



2 0 0 4 A N N U A L R E P O R T

WHO WE ARE

Union Aid Abroad was established by the ACTU in 1984 under the name APHEDA (Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad). We were established as a means for Australian workers, through their unions, to directly assist international development by supporting projects for workers in developing countries.

OUR MISSION

As the ACTU's humanitarian aid agency, Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA expresses the Australian union movement's commitment to social justice and international solidarity through support to overseas education, training and development projects, working in partnership with those whose rights to development are restricted or denied.

OUR VISION

Unions and communities working internationally to eradicate poverty and achieve human rights

ACFID CODE OF CONDUCT



Union Aid Abroad is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct. The Code requires members to meet high standards of corporate governance, public accountability and financial management. For more information contact Union Aid Abroad or visit: www.acfid.asn.au

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FRONT COVER

VANG VIENG, LAOS. UNION AID ABROAD ASSISTS SKILLS TRAINING FOR WOMEN, DOMESTIC FISH FARMING & ESL TRAINING FOR TRADE UNIONS IN LAOS.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
Todd Adams — www.toddadams.net

BACK COVER

OFFICE AND STAFF OF W.H.O.,
BURJ EL BARAJNEH REFUGEE
CAMP, LEBANON.



THIS FAMILY IN CAMBODIA BUILD A NEW HOUSE (RIGHT), WITH PROCEEDS FROM DOMESTIC FISH PRODUCTION

Executive Officer's Report

Australian trade unions and their members can be very proud of the work undertaken by their overseas aid agency over the past 12 months. Many thousands of working women and men were trained in crucial skills they require to improve their families' lives and to win their basic rights in the workplace and in society.

This has been possible because of the continuing growth in support by our donors. The past year has seen a significant growth in financial support from our members and donors in the Australian union movement – a great tribute to their belief in justice, solidarity and the human rights of working women and men everywhere.

As an aid agency based in the trade union movement, we concentrate on assisting vocational skills and educational training projects in the belief that serving human welfare should be the sole purpose of any economic system. The primacy of human rights is our key value — by human rights we mean not only the satisfaction of basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing, but also justice,

equality, freedom, access to culture and education, and the rule of law.

Our projects continue to train thousands each year in the skills needed to strengthen communities and provide more opportunities and a better life for the most marginalised. One project alone last year trained over 16,000 Filipino women and men in HIV education and prevention as they were about to leave for contract work abroad.

One feature of the work of Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA, which makes us unique among Australian aid agencies, is our support for workers' rights as one of the fundamental prerequisites for improving the living standards of many of the world's poorest. Without strong, independent and democratic trade unions, the hundreds of millions who sell their labour to survive will be condemned to working for dismal wages, oppressive conditions and appalling health and safety standards. This is especially true of women workers, who in many developing countries are the most exploited and usually work for the lowest wages.



At the core of our training projects is the work done by our dedicated and committed project partners who make it possible. Whether it be skills training for disadvantaged women in Cambodia or Laos, community health training for ethnic communities in Vietnam, trade union training in Indonesia, vocational training in East Timor or workplace HIV education with unions in PNG, South Africa or Zimbabwe, it all happens because of our talented and committed partners in those countries.

Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA would also like to pay tribute to our many donors, supporters and volunteers here in Australia. Without their generosity and belief in a better world, our work could not take place.

— Peter Jennings
Executive Officer

Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA has such an important job to do. We can only continue that with support from unions and individual members.



This year we celebrate twenty years of Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA. Twenty years of providing support for development through education, health and workers' rights programs. Twenty years of valuable and positive outcomes. Twenty years of achievement for workers and their families in many countries around the globe.

I have just completed my first year as Chairperson of Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA. After many years work with the NSW Nurses' Association, with the final eight years as General Secretary, I left the union as a full-time officer two years ago. My representative roles now are not directly related to nursing, but being a nurse helps. I love all of my work roles; I love the challenges. But the insights and inspiration that I've gained in the single year that I've held the APHEDA Chair position have been quite amazing.

