

Union Aid Abroad APHEDA

The global justice organisation of the Australian union movement



2023

ANNUAL REPORT





EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Growing authoritarianism around the world has dire impacts for workers and their unions in defending rights, jobs and more broadly, civic space.

The international union movement continued its campaigns for a common security for all – for an end to poverty, for social protection for all, for jobs and decent work, for low-income countries to be free of debt so they can invest in vital public services, for human rights and an end to hatred and discrimination. It's no small agenda, but so vital in a world rapidly changing under the influence of populism, misinformation, and AI, with geo-political divisions deeper than ever.

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA's international program continues focus on our strategic themes of worker's rights, health and safety and trade union development; women's rights and feminists movement development; the rights of migrant worker and refugees and climate justice and just transition.

During 2022-23, we began a climate justice project in collaboration with SASK, Finland's trade union solidarity organisation, working in Nepal, the Philippines and Indonesia with unions to build organising for an energy transition that workers and communities can trust. Trust means unions must be at the design table to develop jobs and solutions that are unique to the location and provide hope for fair and just outcomes. This year our work with the German government-funded just energy transition project with Indonesian unions began its implementation phase working in the East Kalimantan and South Sumatra provinces.

In 2022-23, the Labor federal government agreed to fund a new trade union capacity-building program within the aid budget, supporting unions in low-income countries in the Indo-Pacific region. We are so pleased Australia will join the US, the Netherlands, Belgium, Finland Sweden, Norway, Denmark in this kind of endeavour, recognising that strong union capacity reduces poverty and promotes democratic practices and freedoms. We're looking forward to working with the ACTU and the global union network to deliver an impactful program of work.

We want to acknowledge Betty Hounslow, who was an appointed expert on international development to our board

from 2016-2023. Betty died unexpectedly in July 2023 after a short illness. Betty had already advised in the board in late 2022 that she wanted to step down from her role and that we should seek another appointee. We began the search in early 2023 and Betty had her last meeting with us in June. Betty gave fearless advice to the board and the Executive Officer and her dedicated commitment to the purpose and value of Union Aid Abroad will always be remembered.

Thank you to the Union Aid Abroad staff team across six locations, Sydney, Melbourne, Phnom Penh, Hanoi, Dili and Vientiane. Congratulations to all our team for their work. We note our renewed office registrations in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos and thank our country managers in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos for their efforts to ensure our program of work can continue.

Our board and Finance and Risk subcommittee members continue to give expert guidance and support and we thank them for their generosity and commitment. Of note, board members Mark Lennon, Lori-Anne Sharp, Danae Bosler and Michelle Robertson visited our projects in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Timor Leste and Palestine during the course of the year and contributed to our board oversight of the international program. We welcomed Linda Kelly as our new appointed expert on international development.

Our fundraising dinners in Sydney and Melbourne were hugely successful and welcomed by our supporters after an absence of the COVID years. Unions conferences and events returned in full and we joined many of these. Our staff were thrilled to see our net membership growth in the 2022-23 financial year return to positive for the first time since before COVID began.

Thank you to the Australian Council of Trade Unions, Australian unions and trades halls that provide Union Aid Abroad with financial and in-kind support. We also thank all of the individual unionists and volunteers who contribute financially and with commitment. We look forward to continuing to work with you all in 2024.

Kate Lee

ACFID CODE OF CONDUCT

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct. This Code requires members to meet the high standards of governance, public accountability, and financial management.

DFAT ACCREDITATION

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is fully accredited with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is supported by the Australian Government.

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ACFID
MEMBER



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

It was a productive year for Union Aid Abroad -APHEDA with successful projects in fourteen countries, strengthening organisations of workers, women, refugees and farmers, and enabling social change.

Our projects and programs are driven by locally identified needs. We did preparatory work to expand our work in Pacific and with trade unions, so that workers can assert their rights to decent and healthy work, and a just transition.

The congress of the International Trade Union Confederation in Melbourne in November 2022, reinforced our cooperation with unions in the countries in which we work, and also with the trade union international solidarity organisations from Europe.

We are about to enter our fortieth year, so will be reflecting on our long journey and celebrating the contributions of all of our staff, partner organisations, volunteers, supporters and donors, who have worked for international solidarity and justice since 1984. Sadly we lost a valuable board member and wise adviser, with the death of Betty Hounslow in July.

In 2023 we also lost Dr Olfat Mahmoud, the head of the Palestinian Women's Humanitarian Organisation, operating in the Beirut refugee camps since 1985. Olfat was an internationally recognised advocate for the right of return for Palestinian people, and a champion for equality and justice for refugees. She was much loved in Australia for her visits here for over 30 years.

Our four country offices (Dili, Hanoi, Vientiane and Phnom Penh) and our partner organisations run projects that make tangible changes in living standards and health, in achieving workers' rights, the rights of refugees and migrant workers, in environment and climate, in the rights of women and farmers.

The new government in Australia has created a more positive environment for international development policy and strategy, no longer assuming free market growth will slowly roll back poverty, nor that aid should only serve Australia's national and business interests. The new aid paradigm is oriented to responding to the climate crisis, focusing on local democratic civil society and workers' movement to win sustainable systemic change.

The global situation, after the Covid pandemic, has remained alarming. The interacting climate and economic crisis increases poverty, inequality and injustice. Working people in most countries where we work find it incredibly difficult to earn enough to support their families, most cannot gain secure jobs to cover the cost of living. The crisis is accelerating unpredictable geopolitical shifts, fueling cruel wars, and increasing labour migration and refugee flows. In many countries democratic rights are in retreat, and the workers' movement is constrained.

