

## Annual Report for ACFID 2020

### 1. Partners in Aid's purpose, objectives/aims and values

In 2020 the Partners in Aid Board was guided by:

- A **Vision** of enduring, capable communities.
- A **Mission** to make the world a fairer place. We partner with NGOs in developing countries to mobilize impoverished communities and enhance the education, health and income-generating capacity of their women, men and children. We leave a legacy that enables communities to continue an ongoing process of change themselves.
- **Values** of Integrity, Dignity, Respect and Professionalism.

Our **short-term objectives** are to promote and assist with local community and economic development projects. This work includes watershed management, sustainable agriculture, job skills training, environmental sanitation, women's self-help groups, school programs and child sponsorship.

Our **long-term objectives** are to improve living standards through environmentally sustainable approaches in rural and urban areas in developing countries.

### 2. Partners in Aid's income and expenditure for the financial year 2019-2020 and overall financial health:

A full Partners in Aid audited statutory financial report was received and circulated before the AGM. The motion that the auditor's report for 2019/2020 be accepted was put to the meeting and passed unanimously at the AGM on 28/11/2020. This report can be viewed on our website.

In the financial year 2019-2020, Partners in Aid's income was \$159,447 comprising \$156,729 in direct donations. Our total expenditure was \$155,835 of which \$109,496 was expended on projects in India, and \$33,000 in Bangladesh. Administration costs (audit fees, ACFID fees, insurance and accounting fees) totaled \$13,339 or 8.36% of total income. Partners in Aid ended the financial year with a surplus of \$3,612, however this is misleading, as some scheduled project instalments were not disbursed as project activities were limited by COVID shutdowns. This backlog of instalments – some \$18,000 – will need to be paid in the 2020-2021 financial year.

Income was lower than the previous year as some of our regular donors informed us that due to financial problems created by COVID-19, they were unable to continue with their donations. Nonetheless, the organization is in good financial health with the ability to pay its liabilities when and as due. A new Fundraising Committee has been established that includes three members with marketing and communications qualifications, and an important goal for 2021 will be to increase our income.

### **3. Our most significant aid and development activities undertaken during 2019-2020 and their impact**

During 2019-2020, Partners in Aid funds supported projects run by our project partners in Bangladesh, India and the Philippines. The following describes the key projects and development activities undertaken. More detailed reports for 2019-2020 on each project are attached at the end of this report.

#### ***The All Bengal Women's Union, Kolkata, India***

The All Bengal Women's Union (ABWU) provides shelter and education to disadvantaged children and women, including trafficked/abused and elderly women. Those supported by ABWU are provided with shelter, education, vocational training, counselling and /or legal representation.

Child sponsorship is the only ABWU project that Partners in Aid still supports. Partners in Aid supporters currently sponsor 55 girls at ABWU, some of them there as a result of court protection orders. All the children are normally resident at ABWU. The counselling, education and vocational training provided there enables the resident girls to achieve higher levels of independence than had formerly been possible. ABWU strongly encourages their personal independence and participation in the community.

As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, only girls with no family options were able to remain at the home. Very few girls remained in residence and the lengthy closure of all schools attended by ABWU students has meant that all schooling has been done through virtual learning or phone contacts. There has been some easing of restrictions with some girls able to return but the authorities are waiting for more certainty before restrictions can be further eased.

#### ***Social and Education Development Society Child Education Sponsorship Program***

This program involves the sponsorship of the education of children who might not otherwise have the chance to attend school.

Students in India and elsewhere have had a difficult 2020. The school year in India commences on 1<sup>st</sup> June and runs through to the end of April. The students in India have had five months or more of schooling in their current year cycle disrupted. They have been heavily affected by lockdowns which have occurred regularly, some of them still ongoing. There has been a stop/start approach at times. Throughout the year the Indian Government has released statements advising of return dates for schools which have been pushed back on a number of occasions. When the COVID-19 situation became more serious, the decision was made that no students would return to school and that up to Year 10 (the end of schooling for students who are on the SEDS Child Education

Sponsorship Program) they would automatically obtain a pass. The restart date for school is now December 14<sup>th</sup> 2020.

Partners in Aid donors currently sponsor of the education of 185 students. The number of students sponsored remains similar to previous years, however this year a number of our donors have withdrawn their support due to the downturn in the economy, and loss of work due to COVID-19.

Although this year has been very challenging for our students, many of them will return to school education. However, whilst the Government supports the education of children, there does not appear to be any compulsion to attend school for many of the children whose families exist on a very low income. This income often does not extend to being able to both educate their children and feed them. The concern from SEDS' perspective is that many children may not return to school in the short term. Many of them will have gone to work as agricultural labourers as their parents and grandparents have done in the past. The migration of families has also occurred in the past with parents sometimes seeking a better life and work for their families and relocating to the cities. How many children will no longer be participating in schooling may not be known for some weeks or months.

### ***Social and Education Development Society Sustainable Agriculture Project***

The Social and Education Development Society (SEDS) Sustainable Agriculture Project incorporates watershed management and low carbon farming.

The main outcomes of the SEDS watershed management are improved water retention, groundwater replenishment and increased vegetation. The main outcomes of low carbon farming are safer, nontoxic farming practices, improved soil quality, higher crop yields, cooperative work between farmers leading to leverage for loans etc., eventually income from CERs.

SEDS and Partners in Aid commenced a new Project Agreement in July 2020, with a two-year project proposed by SEDS. This new project combines the ongoing tank desilting and watershed management work with low carbon farming under the umbrella term "Sustainable Agriculture".

During 2020, all of India was deeply affected by lockdowns, including the Anathapur District. Despite this, in between lockdowns, the staff and villagers managed to complete tank desilting at Cholemarri in June, removing 2835 cubic metres of silt and benefiting 35 farmers and their families, and the wider village.

