

RESPONSE

Issue FOUR 2024

Gifts of
Hope
THIS CHRISTMAS

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 **AsianAID**
Give Hope TODAY

FROM THE CEO

snapshot of how your intentional gift-giving has impacted the lives of whole families. When mums receive training and resources to start a business, when dads get pay-back loans to supplement their incomes and when families establish crops or rear

stock, there is more than food on the table for children; there is dignity and self-worth for the parents, too.

With the end of year fast approaching, it's true that we have been thinking about gift-giving a bit more at Asian Aid. As we witness your generosity and compassion and see firsthand how

hope changes lives thanks to you, we can't help but give glory to God, the best gift-Giver for His grace, generosity and sacrifice. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6).

We celebrate Immanuel, God with us (Matthew 1:23) in a particular way at this time of year and in so doing, we re-commit to our mission of giving hope today to even more children, their families and communities with your help.

Blessings



Scan the QR code to read the research report

“Wishing you peace and joy this festive season from our Asian Aid family to yours. Thank you once again for being the hands and feet of Jesus to thousands of children in need.”

Dear Supporters

With the end of the year fast approaching, I have been thinking about gift-giving a bit more.

As a brand-new Asian Aid Gift Catalogue is produced (see page 7 for more information), as the shops put up their Christmas displays, as retailers advertise their gift bundles and as kids nudge parents and grandparents about what they want, you almost can't help thinking about gifts at this time of year.

But giving meaningful gifts is not always simple. Did you know that research* has found that Australians have \$1.4 billion worth of unused gift cards in wallets and inboxes going to waste?

The survey discovered that one in three Aussies have at least one unused gift card. The unspent money is worth an average of

\$198 per person.

Intentional gift-giving is the best kind.

Thank you for being intentional in giving meaningful gifts to vulnerable children, their families and communities, together with Asian Aid.

Your gifts of education, health, livelihood, protection and safety lift children out of poverty.

Aside from your donations, the time and efforts you give enable others in your family, church or school to learn about the plight of disadvantaged children. And the opinions you recently shared with our team through the supporter survey enable us to continuously improve. You're in the habit of giving such good gifts!

The stories in this newsletter are only a



CHICKENS AND A GOAT KEEP BIMALA IN SCHOOL

Nine-year old Bimala lives in Nepal with her father, mother and younger brother in a poor community. She is a student in grade 4. **But she is also a budding farmer who is helping her family rise out of poverty by raising chickens that she received when she was sponsored.**

Recently, Bimala sold her chickens to buy a goat. "I will wait for the goat to have babies so I can sell the kids again and buy more goats," she says. As part of her sponsorship support, Bimala and other sponsored children receive chickens and learn about basic financial literacy.

She attends school regularly now, but this was not always the case for Bimala. Despite her father working as a labourer in a nearby district and her mother tending their small kitchen garden, poverty made it difficult for the family to afford even the basics.

And Bimala's poor health made matters worse.

She suffered from pneumonia and constant fevers when she was younger, missing school often. The family's financial struggles, her poor health and irregular school attendance caused Bimala to nearly drop out of school. It was then that she found a sponsor through Asian Aid and received support and the additional gift of chickens and training.

"School dropout rates remain high in Nepal,

with low-income families often unable to afford the uniform and stationary supplies required to send their children to school," says Pramod Dahal, Women's, Girls and Child Rights project manager in Nepal. "If they miss school often, many children then leave their education behind as they grow older. That's why we provide sponsored children who need further school resources with chickens to care for. The children rear the chickens and sell them to increase their household income, giving the family the financial resources they need to keep their children in school."



Until recently, the family relied on the meagre income that Joynab's husband, a day labourer, earned. But it was very difficult to feed and send their children to school and, often, the cost of school fees and education supplies left the family financially stranded.

That's why Joynab didn't hesitate to take up the opportunity to participate in tailoring training offered by our partners. Motivated by the new skills that she gained, Joynab convinced her husband to buy a sewing machine. Initially, she sewed

clothes just for her family, but as her confidence grew and her skills improved, she began to receive orders from others in the community, establishing her small home business.

The income she makes from her business is very helpful to her family, but for Joynab, setting a good example for her daughter is just as important. "I am now teaching my daughter to sew so that soon we can buy another sewing machine and expand our business," she says, proudly.