Australian unionists have always been internationalist. Through Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA we are maintaining our fight against war and dictatorship in Myanmar. We have supported Palestinians since 1984, and we renewed our active solidarity during the 2022-3 year, as violence and repression increased in the occupied territories. In the last quarter of 2023, the extraordinary levels of destruction and death in the Gaza Strip are galvanising both advocacy and humanitarian action.

The international trade union and social justice movements faced many setbacks in the last year, but the old slogan remains "don't mourn, organise!". Though international climate negotiations are faltering in late 2023, Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA is redoubling work in building energy democracy, just transition, wage justice, and food and water sovereignty with our partner organisations and trade unions in Asia, southern Africa and the Pacific.

With a progressive national government, we have an opportunity to help construct an effective aid program, that has real impact on inequality and climate change. At the same time, we have seen stronger than ever support for Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA campaigns and projects from Australian unions and community activists.

Andrew Dettmer

AT JUNE 2023, THE UNION AID ABROAD-APHEDA BOARD

Andrew Dettmer Chairperson
Michele O'Neil Vice-Chairperson
Mark Lennon Hon. Treasurer
Jannette Armstrong Board member
Michelle Robertson Board member
Danae Bosler Board member
Michael Wright Board member
Lori-Anne Sharp Board member
Nicole Calnan Board member

Betty Hounslow Appointed Expert
Kate Lee is the Executive Officer

FINANCE AND RISK SUB-COMMITTEE

Mark Lennon Treasurer
Kate Lee Executive Officer
Lois Rahayu Chief Financial Officer
Madeleine Johnston External Representative

The Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA Board received no fees, salaries, allowances or compensation. If any member of Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, donor or member of the general public has any questions or complaints about the organisation, please contact the Executive Officer, Kate Lee on +61 2 9264 9343 or the Chair of the Board at office@apheda.org.au

COVER: Australian unionists met with members of Ermera Agricultural Union in Timor Leste on a study tour in 2023.

WHO WE ARE

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Australian unions working globally in partnership for the achievement of dignity at work, social justice, economic equality and the realisation of human rights.

We work to achieve this through strong unions and social movements, sustainable development programs, global solidarity and support in times of crisis.

OUR VALUES

SOLIDARITY

Our approach is rooted in solidarity – solidarity that builds connections between people and across borders, as key to building organised movements for equality, development and justice. Our on-the-ground assistance aims to address the causes of injustice and inequality, not the symptoms.

EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

We challenge the dominant myths of development aid – that charity and depoliticised humanitarian assistance can somehow be adequate in addressing the root causes of poverty and injustice. Conservative or autocratic governments and corporations create a world in their own image, where the wealth and power of the global 'one percent', just 78 million people, grows hand-over-fist. We place the demands of the 99% in the centre of our work.

MOVEMENT-BUILDING

We help build democratic civil society, social justice movements, and representative organisations of workers, women, farmers, young people, people with disabilities, refugees, and others - so they can define and fight for their rights and against power structures that seek to oppress them. Organised movements of people make change possible, by exerting political pressure for just solutions.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We aim to be accountable to the local organisations we work with internationally and the people they serve, to our own members, to the Australian union movement and to government donors. We are fully accountable for the funds we receive. We seek the most effective and strategic way to deploy funding – by addressing causes not symptoms – and involve partner organisations in reviewing programs while working for continual improvement.

PARTNERSHIP

Working in partnership is the cornerstone of our approach. We aim for joint action with local partner organisations directed at meeting practical needs with movements on the ground – by supporting the building blocks that enable movements to emerge or become stronger, such as organisation, campaign capacity, education, research, and skills development.

Australian Unionists went on a Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA study tour and learned about union development, farmers and women organising in Timor Leste.



TRADE UNIONS DEFYING REPRESSION AND AUTHORITARIANISM

Globally, progress to reduce poverty and inequality has not recovered since the pandemic. Opportunities taken by conservative governments in 2020 to wind back industrial relations laws and repress freedoms have, in some parts of our region, remained. Nevertheless, unions continue to struggle for full economic, social, political and cultural rights and freedom of expression.

The ITUC's global rights index for 2022 highlights the worst countries and regions for trade union violations. Sobering statistics show four out of five countries block collective bargaining and one third of countries violently attack workers. Terrifyingly, trade unionists on every continent were murdered in 2022. Three countries in our region make the top 10 countries for worker abuse – Bangladesh, Myanmar and the Philippines.

In Myanmar, the military junta continues its trade union repression. Since February 2021, it has outlawed 16 labour rights organisations, declared martial law in the industrial zones to repress unions, jailed hundreds of workers and trade union leaders, and forced trade unionists into exile. Workers at unionised workplaces are forced to provide personal data on family members and public sector workers who resist the coup are coming under renewed pressure. Thet Hnin Aung, General Secretary of Myanmar Industry Craft Service-Trade Unions Federation, remains detained in Insein prison. Despite all this, factory workers strike and public sector teachers and health workers establish alternative systems for assisting the public. Complete international isolation through sanctions against the military, is the call from Myanmar's unions in exile. Successful campaigning by the international trade union movement has led to an ILO report which now

requires the ILO's governing body to deliberate action in 2024 such as severing diplomatic ties and sanctions against the junta.

