



PARTNERS IN AID

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2024

Our newsletter

You may have noticed there was no March edition of our newsletter. At our February meeting, the Board resolved to reduce the number of newsletters we issue each year to two. You will now receive newsletters in June and December each year.

While this will certainly save us a small amount of money, we made the decision based on feedback from our Project Coordinators who told us that there is often little news by way of updates that can be sourced from the projects every three months. We are conscious of not wanting to draw our projects' resources away from what they do best: helping their communities to thrive.

Expansion of the Board

After many months of searching for suitable candidates, we were delighted to welcome four new Board members last month. Philip Alesin, Silvia Hope, Sophia Gerakios and Penny Daly were official welcomed to the Board at our May meeting. All bring

interest in aid and international development, as well as a robust range of professional and personal skills and experiences. The Board is confident that the new additions will further our organisation's ability to support communities in need, allowing us to expand on the work we do with your generous donations.

Federal budget

The annual federal budget was delivered in Canberra on 14 May. The \$300 cost-of-living support certainly received the most headlines, while international aid - officially termed official development assistance (ODA) - received far less coverage.

Partners in Aid is a non-partisan organisation so we hold no opinion on any party's or politician's position on aid. For those who are interested, the Devpolicy blog provides a summary of announcements from the budget. (The blog is produced by the Development Policy Centre within the Crawford School of Public Policy at The Australian National

University.) You can read the review [here](https://tinyurl.com/yb7utxez) (<https://tinyurl.com/yb7utxez>) while [this page](https://tinyurl.com/yp8p7m95) (<https://tinyurl.com/yp8p7m95>) has some interesting slides.

Our new phone number

From 2024, we have a new phone number. We can now be reached on 0429 929 063. The best way to get in touch remains by email, info@partnersinaid.org.au.

End of financial year

The end of financial year is a time when many charitable organisations increase their calls for donations. Partners in Aid is a small fish in a big pond of Australian registered charities, many of whom undertake some extremely valuable work, within Australia and overseas. We would be most grateful if you considered us as part of any end-of-year giving. Your generosity and support supports our entirely volunteer-based organisation to continue making an impact in the lives of some of the world's poorest people. Thank you sincerely for your support.



INDIA: SEDS CHILD SPONSORSHIP

PROJECT COORDINATOR: LYN PICKERING

I have received an email from SEDS. Apart from child education, Rasool has also reported on the prevailing weather conditions in their region. They have been experiencing extreme heat, with temperatures reaching as high as 46OC in the Penukonda area. At the time of writing in mid-May, the temperature has decreased to 36OC, so they are a lot happier!

Everyone is hopeful of good rainfall in the near future. The rains they receive in this very dry part of central southern India come from the monsoons. SEDS is situated towards the edge of the monsoon area, so it might be flooding rains one year and very little rain the next. The last few seasons have seen better outcomes for the local communities, with some long-sustained drought periods prior to that.

Rasool has forwarded the annual child education sponsorship report which details the activities each month at the SEDS campus for the students. Schools in India are on their long summer break in May and return to school in June.

Newer readers to our newsletter might be interested to know what their \$260 annual sponsorship fee means for each student.

- New School uniform twice a year.
- School shoes/thongs.
- School bag
- All books and stationery.
- School fees.
- Monthly weighing and measuring for school clothes or a present of new clothes for the students, as well as general health monitoring checks are carried out between these activities.

There are monthly activities at the SEDS campus included which involve cultural immersion, singing and sporting activities, and movie days. In September and October the students prepare Christmas cards for their sponsors. In December they now receive the gift of new clothes, an acceptable once-a-year present for the students. The clothes are produced mainly through the vocational training program run by Rashna Joshua at SEDS. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, or supporting an additional child, please see the "How to give" page in this newsletter for details.

I am very happy to advise that we have been advised of excellent results for the Year 10 students on the program. (Reports for all other students from lkg (lower kindergarten) to Year 9 are not released until the start of the new school year.) Eighteen Year 10 students sat their exams this year. These students attended eight different secondary schools in the SEDS area of watershed management and sustainable agricultural work. The area has been growing with new communities almost popping up overnight, something which began occurring when the new major highway was completed between Bangalore and Hyderabad.

