



# Newsletter

September 2018

## Partners in Aid

Enduring, Capable Communities

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### Happy Independence Day India!

Independence Day in India is celebrated on 15 August, to commemorate the nation's independence from the United Kingdom on 15 August 1947. On this day, the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru raised the Indian national flag above the Lahori Gate of the Red Fort in Delhi. On each subsequent Independence Day, the incumbent Prime Minister customarily raises the flag and gives an address to the nation.

The holiday is observed throughout India with flag-hoisting ceremonies, parades and cultural events. This is a national holiday.



*Thank you to SendScraps.com and Freepik.com for these images*



# **Crowdfunding for Low Carbon Farming - A Success Story!**



Amanda Stone – Project Director

Earlier this year, we commenced our second crowdfunding campaign to raise money for the groundbreaking Low Carbon Farming project at SEDS in Southern India.

The bequest which had previously provided funding ran out in 2017 and we were desperate to find another source of funds to keep it going.

Low Carbon Farming is a method of sustainable agriculture which results in reduced greenhouse gases - carbon dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and methane - being produced, compared to contemporary farming methods using artificial fertilisers and pesticides and intensive cropping.

If farmers document their methods, the inputs and outputs, and can demonstrate the reduction on greenhouse gases, they can trade these emission reductions for cash, supplementing their incomes and enabling many to stay on their farms and provide for their families.

SEDS has been training farmers, assisting them to develop and use new farming methods, to document their work, to measure their crop yields and to form farmer companies who can trade as a collective as well as apply for finance as a group. It's a program which offers a future for marginal small farms and we are keen to support it.

SEDS needs \$27,000 a year to run the programme but we set a crowdfunding target of \$10,500 to maximise our chances of achieving our goal.

After a slow start, by June 30th we had not only reached our target but exceeded it by 50%, raising a total of \$16,620. This was largely due to a number of large individual donations by a small number of donors and we thank them most sincerely.

Your generosity will ensure the programme can continue during 2018 and will make a huge difference to the lives of these farmers and their families.

We acknowledge that for some supporters, a single annual donation, possibly at the end of financial year, can be their preferred method of supporting our projects.

If 25 supporters were able to each donate \$1000 per year, the Low Carbon Farming project would be funded for the foreseeable future.

We are inviting our members and supporters to consider becoming a Committed Donor with a pledge of a single amount - \$200, \$500 or \$1000 - once a year, to help support these resilient and inspirational farmers to secure a future for themselves and their children on the land.

Please see our Donations page for further details.

If you'd like to discuss the project before donating, please don't hesitate to contact Project Manager Amanda Stone (0437 004 446) or Board Member Daniel Bentley (0432 369 282).



## SEDS – Child Sponsorship - travel plans delayed

Lyn Pickering – SEDS Sponsorship Director

As I sit to write my comments on the child sponsorship program at SEDS, I do so with a degree of sadness that Ian and I were not able to visit at this time. Our planned trip was aborted, two days prior to departure, due to Ian falling. He managed to crack a bone in his spine and also has a pinched nerve. The three weeks of our proposed visit has been spent in hospital, attempting to improve very high and very low blood pressure and having physio to strengthen his body after the fall. Management of these things will now be ongoing.

The good news is that he is now home, and in recovery. Plans for India are on hold until he regains his strength and receives a clearance from his doctor for future travel.

School reports have been received for many children. I am now beginning the process of letters to donors with copies of those reports.

My thanks to those donors who continue to support the education of a child. Your feedback on your own experience of supporting a child, and that willingness to take a new child when that student completes their education to Year 10, ensures that children who have so

little, will continue to have opportunities denied their own parents and grandparents.

### Keep in Touch



[www.partnersinaid.org.au](http://www.partnersinaid.org.au)



[@PartnersinAid](https://twitter.com/PartnersinAid)



[Partners in Aid](https://www.facebook.com/PartnersinAid)



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### TOWARDS A GREENER TOMORROW

The Social Education and Development Society (SEDS) is a Non-Governmental Organisation that has been actively involved in socially transforming initiatives and rural development for over 38 years near the town of Penukonda in Andhra Pradesh.

# Sinangpad Healthy Village Project

Dr Cecily Neil - Project Director

Over the last few months, in addition to their regular Sinangpad Healthy Village Project activities, Sinangpad members have been organizing an evaluation of what has been achieved in the 60+ communities that have participated in the project over the last 10 years, and, in particular, what achievements have been sustained over time. Workshops will be held in September to discuss the findings. I will be attending some of these workshops and look forward to reporting on the findings in the next Newsletter.

