

# Newsletter

December 2018

## Partners in Aid

Enduring, Capable Communities

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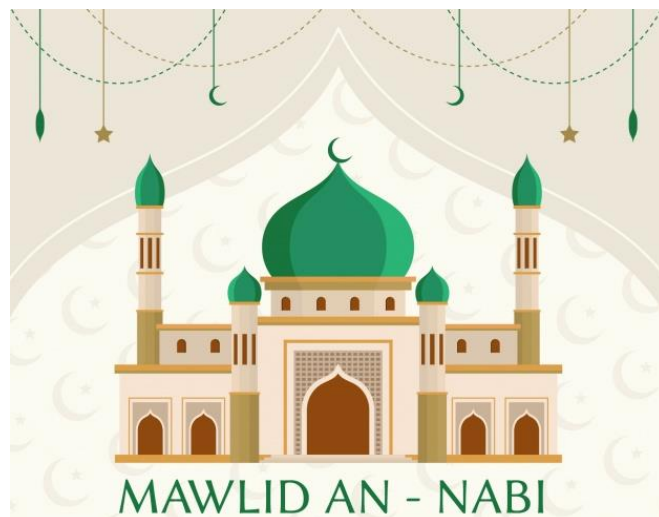
### Happy Diwali/Christmas/Mawlid an-Nabi!

It is holiday season across the world, including in the countries of our partners.

Diwali is the Hindu festival of lights, Mawlid is a celebration of the birth of the prophet Mohammed and perhaps most familiar to our readers, Christmas is upon us. From all of us at Partners in Aid, we wish you a safe and happy holiday season however you chose to celebrate and say a very big thank you for your continued support.



Thank you to Google Images for the images used here.



## THANK YOU TO OUR HELPERS THIS YEAR

*We wish our helpers this year a Very Merry Christmas, and a peaceful and Happy New Year*

Phillip McMillan – for printing our four newsletters per year at no cost to Partners in Aid.

Robin and Liz Zlonzak – for preparing the newsletters for posting.

Joanne McMillan – for support for the SEDS child education sponsorship program

Joy Handley – for her many years of dedicated work and support for the ABWU child education sponsorship program

ALL our donors – whether it is for project work, child education sponsorship or fundraising. Without this support we would not be able to assist the many families and their communities we do – in Bangladesh, India and the Philippines.



Thank  
you!

## 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 education sponsorship at ABWU or SEDS. A general donation will be used in supporting any of our projects needing funds at the time of your donation.

We are happy to provide a gift certificate on request; please email us if you would like to arrange a gift – [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au) Here are some ideas for each of our project areas.

### **Sinangpad, Philippines**

A \$30 donation for the Pasil zero open defecation initiative

- ❖ \$30 supplies materials to enable a household to build a toilet with septic tank.

### **Symbiosis, Bangladesh**

- ❖ Writing materials and books for school \$15 per set
- ❖ Kitchen garden materials \$50
- ❖ Super Kris Kringle – sponsor women's self-help group (\$500/year for a group of 20)

### **ABWU**

Any donation towards:

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

### **SEDS**

- ❖ \$15 provides a fruit tree for the Low Carbon Farm orchards
- ❖ \$50 provides fish fingerlings for the full water tanks
- ❖ \$240 to sponsor a Low Carbon Farming group for one year

Any donation towards:

- ❖ Medical fund for students

## SEDS – a quick update

You may have read in the news that Southern India was impacted by Cyclone Gaja. These sorts of weather events are causing havoc with the annual tank desilting at SEDS, which has been much delayed this year.

The desilting of tanks has been a regular occurrence at SEDS since the early nineties. The buildup of silt in the tanks is a result of water erosion. Every year the monsoons wash away tons of earth, which becomes silt in the area's tanks. The resilience building inherent in the sustainable agriculture project aims to support farmers in dealing with the difficulties of a changing climate.

Many of you will have received your annual update on the progress of your sponsored child at SEDS in the form of a copy of their school report. As mentioned in our last newsletter, Lyn Pickering has just completed a visit to SEDS and wrote the following during her trip.

### **SEDS India – Child education sponsorship and other things**

Lyn Pickering – Child Education Sponsorship  
Project Director

My visit to India is fast coming to an end, and this visit has been exciting and rewarding, all though a little different with Ian remaining home recovering from his hospital stay. Frequent calls have brought him up to date with my activities. Our family have taken care of Ian during my absence, and he is on the mend.