The Philippines elected a new President, Bongbong Marcos in 2022 but for workers, little has changed from the previous leader, Rodrigo Duterte. Trade unionists live in fear of violence, arbitrary arrest and murder and 'red-tagging' of unionists continues. In January 2023, the International Labor Organisation (ILO) sent a high level tripartite mission to the Philippines and made findings supporting the calls of the Filipino labour movement regarding freedom of association violations, the interference of security forces in union activities and persistent and unfounded linking of labour activists to armed insurgency groups. Prior to this mission, unions across the Philippines collaborated together to present united findings. Following the ILO findings, the Philippines government has resisted and obstructed progress, and so galvanized union determination to keep exposing the violations of human rights and murders of union leaders.

Bangladeshi unions persist in confronting significant challenges. The ITUC Global Rights Index report emphasises the ongoing restriction of workers' rights in Bangladesh. Within the country's eight processing zones, workers are prohibited from forming trade unions or freely expressing their rights. Particularly within the garment sector – the nation's largest industry employing over 4.5million workers, attempts at forming unions were ruthlessly obstructed, while strikes were met with brutality by the country's industrial police force. Repression has reached a new level with the murder in 2023 of union organiser, Shahidul Islam in the city of Gazipur in central Bangladesh.



Above: Khaing Zar, Assistant General Secretary of the Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar, lives in exile following the 2021 military coup.

Left: Trade union leaders gather ahead of the ILO Tripartite High Level Mission to the Philippines.

STRATEGIC THEME ONE

DEFENDING WORKERS' RIGHTS AND SAFETY AT WORK

At the core of Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA's purpose is the fight for workers' rights and safe workplaces. By working with partner unions across our region, we are strengthening the collective power of workers in the Global South to defend good jobs, fair conditions, and safe workplaces.

WORKERS MEDIA SUPPORTS UNION ORGANISING

Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA has been in partnership with Workers' World Media Productions (WWMP), based in Cape Town, South Africa since 2009. The project has been supported by the Australian Education Union. WWMP is a popular education facility for trade unions, supporting internet, radio, TV and film productions, along with training for unionists and activists. WWMP resources 16 Labour Community Media Forums with trade union and local activists. Some of these forum run local advice centres, which refer people to relevant non-government organisations or unions. WWMP trains activists and unionists in media skills. These forums broadcast on community radio, on issues such as organising unorganised workers, xenophobia, gender violence, workers' health, accessing water, housing, electricity, social security and transport. WWMP has a program on workers' issues on Cape Town TV. WWMP also supports the People's Media Consortium with 19 organisations. WWMP trains workers who are organising, for example waste pickers and home care workers.



Workers' World Media Productions trains activists and unionists in media skills.



SENTRO supported Talisay fisherfolk to defend their livelihood and homes.

FISHERFOLK WIN

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA works with SENTRO, a national trade union centre in the Philippines. Despite ongoing trade union repression and human rights violations by the current government, SENTRO continues to fight for workers' rights. In the past year, they had a significant victory by organising Talisay fisherfolk to defend their livelihood and homes. The expansion of the Cebu International container port would have prevented 500 fisherfolk from accessing their long-term docking port, and it also threatened to demolish the homes of some of the fisherfolk who live in an insecure settlement on the coast. Through building a coalition of fisherfolk and campaigning with the local government, they were successful in forcing the Cebu Port Authority to negotiate with them. The campaign resulted in the fisherfolk being granted a secured docking area protected from the expansion. They also achieved land tenure for some residents who now have official title over the land they live on.

STRATEGIC THEME TWO CLIMATE JUSTICE, ENERGY DEMOCRACY, AND A JUST TRANSITION

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is working with trade unions and labour organisations in Indonesia, India, the Philippines, Vietnam and Nepal for climate justice and just transition plans. The goals include more equitable climate strategy to ensure decent work and sustainable development.

INDONESIAN UNIONS FIGHTING FOR GREEN JOBS

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is working with the Indonesian Trade Union Confederation (KSPI) and Confederation of Indonesian Prosperity Trade Union (KSBSI) as key parties in this process to ensure a just transition for workers and their communities.

Recently, the KSPI completed a study into the impact of the energy transition on workers in the mining sector, garment sector, and plantation and forestry sectors. It found the transition to renewable energy can provide significant economic opportunities, however, there is also the potential loss of jobs from the introduction of more sophisticated new technology and automation. With 500,000 members across Indonesia, the KSPI can play a central role in fighting for workers' rights during the energy transition process. Climate jobs must provide a decent income, health benefits, pensions, and the protection of workers' rights including the right to join a union and bargain.



Garment sector workers will be impacted by the transition to clean energy. Photo by Rio Lecatompessy on Unsplash.

NEPALI TRADE UNIONS COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA supports the Joint Trade Union Coordination Centre (JTUCC) of Nepal to strengthen the capacity of trade unions in Nepal to engage with climate mitigation and adaptation programs across key sectors.

The goal of this four-year partnership is to respond to the climate crisis ensuring workers are included in discussions on climate change impacts and strategically engaging governments to ensure Nepali workers' interests are included in climate policy and programs at all levels.

This year JTUCC organised four workshops to discuss and plan climate strategies for engaging with the government and employers. The outcome of the meeting was that the Nepalese government agreed to engage with JTUCC on climate change discussions.

JTUCC, representing all the national trade unions of Nepal, will continue supporting unions to organise workers and build trade union strength on the issue of the climate crisis.



Nepalese trade unionists meeting with the Ministry of Labour.

