

Newsletter

December 2019

Partners in Aid

Enduring, Capable Communities

Partners in Aid Ltd
ABN 50 006 946 550

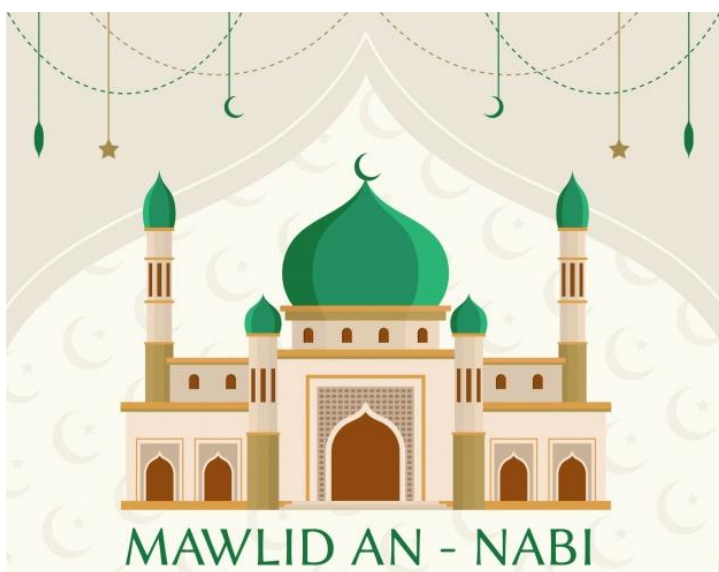
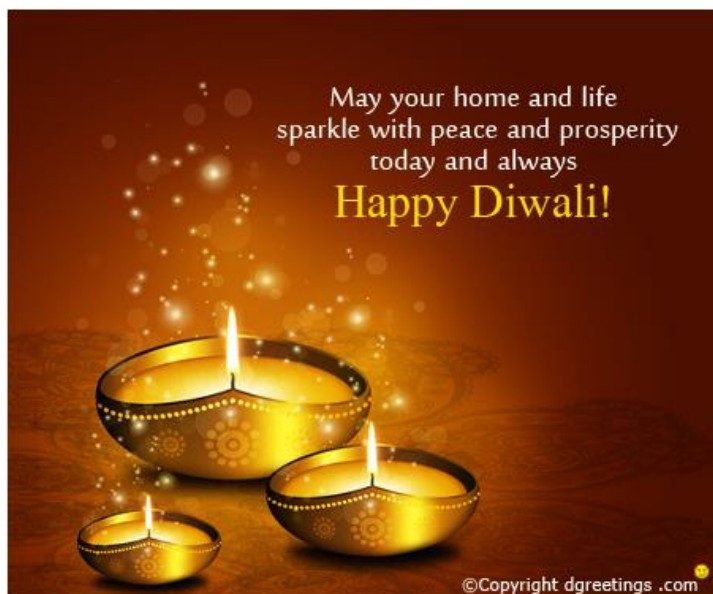
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Happy Diwali/Christmas/Mawlid an-Nabi!

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.

Joy Handley – for her many years of dedicated work and support for the ABWU child education sponsorship program. Read on for a piece on Joy and all the work she has done over the years for Partners in Aid.

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 Here are some ideas for each of our project areas.

Sinangpad, Philippines

A \$35 donation for the Pasil zero open defecation initiative

- ❖ \$35 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)

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

Joy Handley is retiring

After 35 years Joy has reluctantly decided that the time has come to pass the baton.

Joy could not have imagined in 1984 that an advertisement for Office Secretary for 'For Those Who Have Less' would lead to a lifelong passion. After securing the advertised position with the organisation, she quickly became their 'go to' person and mainstay. In addition to general office management, Joy took on a much broader role including visiting most of the project sites (mainly in India and Bangladesh) to review their operations and organising fund-raising events from tin shaking and picnics to street stalls.

Joy gave great dedication and service to the organisation and worked many more hours than the part time salary she was paid. She developed a particularly close relationship with the All Bengal Women's Union home in Kolkata and on moving to Brighton on her retirement in 1995, continued to manage the child sponsorship and (mainly) vocational programs that were supported by Partners in Aid.