When not in lockdown, farmers continued to practise low carbon farming and retain their record keeping which is necessary for accreditation with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The regular verification process was conducted remotely this year with SEDS receiving a successful result once more.

The resilience of the SEDS project and staff was shown during this challenging year where they continued the valued watershed management work despite the conditions and demonstrating the value of our shared work together.

### ***Bangladesh Symbiosis Garment Training Project (GTP), Bangladesh***

Support was provided in the Mymensingh area, through the provision of classes at various levels and in various fields of textile production, from manufacture to marketing and sales. Such support continued to contribute to raising not only the economic status of the poor but the social status of women in the community. This activity was further supported by general educational opportunities and the encouragement of savings groups. Unfortunately, this year has been greatly affected by the Corona Virus ID 19, and at the time of this report the full consequences of the pandemic associated with this virus are not available.

The following brief list of achievements is mainly based on information received from Bangladesh before the national lockdown and a very brief email announcing on resumption of work after the lockdown eased.

<i>Persons Trained</i>	<i>Intended</i>	<i>Achieved</i>
Basic sewing and tailoring	120	122
Embroidery	10	0
Block batik and hand painting	50	6
Garment making	10	0
Training for good health	120	122
Establishing marketing outlets	2	1

### ***Bangladesh Symbiosis Jamuna River Development Project (JRDP), Bangladesh***

Support was provided to the poor on one of the major mobile silt islands in Jamuna River. Such support provided primary and pre-school education to many of the neediest children on the island, and *shomati* support in the form of savings groups with appropriate social support. The project was halted during the government enforced lockdown period of the Covid Virus ID 19. Fortunately, however, the virus had minimal impact on the island and full activities have now resumed. The recent demand for, and interest in, savings groups and their activities have been strong, although, as with other activities, participation strongly decreased during the months of lockdown.

The following brief list of achievements is based on information received covering the entire year of this report. Many of the activities directed at keeping the communities safe are the same as for the Garment Training Project described above.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Intended</i>	<i>Achieved</i>
Persons trained in financial planning at various level (nos. for most basic level)	360	330

Savings through shomati groups *	4,111,200 taka	4,633,219 taka
Eye testing clinics in primary schools	5	2
Education for parents on a variety of child related issues, e.g. child health, safety and child marriage.	167	167

\* 2933 members out of 3407 members are involved in income generation activities as a result of loans taken out from their group.

Information programs were run to inform all participants how to keep safe during the pandemic, with emphasis on washing hands, social distancing and wearing masks.

In addition, 5 schools were supported, at rate of 75% support as school closed for half of the second semester year (yielding 50% + (0.5 x 50%)). Support included teacher salaries, books and teaching materials. (Note that PIA continued full support, but this was not passed on to the schools!) Most extra school activities such as sports days continued as planned.

### ***Sinangpad Association Healthy Village Project, Province of Kalinga, Philippines***

The Sinangpad Healthy Village Project assists remote villages to reduce the health risks in their communities, providing training, facilitating community mobilization, giving small grants to purchase materials for the construction of simple infrastructure (toilets, pig pens, improved drainage, etc.), and following up with mentoring and monitoring in order to enable residents to improve their local environmental sanitation. A special component of the project seeks to ultimately make the Province of Kalinga open defecation free, tackling the problem municipality by municipality. The main outcomes of the project are enhanced skills of residents themselves with respect to reducing health risks associated with their local environmental sanitation.

In the second half of 2019, preliminary screening took place in two communities wishing to join the Healthy Village Project for the first time. Eight villages were visited for purpose of mentoring and monitoring, and, in other villages, eight village-level trainings were carried out, including training of voluntary village sanitary inspectors and leadership training.

Grants for the purchase of materials to enable households to construct their own sanitary toilets were made to nine villages. A total of 184 household sanitary toilets were constructed after June 2019. One village has now achieved zero open defecation status, awarded after random government inspections, and at least three more were awaiting validation in January. That month, approximately 80 municipal and barangay health workers from the Pasil and Balbalan Municipalities attended a meeting held in Tabuk to motivate and enable the exchange of ideas on how to achieve zero open defecation as quickly as possible. At that time, it was anticipated that all Pasil Municipality, with the possible exception of one village, would have achieved open zero defection by the end of 2020 – an expectation which has now been put back until after the pandemic no longer requires isolation.

To improve the chances of sustainability of zero open defecation, once achieved, advocacy was being undertaken with village officials in the last half of 2019, in an effort to change building permit requirements to ensure that no permit is given for the construction of a new house unless a sanitary toilet is included in the plan.

Sinangpad representatives also represented the Sinangpad Association in a number of Municipal Local Government Unit meetings, facilitating cooperation and collaboration between Sinangpad and local government units with respect improving village environmental sanitation and integrating the activities of Sinangpad in villages into other health programs.

Towards the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020, all was going well. Then the pandemic brought everything to a halt. To protect their residents, villages, many of which were relatively remote, became closed to outsiders. There was some hope that construction of sanitary household toilets by villagers could continue, but construction materials became scarce. Basically, the project ground to a temporary halt.

Kalinga was ill-equipped to cope with a serious COVID-19 outbreak – the provincial hospital had only one ventilator and 15-20 lots of oxygen equipment. PPE was in short supply: while it could be purchased from elsewhere, funds were limited. Some of the Sinangpad members, with whom Partners in Aid had worked together over the years, were health workers and became front line workers at particular risk. When Partners in Aid became aware of the PPE shortage, the Board, with the very willing agreement of the relevant donor, made the one-off decision to allow the latest donation made for the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project to be spent on PPE for health workers and residents of our villages. This enabled the Sinangpad Association, after consultation with the Provincial Health Office concerning needs, to procure face masks and shields, hand sanitizer, thermal scanners and other relevant equipment and distribute it to some Health Frontliners, to two Rural Health Units (Tanudan and Pasil) and to 19 of the 60+ barangays (villages) participating in the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project.

