



Partners in Aid

# Newsletter

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December  
2010

Christmas is Coming.....

Welcome to the final newsletter for 2010.

In this edition, we are taking a slightly different approach to our usual newsletter format.

A number of donors and sponsors have asked us how they can support our work as an alternative to **buying Christmas gifts or a workplace 'Kris Kringle'**. We have consulted our overseas partners and come up with some ideas for our project areas which will help make a real difference to the lives and prospects of people living in very difficult circumstances.

We will provide you with a lovely gift certificate to use in lieu of a Christmas gift.

Of course it's also fine to make a general project donation if you prefer, or set up a child sponsorship for ABWU or SEDS.

Partners in Aid would like to thank all our donors, sponsors and friends for their generosity and continued support of our work, and we wish everyone a peaceful and happy festive season.



**Please help us spread the word about Partners in Aid by passing this newsletter on to family, friends and colleagues once you have read it.  
Thank you.**

## Annual General Meeting

Our AGM took place on Thursday 21 October 2010. We are including the **Chairman's Report and the Treasurer's Report here; the full Annual Report** (including Audited Financial Statement) can be obtained from our office or via our website—phone: 03 9704 6315, email: [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au), web: [www.partnersinaid.org.au](http://www.partnersinaid.org.au)

### **Chairman's Report**—Anne-Marie Maltby

**It is with great pleasure that I present the Partners in Aid Honorary Chairman's report** for 2010 which will be my last as Chairman. The Partners in Aid name and logo are now registered trademarks and the dust seems to have finally settled from the time consuming and distracting events relating to the name change. We feel that we started **the year with a clearer understanding of our organisation's strengths and goals.**

We continue to pursue our goal of empowering disadvantaged communities through community development, education, skills training and enhancing the status of women. At an organisational level, we are working to consolidate and refine our policies, procedures and processes to ensure that these reflect best practice.

#### Projects

Our projects are all going well as can be seen from the reports by our project coordinators. I will leave the details for them other than to say that we continue to be highly impressed by the commitment and dedication of our partners and the outcomes that they achieve as a result of our support.

#### Finances

We maintain a healthy and well monitored financial position which can be seen in the **Treasurer's Report. There has been a small drop in donations mitigated to some degree** by the high Australian dollar. We have set up a new bank transfer facility which has not only simplified and sped up the process, but secured more preferential exchange rates which significantly advantages our overseas partners.

#### Fundraising

Our two main social fundraisers were extremely successful. Both well exceeded previous years with the annual Bright Luncheon run by Joy Handley raising well over \$2,000 and the Bayles Dinner topping \$5,000.

#### Thanks to All

I would like to thank all of our members and supporters for their continued loyal support. I would also like to thank the many people who have helped us this year, whether it be folding newsletters, stuffing envelopes, donating their professional services or providing them at preferential rates. Without this support, it would be very difficult for our organisation to make such a positive impact in the overseas communities where our projects are located.

I am very proud to be a member of Partners in Aid and proud of our achievements. As we continue our efforts to work towards and embed best practice, we must ensure our future sustainability both as a financially viable organisation and in our commitment to our overseas partners.

I would particularly like to thank all of the board for their hard work over the last year. I know that we all feel rewarded by how much is achieved by a small group of volunteers and their supporters, despite little corporate or government support. I am resigning as Chairman after three very rewarding years but look forward to my continued active commitment as a board member and to working with you all again.

### Treasurers Report – Andrea Pickering

For the first time in 6 years we had a drop in income in the 2009/2010 year, which is obviously a little disappointing. The major part of this reduction was due to reduced funds being received for 2 self-funded projects by long time supporters. With this factored in, the reduction in income relative to last year was a little over \$8000.

Thanks to the support we have received from our donors, we sent \$137200 to our partner organisations during the 2009/2010 year.

Your board and small group of volunteers have again been working very hard to reduce costs. Unfortunately some of our larger costs (such as audit fees and ACFID membership) are unavoidable, and do not vary relative to our income. With the decrease in our income for the year, our administration percentage has increased, however is still under our stated objective of 15%.