A noticeable change, from my perspective, over the past 25 years that the child education sponsorship program has been in operation, is the willingness of many illiterate parents now desiring to educate their child beyond Year 10. Rasool visits the villages and schools, and sometimes Mani or SEDS Field workers recommend a child for sponsorship. The follow up to this occurs when they go into SEDS for an interview to clarify the details previously given. A small number of parents have remained in school to Year 10, and occasionally beyond that. Whilst this is growing slowly, there are still many illiterate parents and grandparents in the villages who are now recognizing the benefits of education for the children.

India remains a challenging and exciting place to visit with Ian and I focusing mainly on the work of SEDS and their team. This has included Watershed







management and child education sponsorship. We have also built up solid friendships and enjoyed other aspects of work in India through the YOURS Foundation and Rotary. We have been very privileged over the years to meet so many like-minded people both in Australia and in India and through those various partnerships, we have all made a difference.

This visit I also spent three weeks with our granddaughter Kirra and Maurice who have been at SEDS for a two-month holiday helping out as volunteers and enjoying what India has to offer. I came home thinking that this generation are more than capable of carrying on the work, and they too are making very worthwhile connections along the way.

I visited 98% of the students at their schools and saw 173 of them at the second Saturday activity at SEDS, a monthly activity. Cultural Days, sports days, Craft days, Health camp and measuring for school uniforms and their annual gift being some of the activities carried out. Sometimes a combination

of several activities is held on these monthly meetings.

One of our Year 9 girls is achieving excellent results. I was shown her Science project during my visit to her school. The project was on Sericulture (Silk Worm industry). Her research into the local industry was very thorough, and consequently she received a Science Award and the opportunity to travel to a large city to experience a Science Forum with other outstanding students from the State. The results generally this year were very good for all students.

**PHOTOS** All photos of sponsored children have parent or guardian permission. Thanks go to Rasool in his diligence in having the forms for long term students completed and signed before I arrived in India. This permission form has now become normal procedure when information is gathered for a potential new child for the education sponsorship program.



# Sinangpad Healthy Village Project

Dr Cecily Neil - Project Director

Another typhoon recently hit the north of Luzon, including Kalinga, home of our Sinangpad Healthy Village Project. Kalinga was not affected as badly as some of the other northern provinces - farmers had sufficient warning to get the rice crop in, although they lost the corn crop. A significant amount of flooding also occurred, but following plans developed by the province after the disastrous typhoon of 2016, there were effective evacuation processes in place. Nonetheless, there was significant property loss and infrastructure damage in certain Kalingan municipalities.

As it turned out, a visit by the PIA Project Director was already booked (again!) for a time that co-incided with the typhoon. She made it a day later than originally planned, but the impact of the typhoon precluded any visits to villages outside the provincial capital, Tabuk. However, this gave time to discuss the SHVP with two key Sinangpad Association members, Val Pis-o and Rose Alunday.

The work of the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project is continuing, with new villages being introduced into the project, and villages already participating being mentored and re-energized as necessary. The Association has also added another activity to their healthy village workplan. In the Municipality of Pasil of Kalinga Province, virtually all villages are part of the Healthy Village Project. In developing their action plans, most of these villages have given priority to the construction of sanitary latrines. When Sinangpad started working in Pasil, the percentage of households without a sanitary latrine was 58%. It is now 24%. The lack of a sanitary latrine for the most part means that



household members resort to open defecation, with all the risks that this creates for health in the community, and particularly that of young children. However, there has never been enough funds for the SHVP to provide the necessary cement and re-enforcement bars to enable all households without a latrine to build one. (The local Rural Health Unit provides the pans with the connecting pipe and the householders the labour and local materials for the superstructure.) All latrines supported by Sinangpad are pour-flush with cement septic tanks and cement floors. Currently 459 households in the Municipality of Pasil still lack a sanitary latrine. Sinangpad is now determined to help Pasil to have zero open defecation within twelve months. The cement and re-enforcement bars cost between AUD30-40, depending on haulage. Accordingly, Partners in Aid will attempt to raise AUD16-17,000 to enable these construction materials to be purchased.

The most exciting event of the Project Director's visit was participation in a workshop held to discuss participants' response to the Healthy Village Project and its impact on their communities – part of the ongoing project evaluation that is being carried out. Before the typhoon swept through Kalinga, 200 villagers along with staff from the 7 municipalities in Kalinga had indicated their interest in attending. The typhoon damaged roads and made much of the travel very slow and difficult. Nonetheless, 145 people turned up. Many

very positive statements were made by participants about the project and its impact. While originally intended to help with the evaluation of the project, the meeting also served to motivate a number of new barangay (village) captains, who had come to that position after the recent village elections.