#### **4. Evaluation into the effectiveness of and the learning from aid and development activity**

Monitoring visits by several of the project coordinators over the last year have been severely restricted by the impact of COVID-19. Several visits did however take place – one to ABWU, one to the SEDS Sustainable Agriculture Project, and a brief visit to the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project.

A Project Co-ordinator's visit to India highlighted the need to move, at least in part, to crops such as millet which are more resistant to the effects of climate change. However, such changes need not only training in growing a crop, but subsidiary activities such as the development of new marketing strategies etc.

In the course of a brief visit to the Philippines, the Project Co-ordinator was able to visit a number of women whose households had constructed their own sanitary toilets in the preceding twelve months.

Their reactions to what having their own toilet meant to them gave important insight into how the construction of household toilets might be promoted in the future: the impact on health was raised less frequently than the absence of bad smells, not having to go out into the open at night, possibly acquiring leaches in the process, and not having the embarrassment of having to tell visitors from the town that if they wanted to go to the toilet they would have to defecate in the open. This information will be a valuable addition to campaigns in the future when promoting the construction of household toilets.

During the Project Co-ordinator's trip to ABWU, the finding that counselling and other activities such as karate assist greatly in fostering resilience and confidence of the resident girls. A monitoring visit in early March found that many girls were now highly motivated to pursue higher education and careers. This seems to be increasingly the case and fewer girls are leaving school early seeking marriage and motherhood as their sole goal in life.

## **5. Report by the governing body**

The report from the Board Chairperson to the 2020 Annual General Meeting is attached below.

## **6. Financial statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the ACFID Code**

The 2019-2020 ACFID-Code-compliant audited financial statement of Partners in Aid has been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in the ACFID Code of Conduct and complies with the presentation and disclosure requirements of the ACFID Code of Conduct. It is attached below. Further information on the ACFID Code of Conduct can be found on the ACFID website.

(<https://acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct> ).

**7. Commitment to full adherence to the ACFID Code of Conduct:** Partners in Aid is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, which is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice. As a signatory we are committed and fully adhere to the ACFID Code of Conduct, conducting our work with transparency, accountability and integrity. For further information on the Code please refer to the ACFID website at [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au).

## **8. Identification of the ability to lodge a complaint against Partners in Aid and a point of contact**

Complaints about Partners in Aid or its Board can be directed to the Chair and details of how this can be done are on the website: <http://partnersinaid.org.au/contact-us/>. No complaints have been received this year.

## **9. Identification of the ability to lodge a complaint for breach of the Code of Conduct**

If anyone wishes to lodge a complaint for breach of the ACFID Code of Conduct, they are advised on our website that this can be done directly to ACFID. <http://partnersinaid.org.au/contact-us/>

**PARTNERS IN AID LTD.  
INCOME STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH, 2020**

	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Donations and gifts		
* Monetary	157,708	161,845
* Non Monetary	0	0
Legacies and bequests	0	0
Grants		
* Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade	0	0
* Other Australian	0	0
* Other overseas	0	0
Investment Income	1,741	2,168
Other Income	0	0
Revenue for International Political or Religious Adherence		
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>159,448</b>	<b>164,013</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
International Programs		
* Funds to international projects	142,496	165,215
* Project support costs	0	0
Community education	0	0
Fundraising costs		
* Public	750	1,200
* government and multilaterals	0	0
Accountability & Administration	12,588	13,290
Non-Monetary Expenditure		
<b>Total International Aid &amp; Development Programs Expenditure</b>	<b>155,834</b>	<b>179,705</b>
International Political or Religious Adherence Promotion Programs Expenditure	0	0
Domestic Programs Expenditure	0	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>155,834</b>	<b>179,705</b>
<b>EXCESS (SHORTFALL) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>3,612</b>	<b>(15,692)</b>
Other Comprehensive Income	0	0
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME/(LOSS)</b>	<b>3,612</b>	<b>(15,692)</b>

The Company has initially applied AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 111, AASB 118, AASB 1004 and related interpretations.

*Please note : a copy of the Full Financial Report is available on request*

**PARTNERS IN AID LTD.  
BALANCE SHEET  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH, 2020**

	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash & cash equivalents	124,646	122,814
Trade & other receivables	109	0
Inventories	0	0
Assets held for sale	0	0
Financial assets	75,020	73,400
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<u>199,775</u>	<u>196,214</u>
<b>Non Current Assets</b>		
Trade & other receivables	0	0
Other financial Assets	0	0
Property, plant and equipment	0	0
Investment Property	0	0
Intangibles	0	0
Other non-current assets	0	0
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u>199,775</u>	<u>196,214</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Creditors and other payables	3,950	3,955
Borrowings	0	0
Current tax liabilities	0	0
Other liabilities	386	432
Provisions	0	0
Other financial liabilities	0	0
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<u>4,336</u>	<u>4,387</u>
<b>Non Current Liabilities</b>		
Borrowings	0	0
Other Financial liabilities	0	0
Provisions	0	0
Other	0	0
<b>Total Non Current Liabilities</b>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>4,336</u>	<u>4,387</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<u>195,439</u>	<u>191,827</u>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Reserves	0	0
Retained Earnings	195,439	191,827
<b>Total Equity</b>	<u>195,439</u>	<u>191,827</u>

The Company has initially applied AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 111, AASB 118, AASB 1004 and related interpretations.

