



PARTNERS IN AID

MARCH - JUNE
NEWSLETTER 2021

Thank you for your support in these challenging times.

The impact of COVID-19 has hit many Australians hard. However, the impact on our project countries has been even more devastating. For many families, there have been no government safety nets to lessen the consequences of income loss. For children, there has often been no internet that would enable virtual school lessons, and as a consequence, some may never return to school.

In Victoria, the financial impact of COVID-19 on some of our regular donors has meant they have not had the capacity to donate.

To these donors, we want to say thank you for the support you have given to Partners in Aid and our overseas beneficiaries. Our thoughts are with you. Even though you may not be able to donate now, you are still part of the Partners in Aid family.

Like most NGOs, at the moment, with reduced income, Partners in Aid needs to raise more money. For our members who do have the capacity to give, we would love your help by:

- Encouraging new members to join Partners in Aid
- Consider hosting a small fundraising event such as an afternoon tea, a home meal or a restaurant meal where guest can provide a donation to Partners in Aid.

If you are interested in organising a small fundraising event, please let us know and we will send you information on how to do this, and on the PIA projects that your guest donations will support.

Warmest wishes,
The PIA Board

Contact:
admin@partnersinaid.org.au

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Chairperson's AGM Report - Cecily Neil 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 Organisations to continue to fund projects which have a significant impact on the quality of life of people in vulnerable communities. The skills and integrity of each of our Partner Organisations enables best practice ideas to be adapted to the social and physical environment of each project. The close involvement of the Partner Organisations 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 organisation's perception of a community's needs.

There is no denying that 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 impacted, 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 Organisations 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. COVID-19 has not only exacerbated the problems faced by project beneficiaries, but in some cases created potential hardships or risks for Partner Organisation staff and volunteers.

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 110 years. We are indebted to Graham and Kristen for their service and positive legacy.

Several new members have joined the Board as directors (see page on board members), and three more have been nominated to be appointed as directors at this AGM.

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 holding in reserve some scheduled project instalments. This was at the request of our partners, who due to lockdowns, were unable to spend it in accordance with their project agreement. This money will need to be disbursed 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 how we can expand our operations by establishing new partnerships with overseas not-for-profit organisations 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 Organisation, is still being explored. However, any serious attempt establishing new partnerships with overseas not-for-profit organisations 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. We, and our Partner Organisations could not assist communities, and their thousands of residents each year without your generous support. Thank you.

HOW TO GIVE

HOW TO GIVE:

Because Partners in Aid has no paid staff, our overheads are very low. This means nearly all the money donated goes directly to our partner organisations. All donations are tax deductible. There are a number of ways you can support Partners in Aid projects, including making a general donation, making a donation directly to one of our projects, buying items from one of our partners or leaving a gift in your will. You can donate by:

- Leaving a bequest
- Direct Bank Transfer
- Cheque
- Online at [My Cause](#) or [GiveNow](#)
- Purchase from our [Goodwill Wine](#) Partners

BEQUESTS

A gift in your will, no matter what size will make a significant difference to the work of Partners in Aid. You can bequest cash, a percentage of your estate or a residuary gift. All bequests are welcome and there are no fees. We use bequests to assist with the continual development and improvements of all our programs. We recommend that you seek professional advice from your solicitor or financial advisor in planning a bequest. For more information or a confidential conversation please contact Cecily or Lyn on 03 9704 6315 or e-mail admin@partnersinaid.org.au.

BANK TRANSFER OR CHEQUE

Details to donate through bank transfer or cheque can be found on the next page. Please ensure that bank transfers have the details of your name and the direction of your donation. If forwarding a cheque, fill

in the newsletter page or write a note with name and direction of your donation or email admin@partnersinaid.org.au to advise your payment and where you would like it allocated.

ONLINE AT MY CAUSE / GIVENOW

You can make a one off or regular tax-deductible donation through platform My Cause or Give Now (click links below)

- [My Cause](#)
- [Give Now](#)

GOODWILL WINE PARTNERSHIP

You can also 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. You can order individual bottles or corporate and personal gift packs. Order your wines or buy gift vouchers by [Placing your order here and support Partners in Aid.](#)

HOW TO GIVE:

I would like to make a general donation to Partners in Aid

\$

I would like to make a specific donation to one of the below projects (please indicate which project)

Bangladesh: Symbiosis Bangladesh

- \$10 could buy school stationary for 1 week
- \$30 could buy tailoring supplies
- \$200 could buy a sewing machine

\$

India: SEDS Sustainable Agriculture Project

- \$10 could buy 1000 Fish fingerlings to stock tanks
- \$50 could employ a SEDS staff member for 1 month
- \$200 could hire a tractor for 1 week

\$

Philippines: Sinangpad Healthy Village Project

- \$35 could buy materials to enable a family to build a household sanitary toilet
- \$50 could buy health training for communities

\$

CHILD SPONSORSHIP

I would like to begin/continue to sponsor a child at SEDS / All Bengal Women's Union
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.