STRATEGIC THEME THREE

DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WORKERS AND REFUGEES

Across the globe, an unprecedented number of people are seeking protection from war and oppression. Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is working with partner organisations to support migrant workers and refugees with the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to defend their rights.

SUPPORTING SEASONAL WORKERS

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA has been supporting the Samoa First Union (SFU) as part of its work promoting trade union development in the Asia-Pacific. Before COVID-19, most of SFU's members were employed in local hotels, breweries, banks, manufacturing, retail, warehousing and maritime industries. However, more than 3000 workers, primarily those in the tourism and hospitality sectors represented by SFU were laid off during the pandemic. This led to large numbers of Samoans participating in seasonal worker programs in Australia and New Zealand. SFU supports workers to navigate the labour migration process – from helping with their applications, contracts, and police checks, to assisting them in claiming their entitlements while overseas and addressing outstanding superannuation on return home. Working with Australian and New Zealand unions, SFU has been able to speak out about the various challenges, including labour and human rights violations these workers face, both in Samoa and while deployed overseas, and represent their concerns to Samoan policymakers.



Samoa First Union supports workers to navigate the labour migration process.



Yan Myo Aung found out about the minimum wage by listening to MAP radio.

RADIO CONNECTING REFUGEES WITH THEIR RIGHTS

MAP Radio is a unique and reliable media outlet dedicated to promoting and protecting the rights of migrants living along the Thai-Myanmar border. With Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA's support, MAP Radio delivers vital information to migrant communities in an accessible way. Broadcasting in migrant languages, primarily Burmese and Shan, MAP Radio provides timely news updates. It also informs migrants about labour rights and immigration processes and educates migrant communities on women's rights, education, health and social issues. Importantly over the past three years, MAP has provided regular updates on COVID-19 prevention, treatment, vaccination and local restrictions.

The deteriorating political, economic and humanitarian crisis in Myanmar has led to increasing numbers of people trying to seek refuge outside the country. For migrants living in Thailand, it can be difficult to access news from home. In this context, MAP Radio plays a vital role in keeping migrant workers informed and connected to the news.

STRATEGIC THEME FOUR

WOMEN'S SOLIDARITY ACROSS BORDERS

Critical to global justice is supporting women's movements and women leaders, advocates, and campaigners to achieve equality and respect in their workplaces and communities. Here's a snapshot of how Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is working to strengthen women's power.

DOMESTIC WORKERS IN TIMOR

The Working Women's Centre of Timor-Leste (WWCTL) was founded in 2011 to provide informal women workers access to information about their labour rights, and build their capacity to collectively organise and advocate for their needs. As well as lobbying for legal and social protections, WWCTL facilitates fair work contracts for domestic workers, provides vocational skills training and education on collective action and labour rights, and have helped shift the perception of domestic work as real, valuable work in Timor Leste.

They regularly monitor workplace conditions and facilitate monthly meetings of domestic workers as a space for them to share their experiences and gain confidence from participating in a collective group that values their occupation. WWCTL's members are in the process of forming a domestic worker union, and a specific law that provides legal and social protections for domestic workers has been tabled in parliament.



The Working Women's Centre of Timor-Leste facilitates monthly meetings of domestic workers.



Karen women participating in a capacity building training session.

SUPPORTING KAREN WOMEN LEADERS

The Karen Women's Organization (KWO) has over 70,000 members across Karen State, Myanmar, and in seven refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar Border. Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA and KWO are working together on the KWO Capacity Building Project, which equips KWO leaders from the village level up to the executive level to effectively implement community development work, lead in their communities and participate in local decision-making.

Since the military coup in 2021, there has been an ongoing escalation of violence across Myanmar. Despite the conflict and the many safety and logistical challenges this creates, KWO has continued to provide essential support services to Karen women and community members, while also conducting capacity-building training whenever it is safe. This training strengthens understanding of the rights of women, children and Indigenous peoples, and equips them with skills to implement programs for their communities.

13 COUNTRIES 34 PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

CAMBODIA

- Association to Support Vulnerable Women (ASVW-CPU)
- Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT)
- Building and Wood Workers Trade Union Federation of Cambodia (BWTUC)
- Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA)
- Ministry of Women's Affairs, Cambodia
- Cambodian Food and Service Workers' Federation (CFSWF)

INDONESIA

- Local Initiative Occupational Health and Safety Network (LION)
- Indonesian Trade Union Confederation (KSPI)
- Confederation of Indonesian Prosperity Trade Union (KSBSI)
- SP PLN Indonesia

INDIA

- Self Employed Women Association (SEWA)

LAOS

- Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU)

LEBANON

- Palestinian Women's Humanitarian Organisation (WHO)

NEPAL

- Centre for Labour and Social Studies (CLASS)
- Joint Trade Union Coordination Centre (JTUCC)

PALESTINE

- MA'AN Development Center

THE PHILIPPINES

- Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU)
- Centre for Trade Unions and Human Rights (CTUHR)
- Sentro ng Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa (SENTRO)

SAMOA

- Samoa First Union (SFU)

SOUTH AFRICA

- Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE)
- Workers World Media Productions (WWMP)

THAI-MYANMAR BORDER

- Karen Women's Organisation (KWO)
- Migrant Assistance Program (MAP) Foundation
- School for Shan State Nationalities Youth (SSSNY)
- Mae Tao Clinic (MTC)
- Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma (ALTSEAN)

TIMOR LESTE

- Working Women's Centre of Timor Leste (WWCTL)
- Agriculture Union Ermera (UNAER)
- Institute of Popular Education (IEP)
- Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institute (KSI)
- General Workers Union (SJTTL)

VIETNAM

- Bac Kan Women's Union
- Phu Yen Women's Union
- 8 March Centre Hai Duong
- Hai Duong Women's Union

LEBANON

PALESTINE

ZIMBABWE

SOUTH AFRICA

SOLIDARITY SPONSORED BY:





SOLIDARITY IN ACTION: WHERE WE WORK

This year, Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA worked with over forty partner unions and community organisations in fifteen locations across South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East, and Southern Africa. This practical solidarity strengthens the collective power of movements, communities, and workplaces to campaign for equality and justice through developing their organising skills, building their leadership skills, and expanding their campaigning capacity.