During Joy's regular (self-funded) trips to visit ABWU, she was able to see what had been achieved and what the greatest needs were. She particularly enjoyed watching the progress of her sponsored child, Mita, who was born blind, completed a music degree and is now happily married with a child.

Joy's dedication and hard work with fundraising paid off - she inspired much of the Brighton community which was the major source of funds for these vocational training programs and Joy was able to funnel additional funds for many other needs such as remedial teacher training and drainage works to reduce malaria.

Joy has been a force of nature, a pint-sized Scottish ball of energy and enthusiasm but most of all, she has been a tireless worker for the ABWU where she has always regarded all and sundry as 'her girls' and in turn has inspired a great deal of love, affection and gratitude from them. We at Partners in Aid also have a great deal of affection and admiration for Joy and cannot think of her without thinking of ABWU as she has been the main reason that Partners in Aid has been able to give them such great support over so many years.

I know that Joy is a little sad to be 'retiring' but I know that she feels that she is leaving with something very valuable - that she can look back on her time with Partners in Aid and ABWU with a great sense of achievement and know that she has made such a difference to the lives of so many.

Thank-you Joy for your many years of hard work. You will be missed.

Graham Moore is stepping aside

Sadly, Graham Moore has decided to step down from the Partners in Aid Board. Graham has been a Board member for over 10 years, during most of which time he has served as either Chair or a very hard-working Secretary. Graham has been very instrumental with bringing Partners in Aid in line with best practice. His attention to detail and to procedure has done much to ensure that the organization is always compliant with the growing maze of external requirements to which non-profit organizations in Australia must now conform.

Indicative of Graham's commitment, he kindly offered to remain with Partners in Aid until February, fulfilling all the external reporting requirements that fall due early in the year. Graham will be very much missed on the Board. The good news, however, is that he will not be

lost to international development. Having recently retired from Melbourne University, he is now active in Engineers without Borders, and is applying his engineering skills to projects in Africa. We wish him all the very best in his retirement and new ventures in Africa.

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 1st of each year. Please contact us if you're interested in taking on a membership.



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.



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.

SEDS – Child Sponsorship

Lyn Pickering – SEDS Sponsorship Director

School reports have been sent out to all our sponsors, and the Christmas cards are in the process and may even have arrived by the time you receive this December newsletter. A good year again for our students in India, and whilst students in Australia are winding down to the end of our school year, the students in India are halfway through their school year. We are also thinking of all the students who are being impacted by extreme bush fires in NSW and Queensland, and also WA and SA. Some of these students are in the middle of exams and it would be a worrying time for the students and their families who support them, and also their communities. The message is very clear in Australia and that is to prepare, prepare, prepare for any bushfires or other serious events which can impact on people, something which can be frightening to say the very least.

A planned trip to India with Ian is still being considered, something we both enjoy. A number of our sponsors who have admitted to being OLDER, not OLD, continue sponsorship of students at SEDS, and they express their pleasure in seeing students successfully complete their Year 10 studies, before continuing with a new student. The students and their families do express their thanks for this support. Thanks from me also for your continued support. Gillian, a long-time sponsor rang and during our conversation, mentioned that she had been sponsoring girls for at least 45 years through PIA. To our new supporters for child education through SEDS in India, welcome. I hope you enjoy the experience of watching a student grow and develop over the coming years.



Two of our young men, Sai and Ranga have gone on to University and are now supporting themselves through work whilst continuing their studies. They have achieved well beyond what we thought possible when they came to live at SEDS as young children in need of love, care, food and an education. There are many great success stories since this program began in late 1994. Ian and I are happy to share the stories and the work of SEDS with other people. In the past three months we have spoken to three groups, two of whom sponsor students; however child education sponsorship is also a part of a much bigger picture at SEDS. We have both been connected with SEDS since 1992 and watched the significant achievements of Manil and Rajen Joshua and their team.

Ian and I send greetings for the coming Christmas period in Australia, which we know will be celebrated by people in so many different ways. Through our Rotary Club this year we will again assist a Pastor and his volunteers to ensure that the homeless and disadvantaged people in our community get to share a special meal and take home a food hamper, and know they are loved and cared for. Our members also prepare bbq food for up to 1,000 people who attend a Carols night in our local community. We have done this every year since 1985.