In addition to the above activities, the Sinangpad NGO has recently adopted a new project with the goal of constructing toilets and wash basins in those Kalingan elementary schools which do not have adequate sanitation facilities. The first such toilet to be constructed was funded by the Rotary Club of Hawthorn in the village of Pantikian. A proposal is now under consideration by Rotary for the construction of the next school toilet in the village of Balatoc, which suffered major destruction in the typhoon that swept through Kalinga at the end of 2016. Although the new school toilet project is not part of the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project, the toilets for which funding is being sought are for schools in communities already participating in the Healthy Village Project, and the same approach to engaging the community is being adopted. Thus, with the Pantikian Elementary School toilet:

- unskilled work, such as excavating the septic tank, was carried out by community members on a voluntary basis;



- the Municipal Engineer oversaw construction, closely monitoring the work at each step;
- the Municipal Local Government Unit provided a vehicle for trans-shipment of construction supplies to project site (about 3.5 hours from Tabuk, capital of Kalinga, and the only real source of the construction materials);
- the barangay (village) officials, accompanied by Sinangpad members, were responsible for the purchase and transshipment of construction supplies to the project site – materials being carefully selection on the basis of safety, sustainability, ease of cleaning and cost, in that order;
- the Parents and Teachers Association officials took turns to work with the skilled laborers to ensure that the project was implemented according to specification and to be accomplished on time;
- female parents took turns in cooking lunch and serving snacks for the laborers;
- Barangay (Village) Health Workers planted pots of flowers to put around the building to beautify the site and make it more appealing for the children to use, and

- finally, to help create a sense of ownership, the children were allowed to choose the colours with which the building was painted.

Sinangpad members have also undertaken to organize training for a number of members of the community in how to do simple repairs and ongoing maintenance to keep the toilet and wash basins in good condition. Finally, Sinangpad members carried out games and activities with the children to encourage good hand washing practices.

Hopefully, this will be the first of a number of new school toilets to be constructed as part of the overall goal of eliminating open defecation in Kalingan villages.

Pantikian School Toilet funded by the Rotary Club of Hawthorn, Vic. (Before the planting on grass in the muddy area resulting from construction.)

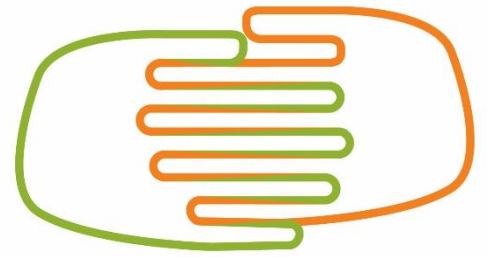


### ***A note on photos used in our newsletter***

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](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au) or by phone on 03 9704 6315.



## Akhi's Dream

Graham Moore - Project Director

Each quarter as part of our ongoing monitoring of projects we receive an update of activities and a snapshot of the personal impact your support creates in Bangladesh.

Akhi lives in the Sirajganj district of Bangladesh which abuts one of the largest rivers in Bangladesh, the Jamuna River. She lives with her parents along with one brother and three sisters. Unlike many women in the area she is able to read. Her mother Shahana Begum is a member of Jagoroni Women's Group supported by Partners in Aid. One day Akhi's mother came to know that JRDP provides vocational training to the members of the groups and other poor community people. Based on that information Akhi became interested to receive that training and her mother talked about the matter with the JRDP staff. Then with the facilitation of TTIS-Sewing project, JRDP arranged a Sewing Training Course for 20 participants along with Akhi in May 2017. During her course Akhi's father also bought a sewing machine for her and with this machine she started sewing clothes for her family during training. After successfully completing her training

## Partners in Aid

Akhi became more confident on sewing. Now she sews during her leisure time and earns BDT 700-800 (\$AUD 12) per month in addition to saving on buying clothes. She also bears her educational expenses through her sewing work. Her dream is to build a Sewing Training Centre in her community where she could provide sewing training to the poor and marginalized women. She is grateful to Symbiosis for the opportunity and shared that now 'she could move towards her destination'.

I take several lessons from this story. The first is that by long term support of women's group we reach a much wider audience than those directly funded. It is clear that Shahana received value from her involvement in the group, otherwise she would not be telling others of her experience and encouraging them to access the support and training our partner, Symbiosis provides. The second is that raising the skill level of people, they can earn income to further their own education. Finally, people who receive the opportunity to improve their lives are often the first to step up and provide the opportunity for others to do the same.

I am inspired by Akhi. I hope you are too, and will continue to support the projects in Bangladesh both directly and by encouraging your friends, family and work colleagues to contribute tax deductible donations.