UNTANGLING *Generational* POVERTY GARMENT-BY-GARMENT

Joynab, a mother of three whose family lives near an Asian Aid-supported school in Bangladesh, and a first-time home business owner now earns up to 5,000 Bangladeshi taka (BDT) a month thanks to her hard work and your help. That's the equivalent of AU\$60.

Joynab was one of over 2,500 people from the Asian Aid-supported school and local communities who benefited from income-generating activities and training in shopping-bag making, in cow, goat and hen animal husbandry, in paddy and seed storing, in fruit tree distribution and planting and in vegetable cultivation.

Thank you for helping this mother-and-daughter team and others in their community begin to break the cycle of poverty. Your support is the gift that will keep on giving for generations to come.

Ujjala's SMALL BUSINESS BUDGET

Your Donation: training, 1500
Bangladeshi taka and ongoing
support, as needed

Ujjala's Contribution: 500 taka

Mother Goat Price: 2000 taka

Sale of Goat Kids: 8000 taka

Profit: 7500 taka

Second Goat Price: 2000 taka

**5500 taka to help Ujjala's
family with essentials
such as food, clothing and
education expenses.**



STEPS TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Every parent wants to provide for their children. **Self-sufficiency is not just about finances; it's about dignity too.** The parents and community members in our programs who participate in income-generating activities all take proactive steps to better the lives of their families.

- They meet with our partners to identify the most pressing needs in their community
- They register for an activity that best meets their needs.
- They commit time and effort to training. It takes up to three months to complete a tailoring course for example, while adult literacy and computer classes can be once or twice a week, ongoing.
- They tend to their gardens, improve their skills, care for their animals; working hard to practise what they learn, getting better every day.
- They go to markets to sell their produce or their animals. They source orders for embroidery or clothing.
- They invest time, energy and resources to grow their businesses.

They are good stewards of the opportunities, training and resources they receive thanks to your support.

This is Ujjala, a tribal woman, a mum and a business owner. Along with other 30 people in her village, she participated in goat-rearing training. At the end of the training, she contributed a quarter of the price towards buying a mother goat so that she could start a home business. Ujjala took good care of her family's goat and, within months, was able to sell two kids, recovering the money she contributed towards the purchase of the mother goat and tripling her income. Ujjala is now ready to buy another goat and extend her business.

SNAPSHOT *of Livelihood* Opportunities



LITERACY CLASSES

At Asian Aid, together with our supporters and partners, we champion the God-given potential of all children. **When children are nurtured by parents who can provide for them, they can grow and develop to the best of their abilities.** That's why we enable parents and other community members, through training, resources and support networks, to better provide for their families. Here are some other livelihood programs you support.



Literacy, including computer literacy, expands people's opportunities to work. In India and Nepal, adults can attend classes to learn basic literacy skills and girls in India can learn how to use computers at after-school classes.



KITCHEN GARDENS

These are programs that enable parents and community members to grow their own food. Establishing gardens in the homes of sponsored children and community members improves nutrition for children and their families while providing additional income through the sale of excess produce. Participants learn about growing and diversifying crops and receive seedlings at the completion of the training. Some families report reduced household workloads for women and girls too.



SELF-HELP GROUPS

At Self-Help Groups in India, mothers of sponsored children and women from project communities receive financial literacy training, guidance on how to commence savings groups, and information on basic payment portals accessible via smart phones. In Bangladesh, community members in Self-Help Groups open bank accounts with their combined savings so they can access funds to start small businesses or to respond to family emergencies. Self-Help Groups also provide a support network for the people in the groups.



SUPPORTER SURVEY 2024 YOUR FEEDBACK

Earlier in the year we asked for your help to focus what we do, plan for the future and connect with more like-minded supporters to join our Asian Aid family through a Supporter Survey. This is what we learned:

Top two reasons for your support

- Jesus has called us to help children and other people in need
- Education is key for breaking the cycle of poverty for vulnerable children

Top three things you value most about Asian Aid

1. Our Christ-focused mission
2. Our transparency, the way we use your donations and the impact your support makes
3. Our focus on children and education

Top two program groups you believe help children the most

1. **Education:** so that every child can gain an education
2. **Livelihoods:** so that caregivers can provide for their children

Close to 94% would recommend Asian Aid, as their charity of choice, to others.