\$ 25

BANK TRANSFER & CHEQUE

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).

TOTAL

\$



BANGLADESH: SYMBIOSIS PROJECT

PROJECT DIRECTOR: ROGER HUGHES

Partners in Aid works with Symbiosis in Bangladesh on two projects which aim to build the capacity, resilience and socio-economic status of impoverished communities. The Bangladesh Technical Training and Information Support (TTIS) Program provides vocational training in sewing, with the majority of participants being women. The Jamuna River Development Project (JRDP) aims to help communities living on islands in the Jamuna River through education, improved literacy, micro-finance and health projects.

It has been a turbulent time for our projects in Bangladesh with the present pandemic. Both project activities and reporting have been difficult. However, as I write this update, we received our first detailed report covering both projects. We have lost our in-country chief project officer, Abu Baker Siddique, who has moved on to further study, but we welcome Alim Al-Razy in his place. The following is based upon Alim Al-Razy's first report. It covers the second quarter of this financial year.

Garment Training Program, (GTP)

Some very limited activity was able to occur during the first quarter but the second quarter has seen a dramatic increase in activity. Forty trainees have completed their training in textiles and sewing. This figure is a dramatic improvement on zero trainees for the previous quarter, and greater than the 30 trainees originally planned for the quarter. Other auxiliary activities, as diverse as the monitoring of children's growth and tree planting, achieved their targets, but those auxiliary programs associated with women's development have generally fallen short of their targets, and more effort needs to be directed towards getting them back on track after the pandemic. I am not aware of the reason for these shortfalls especially as there have been no shortfalls in the targets that were originally set for disability awareness instruction. However, it must be remembered that the GTP, with its auxiliary activities, has been very severely affected by the pandemic, and restoring the activity achieved in the quarter is a laudable achievement.



"40 TRAINEES
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SWEING"

Alim Al-Razy, new chief
project officer



Jamuna River Development Project, (JRDP)

As noted in an earlier report to readers, the community associated with this project on an island in the Jamuna River, did not suffer the ravages of the pandemic, as it was protected by its isolation on an island. The project was closed, by government order, during the national lockdown, but it was able to resume activities immediately after these restrictions were eased. Schooling was able to be provided to all 750 primary school students in the programme during the quarter. Similarly, all other aspects of this project that were scheduled for the quarter were met or exceeded, with for example anti-natal and post-natal check-ups, originally expected to number 50 for the quarter, but actually numbering 83 check-ups. The results achieved were excellent. However, there is difficulty catching up on the backlog caused by the pandemic. Clearly students missed several months of school, which may or may not have long term effects, but never-the-less must put additional strain on the already struggling school system. Also, other activities scheduled entirely for the first quarter have not been rescheduled yet, for example 500 students were to have eye tests and as yet no student has been tested this financial year. However, the results achieved for the quarter are excellent, albeit largely as a result of the isolation of the island from the pandemic.

Although no independent monitoring of the results is presently available, indications are that both our projects are back on track, a great achievement for the team in Bangladesh.



"SCHOOLING WAS ABLE TO BE PROVIDED TO ALL 750 PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAMME DURING THE QUARTER"

Alim Al-Razy, new chief project officer



PHILIPPINES: SINANGPAD HEALTHY VILLAGE PROJECT

PROJECT DIRECTOR: CECILY NEIL

The Sinangpad Healthy Village Project has been ongoing now for nearly twelve years. Located in the Kalinga Province, a mountainous province in the north of the Philippine's main island, Luzon. The project helps enable poor, remote communities to make the most of their human potential, capabilities and resources by promoting behavioural changes intended to reduce the incidence of environment-related food, water-borne and vector-borne diseases, especially those affecting infants.

Still no progress with the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project – currently, money donated is being kept in a Partners in Aid bank account ready for transfer as soon as the Sinangpad Association can resume visits to the villages.

New COVID-19 cases are still being diagnosed in Kalinga. So far, the province has experienced over 2,000 cases, despite efforts to keep the virus from reaching the province. While Kalinga is classified by the Philippine Government as a low-risk area with respect to the pandemic, it is still one of the designated areas under 'General Community Quarantine', which means, that among other restrictions, schools remain closed. With no internet connections in many of the Kalingan villages, this means that children are missing out on any education other than what their parents – who may be illiterate – can provide. The effects of the pandemic will be felt long after outbreaks cease. Our continued support will be essential. The good news is that vaccines have just arrived in the Philippines. The Government hopes that 60% (70 million) of its citizens will be vaccinated by the end of the year. Currently, all our Philippine colleagues and their families are safe.