Fantastic result

Ten students received a first division pass and five a second division pass, while three of the students failed. Two resat the failed exams with their results pending. There are more girls in the program than boys. Eight of the first division students were girls and two were boys. Some of the maths scores were in the high 90s, with Hindu Sree scoring 100%. Languages also scored very well, with English often being the highest of the



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three languages the students study - those languages being Telugu, Hindi and English.

The majority of students will now continue onto Years 11 and 12 (known as college) and from there to university. There is now an expectation from the students and their parents that they will be able to do this, with government being supportive of education for all students. More than 700 students have now attended school because of sponsors in Australia through Partners in Aid. Given the choices, many parents took the chance to give their children opportunities to attend school, something which was largely denied them.

The child education sponsorship program at SEDS began after our discussions in India in late 1994 during my first visit to India with my husband, Ian, who had been once the year

before. The program has continued to prosper under the guidance of GEO Mrs. Manil Joshua and the late Rajen Joshua who operated the watershed management and sustainable agricultural programs they started more than 40 years ago. As SEDS grew, Manil and Rajen took a holistic approach to the work they did. From an early start of planting a few trees and putting in some small gully checks to stop erosion, work progressed to encouraging kitchen gardens and small-scale development work, watershed management, tank desilting, tree planting, sustainable agriculture, low carbon farming, farmers groups and more. The program at SEDS grew to include women's and family health training and management training for women, and then the child education program. It is a very successful venture by the SEDS team and one in which both Ian and I have been very happy to play a small role in.



Photo by [Charu Chaturvedi](#) on [Unsplash](#).



THE PHILIPPINES: SINANGPAD HEALTHY VILLAGE PROJECT (SHVP)

PROJECT COORDINATOR: DR CECILY NEIL

In early May, I spent a week in Kalinga talking to members of Sinangpad Association about their plans for the next financial year. There will be little change from what has been done over the last 12 months, with a continuation of training in community health development and integrating a few villages not previously participating into the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project. There will be a continued emphasis on helping communities achieve zero open defecation, although as some of the septic tanks built earlier will now be getting close to full, there will be more emphasis on the Association's strategy for sustaining open defecation. This includes making sure that residents are keeping an eye on how close their tank is too full and are starting with the building of a new septic tank to which the pipes can be reconnected when the new tank is needed (provided it has remained in good condition, the original tank will be emptied and reused once the new tank is full).

Also important is working with local government units to have ordinances with timelines and penalties requiring anyone erecting a new house in a village to also build a sanitary toilet. It is uncertain right now whether helping women in villages to establish soapmaking groups will continue. The long-term economic feasibility is currently being investigated.

As I have talked about community health development activities and facilitating the achievement of zero open defecation in earlier newsletter articles, I thought I might take the opportunity in this article to talk a little about the people of Kalinga.

The population of Kalinga is 220,329 (2020 census), occupying 153 barangays (villages) and one (very small) city. Most of the population belongs to Indigenous tribal groups: there are six main tribes and several sub-tribes. In former times, the ethnic tribes of the area that is now Kalinga were fierce warriors. It is believed that the name of the province - Kalinga - is derived from the word for an 'enemy', 'fighter' or 'head-hunter'.

Tribal conflicts still occur from time to time but are now settled by peaceful means - without head hunting! However, when there is a conflict between tribes it can cause trouble for the Sinangpad Healthy Village Project. In such times, it can be temporarily difficult for members of one tribe to travel through a nearby village if residents there belong to the tribe with which there is a dispute. This can delay the transport of materials for sanitary toilets or other simple infrastructure being built.

Tribal identity and loyalty are still strongly felt. Particularly strongly felt is the traditional value of the community working together to help each other. This has contributed to achieving zero open defecation, as the community will organise itself to help disabled or elderly members to construct their toilet with the materials provided.

Despite colonisation of the Philippines further south, the mountainous landscape of Kalinga and the past warrior culture of the region have helped a rich cultural heritage to survive. This culture includes intricate weaving, traditional costumes, local music and dance. Traditional costumes are worn on special occasions and at festivals. Particularly strongly felt is the traditional value of the community working together to help each other. Traditional



THE PHILIPPINES: SINANGPAD HEALTHY LIVING PROJECT (SHVP)

PROJECT COORDINATOR: DR CECILY NEIL

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dance and the music of gongs, flutes and other local instruments, for example, are integral to festivals and special occasions.