*Please note : a copy of the Full Financial Report is available on request*

**PARTNERS IN AID LTD  
CASH MOVEMENTS FOR DESIGNATED PURPOSES  
FOR YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH, 2020**

	Cash available at beginning of year	Cash raised during year	Cash disbursed during year	Cash available at end of year	Comments
SEDS Sponsorship	\$ 55,713	\$ 48,128	\$ 40,894	\$ 62,947	
ABWU Sponsorship	\$ 15,383	\$ 16,780	\$ 14,065	\$ 18,098	
SEDS Project	-\$ 84,918	\$ 40,200	\$ 51,742	-\$ 96,460	
Total for Other Purposes	\$ 210,036	\$ 54,272	\$ 49,227	\$ 215,081	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 196,214</b>	<b>\$ 159,380</b>	<b>\$ 155,928</b>	<b>\$ 199,666</b>	

**SEDS sponsorship & ABWU sponsorship programs are the only funds raised for a designated purpose which generated 10% or more of total income for the period under review**

**The cash balance disclosed above includes cash and cash equivalents and other financial assets as per the balance sheet.**

**Please note: The summary financial reports have been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in the ACFID Code of Conduct. For further information on the Code, please refer to the ACFID Code of Conduct Guidance Document available at [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au)**

The Company has initially applied AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 111, AASB 118, AASB 1004 and related interpretations.

*Please note : a copy of the Full Financial Report is available on request*

**PARTNERS IN AID LTD.  
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH, 2020**

	Retained Earnings	Reserves	Total
Balance at 1/7/19 (commencing balance)	\$191,827	\$0	\$191,827
Adjustments or changes in equity due to, for example, adoption of new accounting standards	\$0	\$0	\$0
Items of other comprehensive income	\$0	\$0	\$0
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	\$3,612	\$0	\$3,612
Amount transferred (to) from reserves	\$0	\$0	\$0
Balance at 30/6/20 (year end balance)	\$195,439	\$0	\$195,439

The Company has initially applied AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 111, AASB 118, AASB 1004 and related interpretations.

*Please note : a copy of the Full Financial Report is available on request*



Ashfords Audit & Assurance Pty Ltd  
ABN 52 138 965 241  
Suite 5, 14 Garden Blvd, Dingley VIC 3172  
PO Box 1462, Clayton South VIC 3169  
(03) 9551 2822  
info@ashfords.com.au

## **Report of the Independent Auditor on the Concise Financial Report**

### **To the members of Partners in Aid Limited**

We have audited the concise financial report of Partners in Aid Ltd (the Company), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2020 and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and a table of cash movements for the year then ended, and related notes, derived from the full financial report of Partners in Aid Ltd for the year ended 30 June 2020.

In our opinion, the accompanying concise financial report of Partners in Aid Ltd for the year ended 30 June 2020 complies with the requirements of the Australian Council for the International Development.

### **Basis for Opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the concise financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### **Concise Financial Report**

The concise financial report does not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards in the preparation of the full financial report. Reading the concise financial report and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the full financial report and the auditor's report thereon.

### **The Full Financial Report and Our Report Thereon**

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the full financial report in our report dated 27 November 2020.

### **Responsibilities of the Directors for the Concise Financial Report**

The directors are responsible for the preparation of the concise financial report in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports, and the *ACFID Code of Conduct*. For further information on the Code please refer to the *ACFID Code of Conduct Guidance* available at [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au). The directors are also responsible for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the concise financial report.



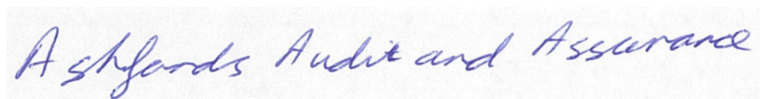
As a member of  
independent accounting &  
financial advisory businesses

Liability Limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

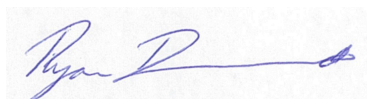
[www.ashfords.com.au](http://www.ashfords.com.au)

### **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Concise Financial Report**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the concise financial report, in all material respects, complies with AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810 Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ashfords Audit and Assurance".

Ashfords Audit and Assurance Pty Ltd  
Chartered Accountants

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ryan H. Dummett".

Ryan H. Dummett Director

Dated 27 November

Suite 5, 14 Garden Boulevard, Dingley

## **Chair's Report to Annual General Meeting**

### **28th November 2020**

I would like to begin by acknowledging the contributions throughout 2020 of our Partners in Aid donors, some of whom have been contributing to particular projects over many years. These donations have helped Partner Organizations to continue to fund projects which have a significant impact on the quality of life of people in vulnerable communities. As highlighted previously, the skills and integrity of each of our Partner Organizations enables best practice ideas to be adapted to the social and physical environment in which the projects are being implemented. The close involvement of the Partner Organizations with their local communities ensures that projects that receive Partners in Aid funding are the outcome of local community engagement and therefore based on community demands, rather than on an external organization's perception of a community's needs. The ongoing commitment of many loyal donors to particular projects has enabled our Partner Organizations to work with communities to help residents achieve not only short-term outcomes but sustained long-term change.

However, 2020 has been a difficult year for everyone. A number of our regular donors have been forced to stop or reduce donations due to lay-offs or the need to help sons or daughters who have been laid-off. To all of those linked to Partners in Aid who have been affected this way, we would like to wish you a much brighter 2021 and to thank you for all that you have contributed in the past.

COVID-19 lockdowns have also made it a difficult year for Partner Organizations with respect to the implementation of projects. Some have been able to struggle through with project activities, others have been forced by lockdowns to suspend project operations altogether. These impacts will be discussed further in the individual project reports to be presented shortly. COVID-19 has not only exacerbated the problems faced by project beneficiaries, but in some cases created potential hardships or risks for Partner Organizer staff and volunteers. Again, as discussed in the reports, Partners in Aid have tried to support our overseas colleagues as far as possible.

This year has been one of significant change with respect to Board membership. Early in the year, Graham Moore and Kristen Aitken resigned, both having been very active on the Board for more than 10 years. We are indebted to both Graham and Kristen for the legacy that they have left.