COVID-19 STATS

INDIA

- 11,438K CASES
- 11,043K RECOVERED
- 159K DEATHS

PHILLIPINES

- 631K CASES
- 560K RECOVERED
- 12,848 DEATHS

BANGLADESH

- 560K CASES
- 514K RECOVERED
- 8,597 DEATHS

As at 16 pf March 2021
Worldometers



"THERE IS A LOT OF EFFORT BEING MADE TO KEEP THE GIRLS ACTIVE AND AVOIDING DWELLING ON THE PANDEMIC."

INDIA: ALL BENGAL WOMEN'S UNION

PROJECT DIRECTOR: ANNE-MARIE MALTBY

The All Bengal Women's Union (ABWU) of Kolkata has been operating for over 70 years. Partners in Aid has been supporting the ABWU for more than 40 years. The ABWU is an NGO run entirely by volunteer women to rescue abused, at risk, destitute, abandoned and orphaned girls.

There is little new to report from ABWU. The girls who remain at the home are having regular classes through the Zoom App so have a real time video link for lessons. This is supervised by staff at the home. Bakery training has continued and many of the girls have enjoyed this.

There is a lot of effort being made to keep the girls active and avoiding dwelling on the pandemic. It has caused a lot of anxiety but there is hope that things will settle now that vaccinations have started.

Of the girls that returned home at the start of the pandemic, very few have returned yet. This is mainly because there is no local train service to date and schools are also shut. Parents/guardians are still concerned about COVID-19 and are reluctant to take the risk of attempting a circuitous journey involving different modes of transportation to bring their children to the Children's Home.

Meet the board members!



Jessica Gill

Jessica joined in March 2020. She works as a management consultant and has a strong interest and experience in social impact work. She has a Master of Finance & Management from the University of Melbourne.



Bob Baldassa

Bob has developed and delivered projects for communities and infrastructure over many years and continents. Bob has a MAICD, FAIPM, and CPPD. He is currently a board member of BE Power.



Chris Gillies

Chris is attracted to Partners in Aid as he believes in the mission to improve the lives and communities of those most in need. He brings unique experience and skills to the Board having worked for international NGOs for the last 10 years.



Nick Foster

Nick began with Partner in Aid in early 2020. He is currently working with IQ Energy Australia, a Melbourne environmental start-up. He has co-lead delegations to the UN in New York and the OECD Forum in Paris. Nick is also a member of the Rotary Passport Club of Melbourne and Citizens Alliance.



Cecily Neal

Cecily has been with Partners in Aid for more than 20 years. She has held academic positions in Zambia and the UK and has consulted on international development projects for AusAid, World Bank and Asian Development Bank. Cecily has a Masters in Sociology, a PhD and Grad Dipl. in Epidemiology.



Caryl Hertz

Caryl has vast experience in leadership and change management. She is passionate about social equity and wellbeing. Caryl has served on many boards, and is Non Exec Director for ACNEM and Out Doors Inc. Her qualifications cover Commerce, Marketing, Education Management and Public Relations.



Lyn Pickering

Lyn has been a Director of Partners in Aid since the early 1990's. She concentrates her efforts on the SEDS child sponsorship program, being the SEDS Project-Coordinator for this program. Lyn is a Rotarian that volunteers in both my local community and overseas. She is passionate about being able to make a difference.



Jacquie O'Brien

Jacquie is passionate about gender equity using political advocacy and targeted communications. She has worked on sustainable livelihood projects in Kenya and Democratic Republic of Congo and has a Masters of International Development & Environment from Monash University.



Roger Hughes

Roger is a long standing board member of Partners in Aid with a key focus on the Bangladesh project. He has been involved in major hydroelectric infrastructure projects in various developing countries. He studied Civil Engineering at the U. of Melbourne, has a PhD in Applied Mathematics from U. of Cambridge.



OTHER FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES

As the COVID-19 restrictions ease across the country, we encourage our supporters and members to undertake their own fundraising activities.

Please contact us at admin@partnersinaid.com.au if you have any ideas and we can see how we can support you. Some ideas include:

- Virtual trivia
- Virtual dinners or morning teas
- Raffles

OIL PAINTING LIMITED OFFER

We currently have a limited offer from our board member Roger Hughes who is offering to paint oil portraits of our sponsored children. If you would like an oil painting of your sponsored child please contact us at admin@partnersinaid.com.au or e-mail Roger directly at Wongarra@hotmail.com to request your oil painting.

We ask that you make a donation (however much you'd like) to Partners in Aid in exchange for the oil painting.

ACFID



ACFID
CODE

Complaints Policy

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

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.

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