

# IN PARTNERSHIP

June 2021



## Empowering Children to Break the Cycle of Poverty with Education

Laxmi was born in the Prakash Tekadi slums, and has lived there her whole life. She had limited access to education as a child. As an adult she lives in the same slums she grew up in, now with her husband and two daughters. Her husband works as a casual cook, getting work when kitchens are overwhelmed or when food is needed for weddings – this is more difficult with COVID-19.

Laxmi was raised in poverty, and now she is raising her children in poverty. Tragically, she was not given the opportunity to escape this trap. But she has hope that her children can break the cycle!

Prakash Tekadi is a small slum community of around 180 people, who are squatting near the Ambernath tip in Mumbai, India. Most people living there work as 'rag pickers', sorting through rubbish for items they can sell. The majority live on less than AUD \$2.50 a day and live in houses made out of whatever can

be scavenged. Communities like this are most vulnerable to the impact, direct and indirect, of COVID-19.

Laxmi was one of the people who contributed to a community consultation as part of designing a new development project. The consultation aimed to learn and address the experience of the people living in the slums. She contributed her thoughts about the critical needs in Prakash Tekadi.

"I said that I'm more concerned about my children; it would be helpful to get the children more education."

With support like yours, things are changing in Laxmi's community. Children like Laxmi's two daughters have started their learning at the Education Centre run by our local partners, Hosanna Ministries.

The Education Centre is open in the morning, and the children who attend learn basic maths, reading and

writing, and sing songs. The children have been taught the importance of washing their hands properly, a critical skill in the current pandemic. The centre also provides them with a nutritious snack, something many children in Prakash Tekadi don't have access to at home.

"I'm happy that my daughters will get some education, and close to our house," says Laxmi, laughing and smiling. "Because it's in the community, we feel like it's safe. Doing activities in our community, it makes us feel very proud and safe."

Your gift today will help some of the world's poorest communities break free from generational poverty.

Give now to the COCOA Mid-Year Appeal and empower people like Laxmi and her daughters to break the generational cycle of poverty.


[www.gmp.org.au/empower](http://www.gmp.org.au/empower)


## News & Events

### COCOA Mid-Year Appeal Closes June 30

When you give to the COCOA Mid-Year Appeal in June, your gift can help empower some of the world's poorest communities to break the cycle of generational poverty. Give via online, reply paid envelope, over the 'phone or email GMP for more information.

 [gmp.org.au/empower](http://gmp.org.au/empower)

 PO Box 341, Torrensville Plaza, SA 5031

 1800 467 222 (Free call)

 [info@gmp.org.au](mailto:info@gmp.org.au)

### NAIDOC Week, July 4-11

NAIDOC Week celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia. The theme for 2021 is **Heal Country!** To find out more and to participate in events near you visit the website [www.naidoc.org.au](http://www.naidoc.org.au)

### COVID-19 Ministry Appeal

Your support of the COVID-19 Ministry Appeal will provide financial resources to churches so they can reach out to those being impacted by COVID. Because of the urgent situation, initial support will be directed to India. Give online today [www.gmp.org.au/covidappeal](http://www.gmp.org.au/covidappeal)

### Expression of Interest Invited – GMP Board Treasurer

An important element of the work of the Board is the financial governance of GMP. There is now opportunity to join GMP as the Board Treasurer. The suitable person will have experience in a governance financial role. This is an honorary position and you will make a difference in the life of GMP and our partners. Please send expressions of interest before June 30. More information about the position and how to apply can be found on the GMP website [www.gmp.org.au/about-us/employment](http://www.gmp.org.au/about-us/employment) Expressions of interest can be sent to Barrie Yesberg, GMP Board Chair, [yesberggmp@gmail.com](mailto:yesberggmp@gmail.com)



Image sourced from [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

## New Ways of Living

Over the past weeks the impact of COVID has become more serious in many places. The images from India, as well as knowing that many other places are doing it tough, have impacted us.

In the past year there have been many changes. The anticipated 'normal' that we planned for has gone for ever. We are learning new ways of living. New ways of being in relationship, new ways of reaching out with care, new ways of providing support and encouragement.

Two realities come to the fore. One reality is the critical importance of living with compassion for others. We may have opinions about why something has happened and who is at fault. No matter what our conclusions are, people are hurting and struggling. These are all people with whom we have much in common. Each of us created in the image of God. Every one of us a person for whom Christ died. All of us are invited to share in the justice and joy of God's Kingdom. We share a common humanity, vulnerability and fear. We are one, and accepting this reality is the foundation of compassion.

A second reality is the resilience of the human spirit. People face such fearful times, yet they continue to live. There is injustice, suffering, trauma and death. People cannot socially distance because of the density of housing and community. Yet what do we see? We see people maintaining the rhythms of the everyday – work, school, sleep, family life and belonging. We know who we are; in our being we are connected to others. In the grace and providence of God we sense and discover something more. Another day begins and we go on. Maybe with hesitation and fearfulness. Always with the promise of Jesus, 'I am with you always – even to the end of the age.' It is in this promise that strength is found. A promise of companionship, support and encouragement. A rich gift of forgiving and renewing love.

God connects us in one family and asks us in the body image of 1 Corinthians 12:26 to experience and share the journey of life with others; sharing pain, supporting journeys, and celebrating victories. We are connected, we are together and we bring what we have to encourage and support those for whom life is a struggle. In turn, they challenge us in how they live and, also, they inspire and encourage us.