THE CAMPAIGN TO BAN ASBESTOS IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

The campaign to ban asbestos across Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Indonesia has been underway since 2017. It seeks to raise awareness of exposure to asbestos, its health impacts and the risk to workers and consumers. It also seeks to influence policymakers who have the power to stop its trade and use. The project collaborates with regional and global ban campaigns. The goal is to contribute to banning asbestos in South-East Asia and reducing future asbestos-related diseases.

REGIONAL CAMPAIGN

As the impacts of COVID-19 subsided, campaign activities ramped up this year. Significant achievements include Cambodia announcing a ban on asbestos, the Asia Development Bank banning asbestos-containing materials from its investment projects in Asia, and the amount of asbestos consumed in Vietnam has been significantly reduced. A global campaign alliance, coordinated by the Australian Council of Trade Unions, has also strengthened advocacy with broad support for reform of the Rotterdam Convention led by Australia and Switzerland.

CAMBODIA

In May, Cambodia announced its decision to stop using asbestos in 2025. This was followed by the release of the OSH Masterplan outlining a plan to achieve this. The Building and Woodworkers Union continues to lead the advocacy network CAMBAN and raise awareness of exposure risks for construction workers. The close support and cooperation with the Australian Safety and Eradication Agency, the Australian Embassy, the International Labour Organization and the Solidarity Centre are recognised also in this progress to protect workers from needless cancer.

LAOS

The Australian Embassy joined the campaign by displaying a billboard outside the Embassy advocating for a ban on asbestos. The campaign is gearing up once again in Laos with a new three-year agreement with the Lao Federation of Trade Unions to lead efforts to ban asbestos in Laos in coming years. The urgency is highlighted as shocking photos emerge from Ministry of Health monitoring of working conditions and exposures in asbestos roof sheet factories in Laos.



VIETNAM

Vietnam has seen a 66% drop in asbestos consumption of asbestos in recent years as awareness of the risks of exposure grows and alternative products are more available. The campaign focus is on reducing demand and providing awareness and training for ethnic minority communities on asbestos hazards from asbestos-containing materials. The focus has been on Bac Kan Province in Vietnam's north in collaboration with the Bac Kan Women's Union. The activities include awareness training for community leaders and pilots in safe removal and disposal for poor households.

INDONESIA

The campaign through our partner Local Initiatives for OSH Network (LION) is continuing to try to change policy, raise awareness and save workers' lives in one of the last big consumers of asbestos in the world. This year, the focus has been on social media and new communication materials, awareness raising for workers in manufacturing and construction, training for doctors and specialists in Indonesia from Australian specialists, in diagnosing asbestos diseases, advocating for labelling of ACM with the Consumer protection agency and first training for a group of construction workers in safe removal of ACM.



Above: Vietnam has seen a 66% drop in asbestos consumption of asbestos in recent years.

Left: Dan Heldon, Deputy Head of Mission at the Australian Embassy in Laos PDR, with embassy staff.



INDONESIAN SPECIALISTS TRAINED IN ASBESTOS-RELATED DISEASES

The Sydney-based Asbestos and Dust Diseases Research Institute (ADDRI), the Australian Government’s Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency (ASEA), Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA, Local Initiatives for OSH Network (LION) and Binawan University conducted a pilot training in Indonesia. It focused on educating students and staff about asbestos-related diseases and building the capacity of medical practitioners to diagnose them. 164 students and health specialists from across Indonesia participated in the three-day intensive clinical training on the first day and 51 doctors and other specialists on the second and third days. A core group of health professionals has been introduced to asbestos-related diseases through training sessions led by ADDRI specialists and local researchers. Specialists in oncology, pathology, radiology, nursing, epidemiology, and public health were included in the training.

CAMBODIA ANNOUNCES STOP ON ASBESTOS USE IN 2025, A BREAKTHROUGH FOR THE REGION

Since 2015, Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA and its partners in Cambodia, including the Building and Wood Workers Trade Union Federation (BWTUC), the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT) and the joint non-government organisation and trade union network CAMBAN, have been warning about the health impacts of this deadly fibre. Thousands of people have attended workplace information sessions, national workshops, tripartite dialogues, and days of action organised as part of the awareness campaign aimed at policymakers, construction workers, and other workers from affected industries. Network members have called for the immediate end of asbestos use and importation of asbestos-containing materials.

Above: A three-day workshop brought together health specialists in Indonesia to train them in asbestos-related diseases.

Below: Cambodia has announced its decision to stop using asbestos in 2025.



ADVOCATING FOR INTERNATIONALISM WITHIN AUSTRALIA

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA not only helps build workers' power abroad, but it also builds solidarity at home. By bringing international speakers to Australia on advocacy tours, by organising study tours abroad, and by taking part in actions in solidarity with international struggles for justice, Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA helps build bridges between people who share common challenges and common interests.