My first itinerary as Chair earlier last year comprised Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and the Thai-Burma border. I visited many of our projects — past and present — and met with participants, project partners, women's unions, members of parliament, unions and federations, AusAID officials and the Australian Ambassador to

Vietnam. I was struck by the broad respect for APHEDA. In all countries, at all levels: central, provincial, district, hamlet.

The trip was eye-opening, educational, humbling. I came back energized and inspired.

In Vietnam, I visited a skills training and revolving loan project in Ha Tay Province. They were keen to show me their skills — sewing, matchstick blind making, weaving — and anxious that I understood how much better their lives are since participating in the APHEDA project. They made sure I saw and understood the improvement — the quality of their houses, their livestock, their clothes.

In Hoa Binh Province, I meet the principal and teachers of the Health Worker Training School which has been running APHEDA-funded Hamlet Health Worker training programs for some years now. I also visited the District Hospital and some Commune Clinic staff and Hamlet Health Workers. It was here in the Commune Clinic that I think I understood for the first time in my life what the word malnutrition actually means: for a number of months each year there is lack of sufficient food in the

community for all families. I asked them what their greatest need was, and they said, "More APHEDA training, and more medications".

I kept feeling so humbled. By the thanks being given, by the positive outcomes that I was being shown, by the joy and happiness, by the hospitality being offered, by the warm welcomes.

In Cambodia, I visited the Choukk Fish Breeding Station as well as three families with fish farms, in the Kampong Province. A remarkable APHEDA project, now fully operational with families being provided with skills, equipment and of course fingerlings (small fish) to successfully farm and sell fish to their surrounding communities. I was shown new and better housing, children now being educated, and had the livestock paraded for me. I was given demonstrations of their family-wide skills with the nets, casting them expertly to catch fish to sell. These families also mentioned malnutrition, but this time to tell me that their families no longer suffered malnutrition — it was a thing of the past thanks to this project.

At Mae Sot, on the Thai-Burma border, I visited Dr Cynthia Maung's Clinic, a 100

bed hospital open to all, not just the Karen refugees needing care. They serve the local refugees as well as train backpack health workers, who regularly go from Dr Cynthia's Clinic and provide medical help for the Karen people. They then bring back to the Clinic people needing hospital-based care. The backpack health workers and the Clinic manage 140 prostheses per year — 140 people who have lost limbs in land mine explosions in Burma, and are brought back to the Clinic for proper surgical amputation, rehabilitation and prostheses.

Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA has such an important job to do. We can only continue that with support from unions and individual members.

I congratulate all of you for your support and commitment. With your help Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA can continue its vital and important work, where we can try to positively affect the lives of men, women and children, across the globe, wherever there is a need.

Finally, I would like to thank our staff and our volunteers, both here and overseas, for their wonderful, extraordinary work. Thanks also to our Patrons Hazel Hawke and Sir Ron Wilson, and my fellow Committee of Management members.

— Sandra Moait
Chairperson

Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA was established in 1984 by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) in recognition of the union movement's responsibility to contribute directly to countries and regions of the world where men and women workers are disadvantaged through exploitation, poverty, discrimination and civil conflict. Union Aid Abroad aims to build self-reliance through support to educational and training projects for workers and their trade unions. Union Aid Abroad also assists with relief programs and emergency appeals in cases of specific international emergencies.

Through over 40 projects and project partners, Union Aid Abroad assists many different communities including workers struggling for their rights, skills for disadvantaged women to improve their opportunities and options in life, assistance to refugees and stateless people, those suffering from HIV/AIDS and education for indigenous peoples and for child labourers in India.

Support for these projects comes from Australian trade unions, many individual unionists, international organisations and unions as well as from AusAID, the Australian government's aid agency.



ABOVE: CAMBODIA HIV TRAINING 2004
LEFT: MAKING THE POTTERY STOVES FOR HOUSEHOLD USE IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS ON THE THAI-BURMA BORDER
BOTTOM LEFT: SEWING GRADUATE IN HER SHOP DURING MONITORING VISIT IN CAMBODIA

HEALTH AND HIV

Since Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA was formed in 1984, we have prioritised training in primary health care, so poor and marginalised communities can gain control of one of the most crucial aspects of their lives. These projects have included maternal and child health, nutrition, traditional medicines, and communicable diseases. From the mid-1980s HIV has emerged as a leading threat to humanity and to all areas of development. HIV is now the leading cause of death in the least developed countries. Since the late 1980s, Union Aid Abroad has supported innovative projects in HIV education, support and care in the Pacific, southern Africa, the Mekong region and the Philippines. In recent years our partnerships against HIV have focussed on peer support for people with HIV, women's rights, access to treatments, effective trade union policy, education and support programs, the needs of migrant

workers and orphans affected by HIV.