*John Gilmore,*  
Executive Officer



Women in Prakash Tekadi, India

## Empowering Women to Break the Cycle of Poverty with Healthcare

It's a busy day when we come to visit Sunita. Her granddaughter is running around inside their makeshift house, and we can hear music and bike bells coming in from outside.

"I'm feeling weak, my health is not as good, and I worry I can't be supported," Sunita tells us. She holds up her arm, and motions at the needle being inserted into her wrist. "The doctors have said I need blood transfusions, to overcome the weakness."

She is scared that she won't be able to access the health care she needs. She worries about what her family would do without her. The grip of poverty is holding her back, and she needs help to break the cycle.

It's difficult to travel from the slums of Prakash Tekadi to the nearest public hospital. Hospitals that are closer are private and, therefore, expensive. Most of the people living in Prakash Tekadi were born into poverty. There is a lack of awareness about proper hygiene. Rubbish is thrown out to the streets, and numbers of people do not wash their hands regularly or thoroughly enough. This causes many preventable, but serious health problems, including fevers, infections and diarrhoea – and also leaves the community vulnerable to COVID-19.

Sunita is the head of her household, and is taking care of her five-year-old granddaughter while her daughter is working. Her young niece and nephew also live with them. Their family has experienced many tragic losses.

"My brother lost his life, so his children also live with us," she tells us. Her daughter's husband also passed away, leaving her to raise their child alone. "He [daughter's husband] was sick with some disease, maybe tuberculosis, but we don't know."

There is a critical need for better health care in Prakash Tekadi. As it is now, even when they are able to travel to the hospital, it takes people away from their family and their work. This vulnerability keeps them stuck in the vicious cycle of poverty.

"Whenever someone is sick, I am the one to take them to the hospital because I know some of the doctors," Sunita says.

She fears that because she has this responsibility, that if she gets sick, there will be nobody to take proper care of her and so there will be nobody to take care of her family.

That's why the Prakash Tekadi Community Building Project is focusing on health care and awareness. This critical need can be met!

With the help of supporters like you, Prakash Tekadi can have monthly doctor's visits. They will have access to "check-up camps", where doctors will come and perform health examinations, and test for COVID-19 and other serious conditions such as HIV.

The project also aims to provide health awareness workshops. These will be conducted by relevant professionals and cover a range of topics, including proper sanitation and hygiene practices and the use of hand sanitisers and masks.

Your support will help women like Sunita stay with their family and get the critical health care they need. When you give to the COCOA Mid-Year Appeal, you are helping to stop preventable disease spreading in a vulnerable community. This gives hope to kids like Sunita's granddaughter, to have a future where they can break the cycle of poverty.

Find out more or give today at [www.gmp.org.au/empower](http://www.gmp.org.au/empower)

## Reconciliation Week

Reconciliation Week (May 27-June 3) marked almost three decades of Australia's formal reconciliation process. Observing the week is a great opportunity for churches to engage with the truth about our history and to intentionally listen to the voices of Australia's First Peoples. IMA Coordinator West, Colin Battersby says, "It is a time to reflect on our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to consider what actions need to be taken, both personally and collectively, to develop and enrich these relationships. As disciples of Jesus, it is a reminder to live with a posture of humility as we seek after a shared journey of friendship and healing; a journey marked by daily moments of listening, learning and responding."



## “Ni” Cultural Awareness Workshop on Noongar Country

Ngaama Ministries, with the support of Indigenous Ministries Australia, conducted a Cultural Awareness Workshop at Riverview Church, WA, on May 14. The training is called “Ni” which means “listen” in the Noongar language. The workshop was wonderfully facilitated by Whadjuk Noongar Yorga, Dena Gower and Keren Masters (from Moorditj Keila) and featured a time of sharing from members of the Stolen Generation.

There were 21 participants on the day, with representatives from churches, Christian NGOs, mission organisations and Christian schools. There were many positive reflections about the day as participants learned about the truth of Australia's recent history and challenged social stereotypes and cultural myths.

Some of the participants' responses included:

*“Thank you so much. Just loved the workshop.”*

*“Thank you for choosing to serve us in this way. It means a lot and we treasure what has been shared. We met some Australian heroes today.”*

A previous workshop participant also expressed their gratitude for the training:

*“I felt so privileged to be able to attend the Ni Cultural Awareness Workshop organised and put together by Dena Gower and Keren Masters. It has definitely enlarged my understanding of the history of Australia and the plight of the Aboriginal people for centuries. I highly recommend this workshop for pastors and church leaders, teachers and the wider community. Thank you, Dena and Keren, for opening your heart to us and sharing your faith journey.”*

The workshop covers the following topics: Pre-colonisation: Aboriginal culture and lifestyle; the impact of colonisation; the consequences of

unresolved trauma; the differences between Aboriginal and Western worldviews and the way forward towards healthy relationships and partnerships.

Another Ni Workshop is scheduled to be hosted at Lifestreams Church (Perth) on Monday June 28, so please book early via Eventbrite to avoid disappointment, as tickets go quickly (see link below).

To find out about future workshops or to arrange a tailored workshop for your church, Christian organisation or school in the Perth region, please contact Colin Battersby via email: [colinb@gmp.org.au](mailto:colinb@gmp.org.au)

**Book into the Ni Workshop on June 28 now!**

[www.eventbrite.com.au/e/ni-cultural-awareness-workshop-ngaama-ministries-tickets-154167431939](http://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/ni-cultural-awareness-workshop-ngaama-ministries-tickets-154167431939)