### Batik block printing training



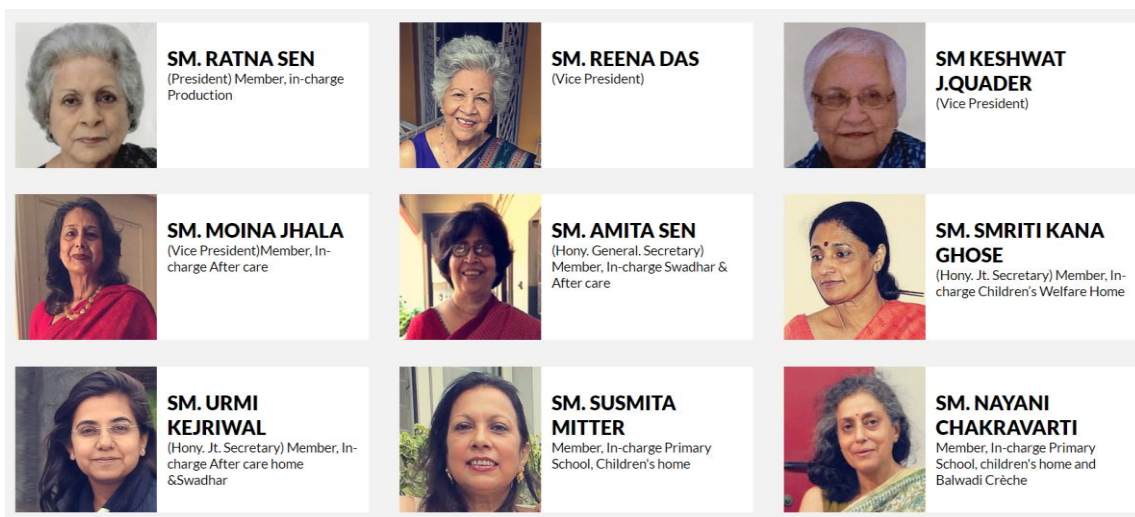
## ABWU



Anne-Marie Maltby - Project Director

We have shivered through some freezing Melbourne winter days but I would personally much prefer that to the summer season that the people of Kolkata have been suffering through. Record temperatures combined with high humidity made things pretty unpleasant, particularly for the poor who have to work through relentless heat and humidity with no escape during sleepless nights. To make it worse, there have been floods with the monsoon. As Kolkata has expanded, many lakes and canals are filled with muck or built over altogether. Areas of low-lying fields that once absorbed the runoff are now new suburbs. The rapid extraction of groundwater is also causing the landscape to sink and the overall result is flooded streets every monsoon. Most of the population has little choice other than to wade through water for a large part of the monsoon season. Not much fun anywhere let alone in a place where standing water is filled with so much that you don't want to think about.

Most ABWU volunteer ladies are there every day even when the heat and humidity are at their worst. There is no air conditioning so working conditions aren't easy but they know that the work still needs to be done and there needs to be constant monitoring to manage things well. Although they haven't complained, the government changes that repatriated a lot of girls caused a lot of problems but ABWU seems to be adjusting to this. The government also now seems to have some degree of flexibility with their policy. During follow up home visits, two girls who had been returned to their villages raised concerns that they would be married off and wouldn't be able to continue with their education. They were being monitored by ABWU and appealed to them which resulted in getting permission for re-admission into the Home for another two years until they complete their Higher Secondary education. It's great to know that ABWU can have some influence in these sorts of cases.



*Some of the many dedicated ladies who run ABWU*

Four more girls have recently been accepted into the government General Nursing & Midwifery Training, which will make a total of six girls undertaking that training. One of the girls had previously been doing hotel housekeeping training and it appeared to be going well. As she had quite a traumatic background, the ABWU ladies were thrilled about how well she was going and what it was doing for her confidence. Unfortunately, she began to find the work extremely difficult and totally lost confidence about her spoken English which is essential for the level of hotel for which they were being trained. Things were looking bad for her future but, after a lot of discussion, ABWU arranged for her to sit the nursing entrance exam and she was accepted. With her hospitality training and some confidence, ABWU feel that things should go well for her this time.

The dedication of the ABWU volunteers is a measure of their belief in the worth of their work. Every girl at ABWU has a story to touch your heart and we are grateful that the PIA supporters can

provide opportunities for them that were unimaginable to them before.

If you're curious, you can visit the ABWU's new website: <http://abwu.org.in/>



Bengal Presidency Council of Women & the All Bengal Women's Conference formed an independent organization for Suppression of Immoral Traffic. This society came into being as ALL BENGAL WOMEN'S UNION.

#### WHAT WE DO



Child Protection

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Child Care

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Swadhar

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Elderly Care

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## 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/>

# PayPal™

*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](http://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 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Please contact us if you're interested in taking on a membership.



## Partners in Aid Donation Form



### Donations

Partners in Aid

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)

\$

### SEDS Low Carbon Farming Committed Donor

I wish to pledge \$200 /\$500 /\$1000 per year for 1/2/3/4/5 years and will make my donation on

.....(date)

### Child Sponsorship

\_\_\_ children

x

\$260/280

=

\$

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)

\$ 25

### Membership

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

\$

### 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](mailto: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*