WORLD CONGRESS OF THE UNION MOVEMENT COMES TO MELBOURNE

The 5th International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) World Congress was held in Melbourne from November 17-22. Over the five days, more than 1000 unionists discussed organising for climate-friendly jobs, workers' rights, just wages, social protection, equality and inclusion. ITUC represents over 207 million workers in over 300 national federations in 165 countries.

During the congress APHEDA organised several events. In conjunction with Philippines Australia Union Link (PAUL), APHEDA organised a forum with two national unions from the Philippines, SENTRO and KMU, about the 2022 national election and the continued repression of unionists in the Philippines.

APHEDA also organised a forum in conjunction with the Australian Council of Trade Unions and ITUC, which featured a panel of unionists from Myanmar, Hong Kong, Afghanistan and Belarus who have been exiled because of their union work, speaking about their experience living under repressive governments.

GLOBAL JUSTICE EDUCATION LAUNCHED

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA has been working with a group of volunteer union educators to create new training modules on global justice and international solidarity.

These training modules are designed to be a resource available for all unions and like-minded civil society organisations. It is a contribution to continuing the tradition of building an internationally concerned and engaged union movement in Australia and to pass on these lessons to union leaders of the future.

The training introduces the global political context that creates the need for workers' solidarity. It allows us to delve a little deeper into the 'why' that drives poverty and injustice and the partner organisations supported by APHEDA, and in so doing builds up the bonds of solidarity with comrades internationally.



Delegates to ITUC World Congress meet to discuss trade union rights.

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THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL
TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION
REPRESENTS **207+** MILLION
WORKERS IN **300+** NATIONAL
FEDERATIONS IN **165** COUNTRIES.”



APHEDA DINNERS IN MELBOURNE AND SYDNEY A GREAT SUCCESS

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA held two successful fundraising dinners in Melbourne and Sydney in the past year. It was wonderful to gather together again to hear more on international struggles and to fundraise.

In Melbourne, the dinner was hosted by Wil Stracke, Assistant Secretary of Trades Hall. A guest speaker who is a senior journalist with the Democratic Voice of Burma, shared her experience of working as an underground journalist after the military coup in Myanmar.

Director of the Sydney Southeast Asia Centre Professor Michele Ford gave the keynote address and ACTU President and APHEDA board member Michele O’Neil provided an update on some of the international victories workers have achieved in the past year.

In Sydney, the evening was hosted by comedian Craig Reucassel. Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Pat Conroy MP spoke about tackling global poverty and strengthening relationships across our region in his keynote address.

Tasneem Roc from the Myanmar Campaign Network also spoke about brutality of the junta regime, which targets unionists and activists.

Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Pat Conroy MP gave the keynote address at the Union Aid Abroad Sydney dinner.



MYANMAR CAMPAIGN NETWORK

The Myanmar Campaign Network is an Australian national coalition formed following the 2021 coup in Myanmar, comprising human rights organisations, international aid NGOs, Myanmar diaspora organisations, trade unions and faith-based organisations.

#100DAYCAMPAIGN

The #100DayCampaign for targeted sanctions on the Myanmar military junta, running from July 12 to August 28, was a call to action aimed at pressing the Australian Government to implement targeted sanctions on the Myanmar military junta within 100 days of the May 2022 election. Through a blend of digital engagement, this campaign gained widespread support and generated impactful results.

Supporters were invited to participate in a Social Media Photo Pledge, visually expressing their solidarity by sharing photos holding the sign “I support targeted sanctions on Myanmar junta” with the hashtags #AUSanctionMyanmarJunta and #100DayCampaign. The response was overwhelming, with participants from across Australia, including notable figures like Senator Jordan Steele-John and Bridget Archer MP, Member for Bass, joining in.

Amplifying the campaign’s message, supporters were encouraged to engage with their federal MP and State Senators through a personalised email campaign.



THE IMPACT OF THE MYANMAR COUP ON WOMEN, YOUTH, AND CHILDREN

“The Impact of the Myanmar Coup on Women, Youth, and Children,” webinar held on December 15, 2022, was a collaborative effort between the Myanmar Campaign Network, Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA, and Women Activists Myanmar. This session provided a comprehensive update on the grievous human rights violations committed by the Myanmar military and explored the profound ramifications of the coup on women, youth, and children.

The event shed light on the work carried out by local civil society organisations, with decades of experience in

providing critical humanitarian aid to those affected. Hosted by Myanmar Campaign Network manager Tasneem Roc, the webinar featured esteemed speakers, including Minister Naw Susanna Hla Hla Soe, who serves as the National Unity Government Minister for Women, Youths, and Children; Naw Wa Ku Shee, representing the Karen Peace Support Network; and Wai Wai Nu, Founder and Executive Director of Women’s Peace Support Network.

The primary objective was to dissect the coup’s impact on women, youth, and children, while spotlighting the responses and achievements of the National Unity Government, especially the Ministry of Women, Youths, and Children, and acknowledging the pivotal role played by civil society and community organisations.

THE “TWO YEARS TOO LONG” CAMPAIGN – SANCTIONS SUCCESS

The “Two Years Too Long” campaign, coinciding with the two-year anniversary of the coup in Myanmar, mobilised supporters to compel the Australian Government to issue the first round of targeted sanctions against the Myanmar military junta.

Supporters from across the nation were encouraged to participate by sending emails to Minister Wong ahead of this significant anniversary, emphasising the critical need for sanctions.