It should be noted that the comments made at the meeting were greatly to the credit of Val Pis-o and Rose Alunday, who have been key in organizing the activities of the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project over the last ten years.



*Rose Alunday speaking to participants at the meeting*

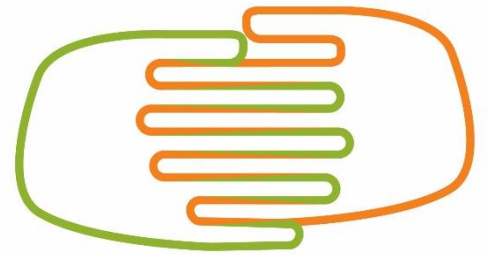
### ***A note on photos used in our newsletter***

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 reviewed to ensure compliance with the [ACFID Code of Conduct](#), and are audited by ACFID triennially.

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.





## Symbiosis update

Graham Moore - Project Director

## Partners in Aid

As we near the end of the year our Bangladesh partner Symbiosis has reported on the end of the recently concluded three-year terms of the Jamuna River Develop Project and the Garment Training Project.

I continue to be amazed by the fantastic outcomes achieved by the women's' groups. Over the last couple of years almost 900 women formed 37 groups under the guidance of Symbiosis field workers. The main qualification for joining is to be illiterate and be willing to learn. After their first 9 months of frequent meetings, the vast majority of the 900 women can now write and do arithmetic at a very basic level. In the words of one woman who I met on an evaluation visit "Now that I can write my name I am a person, before I was invisible." Almost 100 of the 900 women are able to write more complex sentences such as writing down an issue they would like discussed at their meetings, while 120 can read the rules of their group.

Over the next 3 years, Symbiosis will use the funding provided by Partners in Aid to transform these women's groups into catalysts to broaden their reach. As independent community-based organisations, the women's groups will be able to sponsor and facilitate new groups of women take journey that they have been through.

I have talked about just a few of the highlights that are the return on about \$21,000 per annum that Partners in



*Molida Begum, from Kazipur, joined a women's group some years ago. Through the group savings plan, she saved and then took a loan from other women in the group to buy a goat, which has now had two*

Aid provides. If we had more donations directed to Bangladesh projects we could easily increase the impact. Please talk to your friends, family and workmates about becoming regular donors.

If any of our donors would like to form a closer relationship with one of the women's group please let me know. We can assist by setting up a sponsorship arrangement, similar to child education sponsorship, whereby information specific to your sponsored group can be exchanged.



## New fundraising tool

Partners in Aid Secretary Graham Moore recently tried a new fundraising tool with great success. Graham recently retired from the University of Melbourne. Since receiving a retirement gift was definitely not a priority, Graham used the Mycause fundraising tool to quickly set up a donation's portal for his friends and colleagues to donate to Partners in Aid, and leave message instead of giving a cash contribution to a gift.

Graham said, "It took just a few minutes to set up the personal fundraising page on Mycause and link the page to Partners in Aid. Then I gave the internet link to the people who were emailing out the invitations asking people to donate rather than contribute to a retirement gift." Donors could donate online using their credit card, and leave a message. They also get their tax-deductible receipt straight away to download or print. Graham was delighted when he raised over \$900 and received many messages of congratulations. At the end of the month mycause sends a single transfer of money to Partners in Aid which really cuts down on the administration time of our busy treasurer, Andrea.

If you would like to see the fundraising page, go to <https://www.mycase.com.au/page/183826/retirement-contribution> If you are planning a function, such as a birthday, wake or retirement, where people often wish to bring a gift, but you would prefer them to donate to your favourite charity, Partners in Aid, you can easily create a similar page. Go to <https://www.mycase.com.au/start-fundraising> and click the green "start now" button. If you need any guidance contact Graham at [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au) and he can step you through it.



## ABWU



Joy Handley - Project Coordinator

We are expecting Christmas Cards from the girls to arrive soon. As always they work hard to get them all over to us early so that we have time to get them all ready for posting before our own Christmas rush starts! Girls doing courses and living outside the Home are not always able to do this and we hope their sponsors understand the difficulty the girls have, but also know that the girls are very thankful for your support.

The weather in West Bengal was particularly hot again this year; it seems to get hotter and hotter every year. This year the staff and volunteers once again struggled to keep going and get to ABWU every day. Anjali who is Office Secretary, who does a huge amount of multi-tasking, has a 3 hour journey each way every day! That is some commitment! When visiting she is always there... early morning til late at night and often at weekends depending what is happening. Anjali is also a counsellor and Case Worker. A very busy lady!