Several new members have joined the Board as directors, and three more have been nominated to be appointed as directors at this AGM. We will introduce the new Board in the next Newsletter. However, in addition to acknowledging donors, I would like to acknowledge the contributions that have already been made by our current and upcoming new directors and committee members throughout the year. Jessica Gill, our new secretary, has done a great job not only acting as secretary but also redesigning our newsletter format and preparing each edition throughout 2020, which Phillip McMahon still kindly prints free of charge. Jess has also liaised with a company that offered, *pro bono*, to modernise our logo a little, without losing the basic concept. John Lawson has recruited several volunteers and worked intensively with them to increase awareness of Partners in Aid and its activities through the social media. Bob Baldassa has worked on our risk management procedures to bring them into line with

Australian Standards. Chris Gillies has worked with other Board members to develop our new strategic plan. Nick Foster has taken on the roles of treasurer and dropbox manager. Caryl Hertz has accepted responsibility for ensuring that all the regulatory requirements associated with being a director on the Board are fulfilled and fully documented on the dropbox. Lyn and Ian Pickering have continued to provide and maintain our registered office at their home and handle the incoming phone queries. They have been instrumental in major fundraising activities, and Lyn has also continued with the very demanding task of directing the SEDS Child Education Sponsorship Program, including undertaking the reams of paperwork this requires. Roger Hughes, Anne-Marie Maltby and Amanda Stone all have continued to keep in touch with the projects for which they are project co-ordinators and have continued to make a significant contribution to the Projects Subcommittee. Last, but not least, we must acknowledge Andrea Pickering, our former treasurer who resigned a couple of years ago but has continued to assume responsibility for much of the financial work, despite working full-time, helping run a farm, and bringing up four very active young children.

A key issue in this coming year will be fundraising. Our income dropped this year from \$161,845 to \$157,705. Although we ended the 2019-2020 financial year in the black, this was partly due to the holding in reserve some scheduled project instalments. This was at the request of our partners, who because of the lockdown, were unable to spend it in accordance with their project agreement. This money will need to be disbursed in this financial year, which will put pressure on our reserves if we cannot increase our income. Our Marketing, Communications and Fundraising Committee is exploring a range of possible means of raising funds.

For some time, we have been talking about how we can expand our operations by establishing new partnerships with overseas not-for-profit organizations that share our values. A donation has been offered to fund a one-off activity involving the construction a pre-school toilet in Kiribati and promoting good hygiene and sanitation practices among the children. The feasibility of this activity, and whether it might lead to a new Partner Organization, is still being explored. However, any serious attempt to establish new partnerships with overseas not-for-profit organizations will not be possible until we can increase our income generating capacity.

Finally, I would like to end by saying thank you once again to all our donors and supporters and wishing you all the best for the coming year. Our partners and us could not assist communities, and their thousands of residents each year without your generous support.



Dr Cecily Neil  
28 November 2020

**AGM Director's Report: All Bengal Women's Union**

**Year:** 2019 - 2020

**Partner:** ABWU – All Bengal Women’s Union

**Main Activities:** Provision of shelter and education to disadvantaged women and children

**Main Outcomes:** Shelter, education, vocational training, counselling, legal representation for children, trafficked/abused women and elderly women.

**Status of project and partnership agreements:**

PIA supporters sponsor 55 girls at ABWU. All children are residents at ABWU and child sponsorship is the only project still supported. The last funding for vocational training was in June 2018.

As a result of the CCOVID-19 crisis, only girls with no family options were able to remain at the home. There has been some easing of restrictions with some girls able to return but the authorities are waiting for more certainty before restrictions can be further eased.

I visited ABWU in March this year and met with and received updates on all sponsored girls. As always, this was a very positive experience.

**Summary of project financial assistance:**

<i>Date sent</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Amount</i>
22/6/20	Child Sponsorship	\$14,065

**Record of any complaints:**

None

**Record of any child protection issues:**

None

**Visits to and from partner**

<i>Date range</i>	<i>Name</i>
Anne-Marie Maltby visited 2 <sup>nd</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	

**Volunteer Activity**

N/A

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Director’s Name:** Anne-Marie Maltby

## **AGM Project Directors Report: Bangladesh**

**Year:** 2019 - 2020

**Partner:** Symbiosis Bangladesh

### **Main Activities:**

Provision of support and education to poor people in northern Bangladesh, by providing training in textile production and marketing, primary school training and preschool training to the children of a silt island in the Jamuna River and supporting the community through women's *shomati* groups.

### **Main Outcomes:**

#### **The Garment Training Project (GTP)**

Support was provided in the Mymensingh area through the provision of classes at various levels and in various fields of textile production, from manufacture to marketing and sales. Such support continued to contribute to raising not only the economic status of the poor but the social status of women in the community. This activity was further supported by general educational opportunities and the encouragement of savings groups. Unfortunately, this year has been greatly affected by the Corona Virus ID 19 and at the time of this report the full consequences of the pandemic associated with this virus are not available.

#### **The Jamuna River Development Project (JRDP):**

Support was provided to the poor on one of the major mobile silt islands in Jamuna River. Such support provided primary and pre-school education to many of the neediest people on the island, and *shomati* support in the form of savings groups with appropriate social support. The project was halted during the government enforced lockdown period of the Covid Virus ID 19. Fortunately, however, the virus had minimal impact on the island and full activities have now resumed.

### **Status of project and partnership agreements:**

#### **1) The Garment Training Project (GTP): (Year 2 of 3-year project)**

This project replaces the former broadly based Technical Training Project (TTIS). While continuing to provide the general social support of the old TTIS, the technical aspects of this project concentrate on the textile training of the former TTIS.

The project was extremely successful this past year, up until the corona virus ID 19 struck. However, the virus had a devastating impact on the execution of the project after April. The Government of Bangladesh applied a national lockdown, which carried over into the start of the present financial year, totally halting fieldwork. It is clear that, even before the lockdown, activity was decreasing as the virus bit the community. While staff are now back at work implementing this financial year's project plan, information on the impact of the virus for

latter part of the last financial year remains unclear. National reports would indicate that it is likely to be severe but for a full understanding of the consequences for this project we must wait.