Ian and I will join with our four adult children, their spouses and eight of our nine grandchildren, to celebrate Christmas. For some of us this will involve a Church

service, and for others, the opportunity to catch up with each other. Whichever way you celebrate Christmas, OR other special events at different times of the year, we hope you get to do it with family, and those around you who you care about.



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 or by phone on 03 9704 6315.

Sinangpad Healthy Village Project

Dr Cecily Neil - Project Director

The 19th November – a day of little note to most Australians. However, to many agencies working in the international development arena, this is a day that it important to acknowledge in some way. 19th November is World Toilet Day, a day designated by the UN that is all about inspiring action to achieve sanitation for all by 2030. Good sanitation is a basic human right - yet over one billion people in the world are still forced to practise open defecation.

In Kalinga, there are still many households who still lack access to a sanitary toilet – a lack that can place whole communities at risk of life-threatening illness and disease. It is the young children who are especially at risk.

The primary goal of the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project is to heighten awareness in remote communities of the health risks associated with different local environmental sanitation problems and to enhance community members' ability to reduce these risks. In the course of Sinangpad's community engagement, communities normally determine their own priorities with respect to reducing local risks.

However, a major donation has enabled us to add an additional goal to the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project - helping whole municipalities, one by one, to become open defecation free. Households without a toilet are provided with concrete and reinforcement bars to enable them to build a basic toilet with a septic tank. The Municipality helps transport the materials to closest point of vehicular access, after which men from the village walk the materials into the village – in some places, a 30-minute walk. Toilet construction is



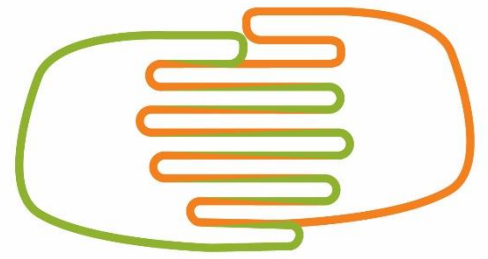
carefully coordinated by Sinangpad with the community, the Rural Health Units, which supply the pans, and the Municipal Engineer who ensures the septic tanks are sound. The household uses whatever local materials they can find to build the toilet walls and roof. The communities have mobilized themselves to ensure that any household unable to construct a toilet themselves, because of age, disability or other reason, will be assisted by other community members.

A concerted effort to achieve zero open defecation is currently ongoing in the Municipality of Pasil. Some 90 household toilets have been constructed or are in the process of being constructed over the last months and, at this stage, only a small percentage of households in the Municipality don't have a toilet. These will all be helped to construct one soon. Hopefully, the project can then move to achieving zero open defecation in another municipality.

The materials for the toilets cost approximately \$35. The gift of a household toilet would make a unique but invaluable gift if anyone is looking to add something extra to their Christmas celebrations.

Complaints Policy

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



Partners in Aid

Cyclone Bulbul and the Jamuna River Project.

Roger Hughes - Project Director

Most of us in Australia have been distracted by the horrors of the Eastern Australian Bushfires, the seriousness of which has shaken many in our community. While Australia has been burning, Bangladesh has been pummelled by the high winds and storm surge of Cyclone Bulbul. Readers will know that low-lying Bangladesh has always been badly affected by such disasters. However, whereas the death toll from such cyclones used to be in the hundreds or thousands, Cyclone Bulbul appears to have caused about a dozen deaths, still too high but many fewer than would have been killed just a few decades ago. Maybe because of its venerability as a low-lying delta region, Bangladesh has for many years been taking climate change seriously and preparing itself as seen by the reduced casualties caused by cyclones such as Bulbul.

