

March 2019

Partners in Aid

Enduring, Capable Communities

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Help Shift A School Before It Gets Washed Away

Partners in Aid's Bangladesh partner, Symbiosis, has appealed to us to help fund shifting one of the schools that is about to be swallowed up by bank erosion in the Jamuna River. Partners in Aid currently supports teacher salaries in the primary school (pictured below). The Jamuna River Development Project supports people on sand islands (chars) in the Jamuna River to attain the most basic human rights of shelter, a job, understanding of law and environmental issues, and education for themselves, since many are illiterate, and their children.



Help Shift A School Before It Gets Washed Away

The sand islands, which are quite large, are constantly eroding from the upstream end and being reformed at the downstream end. As a consequence, any semi-permanent structures need to be shifted on a regular basis. After quite a few years, one of the schools we support will inevitably succumb to the erosion of the soil from beneath it. A new site has been identified which has already been built up to avoid the worst of the annual monsoonal floods. To access the site, Symbiosis need to partially compensate the current land owner for the capital works of raising the land, as well as install new toilets and tube wells for the school children. The local community will provide most of the labour voluntarily to shift the building.

What we need immediately is a bit over \$3000 to help pay for this. The only alternative for Symbiosis would be to save money on other projects by reducing the number of teachers or women's support groups that are currently being funded.

Can you please help? Tax deductible donations can be sent to our bank account as follows:

Partners in Aid Ltd – Overseas acc BSB: 033686 Acc : 162354.

Please also email admin@partnersinaid.org.au with you name, address and donation details so we can issue a receipt.



SEDS Tank Desilting Starts Again

Amanda Stone – Project Co-ordinator

The popular and very valuable Tank Desilting program at SEDS in southern India struck a hurdle last year when rains didn't come when expected, and then light rain came when not expected making it difficult to use the heavy machinery. So the program of desilting had to be postponed and the selected villages had to wait.

Happily, work has begun again in early 2019 and the 4 villages of Chinnakodipalli, Suddakuntapalli, Buchepalli and Seshapuram are now benefitting from increased water storage, improved ground water and excellent topsoil thanks to the excavated silt replaced on farms.

In total, 192 farmers, and their families and animals, have benefitted from this year's program of desilting, and 12,860 cubic metres of silt have been removed from water storage tanks and placed onto farms to enrich the soil and enhance crops.

Each village has contributed half of the funds required and also to the labour involved.



SEDS has summarized the benefits of tank desilting below, with an image showing the desilting underway.

Tank Desilting - A Note for the reader

Tank Desilting is a program taken up for some of the following reasons:

- To enhance storage capacity in the existing tanks through more efficient catchment which, have been silted from runoff from the hills of soil due to deforestation.



- To increase water resources through efficient micro catchments based on local knowledge and simple low cost structures.
- To return fertile soils to the farmer lands for higher yields in crops.
- Farmers are able to generate income in balance with their natural environment.
- To ensure that a natural resource is managed efficiently by the community.
- To promote livelihoods for women through kitchen gardens and homestead plantations.
- To promote farmer groups to take up sustainable agricultural practices leading to Low Carbon Farming (mixed cropping, farming with attention for food crops and input

cost reduction)

- To promote an ownership of these catchments to the communities.

We try to reach as many farmers as the budget allows.

SEDS reports regularly to Partners in Aid on each tank desilted. Details of the Chinnakodipalli tank demonstrate the accountability of the farmers and SEDS to each other and Partners in Aid. This is a truly collaborative effort and more than 90% of every dollar donated by Partners in Aid supporters goes a very long way to improving the livelihoods of some of the poorest people in our region.

Chinnakodipalli Tank Desilting Work Report – 2018 Nov/Dec

No of Farmers	No of Loads	Unit Cost	Payment	Pit size	No of Cubic meters
35	90	100	9000.00	40*42*2	3360
	30	130	3900.00		
	240	150	36000.00		
	30	160	4800.00		
	570	180	102600.00		
	90	200	18000.00		
TOTAL	1050		1,74,300.00		
JCB Hours	98.1	750	73,575.00		
Grand Total			2,47,875.00		

symbiosis



working together for good

The path to self-empowerment

Graham Moore - Director

Many previous instalments to this newsletter have reported on success stories of individuals highlighting how, through projects run by our partner Symbiosis Bangladesh, they have attained improved skills to start to move their family away from grinding poverty. In July 2018, a new three-year cycle commenced on our projects, where similar training and community support continues, but a new aspect has been introduced. As you know, the core of these projects involves groups of women learning a set of life skills they have not previously had the opportunity to learn, and then as a group supporting each other through discussion and savings plans to implement their new skills to the benefit of their families.

