

FEBRUARY 2023

What is the Overseas & Northern Outreach Department?

I have recently received the February edition of the Mothers' Union e-Newsletter published by Mary Sumner House. It is the first newsletter for 2023 and commences thus:

A Happy New Year to all our members and friends. Welcome to the first e-newsletter of 2023! We are looking forward to the upcoming year and continuing our work with our members, friends and churches to support people around the world to overcome inequality through activism, advocacy and practical action. With kindness, courage, and compassionate actions, Mothers' Union will continue to help the world's hardest to reach communities to transform their lives.

As Mothers' Union members we are called to activism, advocacy and practical action. We are called to be kind, to have courage and be compassionate in our actions. So what does this mean to us in Australia as we seek to transform the lives of others through our Overseas and Northern Outreach section?

Our own AMUA Handbook 2018 (p21) states that:

Through the worldwide Mothers Union network, the Overseas and Northern Outreach Department has a special responsibility to participate in the mission of the church by furthering the awareness of issues of aid and development, working towards the alleviation of poverty, and fostering compassion and justice for all people.... The Mothers Union has a role to play, along with other international agencies, in response to human need in the world community.

The department seeks to promote issues of mission, aid and development by:

- a) encouraging prayer,
- b) inspiring members to give financial support, and
- c) sharing information.

In this, my first newsletter, I want to share information on the second aspect of this three pronged approach.

Again, from our Handbook (p21-22):

INSPIRING MEMBERS TO GIVE

Raising funds to facilitate the mission of the Mothers' Union in places where it is under-resourced, is a function of the Overseas and Northern Outreach Department. Members are encouraged to give to the various Grant Funds.

a) **The Overseas Fund** which is administered from Mary Sumner House in London, has in the past provided for Community Development Co-ordinators (CDC), worldwide, enabling them to initiate programmes of leadership training and spiritual growth, maternal health and child care, hygiene, nutrition and literacy. ..Grants are also given for conferences, seminars and training. Increasing emphasis is being placed on encouraging dioceses to set up viable self-help projects so they begin to generate their own income to fund not only their work, but their workers. Periodically there will be a specific Overseas Project Target Fund.

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b) **The Overseas Relief Fund** is administered by Mary Sumner House, and enables money to be sent quickly to Mothers Union dioceses in areas where there have been natural disasters, and help is needed.

Members in Australia contribute a portion of their Mothers Union subscription to the Overseas Fund. Members are also encouraged to make further donations to these funds.

c) **The Northern Outreach Fund** supports the mission of AMUA and the promotion of Christian family life in The Northern Territory, North West Australia and North Queensland. Members throughout Australia contribute to the fund through an annual contribution, personal donations and special efforts.

d) **The Papua New Guinea and Melanesia Development Fund** was established in 2009 to meet the needs of developmental work in consultation with Mary Sumner House Action & Outreach Unit.

e) **The Training Fund for Indigenous Women.** The capital provided for this fund is invested and the interest from this investment and further donations received are used annually to facilitate funding of the training of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island women.

f) **The Australian Disaster Relief Fund** was established to provide relief to families suffering hardship caused by natural disasters in Australia.

From time to time Australian members are asked to provide funding for special projects by their link diocese or branch. It is important that dioceses build up special relationships with their links and that these links are primarily a prayer partnership.

Our AM A Financial Report for the year 2021-22 shows that the following income was received for projects and funds that fall within the Overseas & Northern Outreach department:

Mary Sumner House

Overseas Fund Member Contributions	\$2,029.00
Overseas Fund Donations	\$12,525.40
Overseas Relief Fund	\$90.00
Special Projects Donations	\$525.00
MSH Special Appeal - Overseas Target Fund	
Disaster & Climate Change in the Pacific	\$17,794.80
PNG Parenting Program	\$2,651.60

Northern Outreach

Member Contributions	\$4,058.00
Donations	\$21,324.44

Australian disaster Relief Fund

Donations	\$5,056.20
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Training Fund for Indigenous Women

Donations	\$4,785.00
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PNG Melanesia Development Fund

Donations	\$426.00
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Other Income

Donations for Tonga	\$1,000.00
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Our current Overseas Target Fund Project, Disaster & Climate Change in the Pacific, is in partnership with Anglican Overseas Aid (AOA). \$20,000 has now been forwarded for this project on our behalf as a result of member contributions through donations and fundraising.

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Darren, from AOA has forwarded the following brief summary and update to me.

Church and Community Disaster Resilience in Tonga and Fiji.

Families living in the Pacific are increasingly experiencing the impacts and adversity of climate change, with cyclones and flooding becoming regular events.

The impact of repeated disasters not only destroys infrastructure and homes but can produce instability in family life and place children at risk.

The project works to equip and empower youth in the Pacific to create safer communities that are prepared for and equipped to respond to natural disasters, and provide the necessary equipment through prepositioned supplies to support an emergency response.

Early this year, two new containers were prepositioned in Fiji and filled with emergency supplies, thanks to the support of Mothers Union Australia.



The six monthly report for the July - December 2022 period on progress with our Overseas Target Fund is due to be received from the on-ground project team in the Pacific in March. Details from this report will be included in the next O & N.O. newsletter.

I thank all members for their past contributions to our mission work. I would love to hear from dioceses and branches how they have gone about raising these funds and of plans they may have for the coming year to support our different grant programs.

Blessings

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