



QSA Notes

Partners deliver innovative activities to meet the specific needs of their local communities

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Environmental training for teachers

Local organisations know what their local communities need and are best placed to provide services and support appropriate to the location and circumstances and which are culturally and technologically appropriate. QSA focuses on food and water security and sustainable livelihoods, working with communities for sustainable futures and a more peaceful, equitable, just and compassionate world. QSA's strength lies in long-term relationships with grassroots community groups who understand and can deliver for the specific needs of those most in need in their local communities. By partnering with these organisations, QSA not only achieves efficiencies but also ensures they are targeted at families and communities that most need support. We've selected some highlights from our project partners in Cambodia, India (Tamil Nadu) and Uganda to illustrate activities explicitly designed to meet the needs of local communities.

Innovative seed planter to help Ugandan farmers

A simple seed planting device developed by our project partner in Uganda, St

Jude Family Projects, makes a dramatic change to the efficiency of local farmers. The planter enables farmers to sow their seeds and seedlings in one movement while working in an upright position. The device drastically reduces the hours of (literally) back-breaking work required in the planting season. Female farmers are the mainstay of agriculture in these communities and the backbone of the rural economy. Women are usually responsible for the family farm and providing food for their families. This project supports rural women farmers – some of the poorest of the poor – to achieve food security through training in organic agriculture so that they can maintain and improve resilient small-scale farming. Our partner hopes to provide smallholder female farmers with this relatively cheap and simple yet innovative and highly effective device. This is a local solution that really can change the lives of these farmers.

Environmental training for teachers in rural India

Environmental education is a high priority for our partner Pitchandikulam



Fish farming.

Bio Resource Centre in Tamil Nadu, South India. School children attend environmental education classes and exposure visits to Pitchandikulam Forest, and take part in weekend activities through Eco-Clubs. Most school teachers in rural India have little or no training in environmental education. So how can they teach the next generation if they do not know it themselves?

Our partner offers one-year environmental training programs for school teachers, including a comprehensive handbook with activities and lesson plans for their classrooms. A key consideration is providing culturally appropriate training relevant to the environment and the circumstances of these communities. It fits QSA's ethos of supporting environmental protection and partnering with organisations in-country that can prepare and deliver training that is relevant to the local situation and that deals with local issues, rather than being imposed from outside. Staff turnover means there are always new teachers to learn and receive in-service training, and Pitchandikulam's

in-service teacher training is constantly in demand.

A vital element of permaculture projects in Cambodia, permaculture training for women in rural areas is the cornerstone of several Cambodian projects. Our partners work with disadvantaged women with little land, few skills and minimal options to earn an income to support their families. They receive training in permaculture techniques and basic materials to establish home food gardens. With gardens, they can achieve food security, improve family nutrition, reduce the impact of climate change and sell surplus produce to supplement household incomes.

Families in Pursat province receive permaculture training from our partner Department of Women's Affairs and learn about chicken raising. Chickens are a vital element of permaculture home gardens, eating kitchen and garden scraps, controlling insect pests, fertilising and turning the soil. Our partner would like to provide households with vaccinated chickens, feed and other set-up materials. With a modest flock of just ten vaccinated chickens, they can establish a small poultry operation to improve family nutrition and generate income from the sale of eggs.

New enterprises to support families during COVID

When markets and borders closed and many people lost jobs and incomes during the pandemic, our partner, Khmer Community Development (KCD) worked with target communities in Kandal Province, Cambodia, to identify options to supplement their incomes and improve nutrition. KCD's approach is to help families



A few chickens really can make a big difference!

identify new income generation opportunities, and during COVID-19, fish farming was a popular choice. KCD provides skills training and advice and would like to provide more families with materials and stock for small aquaculture operations, simple affairs, constructed using basic materials that are readily available locally. These small-scale family operations boost nutrition, improve food security, and produce fish to sell in local markets to supplement family incomes. As the saying goes, Give a person a fish and feed them for a day. Teach a person to fish and feed them for a lifetime.

QSA Living Gifts

These are just a few of the innovative activities offered by our partners to meet the needs of their local communities. A critical part of all QSA projects is an assessment (in conjunction with local authorities and representatives) to identify communities and households with the greatest need. They often prioritise female-headed households and families with low incomes, little or no

land and poor skills, many children and members living with disabilities. A primary aim is to empower these individuals and families with the skills and to support themselves sustainably. Thus, a key priority is poverty alleviation, along with improving nutrition and achieving food security. Due to location, dependence on agriculture and precarious financial situations, these households are increasingly impacted by climate change.

Choose a Living Gift

QSA publishes a Living Gifts catalogue so you can select specific activities to support with items to provide 'extras' to our project partners, which they may not offer with general funding. For more information about these and other projects, or to purchase a gift, starting at just \$30, go to the Living Gifts at the QSA website www.qsa.org.au/living-gifts. If you can't decide from the eleven gifts in the catalogue, you may choose a gift value and QSA will allocate it to the project in most need.

QSA is a member of the Australian Council for International Development and is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct. The purpose of QSA is to express in a practical way the concern of Australian Quakers for the building of a more peaceful, equitable, just and compassionate world. To this end QSA works with communities in need to improve their quality of life with projects which are culturally sensitive, as well as being economically and environmentally appropriate and sustainable.

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