The following brief list of achievements is mainly based on information received from Bangladesh before the national lockdown and a very brief email announcing a resumption of work after the lockdown eased.

<i>Persons Trained</i>	<i>Intended</i>	<i>Achieved</i>
Basic sewing and tailoring	120	122
Embroidery	10	0
Block batik and hand painting	50	6
Garment making	10	0
Training for good health	120	122
Establishing marketing outlets	2	1

In addition to the above, a significant effort has gone into capacity building in the community by teaching financial and loans management, the importance of audits, etc., spending two sessions on each of six topics. However, only a half of the planned training was carried out because of the virus.

**The Jamuna River Development Project (JRDP):** (Year 2 of 3-year project)

The project, which delivers financial guidance, schooling and general support to the community on a silt island as it washed down the river Jamuna, has had a successful year despite the corona virus ID 19 devastating the mainland. Fortunately, reports received indicate that the virus never made its way to the island, or if it did it was a weak strain having minimum impact. Nevertheless, by order of the national government of Bangladesh the island was locked down like the rest of the country as an important precaution. Project work has returned to normal since the lockdown has been lifted.

While the island escaped the virus, it has since suffered from severe flooding, which has undermined many structures and caused considerable damage and misery. However, such difficulties are for the following financial year, financial year 2020-21.

The following brief list of achievements is based on information received covering the entire year of this report. Many of the activities directed at keeping the communities safe are the same as for the Garment Training Project described above.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Intended</i>	<i>Achieved</i>
Persons trained in financial planning at various level (nos. for most basic level)	360	330
Savings through shomati groups *	4,111,200 taka	4,633,219 taka
Eye testing clinics in primary schools	5	2
Education for parents on a variety of child related issues, e.g. child health, safety and child marriage.	167	167

\* 2933 members out of 3407 members are involved in income generation activities as a result of loans taken out from their group.

The recent demand for, and interest in, savings groups and their activities have been strong, although, as with other activities, participation significantly decreased during the months of lockdown.

Information programs were run to inform all participants how to keep safe during the pandemic, with emphasis on washing hands social distancing and wearing masks.

Support of 5 schools, at rate of 75% support as school closed for half of the second semester year (yielding 50% + (0.5 x 50%)), including teacher salaries, books and teaching materials. (Note that PIA continued full support, but this was not passed on to the schools!)

Most extra school activities such as sports days continued as planned.

#### Note on Both Projects.

The majority of the budget for Symbiosis Bangladesh is spent on staff salaries. In the spirit of 'Job Keeper' here in Australia, a decision was made by the Board of Partners in Aid to keep our contractual obligated payments to Symbiosis Bangladesh going, rather than suspend them during the period of the lockdown. It was considered important that the team in Bangladesh be kept intact.

However, it is noted that recently Dr Morris Lee has stepped down as the head of Symbiosis Bangladesh, although he will still work in a transitional period. He leaves the organisation in sound shape, if a bit battered by the virus and its consequences. His departure signals the need for a more detailed than usual consideration of the role of Partners in Aid in Bangladesh, a consideration that the Board will undertake during the present financial year, 2020-2021.

The above reports give brief account of activities. The Board of Partners in Aid is happy with the progress made during this difficult year. However, the difficulty of the year has left reporting vague in places and the Project Committee and Board await further details on many aspects of this difficult year. Monitoring of the project by direct visit has been impractical because of the virus and a travel alert.

#### **Summary of project financial assistance:**

<i>Date sent</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Sept 2019	Continuation of development activity in both projects	\$16,400
March 2020	Continuation of development activity in both projects	\$16,600

It should be noted that the PIA made the decision, in consultation with Symbiosis Bangladesh, that all staff should continue to receive payment during their period of lockdown, in line with the Australia Government's position on payments in Australian society.

#### **Record of any complaints:**

None

**Record of any child protection issues:**

None

**Visits to and from partner**

*Date range*      *Name*

None

**Volunteer Activity**

N/A

**Date:** 23 November 2020

**Director's Name:** Roger Hughes.

(Director and Project Coordinator for both the GTP and JRDP).

## **AGM Project Director's Report: SEDS Child Education Sponsorship**

**Year:** 2019 - 2020

**Partner:** SEDS (Social Education and Development Society)

**Main Activities:** Sponsorship of education of children who might not otherwise have the chance of attending school

**Main Outcomes:** Sponsorship of the education program of 185 students

### **Status of project and partnership agreements:**

The school year in India commences on 1<sup>st</sup> June and runs through to the end of April. Students in India and elsewhere have had a difficult 2020. The students in India still have five months of schooling in their current year cycle.

Whilst COVID-19 has had a profound impact on the lives of millions of people worldwide, students at school have also been heavily affected by lockdowns which have occurred regularly, some of them ongoing. There has been a stop/start approach at times. Throughout the year the Indian Government have released statements advising of return dates for schools which have been pushed back on a number of occasions. When the situation became more serious, the decision was made that all students would not return to school and that they would automatically obtain a pass up to Year 10. This is the end of schooling for students who are on the SEDS Child Education sponsorship program. The restart date for school is now December 14<sup>th</sup> 2020.

In a normal school year, I would expect to receive a copy of reports sometime after the end of the school year for students in secondary education, i.e. Year 6 to Year 10, by July or August. Hand-written reports for students in Kinder to year 5 sometimes are a little slower. There are no reports this year, although the students will receive a paper which advises of automatic passes.