As always, travel costs are a grey area, as they are felt to really be a project cost, rather than an administration cost. As well, your board members reimburse Partners In Aid for the cost of their travel. In light of this, if we were to remove travel costs from our accounts, our administration percentage for this year would be 8.2% of donated funds.

We again thank our supporters and donors for their continued support in our work.

### Election of Office Bearers

As a consequence of Anne-Marie stepping down as Chair after 3 years of dedicated service, Graham Moore was elected unopposed. He brings to the position hands on experience in development work, plus long standing work in community and educational governance. Anne-Marie was elected as Deputy Chair, following Roger Hughes stepping down from that position. Andrea Pickering will continue to provide outstanding service as Treasurer, while Kristin Aitken continues in the position of Secretary.

The AGM minutes and reports, available on request or from the website. outline the remainder of board and advisory members.

# Symbiosis—Bangladesh

## School

As we reported in previous newsletters, Partners in Aid funds a school on an island in the Jamuna River, providing an essential education to some of the country's poorest children. Most of the villagers are illiterate and living in poverty. Almost every family has four or five children and the education facilities for children are very limited and a long distance away.

The monsoonal floods are slowly washing the island downstream, and the school has been relocated several times to avoid it falling in the river as the island migrates. Relocation involves the locals dismantling the school and putting it back together in its new location.



School building. Skylights or ample windows are necessary to provide sufficient light for learning

Demand for the classes has exceeded resources, with around 120 children attending instead of the 75 originally planned. The school is now operating two shifts (with the teachers working the second shift unpaid) to enable as many children as possible to access education which will give them better future prospects. Study materials are in very short supply, so writing materials and books at a cost of \$15 per set would make a huge positive impact.

Conditions in the school are extremely basic, to say the least, and the building is very dark inside due to minimal natural light, which does not provide the most conducive environment for learning. \$100 is being sought to install skylights in the school roof to increase the natural light and create a more pleasant environment for the children and teachers.

## Trees

Tree planting helps stabilise the soil and mitigate erosion when the monsoon floods inundate the island, as well as providing villagers with shade and an income from the crops (such as guava).

The trees would be planted at the downstream end of the island, which means they would have several years to become established and grow as the island gradually migrates south.

A donation of \$50 will enable 100 trees to be planted and cared for.



Life in the wet season



### Fundraising Focus

- Writing materials and books \$15 per set
- Any donation towards skylights in school
- Tree planting and care \$50 per 100

## ABWU—Kolkata, India

### Orphans Trip

Around 100 of the girls being educated and looked after at ABWU are orphans with no family at all, not even aunts or uncles.

Holiday times can be very difficult and lonely for these girls as they have to stay at the Home, while the others return to their families. ABWU would like to be able to take them away for a few days every year, and organise some local day outings from the Home.

An orphans trip was conducted in May 2010, which was the first since 2007. A total of 101 girls and staff went by train to Puri in Orissa state and stayed at a holiday home close to the beach, which for most of them was the first time they had seen the sea. The girls swam in the sea, drank fresh coconut water, ate lots of fish and ice-cream and went sight seeing. Visits included temples and Nandan Kanon Zoo which is famous for the white tigers.



A number of girls also attended a local five day camp. They all had general health check-ups, learnt new handwork, participated in group activities, interacted with other children and took part in a cultural program.



Your donation would help ABWU build up the fund to enable a yearly orphans trip and some local days out.



On the train



Seaside fun at Puri

	<p><b>Fundraising Focus</b></p> <p>A donation of any amount towards the orphans holiday fund</p>
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## SEDS - Andhra Pradesh, India

### Fish Fingerlings for Tanks

When a tank is desilted, funded by Partners in Aid, advantage is taken of the new conditions to seed the full tank with fish fingerlings. These fish rapidly grow and are harvested by local villagers before the water evaporates and annual rains come.

**This 'value-adding' to our tank desilting work provides protein-rich and nutritious food to many villagers.**

For \$10, you can provide 1000 fish fingerlings to a village tank in the next desilting round. Each tank can take up to 50,000 fish. The results of desilting and revegetation can be seen in these photos .