Through persistent lobbying and advocacy, the Australian government took a significant step on February 1, 2023, announcing sanctions on 16 Myanmar individuals and 2 Myanmar military conglomerates. This outcome highlighted the significant role played by grassroots activism in effecting meaningful change.





Top: Union Aid Abroad board member Michelle Robertson presents Timor Leste Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão with a Uluru Statement from the Heart t-shirt.

Below: Participants on the Palestine study tour met with members of a women's cooperative.

Left, from top: Early childhood educators joined the #100Day campaign calling for targeted sanctions on the Myanmar military junta.

Myanmar Campaign Network Manager Tasneem Roc joined supporters in calling for sanctions on the military junta.

STUDY TOURS TO PALESTINE AND TIMOR LESTE

This year Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA organised two study tours, one to Timor Leste and one to Palestine. These tours are incredibly important in connecting Australian APHEDA members with the work of our partner organisations.

Twelve APHEDA members travelled to Timor Leste for a week to visit its projects and meet with union leaders, women and farmers. Participants met with women from the APHEDA-supported Working Women's Centre, who work with domestic workers to improve their working rights, including campaigning for law reform. Participants also met farmers who are addressing the challenges of an insecure food system, climate change and the high cost of importing food by organising themselves into unions and food cooperatives. The group also had an opportunity to meet with Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão at Government Palace.

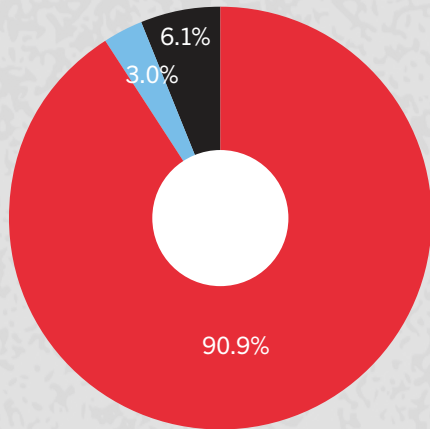
Australia Palestine Advocacy Network and Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA organised a study tour for seven Australian unionists to visit Palestine. The group visited Jerusalem, Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem and Tel Aviv.

The focus was to understand the situation of Palestinian workers. The delegation met with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) affiliated Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions, the General Union of Palestinian Workers, the General Union of Palestinian Teachers, the New Unions in Palestine and the Democracy and Workers Rights Center, along with the Israeli Histadrut. The Australian unionists also visited our project with the MA'AN Development Center.



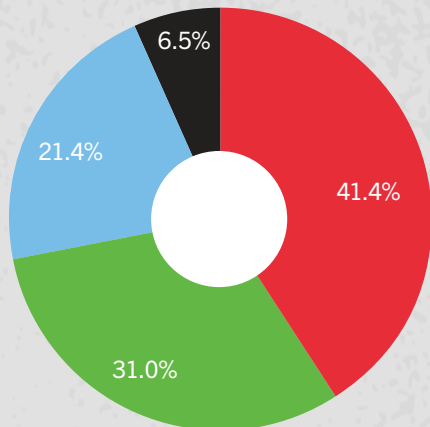
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

EXPENDITURE 2022-23



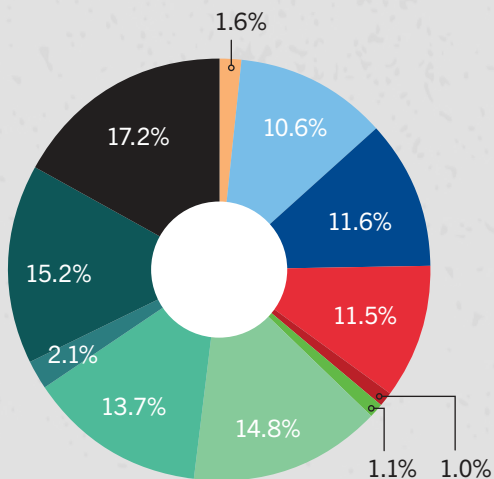
Programs (Includes Development Education)	90.9%	4,093,753
Fundraising	3.0%	135,166
Operating Expenses	6.1%	273,132
Total Expenditure		4,502,051

SOURCES OF INCOME 2022-23



Community Support	41.1%	1,886,254
Government Funds	31.0%	1,420,087
Other Grants	21.4%	981,410
Other Income	6.5%	299,476
Total Income		4,587,227

EXPENDITURE BY REGIONS 2022-23



Pacific	1.6%	53,531.46
Thai Burma Border and Myanmar	11.6%	384,318.34
Cambodia	11.5%	381,149.12
Middle East	10.2%	338,230.28
Philippines	1.0%	34,017.53
Africa	1.1%	35,000.00
Vietnam	14.8%	488,959.42
Timor Leste	13.7%	451,656.38
Laos	2.1%	67,931.12
Other	15.2%	501,457.41
Asbestos	17.2%	567,765.94
Total		3,304,017.00

APHEDA LTD. FINANCIAL REPORT, JUNE 2023

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

REVENUE	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue from continuing operations	4,340,162	5,484,162
Interest and investment income	123,532	1,729
TOTAL REVENUE	4,463,694	5,485,891
DISBURSEMENTS		
Funds to International Programs	3,304,017	3,750,944
Program Support Costs	580,353	375,985
Community Education	124,386	172,226
Fundraising Costs		
Public	112,939	337,061
Government	22,227	22,227
Accountability & Administration in Australia	273,132	132,553
Non-monetary expenditure	84,997	296,040
Loss on revaluation of investments		268,029
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	4,502,051	5,355,065
Excess of revenue over disbursements/(disbursements over revenue)	-38,357	130,826
Other comprehensive income		
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	-38,357	130,826
Funds available for future use at the beginning of the financial year	1,469,862	1,808,413
Funds available for future use at the end of the financial year	1,508,061	1,469,862

During the Financial Year, Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA had no transactions in investments, international political or religious adherence promotion programs, nor any domestic programs.