The number of students remains similar to previous years, however this year a number of our donors have withdrawn their support due to the downturn in the economy, and loss of work due to COVID-19. This year has been very challenging for our children. Many of them will return to school education, however whilst the Government supports the education of children, there does not appear to be any compulsion to attend school for many of the children whose family exist on a very low income. This income often does not extend to being able to educate their children and feed them too. The concern from SEDS' perspective is that many children will not return to school in the short term. Many of them will have gone to work as agricultural labourers as their parents and grandparents have done in the past. The migration of families has occurred in the past where parents sometimes seek a better life and work for their families and relocate to the cities. How many children will no longer be participating may not be known for some weeks or months.

To our many donors, my special thanks for continuing with your sponsorship support of students. Once I know of the overall impact of students returning to school or not, I will be better placed to make decisions, after discussions

**Summary of project financial assistance:**

<i>Date sent</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Amount</i>
	Sponsorship of children's education	\$40,894

**Record of any complaints:**

None

**Record of any child protection issues:**

None

**Visits to and from partner**

No visits to India by the Coordinator were possible this year due to the impact of COVID-19

However, in March 2020, Mrs. Manil Joshua, CEO of SEDS visited Australia for a short visit. During this time, she and her son Rohith, who also has a leading role in SEDS, attended a luncheon at the Pickering's home along with ten donors, and participated in a Partners in Aid Board meeting,

**Volunteer Activity**

N/A

**Date:** 16 November 2020

**Director and Child Education Sponsorship Co-ordinator:** Lyn Pickering

## **AGM Project Director's Report: SEDS Agriculture Project**

**Year:** 2019 -2020

**Partner:** SEDS - Social and Education Development Society

**Main Activities:** Sustainable Agriculture (Incorporating Watershed Management, Low Carbon Farming)

**Main Outcomes:**

**Watershed Management:** improved water retention, groundwater replenishment, increased vegetation,

**Low Carbon Farming:** safer, nontoxic farming practices, improved soil quality, higher crop yields, cooperative work between farmers leading to leverage for loans etc, eventually income from CERs.

**Status of project and partnership agreements:**

SEDS and Partners in Aid commenced a new Project Agreement in July this year, with a 2 year project proposed by SEDS given the uncertainty around DFAT funding.

This new project combines the ongoing tank desilting and watershed management work with low carbon farming under the umbrella term "Sustainable Agriculture".

### **Background**

***SEDS mission is to facilitate a strong people's institution responsible for the development process of the rural poor with a specific focus on women leading towards the vision through promoting sustainable livelihoods, management of natural resources, community owned and managed health and education initiatives***

SEDS is committed to realizing its vision taking in account the challenges for rural development in a globalizing context. They aim to:

- **Create strong community-based organisations (CBO's),**
  - who have the capacity, resources and infrastructure to address their common needs independently,
  - Who are aware of their rights and able to defend them,
  - who are gender-sensitive and non-exclusive, and
  - who live and generate income in balance with their natural and social environment.
  
- **Enhance and manage the natural resources**
  - Together with the people.
  - Promoting biodiversity and increasing vegetation cover on and next to the field
  - Through afforestation through dry-land horticulture
  - Through kitchen gardening and homestead plantation, through livestock promotion
  - Through promotion of sustainable agriculture

SEDS works in six Mandals in the southern part of Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh: Roddam, Penukonda, Somandepalli, Gorantla, Chilamathur and Parigi covering an area of roughly 6700 square kms, with a population of some 450 000.

Anantapur district is situated in the middle of the Deccan Plateau, out of full reach of both monsoons. The main issue affecting the area is drought.

**Tank desilting** is undertaken not just to deepen the tanks for more storage capacity. It also deepens the relationship between the people, nature and SEDS.

Tanks as multi-use socio-ecological constructs provide the highest productivity in agriculture uses. Tanks have multiple functions and several outputs like food (fish), fodder (tank bed) and fuel (bushes). Then there is the silt that can be used in the fields to improve the soil.

As such tank desilting is not a one-off project just to improve the availability of water. It plays an important part in a holistic approach to development and it works as a hand in glove program.

- To further empower the women in the area economically and socially by supporting Village Organization's (VO's) and women with seed collection.
- To raise awareness among the target population on issues such as community resources (tanks), sustainable agriculture, gender issues and women's wellbeing, and community health
- To create a stimulating environment that encourages positive learning for the children in the SEDS area of work.
- To introduce open and flexible approach to include different crops and systems to small holder farmers.

**Sustainable Agriculture** is a program which encompasses a number of facets. It means good stewardship of the natural systems and resources that farmers rely on. Among other things, this involves:

- Building and maintaining healthy soil
- Managing water wisely
- Minimizing air, water, and climate pollution
- Promoting biodiversity

Integrated with activities such as tank desilting, watershed management, fish seeding, tree planting, it lays a strong foundation for sustainable agriculture.

SEDS is working towards training farmers to diversify to more drought resistant crops. In this new project, they will introduce 500 small farmers to growing millets as an alternative cash crop and train farmers to respond to unpredictable rainfall. SEDS will train farmers in sustainable planting and harvesting techniques, making organic pesticides and fertilisers. They will also establish a seed bank to provide farmers with millet seeds.

## **The Past Year**

During 2020, all of India was deeply affected by lockdowns, including Anathapur District. Despite this, in between lockdowns, the staff and villagers managed to complete tank desilting at Cholemarri in June, removing

2835 cubic metres of silt and benefit 35 farmers and their families and the wider village.

When not in lockdown, farmers continued to practise low carbon farming and retain their record keeping which is necessary for accreditation with the UNFCCC.

The regular verification process was conducted remotely this year with SEDS receiving a successful result once more.

The DFAT Friendship Grants were suspended early in 2020 and there is no indication of whether they will in fact be awarded. SEDS is preparing the groundwork for the millet project which the grant was to fund and we hope that the grants will be revived in 2021.

SEDS will celebrate 40 years of pioneering and respected work in December this year. Partners in Aid has been by their side for most of those 40 years and our partnership has benefitted thousands of farmers and their families and communities. The resilience of the SEDS project and staff was shown during this challenging year where they continued the valued watershed management work despite the conditions and demonstrating the value of our shared work together.