The new aspect is for the women's group to formally become Community Based Organisations (CBOs). This allows them to operate independently of Symbiosis because they will be able to seek support services and finance from government and non-government organisations. They will also be able to assist new groups of women begin their journey out of poverty.

In the 2nd quarter report we recently received, the first steps to this goal are evident. Five Symbiosis field officers have received training in to help set up

CBOs. The first batch of women's groups have had their initial orientation and training on forming a CBO. CBO members and staff together discussed to find out potential businesses through a workshop. CBO has made a list of potential business for future and those could be started when the fund will be available. Five other women have had hands on training to help prepare their groups for the transition. Ten members of a CBO have already accessed financial support to buy sewing machines. I look forward to the development of this new initiative.

In another initiative, more emphasis is being placed on provided support for people with disabilities. Field officers had discussions with two families who have disabled members to encourage them to join the Symbiosis Garment Training Project and potentially buy a sewing machine to allow them to earn an income. A further 8 people with special needs were trained for Block Batik work and they expect to earn income with this skill.

Change of Project Coordinator

This is my last newsletter instalment for a while. Roger Hughes has re-joined the Board and is resuming the role of Bangladesh projects coordinator. I'm sure many of you will remember Roger – we are very pleased to welcome him back to the Board.

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.



This is Shamsunahar is making a dress with a sewing machine recently acquired with government assistance. Shamsunahar is from a single parent family after her father left home. Her mother could not afford to support her to complete her education, but now through the Garment Training project she has new opportunities.

We often get letters from our supporters thanking our staff for the great job they are doing. As many are already aware, Partners in Aid is run almost totally by unpaid volunteers. The only exception that comes to mind is we pay for the services of an auditor to audit our annual financial returns. The organisation runs through the input of the voluntary members of Board and project committees. So whether it be operating our financial system and transactions, keeping our many sponsors informed, or trawling through government red tape to keep us compliant with laws of the land, there are some dedicated volunteers at work making it happen.

If you want to help, the very best thing you could do is convince another person or group who is not currently a donor, to become a donor to Partners in Aid. This is something everyone can do. We could slash our administrative costs if we had a pro-bono financial auditor to oversee our annual returns, so if you know such a person, put them in touch with us.

ABWU



Anne-Marie Maltby - Project Director

Late February is exam time for the older girls at ABWU so there are a lot of nerves. A second language is compulsory so most study English with extremely varying degrees of success.

Unlike Australia, Primary Education is to Year 4 and Secondary Education is to Year 10 (Junior High or Upper Primary stage is from Year 5 to 8 and High School stage is 9 and 10). Higher Secondary stage is Year 11 and 12.

The more academically inclined girls tend to study very hard as they know that education is a big opportunity for them. Many of the others are just happy to have been able to attend school. ABWU will be sending out individual reports of sponsored girls shortly

The cooler weather over the winter months has meant that there has been a lot of activity. Girls have been competing in folk dancing competitions and a karate national championship. Six girls participated in a girl guide camp with others attending an expedition camp.

Many organisations and groups ranging from the Department of Tourism to individual families

Complaints Policy

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

include ABWU girls in activities and outings. In recent months, these have included a special lunch, a tram ride event with folk dancing, the sky show at the Birla Planetarium, Zoo visits and Christmas parties. The younger girls particularly enjoy getting out of ABWU. The older ones are given a bit more freedom to go out unescorted.

Other than that, life goes on as usual at ABWU. The ladies work hard to support the girls and remain very grateful for the support of Partners in Aid supporters and sponsors.



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.

Sinangpad Healthy Village Project

Dr Cecily Neil - Project Director

One of the municipalities in which Sinangpad has worked has been the Municipality of Pasil. Success achieved in Pasil has been partly due to the strong co-operation that the Sinangpad Health Village Project has received from the Municipal Local Government. At the workshop held late last year, the Municipal Health Officer highlighted the fact that the number of households without sanitary toilets has dropped from 58% to 24%. The Municipal Health Office was anxious for this remaining 24% (459) of households to be able to build their own sanitary toilet so that Pasil could become open defecation free. However, most of the households concerned are too poor to be able to afford the construction materials necessary for a sound septic tank and Sinangpad did not have sufficient funds to provide these materials to all the households.

