



Overseas & Northern Outreach Newsletter – February 2024

Former Overseas Target Fund – Parenting Program in Papua New Guinea

This recent update was received from Mary Sumner House:

MSH and the team in PNG are working to get a joint Literacy and Parenting Programme started by applying for extra external funding. The money kindly donated by Australia has been 'ring fenced' so the team in PNG can use it to envision and sensitise the communities once the programme starts. As you can imagine with the Pandemic and other issues there has been a large delay in getting the programme to this stage. The Programme will be using Literacy groups to teach literacy skills and provide a safe place for the participants to discuss and share the parenting course materials, then expand this further through the communities.

Current Overseas Target Fund – Disaster and Climate Change in the Pacific

Our Memorandum of Understanding with Australian Anglican Overseas Aid which has seen us, as AMUA members, contributing funds to a project developing church and community disaster resilience in Tonga and Fiji comes to an end in March this year and AOA have advised that this project is now fully funded, which is a testament to our generous response to the invitation to support the work being undertaken in Tonga and Fiji. A final report will be shared with members with my next newsletter.

New Overseas Target Fund

Our president Robin met with MSH representatives in the middle of 2023 to begin planning for a new project for AMUA to support from 2024 which would have seen us focussing on a parenting program in a Southeast Asian country however MSH have recently advised that the current political situation in that country is such that it is not safe to implement a project at this time. Conversations are now ongoing as to what may be our new project from 2025.

As a result, the AMAU Executive have agreed to sign a 12-month extension of our MOU with AOA for a new project: **Building Disaster Resilience for People with Disabilities in Solomon Islands.** A flyer giving details of this project accompanies this newsletter.

A June 2022 report from the Organisations of Persons with Disabilities suggested that around 14% of the Solomon Islands' population lives with a disability. Our new project will enable us to provide funding to upgrade a local church so that it may be used as an emergency shelter in times of natural disaster. As the promotional flyer states "People living with a disability are two to four times more likely to die or be injured in a disaster than the general population" (University of Sydney)

As members of AMUA we can make a difference to the lives of our brothers and sisters in the Pacific. I commend our new Overseas Target Fund Project to you.



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The Theology of Disaster Resilience

An internet search will readily direct you to a number of resources which you can use to gain an understanding of why as people of God we should be concerned with the issue of disaster resilience.

You may like to follow this link for a resource which provides a number of Bible studies, prefaced with a background statement based on the premise that “preparedness is an element of discipleship for a resilient pacific earth community”.

<https://anglicanoverseasaid.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Theology-of-Disaster-Resilience-Bible-Studies.pdf>

Northern Outreach Grants for 2024

Letters of invitation have been sent by Robin to the Bishops of the dioceses of North West Australia; Northern Territory and North Queensland giving them the opportunity to apply for funding from our Northern Outreach funds for projects in their dioceses in 2024 which are compatible with the aims and objectives of AMUA. When all responses have been received, they will be reviewed and a recommendation developed and forwarded for consideration by members of our Australian Council.

Bringers of Hope and Change – Mothers’ Union in the Diocese of Zululand

In the February newsletter from MSH there was an article on the work of members in the Diocese of Zululand who have been taking action to combat the discrimination suffered by people with albinism, who are among the most marginalised and vulnerable in South Africa. Members have assisted people with albinism to apply for government grants, have raised awareness within their own churches and communities and have provided skincare, school uniforms and other assistance.

As written: ‘it’s a poignant reminder of the influence Mothers’ Union members have...’

Blessings

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