Our long-term experience and expertise in HIV education and support for communities in developing countries makes us one of the leading Australian agencies implementing these programs.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA has been involved in the provision of skills training since its inception in a range of production and income generating areas. Union Aid Abroad focuses mainly on adult vocational education which is needs based and which can be transmitted in a short time-frame so that the participants are able to benefit quickly from the training. This training is delivered through locally based partners. The most effective programs are those which result from working closely with local partners in the design, development, implementation and evaluation

of these programs. The two way process of sharing experiences and learning from the past has been very important for Union Aid Abroad.

Union Aid Abroad's skills development programs are based on the principles of adult education and experiential learning. Programs are designed so that people's attitudes and behaviour can be changed through learning skills. The training Union Aid Abroad provides is participatory and implemented in consultation with the users. Most of the training is also based on the learning by doing approach where participants learn through the practical application of new skills.

Union Aid Abroad currently facilitates more than 36 skills development programs in 15 countries around the world. These programs cover a wide



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spectrum and include carpentry, black-smithing, agriculture, computer literacy, HIV/AIDS education, tailoring, electrical, hairdressing as well as literacy and numeracy classes. The beneficiaries include the marginalised sectors of the community such as women and the very poor as well as ordinary workers. Union Aid Abroad also provides training to ex-combatants following the cessation of conflict so that they have an opportunity to return to civilian life and not have to resort to violence again. These programs not only benefit those who participate directly, but also their immediate families and communities.

WORKERS' RIGHTS

Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA is the only Australian overseas aid agency who believes in the need for strong unions in developing countries, and funds and supports this work. Independent, democratic and inclusive unions are essential if working women and men are to achieve a just wage, and

therefore a decent standard of living for their families.

Global inequality is now at a staggering and unsustainable level, when measured by the gap between the world's richest 10% and poorest 10%. Globalisation has created the potential for immense economic growth, but when combined with "economic rationalist" policies which favour deregulation, laissez-faire competition and the discouragement of trade unions, it has resulted in the suppression of wages, conditions and safety standards for many workers in most developing countries.

In recent years, Union Aid Abroad has assisted the development and training of unions in East Timor, Cambodia and Indonesia, and helped strengthen unions to deliver education and services to their members such as HIV/AIDS education in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Cambodia and Papua New Guinea, OH&S training with unions in Vietnam and the Philippines,

ESL training for unions in Laos and vocational training for Burmese unions in exile on the Thai-Burma border. In the Philippines, a workers' organisation, PAFPI, last year trained over 16,000 contract workers in HIV/AIDS prevention before they left for overseas contract placements.

WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

The role of women in providing for families and participating in the economies of developing countries is often overlooked in both development programs and policies. Directly addressing the needs of women, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds such as the poor, widowed and those dealing with the impact of civil conflict in refugee communities, has been a focus for Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA.

Whether their work is on the farm, in the factory, the office or the home, the workload for women is greater than for men, the opportunities for

studying are fewer and the potential for income is less. However, the benefits to families are direct when women have access to controlling family finances.

Microfinance (small lending programs for income generation) have proven to be effective in lifting families out of poverty, whereas when the family's income is left in the hands of men, resources are sometimes squandered. Women prioritise spending on the family first, in particular providing for their children's education and thus supporting a better future. Women make development happen.

Union Aid Abroad has focussed on providing opportunities for training women in a variety of employment, income generating and leadership skills areas.

This training supports adult education, health and capacity building programs in many countries. These programs include agriculture, tailoring, hairdressing, office skills and computer literacy, hospitality industry skills, media skills, health promotion including maternal and child health training as well as integrating literacy, numeracy, occupational health and safety, HIV/AIDS education and other life skills.