Close to 87% want to help wherever there is need rather than support a particular country.

Most prevalent wish:

More personalised communications from your sponsored child.

"On behalf of the team, I want to thank you for your feedback and I want to assure you that we have carefully considered your perspectives and will continue to improve how we engage and communicate with you. Your responses confirm that you believe education can unlock important opportunities for vulnerable children, that you aspire to be the hands and feet of Jesus to "the least of these" and that you trust Asian Aid's mission, accountability and impact. We value your support immensely. Thank you!" Paul Esau, Asian Aid CEO.



URGENT EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR BANGLADESHIS

Thanks to your immediate and generous response, close to 530 families* in Bangladesh who were stranded without food or clean water can now receive life-saving emergency kits.

Each \$49 kit contains food supplies like oil, rice, dhal, flour, salt, potatoes, onions and garlic, a water jar with clean drinking water, water purification tablets and medicine against diarrhoea, fever and skin

infections. Your donations to our Meet-The-Need fund enabled our partners to support the families of sponsored children and distribute emergency kits to flood-affected communities immediately.

"84 people died from the flood in our community. The water came up so quickly over the top of the houses and it took 10 days for the water to subside."



This is what Ahad, a high school student from Manipur in eastern Bangladesh, told our partner team when they arrived at his community to help. Ahad's father is a farmer, and the family lost all their crops, cattle and most of their few possessions when the floods washed away the roads, swept through their home and took away their livelihood. Ahad is one of two million Bangladeshi children who are in the grip of one of the worst floods ever recorded.

It will take time to rebuild, but hope remains for the people receiving your help.

Thank you!

In unforeseen circumstances and disasters children are often the most vulnerable. Your regular donation to our Meet-The-Need fund will help us quickly address the most urgent needs facing children, their families and communities.

* As of mid-October 2024, at the time of writing.



Scan this QR code to become a regular Meet-The-Need donor.

Kids' Gifts of Hope



Our Kids' Gifts of Hope NEW Catalogue
SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW ONLINE

gifts.asianaid.org.au



GIVE A Gift of Hope This Christmas

Not all gifts are the same. Some break, expire, collect dust or are lost. Others lift children out of poverty so that they can reach their God-given potential. When you buy a GIFT OF HOPE*, you transform the lives of children, their families and their communities at Christmas and all year round.



I want to give Gifts of Hope

GIFTS	PRICE	QTY	TOTAL
Kids' Books	\$10		\$
Fruit Tree	\$25		\$
Sports Gear	\$45		\$
New Beginning	\$50		\$
'Healthy Me' Check	\$60		\$
Business Start-Up	\$135		\$

ADD A DONATION TO MEET-THE-NEED \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

I WILL BUY MY GIFTS BY:

CHEQUE Make payable to Asian Aid Organisation and post with this form.

FUNDS TRANSFER Call us on (+61) 02 6586 4250 for banking details

CREDIT CARD

Name on Card _____

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Expiry ____/____/____ CSV _____ Amount _____

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

☐ Please send me details about making a Gift in my Will to Asian Aid.

*By buying a gift, you're making a tax-deductible donation to an Asian Aid project that supports children, their families and their communities. Donations of \$2 and over are tax-deductible in Australia. Personal information is collected to process donations, issue tax receipts and send updates about your support.

☐ If you do not wish to receive updates or promotional materials from Asian Aid, please tick this box. This excludes our quarterly newsletters.

Kids' Books \$10. Give the gift of reading with a pack of library books.

Fruit Tree \$25. Gift a family with fruit trees, veggie seeds and training to grow their own food at home.

Sports Gear \$45. Supply soccer balls, cricket bats, nets and team uniforms to active kids.

New Beginning \$50. Help a family receive a chicken, a goat or a duck to start a business.

'Healthy Me' Check \$60. Provide free medical checkups for kids.

Business Start-Up \$135. Give a woman a sewing machine, materials and training to start a home business.

MY DETAILS

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

ID _____

(if already a supporter)

DOB ____/____/____

WAYS TO DONATE TO ASIAN AID

asianaid.org.au

MAIL your completed form to:
PO Box 333 Wauchope
NSW 2446 Australia

CALL (+61) 02 6586 4250

For more information, visit www.asianaid.org.au
call (+61) 02 6586 4250 or email contact@asianaid.org.au

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