



Partners in Aid

AUSTRALIA

ABWU SPONSORSHIP PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Introduction

All Bengal Women's Union (ABWU) is an Indian NGO which provides broad ranging support for women and girls. It has been operating for over 70 years. Partners in Aid has been supporting the ABWU for more than 40 years.

Local Context

ABWU is located in a poor area of central Kolkata. Our partnership provides assistance for girls in the Children's Home (CWH) and the After Care Home (ACH - those aged 18 and over) who are generally from abusive and/or extremely destitute backgrounds. They are brought to the home by court order or by government /non-government help agencies. Many have had no form of education and also need extensive emotional support. Most girls leave at the age of 18 but may stay longer in particular circumstances such as tertiary education. Our support is primarily through sponsorship.

Goals

The goal of sponsorship is to improve the future wellbeing and independence of the girls predominantly through education, counselling and life skills training. ABWU aims to empower the residents and build resilience.

Although ABWU has a very broad scope, PIA support is limited to resident girls and sponsorship subsidises the amount received from the Indian Government and their own fund raising. It assists ABWU with the provision of such things as counselling, remedial education, vocational support and support for tertiary education.

Expenditure

In Jun 2024, PIA sent \$10,093 comprising sponsorship for 39 girls and \$460 additional general donations from sponsors.

Intended and Achieved Actions

There are now 36 sponsored girls, 30 are in the CWH and 6 in the ACH. There are 5 older girls doing nursing training. Last year there were 41 girls sponsored. Further reduction in numbers is expected as we no longer promote ABWU sponsorship.

In the very early years, the PIA sponsorship program was needed to assist with basic food, clothing and accommodation needs. As ABWU has become increasingly well established and respected, there is increasing support from the local community and the growing middle class. As a result, sponsorship is used to assist with less basic needs. This can only be regarded as a very positive outcome from our program.

Risks and Management Action

<i>Identified Risk</i>	<i>Likelihood</i>	<i>Impact</i>	<i>Action taken to Mitigate Risk</i>
Reduction in sponsorship numbers	High	Weak	Reduction in numbers has had only a small impact due to the increase in the Australian dollar relative to the Indian rupee. Increasing support from ABWU's local community also means that our assistance is not so critical.

Anne-Marie Maltby, Project Director

November 2024