Accordingly, it was decided that the Sinangpad Health Village project would run a special appeal for funds to meet this objective. It was estimated that between AUD16,00 – 17,000 would be required, the necessary materials costing between AUD30-35 per household. (The local government's Rural Health Unit will supply



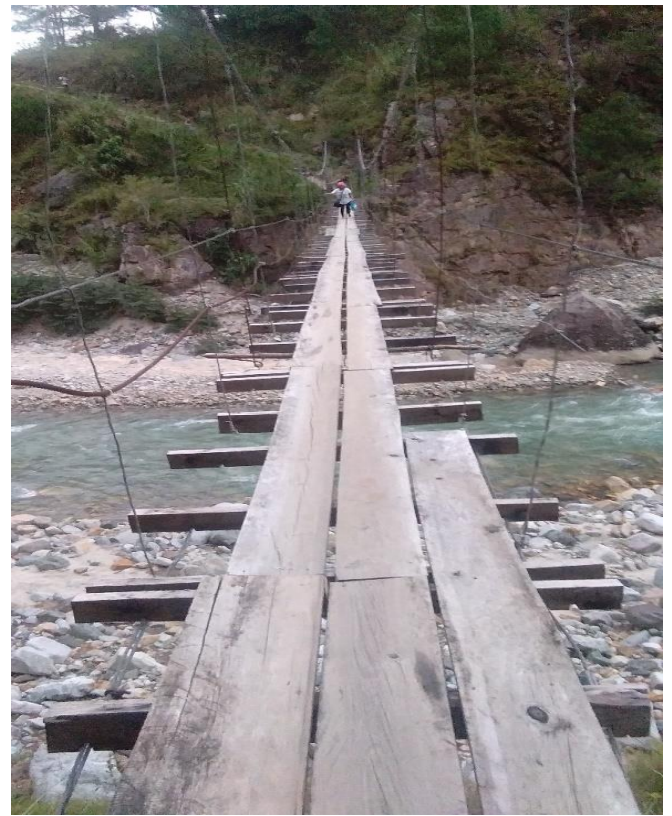
the pans with the necessary pipe attachment and households the local materials for the construction of the superstructure.)

We are delighted that not long after the appeal was launched Partners in Aid received a very large one-off donation in support of toilet construction in Pasil. Along with the other donations, there is now enough money available for Sinangpad to pay for the purchase of the necessary materials. Community organizing facilitated by Sinangpad Association members will ensure that any household unable to provide the necessary physical labour for construction of their toilet will receive assistance from other members of their village. If the household has a member with physical disabilities that might make it difficult to use a toilet, special provision will be made to ensure that the toilet has a porcelain toilet bowl rather than a squat pan, railings attached to the wall, and walls strong enough to support the railings in use.



The Municipal Engineer will keep an eye on the construction of the septic tanks to ensure that they are an appropriate size and leak proof, while the Municipal Health Officer will organize talks in the villages regarding the proper maintenance of the toilets once built.

Sinangpad Association will oversee overall implementation, and report to Partners in Aid quarterly on the number of toilets constructed. The Partners in Aid Project Coordinator for the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project will visit some of the villages approximately mid-way during implementation, scheduled to take place between April 2019 and December 2020 (this longish period allows for disruptions during the rice planting and harvesting season and increment weather during the typhoon season.).



Getting construction materials into the village is not always easy

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!



**ACFID
CODE**

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.

Who is ACFID?

The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) unites Australia's non-government aid and international development organisations to strengthen their collective impact against poverty. Their vision is of a world where gross inequality within societies and between nations is reversed and extreme poverty is eradicated. Partners in Aid is proud to be associated with such an organization, the peak body for the not-for-profit aid and development sector in Australia.