Tanks before and after

### Trees

An integral part of the watershed management work at SEDS is revegetation and provision of trees to villagers for shade and food. One of these trees is guava, **known as a 'super fruit' for its vitamin rich properties:** vitamins A and C with seeds that are rich in omega-3, omega-6, polyunsaturated fatty acids and dietary fibre. A single Apple Guava fruit, a plant provided by SEDS to villagers, contains over four times the amount of vitamin C as one orange.

One of the women receiving SEDS-donated guava trees is Rathnamma, a farmer and mother of two boys.

Rathnamma received 48 plants for a one acre plot. Now after four years, the trees are bearing much more fruit than expected. This harvest season they generated a monthly income between Rs. 4,000 and 5,000 (AU\$90—\$110). Rathnamma plucks the fruits then sells them in the town. With this extra income she is able to support her younger son in school and save some money at the same time.



Rathnamma & husband

Tank desilting is not successful unless the erosion of topsoil in the area can be minimised. Revegetation of the local environment is essential and SEDS has undertaken a long term, often difficult process of planting tens of thousands of trees in the Anathapur district.

For \$10 a valuable tree – guava, neem, tamarind, mango— can be provided for either food, shade or soil stabilisation.

The Indian national newspaper, The Hindu, recently reported on SEDS achievements:

Dense forests have been raised and massive shade-giving and fruit-bearing trees developed into a canopy covering thousands of hectares in what were once forest lands devoid of greenery. As one traverses through the length and breadth of the five mandals adopted by Social, Education and Development Society (SEDS) in the Penukonda revenue division, it is unbelievable that such massive forestation work has been done by a low profile NGO founded by Rajan Joshua from Kerala and Manil Jayasena Joshua from Malaysia. They both met in Anantapur district and by providence got married. Soon after their marriage, they settled in a remote village called Anandapuram in Penukonda mandal and by their hard work and sheer dedication they built a set-up which uplifted the underprivileged on the educational, social and environmental front.

**“We faced stiff resistance and blind opposition to the forestation drive from the locals. They cut down the trees planted by us and offered no cooperation as we opposed tree felling by the locals; but our persistence, perseverance and patience paid off and ultimately they began to understand the seriousness of our cause,”** said Rajan Joshua, executive director of SEDS.

	<p><b>Fundraising Focus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fish fingerlings \$10 per 1000</li><li>• Trees \$10 each</li></ul>
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# Bayles Dinner—26 February 2011

The Bayles World Food Day Dinner will be held on Saturday 26 February 2011 at Bayles (near Pakenham).

The food is all donated and home cooked, and the meat is home grown on the farm at Bayles.

The 2010 event was a huge success despite appalling weather, and helped us raise over \$5000 thanks to more than 80 attendees braving torrential rain and storms. Needless to say, we are hoping for better weather this time!

Menu: finger food starters, roast meats, baked potatoes, salads, vegetarian options available, variety of delicious desserts.

Drinks : Soft Drinks provided, BYO alcohol

\$35.00 per person/donation for kids (tax deductible receipt issued)

6.00pm for starters, main meal to commence serving at 7.00pm

If you would like a night out in a friendly, relaxed environment, we would love to see you. Come on your own or bring a group of friends – all welcome (including kids).

RSVP: Monday 21 February 2011

For more information or to book in, please contact the office on 9704 6315 or [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au) (a map will be provided for those that require one).

We would like to thank the following local businesses who help us keep our administration costs low by kindly providing their services at a reduced rate:

- M & K Printing, Narre Warren, 9704 8500 (Ken)
- Computer Initiatives, Berwick, 9707 4850 (Tim Moore)

# Partners in Aid Donation Form



## Donations

I would like to make a donation to a project (please circle):

Bangladesh (books and writing materials/trees/project support)

ABWU (orphans trip fund/project support)

SEDS (fish fingerlings/trees/project support)

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

## Child Sponsorship

I would like to begin/continue (please circle) to sponsor a child at ABWU/ SEDS (Please circle and note in the box number of children you would like to sponsor)

Please tick the appropriate payment box:

3 months = \$60

6 months = \$120

12 months = \$240

Total Amount enclosed  
(donations and child sponsorship)

If paying by EFT please email [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au) for bank account details. If paying by cheque make it out to Partners in Aid and send 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 and over are tax deductible (receipt will be issued)

*Thank you for your support*