It is always heartening when there, to witness the personal support ABWU get from within the community. Every time visiting there always seems to be people bringing in goodies, books even computers. They get huge support from Rotary and Lions Clubs as well as several ladies groups, These groups provide, at various times during the year, new outfits for Festivals throughout the year. Rotary always put on Fireworks display in the

courtyard for Diwali 'Festival of Light' and includes special food treats for everyone. It is a very exciting time to be there. Then at Christmas they are again treated to special food and gifts from the various ladies Groups as well as Rotary and Lions Clubs.

It shows that ABWU are held in very high esteem by many.

A big thank you to all our sponsors and donors who continue to support the girls and provide them with the opportunity of better education and eventually employment.

### A LITTLE HISTORY ON HOW WORLD FOOD DAY LUNCH COMMENCED

When I was running the office and trying to think of ways to raise money; one morning I heard on the radio that The Cancer Foundation was starting a 'BIGGEST MORNING TEA'. This event is now a huge success all over the country. As soon as I heard it, I thought "What a wonderful idea...wish I had thought of that!"

Keeping the thought in my mind I came up with World Food Day Lunch. It started very small with me having friends for lunch in my home and a few donors doing likewise or just having morning tea. When I first moved to Bright I again had lunch for local people I had got to know in just a few months. I had just joined a new ladies group Business and Professional Women (BPW). On their first

International Night the following March I was asked to be Guest Speaker. I was horrified as I had never done this. After much coercing I managed to apparently 'do a good job'. The function was held at Simone's Italian Restaurant and all the staff, including Patrizia Simone listened to me. A few days later Patrizia offered to put on a lunch for me in their restaurant! So that was the start of 18 years of "World Food Day" in Bright! I remember saying on the day to 70 people who attended that it was all my dreams come true! It was a lot of hard work and I did do it myself. The following year we had it in a garden, and Ian and Lyn Pickering came up to help us. We had it all set up around a big tree looking fantastic AND IT RAINED after months of NO RAIN!!! Still we managed. From there we went to RSL premises for some years, then back to a garden and eventually last 3 lunches were at Simone's restaurant. The first 2 lunches were under Action Aid Australia and from then on Alpine Women's Group came on board to assist me in various ways. We then ran the lunch under AWG and changed it from World Food Day Luncheon to Italian lunch in the Garden and Italian lunch in the courtyard. Over this time we raised in excess of \$50,000. It wasn't always on the actual day, but that didn't matter and by now PARTNERS IN AID were having a very successful Dinner at our Treasurer's property usually in February or March with many more people attending and raising a lot of money. This event is ongoing and grows bigger every year. A huge commitment and hard work for a few of our committed Board and members as well as many family and friends. Donors still hold their own

fundraiser be it morning tea in the office, lunch, afternoon tea on whatever day suits. Sadly my luncheons in Bright have come to an end as Simone's Restaurant has been sold and my husband Barrie and I feel it is time to call it a day! Barrie is 82 and I am 79 so it gets harder every year.

Thank you to all our sponsors who attended the lunch over many years, travelling long distances to be part of it. It was always rewarding for me to meet up with them and put faces to names. I would also like to thank AWG for all their assistance with the same few running the kitchen every year!!

Of course, none of it would have been possible without the enormous generosity of Patrizia Simone, her son Anthony, also a chef, and her husband George. It was a huge effort for them and they did it willingly every year. I must also mention all the businesses in Bright who willingly donated goods for raffles and Auctions. The auctions always added a great amount to the total. I am so blessed to live in this beautiful town with such caring, generous people.

I think it is fair to say that it has been a huge success in our own small way as it has raised funds for our projects that we would otherwise be struggling to find.

Fundraising is a dilemma for all small NGO's and we all do our best to achieve good outcomes as best we can. I initiated and ran 3 (I think) very successful Dinner Auctions with great support again from Ian and Lyn, the Dandenong community and businesses. I can't remember how much we raised,

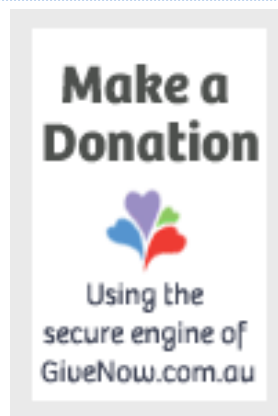
but it was worth the effort. Also, we had a few theatre nights which were fun and no stress for anyone. If any of our donors/sponsors have any bright ideas for fundraising, we would love to hear from you.



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.



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>

*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.*



## 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™

## 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)

\$

### 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 Education Sponsorship

\_\_\_ children

x

\$260/280

=

\$

I would like to begin/continue (please circle) to sponsor a child's education 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 education 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*