One art that is dying out, however, is that of tattooing, an art form that over centuries was passed down from generation to generation. The tattooing involves intricate designs, with

cultural and spiritual meaning, that cover much of the bodies of men and women alike. For men, tattoos used to be a sign of bravery and for women a sign of beauty. Today, it is a dying art, as modern Kalingans feel it to be outdated. However, efforts are being made to train a new generation of tattoo artists to ensure the tradition does not die.



Photo by [Joshua Kyle](#) on [Unsplash](#).

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, 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 [Mycause](#) or [GiveNow](#)
- Purchase from our [Goodwill Wine](#) partners.

We're also working to make it easier for you to donate directly to a specific project. This month, we're excited to give the option to make a donation to the Sinangpad project in the Philippines (see the link at the bottom of the project page in this newsletter). Over the coming months we hope to roll-out similar functionality for our projects.

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 adviser in planning a bequest. For more information or a confidential conversation, please contact us on 0429 929 063 or email info@partnersinaid.org.au.

BANK TRANSFER OR CHEQUE

Details of how to donate through bank transfer or cheque can be found on the following page. Please ensure that bank transfers have the details of your name and the direction (i.e. the name of the project) of your donation, if any.

If forwarding a cheque, please complete the short form in this newsletter page or write a note with your name and project of your donation. You can also email info@partnersinaid.org.au to advise us of your payment and where you would like it allocated.

ONLINE AT MYCAUSE OR GIVENOW

You can make a one-off or regular tax-deductible donation through the secure platforms Mycause or Give Now. Just click on the link or type the address into your internet browser.

- [Mycause](#)
(www.mycause.com.au/charity/25612/PartnersinAidLtd)
- [GiveNow](#)
(www.givenow.com.au/partnersinaid)

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).

India: SEDS Child Education Program

- Medical fund. Items like reading glasses, eye drops, creams for rashes, toothbrushes and toothpaste.

\$

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

- \$50 could buy materials to enable a family to build a household sanitary toilet.

\$

Child sponsorship

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

The cost is \$260 per child per year, plus an optional annual gift of \$20.

\$

Membership

I would like to begin a membership or continue a membership (please circle) of Partners in Aid.

\$ 25

BANK TRANSFER AND CHEQUE

EFT details: Account name, Partners in Aid; BSB, 033686; account number, 162354. Please include your surname as reference and then email info@partnersinaid.org.au to arrange a receipt and confirm where you would like the donation directed. If paying by cheque, please make it payable to Partners in Aid and post to PO Box 42, Narre Warren LPO, Vic 3805.

Name for receipt: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Phone number: _____

TOTAL

\$

Email (to receive our newsletter): _____

Gifts of \$2 or more are tax deductible (a receipt will be issued).



A NOTE ABOUT OUR IMAGES

Wherever possible, we include images of our projects that have been taken by our Board members on their self-funded visits to sites, or photos taken by our partners themselves. However, we are particularly conscious of the need to respect the privacy of others, especially children. Accordingly, some images in our newsletters are sourced from free online photo sharing websites like Unsplash.

DO YOU NEED TO UPDATE YOUR DETAILS?

If your postal address has changed, please email info@partnersinaid.org.au or call 0429 929 063 (new from April 2024) and we'll update our records. Similarly, if you'd instead like to receive our newsletter by email, please get in touch. Receiving the newsletter electronically allows us to save on the cost of postage. We are, of course, very happy to continue mailing the newsletter to you in the traditional way and are grateful to our printer for the continued donation of his time and resources. And if you'd like to discontinue receiving our updates, please get in touch by phone or email and we'll remove your details from our database.

OUR COMPLAINTS POLICY

Any complaints should be addressed to the Board Chair via email or regular mail at the details found at the bottom of this page. All complaints will be treated seriously, acknowledged promptly and resolved within two months. Details of our Complaints and Whistleblower Policy can be found on our website: <https://partnersinaid.org.au/resources/>.

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. Its 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.

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.