ASSETS

Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,508,061	1,469,862
Other Current Financial Assets	17,396	150,000
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1,525,457	1,619,862
Non-Current Assets		
Property, Plant & Equipment	-	-
Financial Assets	3,474,345	3,364,422
Right of use assets	195,097	231,115
TOTAL ASSETS	5,194,899	5,215,399

LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities		
Trade and Other Payables – Current	637,281	584,688
Non-Current Liabilities		
Provisions	7,105	7,906
Lease liabilities	180,871	214,806
TOTAL LIABILITIES	825,257	807,400
NET ASSETS	4,369,642	4,407,999

EQUITY

Accumulated Funds	4,369,642	4,407,999
TOTAL EQUITY	4,369,642	4,407,999

At the end of the Financial Year, Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA had no Assets held for Sale, no Inventories, no Investment Properties, and no Intangibles. Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA also had no Borrowings, no Current Tax Liabilities and no other Financial Liabilities.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
	Accumulated Funds	
BALANCE AT 30 JUNE 2022	4,407,999	4,277,173
Adjustment for changes in Equity	0	0
Items of other comprehensive income	0	0
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue)	(38,357)	130,826
Amount transferred (to)/from reserves		
BALANCE AT 30 JUNE 2023	4,369,642	4,407,999

A full set of our audited accounts are available for inspection at our Sydney Office.

DECLARATION BY RESPONSIBLE ENTITIES

In the opinion of the Committee (Responsible Entities) of Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad Limited:

1) The financial statements and notes of Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad Limited are in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:

- Giving a true and fair view of Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad Limited financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
- Complying with Australian Accounting Standards-Simplified Disclosures and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013; and

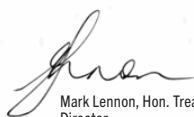
2) There are reasonable grounds to believe that Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad Limited will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Directors and is signed on behalf of the Directors by:



Michele O'Neil, Vice Chairperson
Director

Signed in Sydney this 17th day of November, 2023



Mark Lennon, Hon. Treasurer
Director

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT ABROAD

Report on the audit of the financial report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad Limited (the "Registered Entity"), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in funds and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies and the Responsible Entities' declaration.

In our opinion, the financial report of Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad Limited has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:

- giving a true and fair view of the Registered Entity's financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its performance for the year ended on that date;
- complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013; and
- the 2022 financial report is in accordance with the ACFID Code of Conduct.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Registered Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor's Report Thereon

Those charged with governance are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Declaration in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2021 (NSW). Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Responsible Entities for the financial report

The Responsible Entities of the Registered Entity are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, the ACFID Code of Conduct, and the Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2021 (NSW), and for such internal control as the Responsible Entities determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Responsible Entities are responsible for assessing the Registered Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Responsible Entities either intend to liquidate the Registered Entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Registered Entity's financial reporting process.

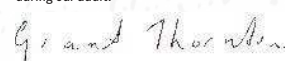
Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

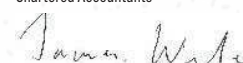
As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Registered Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Responsible Entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Responsible Entities' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Registered Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Registered Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



GRANT THORNTON AUDIT PTY LTD
Chartered Accountants



JAMES WINTER
Partner – Audit and Assurance

Signed this 17th day of November 2023

The Summary Financial Reports have been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in the ACFID Code of Conduct. For further information on the Code, please refer to the ACFID Code of Conduct Implementation Guidance available at www.acfid.asn.au

Do Global Justice. The Union Way.



Surya Ferdian, Hermansyah Abdi, and Jotika Gounder, union leaders from Indonesia and Fiji, joined other unionists at the ACTU's Healthy Work Conference in Brisbane in 2023.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SOLIDARITY

OUR UNION AFFILIATES

Australian Education Union
Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union
Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation
Australian Workers' Union
Communications Electrical and Plumbing Union
Community and Public Sector Union
Community and Public Sector Union, State Public Services Federation
Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union
Finance Sector Union
Health Services Union of Australia
Health and Community Services Union
Independent Education Union
Maritime Union of Australia
Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance
National Tertiary Education Union
NSW Nurses and Midwives Association
Professionals Australia

Rail, Tram, and Bus Union
United Firefighters Union of Australia
United Workers Union
Queensland Council of Unions
South Australia Unions
Unions ACT
Unions NSW
Unions Tasmania
Unions WA
Victorian Trades Hall Council

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Renata Musolino
Deb Nicholls
Peter Stokes
Deb Vallance

OUR INTERNATIONAL PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Solidar Suisse
Solidarity Center (US)
Irish Aid

International Labour Organisation
IBAS (International Ban Asbestos Secretariat)
ABAN (Asian Ban Asbestos Network)
International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland (SASK)
TARA Foundation
MISEREOR

OUR AUSTRALIAN PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Asbestos Diseases Foundation of Australia
Asbestos Dust Diseases Research Institute
Asbestos Safety & Eradication Agency
Australian Council of Trade Unions
Australian Embassies of Cambodia, Indonesia, Timor Leste, Vietnam and Laos
Australian Government through the Australian Aid program