

ASSISI AID PROJECTS

breaking the cycle of poverty

Partnering to Grow

Strategic Plan 2011-2014



OUR VISION:

“WORKING WITH THE DISADVANTAGED TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF POVERTY”

BACKGROUND

- Assisi Aid Projects is an Australian based aid and humanitarian organization, with a focus on development projects across Asia.
- Despite its relatively small size and resources; Assisi Aid Projects has unique skills and assets which has enabled it to progressively make a difference in the lives of the poor and disadvantaged for over 25 years.
- We assist the communities where we work to break the cycle of poverty, through initiatives such as self help groups, ecotourism development, and the provision of basic educational and health services.
- Our projects contribute to the achievement of one or more of the following Millennium Development Goals:
 - Eradicating extreme hunger and poverty
 - Promoting gender equality and empowerment of women
 - Ensuring environmental sustainability.
- Our work, both in Australia and overseas, is primarily carried out by volunteers, with donors spread evenly across rural and city locations in Australia. We pride ourselves on delivering effective programs of the greatest value for dollars contributed, whilst keeping overheads to a minimum.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Due to various external factors; Assisi is at a turning point in its history
- In order to grow, Assisi will focus on continuing to strengthen its existing partnerships whilst also building new partnerships and alliances
- This will allow Assisi to leverage its history and assets whilst increasing impact and relevance
- Full accreditation is desired to deliver Assisi's longer term vision

ASSISI AIMS TO GROW
AT 25% PER YEAR
OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS

Short term priorities 2011-14

- Refine governance structure to support growth
- Build marketing & fundraising capability
- Extend and build pipeline of programs → focussing on establishing and embedding operations in newer countries



Long Term Vision 2020

- Multiple programs (Maternal Child Health, Self Help Groups, income generating initiatives...) operating at scale across multiple geographies
- Development knowledge and methodologies codified and shared broadly
- Respected contributor in the Australian Development and broader community
- Provision of technical support and community field visits for post-graduate community development courses





OUR VALUES

Assisi Aid Projects is committed to:

1. Sustainable, fair and equitable solutions that address the root causes and symptoms of poverty and disadvantage.
2. Accountability to all our stakeholders for our performance and integrity.
3. Building creative and trusting relationships with the communities in which we work:
 - Based on an understanding of their history and culture
 - Giving priority to their interests
 - Involving communities to the maximum extent possible in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects and programs, encouraging self-reliance
 - Valuing men and women, boys and girls in ways that respect the dignity, uniqueness and intrinsic worth of every person
 - Supporting without consideration of the racial and religious affiliations of recipients
4. Active learning, innovating and continuously improving our aid and development work.
5. Honesty and transparency in all our dealings.
6. Respecting, protecting and promoting internationally recognised human rights including civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights and with particular emphasis on gender equality, the protection of children, people with a disability and the rights of minorities and vulnerable and marginalised groups.
7. Environmental sustainability in both our aid and development and domestic operations.
8. Strengthening civil society in the countries where we work.



OUR APPROACH

Over 2011- 2014, we will focus on 3 key areas:

1. EXTEND AND BUILD PROGRAMS ALIGNED TO THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS

- Assisi will ensure projects focus on one or more of 3 thematic areas which are aligned to the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals:
 - Empowerment of women
 - Community Economic Development
 - Climate Resilient Communities
- Some examples of programs which align to these thematic areas include Water Sanitation Health (WASH), waste disposal, ecotourism and self help groups initiatives.
- Assisi will seek to identify scalable Programs rather than individual projects, to ensure maximum results for dollars invested.
- Assisi will also seek to focus on programs where there are partner organisations involved, to reduce risk and leverage resources.
- Assisi will not be restricted geographically in pursuit of projects, to mitigate the risk of India's future matched funding status.
- However Assisi will continue its current project portfolio to maintain support from current and expanding donor base.
- Assisi will seek to identify opportunities to leverage Projects back to fundraising activities, for example by visits from project staff back to Australia, or by arranging shared learning exchange visits by personnel from each country to the focus communities.





2. RESOURCE AND BUILD FUNDRAISING AND MARKETING CAPABILITY

- Assisi will grow new sources of funds to be directed to the new projects and programs and reduce current reliance on a small group of key donors
- A Fundraising and Marketing Plan will be developed, focusing on opportunities in
 - Patrons, Corporate Partnerships and Events
 - One-off Grants and Contracts, where aligned to thematic areas of focus
 - Increasing online and offline communications, with exposure through social media as well as traditional methods
 - Joint marketing partnerships with other NGOs such as Live & Learn and Make Poverty History
 - Initiatives to increase the existing supporter database
 - A Marketing and Fundraising Plan will be developed and executed by the Marketing and Fundraising sub-committee
- Assisi will seek partnerships and personnel to provide volunteer resources- for example corporate volunteer websites and event specialists
- A strategic investment of \$35,000 maximum per year will be made to allow this plan to take place
- Marketing communications will focus on promoting project success stories in an engaging way, and will also strive to ensure support of current donor base is maintained

3. REFINE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT GROWTH

- Membership and functions of the Committee of Management will be reviewed to reduce the focus on operational matters and communication
- Responsibility for operational matters will devolve to sub-committees
 - Marketing & Fundraising Committee will be created
 - Projects and Finance Committees will continue to meet to discuss operational aspects
- Assisi will seek to build partnerships with volunteer pools such as goodcompany and others to develop a pipeline of potential committee and sub-committee members
- To support growth aspirations, Assisi will commence the full AUSAID accreditation process from January 2012
- Assisi will make a strategic investment in Fundraising and Marketing of \$35,000 per year for 3 years
- Notwithstanding this strategic investment, Assisi will keep other administration costs low and continue to run an accessible, supporter friendly and cost effective administration





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“Together we have made wonderful improvements in the lives of ... orphans, the destitute, the elderly, lepers and rural people.”

Sr Stella, 2004



Assisi's values align with the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct. The Code is a voluntary, self-regulatory industry code of good practice that aims to improve international development outcomes and increase stakeholder trust by enhancing the transparency and accountability of signatory organizations.