Thought for the day

Lyn Pickering – SEDS Sponsorship Director

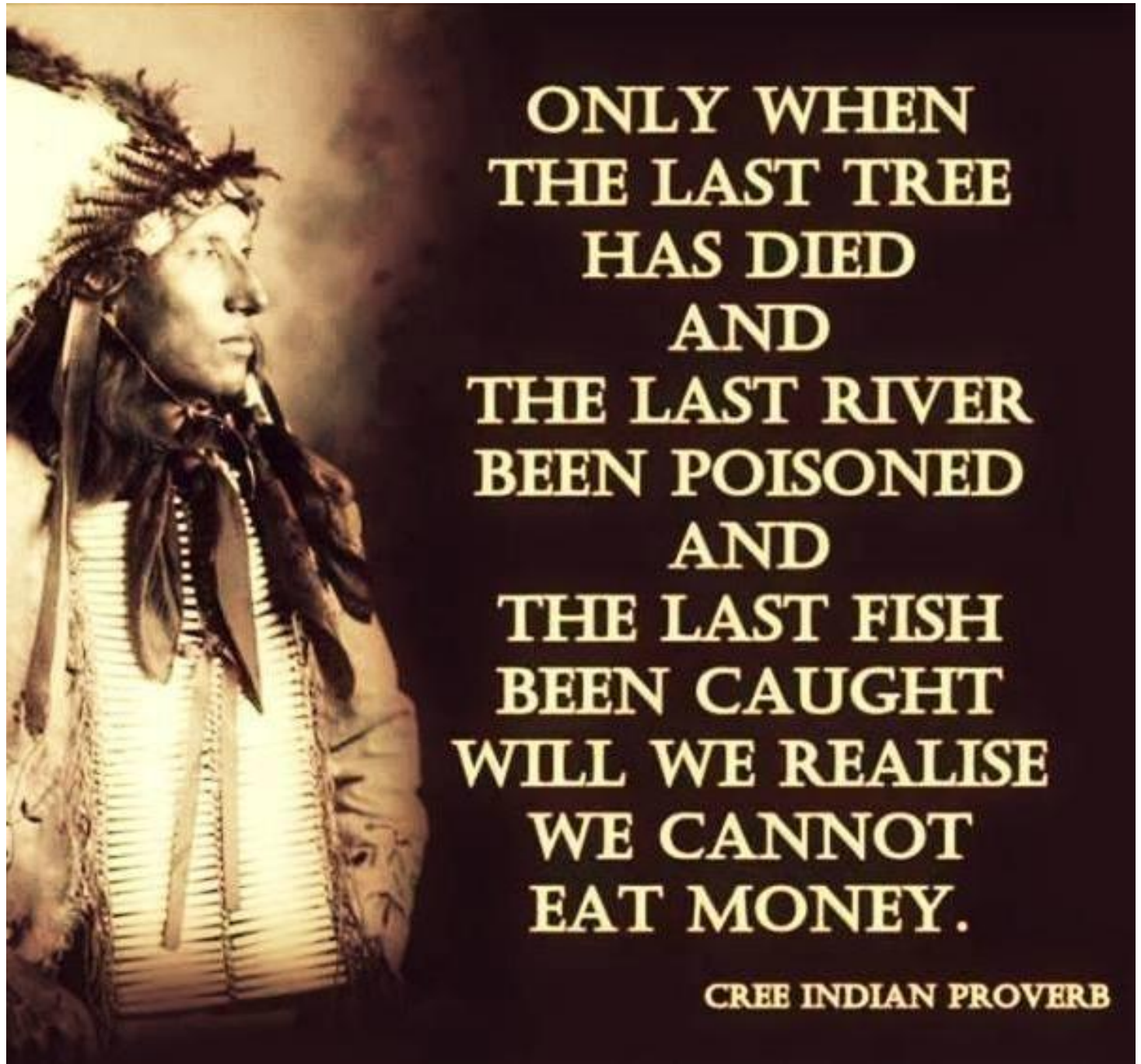
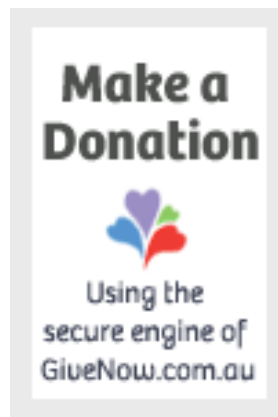


Image thanks to Reddit https://www.reddit.com/r/QuotesPorn/comments/20n0ac/only_when_the_last_tree_has_died_cree_indian/



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.

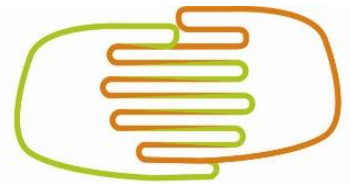


You can make a donation to Partners in Aid through PayPal. You can select a specific item, such as fish fingerlings for tanks in India, or a general donation. Making a general donation gives the Board of Partners in Aid the greatest flexibility in using your contribution. Please use the comment field 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/>



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 (Low Carbon Farming)

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)

Membership

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

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 newsletters and occasional updates): _____

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

Thank you for your support

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.