**Summary of project financial assistance:**

<i>Date sent</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Amount</i>
26/11/19	Tank Desilting and Sustainable agriculture	\$42,000
19/6/20	Tank Desilting and Sustainable agriculture	\$9,292

**Record of any complaints:**

None

**Record of any child protection issues:**

None

**Visits to and from partner**

<i>Date range</i>	<i>Name</i>
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Amanda Stone visited 16<sup>th</sup> to 24th August 2019. No visits were possible in 2020.

**Volunteer Activity**

N/A

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Director's Name:** Amanda Stone

## **AGM Project Director's Report: Sinangpad Healthy Village Project**

**Year:** 2019-2020

**Partner:** Sinangpad Association – Sinangpad Healthy Village Project

**Main Activities:** Improving community health through enabling residents to improve local environmental sanitation. A specific component of the project is the achievement of zero open defecation, municipality by municipality.

**Main Outcomes:**

Villagers recognize both behavioral and local environmental risks to health in their community and are enabled and motivated to change behaviour and, the help of small grants to purchase any necessary construction materials, to remove any physical barriers to such change.

**Status of project and partnership agreements:**

***Background***

The basic approach of the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project is as follows. When a village indicates its interest in participating in the project, it is visited by Sinangpad Association volunteers who do an assessment of the health risks inherent in the local village environment. A one or two-day interactive training is then carried out in the village, the only *proviso* being that at least one person from 75% of households attend. The Sinangpad Association volunteers then help the community establish a core group which they then assist with the development of an action plan. The villagers themselves determine their priorities with respect to environmental improvement and prepare a very simple proposal for funds to purchase any materials, such as cement, needed to construct basic infrastructure to enable these priorities to be realised. Villagers do the construction themselves with ongoing mentoring and monitoring from Sinangpad and local municipal experts, if needed. Once the initial goal has been achieved, villagers may apply for further grants.

In the second half of 2019, participating villages were being visited and mentored. Grants had been made to nine villages. Since the last PIA Project Co-ordinator's visit had taken place about a year earlier, monitoring and evaluation assessments had been carried out 20+ communities to determine what outputs had been sustained in these communities since they started participating in the SHVP. This data is now being entered on the computer for analysis. Where necessary, Sinangpad members planned for retraining or mentoring visits to revive community enthusiasm for improving the environment sanitation in their village. Sinangpad representatives had also represented the Sinangpad Association in a number of Local Government Unit meetings in three municipalities, facilitating cooperation and collaboration between Sinangpad and local government units with respect improving village environmental sanitation.

This was the continuance of the work that the project had been undertaking for 12 years, with modifications based on lessons learnt and new communities incorporated into the project each year.

The latest modification has been the incorporation of a new component, specifically aiming at eliminating open defecation in the province, municipality by municipality. A total of 184 household sanitary toilets have been constructed since June 2019. One village has now achieved zero open defecation status, based on government random inspections, and at least three were now awaiting validation in January. At that time, it was anticipated that all Pasil Municipality, with the possible exception of one village, would have achieved open zero defecation by the end of 2020 – an expectation which has now been put back until after the pandemic no longer requires isolation. To facilitate sustainability of a community's open defecation free status, once achieved, in the last half of 2019, advocacy was being undertaken with village officials in an effort to change building permit requirements to ensure that no permit is giving for the construction of new houses unless a sanitary toilet is included in the plan.

### **The Year 2020**

Towards the end of last year and the beginning of 2020, all was going well. In January, approximately 80 municipal and barangay health workers from the Pasil and Balbalan Municipalities attended a meeting held in Tabuk to motivate and enable the exchange of ideas to ensure zero open defecation is achieved as soon as possible. Then the pandemic brought everything to a halt. Villages, many of which were relatively remote, became closed to outsiders to protect their residents. There was some hope that construction of sanitary household toilets by villagers could continue, but construction materials became scarce. Basically, the project ground to a temporary halt.

Kalinga was ill-equipped to cope with a serious COVID-19 outbreak – the provincial hospital had only one ventilator and 15-20 sets of oxygen equipment. PPE was in short supply: while it could be purchased from elsewhere, funds were limited. A number of the Sinangpad members, with whom Partners in Aid had collaborated over the years, were health workers and became front line workers at particular risk. When Partners in Aid became aware of the PPE shortage, the Board, with the very willing agreement of the relevant donor, made the one-off decision to allow the latest donation made for the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project to be spent on PPE for health workers and residents of our villages. This enabled Sinangpad, after consultation with the Provincial Health Office concerning needs, to procure face masks and shields, hand sanitiser, thermal scanners, and other relevant equipment and distribute it to some Health Frontliners, to two Rural Health Units (Tanudan and Pasil) and to 19 of the 60+ barangays (villages) now participating in the Sinangpad Healthy Village project and.

The decision to use a donation for some reason other than that for which it was made, even with the consent of the donor, is an unusual one, and this may be the first time approval of such a major change in project expenditure, has been taken by the Board. However, it was felt that these were exceptional circumstances and that it would also serve as a mark of respect to those of our Filipino colleagues at risk who have put so much of their effort and free time into the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project.

Sinangpad Association members are all ready to resume project activities as soon as circumstances permit. There is still some AUD19,000 that has been donated for this project that has, at the request of Sinangpad Association, been held in reserve in Australia, pending the opening up of the province.

**Summary of project financial assistance:**

<i>Date sent</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Amount</i>
12 Sept 2020	Special grant to cover purchase of PPE	AUD10,000

**Record of any complaints:**

None

**Record of any child protection issues:**

None

**Visits to and from partner**

Cecily Neil visited Kalinga in January 2020.

**Volunteer Activity**

N/A

**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Director's Name:** Cecily Neil