped that the capacity building and the commitment to creating a healthy village that has been generated by Sinangpad training and mentoring will facilitate the resurrection of the devastated villages. Sinangpad's plans for next year are now undecided, although it is likely that much of the funding available will go towards providing construction materials that will enable community members to restore such local infrastructure as sanitary latrines, pig pens, village drainage, and solid waste disposal containers. A Partners in Aid member will be going to Kalinga this month to discuss the situation, and Sinangpad's plans for 2017.



Partners in Aid

Bangladesh News

Graham Moore - Project Director

In rural Bangladesh the poorest people tend to be in a cycle of poverty. Extreme poverty dropped from about 70% of the population in the 1980s to about 40% in 2010 according to Gapminder. This change has come about partly through the efforts of Partners in Aid and our Bangladesh partner Symbiosis. We believe the most effective way to continue this trend is through integrated programs that support the empowerment of the poorest communities through education, especially of women, that can strengthen the health and well-being of the family and their environs plus contribute to income generating activities.

Partners in Aid are commencing an opportunity to sponsor groups of women in the Jamuna River Development project and we need sponsors now. If you or someone you know are in a position to sponsor a group of about 20 women who are fighting for a better life for their community and family, now is the time to contact me (project coordinator Graham Moore) at symbiosis@partnersinaid.org.au. For \$500 per year over 5 years you can fund a women's self-help group and assist a whole community to start

to break free of the poverty cycle. Maybe this could be your family's Kris Kringle

Here is an example of the difference our work can make. Amena Begum, 30, is married to Monir who is a grocery shop keeper and they have one son and one daughter. They live at Bhangabaria in Shorishabari district, which is between Mymensingh and the Jamuna River. It was very hard to maintain their family needs within the meagre earnings of her husband. Due to their financial problems, their family happiness has been under stress and was decreasing day by day. So she was seeking ways to contribute to her family and improve their financial situation.

However, the opportunities in rural Bangladesh are few and far between. One day she met with Rehena (a sewing trainer from Symbiosis) and shared her family problems. Rehena encouraged her to take sewing training from TTIS alongside her domestic work. Amena discussed the opportunity with her husband and he agreed with his wife for her to commence sewing training. She completed very well and started sewing at her home. Community women felt courage by seeing Amena's work and started to learn sewing from

Amena. She began to receive sewing orders from the neighbors and was able to earn money through this system which helped contribute to her family needs. She realized that it is a big success for her life. She is also discussing with Monir starting a small clothes business in future to supplement the grocery store goods. Apart from sewing, Amena also learnt about health and different types of income generating activities to develop every individual life through Symbiosis. She is very

much thankful to Symbiosis for her achievement, and funders Partners in Aid who help bring together groups of women for sewing training.

As we approach our Christmas season, please think about how you can express your love and caring for community and family through supporting programs funded by Partners in Aid to help break the cycle of poverty. Go to the Partners in Aid website <http://partnersinaid.org.au/how-to-help/> and choose items from the Symbiosis list.



Christmas Gifts and Donations

This Christmas why not consider making a donation to one of our projects as an alternative to buying a traditional gift for family or friends? You'll be making a very positive difference to the lives and prospects of disadvantaged and vulnerable people, while avoiding the shopping hustle and bustle and queuing for a parking space too!

You can also make a general project donation if you prefer, or set up a child sponsorship at ABWU or SEDS.

We are happy to provide a gift certificate on request; please email us if you would like to arrange a gift.

A general donation will be used in supporting any of our projects needing funds at the time of your donation.

Here are some ideas for each of our project areas.



ABWU

Any donation towards:

- ❖ The orphans' holiday fund
- ❖ Sewing supplies
- ❖ School text books

Symbiosis, Bangladesh

- ❖ Writing materials and books for school \$15 per set
- ❖ Kitchen garden materials \$50
- ❖ Super Kris Kringle – sponsor a teacher for a year, \$1800, or \$150/month
- ❖ Sponsor a women's self-help group, \$500 per year for 5 years

SEDS

- ❖ \$15 provides a fruit tree for the Low Carbon Farm orchards
- ❖ \$50 provides fish fingerlings for the full water tanks
- ❖ \$100 provides a bee hive to help pollinate crops

Sinangpad, Philippines

Any donation towards helping communities make their village environments healthier through:

- ❖ Training villagers in community health development and facilitating their planning to create a healthier village
- ❖ Mentoring villagers implementing plans to make their village healthier
- ❖ In some cases, providing funding for materials necessary to enable villagers to construct simple infrastructure such as toilets and pig pens to reduce health risks, especially to children.

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.

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 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/fruit trees/fish fingerlings)

\$

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 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