The poor generally end up in the areas that are most vulnerable to natural disasters and they have fewer resources to combat difficulties when they occur. Our present Jamuna River project, in contrast to our project of many years ago on the Bhola Char (island), is in the northern half of the country, well away from both the coastal fringe and the swamps of the Sundarbans. This location offers some protection. Its vulnerability comes not from the sea but the river flooding. So how have the poor on the islands of the Jamuna River been coping. Our man on the ground in our project area in Bangladesh, Md. Abu Baker Siddique, reports that "Project people are safe and no bad impact of the cyclone was happened to their life. But impacted in the coastal areas of Bangladesh." The locals on the islands have continued to protect themselves in the time honoured way of keeping mounding silt in certain parts of the island to lift if above the wet season flood level and as far as practical building structures that can be moved along this mounded silt as the islands move downstream.

Over the years, since I started visiting Bangladesh in the 1990s, there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of riprap protection on the mainland banks of the Jamuna River. Given the success of this protection on the mainland, the government provided similar protection to the island communities, and so confident of its success that it started to build permanent schools on various islands. However, on the islands such riprap provides little protection. It has been found to be too susceptible to undermining by erosion with the river flow

directed directly at the riprap rather than tangential to it. For the time being the strategy adopted by the locals appears to be the best strategy.



Image thanks to India Today <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/cyclone-bulbul-hits-bengal-moves-towards-bangladesh-1617691-2019-11-11>



Image thanks to The Guardian <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/11/cyclone-bulbul-deaths-millions-displaced-india-bangladesh>

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.

ABWU 2019



Anne-Marie Maltby - Project Director

We are making some major changes to ABWU funding and will be ceasing all funding for ABWU (non-sponsorship) projects. This won't affect sponsorship in any way.

There are two main factors related to the need for the changes. The now ceased annual fundraising luncheon at Bright was the major source of project funding and this covered the majority of the many ABWU projects that we have supported over the years. We receive a small number of donations outside the luncheon money, but this isn't enough to cover project funding and is also too small to justify the statutory admin required.

ABWU has also slowly changed over the years. They are getting increasing support from the Indian community as the Indian economy improves and are not so reliant on project money.

Over the last couple of years, we have discussed our situation with ABWU, and they understand that the project funding was tied to the annual luncheon and would have to stop. Last year was the first year that no luncheon was held and this year we sent the last funds remaining in the project 'kitty' which were enough to cover the 'catch up' education provided by the Education for All project until mid-2021.

You will no longer see a section for ABWU project donations at the end of our newsletters, but child sponsorships will continue and remains by far the

biggest component of our funding. In the past, sponsorship money was needed to assist in providing the very basics to house, feed and provide some education. It was considered great achievement to be able to arrange a satisfactory marriage after some schooling. In those early days, it wasn't imagined that many of these abused, at risk, destitute, abandoned and orphaned girls would complete secondary schooling let alone go on to university education. How things have changed!

Project funding has been a major support to these changes. To give you an idea of the scope of support we have provided, here are some of our funded programs over the years:

- Life skills training and remedial tutors
- Cutting, tailoring and knitting, block printing and weaving vocational training
- Purchase of sewing machines and weaving looms
- Purchase of books and stationery
- Purchase of firefighting equipment
- Purchase of emergency battery packs
- Karate training
- Cooking teacher's salary
- Medical funding
- Malaria prevention programs and repair of drains
- Subsidy of orphan holidays

ABWU is very much a 'success story' for Partners in Aid and we should all be proud that our support has enabled so much to be achieved.

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/>



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.



**Make a
Donation**



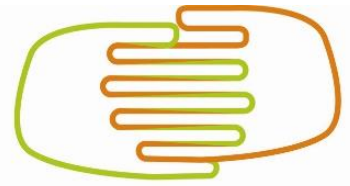
Using the
secure engine of
[GiveNow.com.au](http://www.givenow.com.au)

GiveNow is an initiative of the Our Community Foundation, a not-for-profit program established through the financial support of www.ourcommunity.com.au 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>



Partners in Aid Donation Form

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):

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

Child Sponsorship

I would like to begin/continue to sponsor a child at ABWU/SEDS (Cost is \$260 per child per year, + optional annual gift \$20)

___ children

x

\$260/280

=

\$

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)

\$

EFT details: Partners in Aid, BSB/Acct: 033686/162354, with your surname as reference.

Please email 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 post 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 or more are tax deductible (a receipt will be issued)

***Thank you for your support!
Your contributions really help make a
change in the lives of others.***