LEFT: APHEDA HELPED TO REBUILD, RESTOCK AND TRAIN STAFF AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EAST TIMOR LIBRARY

RIGHT: APHEDA PROVIDES TRAINING SUPPORT TO THIS BLACKSMITHS CO-OP IN EAST TIMOR

International projects for 2005

THAI-BURMA BORDER

HEALTH CLINIC FOR SHAN REFUGEES • Burma Relief Centre and Shan Health Committee • **Thai-Burma border, Northern Thailand** • AusAID, ANF Vic, HACSU •
NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING FOR KAREN WOMEN REFUGEES • Karen Women's Organisation • **Thai-Burma border, Western Thailand** • AusAID, AEU •

MIDDLE EAST

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION • Women's Humanitarian Organisation • **Burj el- Barajneh Refugee Camp, Beirut** • AusAID, CFMEU, LHMU •
HEALTH CARE FOR AGED • Women's Humanitarian Organisation • **Burj el- Barajneh Refugee Camp, Beirut** • Camps Campaign •
WOMEN'S VOCATIONAL TRAINING • Women's Humanitarian Organisation • **Burj el- Barajneh Refugee Camp, Beirut** • Women to Women •
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY • MA'AN Development Centre • **Southern Gaza** • AusAID •
HEALTHCARE - CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT TRAINING • Palestinian Medical Relief Society and Patients Friends Society • **Jenin, West Bank** • AusAID and APHEDA •
EMERGENCY APPEAL • **Sulemaniya region, Iraq** • Norwegian Peoples Aid and APHEDA •

SOUTHERN AFRICA

HIV EDUCATION, SUPPORT AND CARE • Congress of Trade Unions • **Zimbabwe** • AusAID •
HIV EDUCATION, SUPPORT AND CARE • National Movement of Rural Women • **KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, NW provinces, South Africa** • AusAID •
CARE FOR BABIES WITH HIV • Rehoboth Trust • **Murchison, KwaZulu – Natal, SA** • Boomerang Project •
HIV EDUCATION FOR YOUTH • Darling Trust • **South Africa** • Boomerang Project •
YOUTH LEADERSHIP TRAINING • Eudco Africa • **South Africa** • APHEDA Donors •

INDIA

EDUCATION FOR CHILD LABOURERS • **Andra Pradesh** • IFBWW •

CUBA

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND SPECIALIST EXCHANGE • William Soler Children's Hospital • Cuban Children's Fund •

VIETNAM

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER TRAINING • **Hoa Binh Province** • AusAID •
MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH TRAINING • **Bac Kan Province** • AusAID •
WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT • **WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP TRAINING** • AusAID & APHEDA •
HIV TRAINING FOR HOTEL WORKERS • **Province** • AusAID & APHEDA •
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING • **13 Provinces** • AusAID & APHEDA •

EAST TIMOR

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING • Management Committee of Knuva Buka • Institute for East Timor (LAIFET), Group and APHEDA •
CARPENTRY TRAINING • LAIFET • **Aileu** • AusAID and APHEDA •
BLACKSMITH TRAINING • LAIFET •
LITERACY TRAINING • GFFTL • **Districts** •
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING • Forum, LAIFET, GFFTL, Sahe, Radio R • **Districts** • AusAID and APHEDA •
COMMUNITY RADIO DEVELOPMENT • Asosiasi Radio Komunitas Timor Leste (ARTK) •
TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING • Union Congress (KSTL) Nurses Association • APHEDA and AMWU ANF CPSU •
LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT • Universitas

PACIFIC ISLANDS

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE TRAINING • Farmers First Network • **Bougainville** • Oxfam-CAA •
HIV EDUCATION WITH TRADE UNION TRAINING • AusAID, APHEDA and MUA, QLD •
UPGRADING TRAINING FACILITIES • Centre • **Bougainville** • AusAID, APHEDA •
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING • Community Integrated Development Agency •
SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY BASED TRAINING • **COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND SUPPORT** • International Women's Development Agency •
TOOLS FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING • **Islands** • AusAID, APHEDA •