



SISTERS OF MERCY

Walking Together. Changing Lives.

OUR VISION

We partner with the most vulnerable to develop opportunity, dignity and self-reliance.

OUR MISSION

Inspired by Catherine McAuley's legacy,
Mercy Works actively collaborates with
local organisations to uplift vulnerable
people, especially women and children,
in Australia, Papua New Guinea, the
Philippines, and Timor-Leste.
Through hands-on programs that
strengthen capacity, encourage
self-reliance, and foster environmental
sustainability, we drive meaningful,
lasting change for those most in need.

OUR VALUES

Mutuality • Integrity Compassion • Justice

MERCY WORKS

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We are a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and as such committed to the ACFID Code of Conduct for Australian aid and development organisations. See www.acfid.asn.au

Cover

(L to R) Dianne Balatero, Brigid Glanville, Sr. Theresia Boyek rsm, Sr. Gilbert Pathrose som.



In Papua New Guinea, bilums are beautiful, traditional, and intricately handwoven string bags which have been crafted and used by people for hundreds of years to carry their most precious and essential belongings.

They are at the heart of Papua New Guinean traditions and hold deep cultural and emotional significance.

The Bilum is the name of our magazine, which carries and communicates the stories of the people involved in the many projects supported by Mercy Works. It is sent to people like you. Our friends, donors, and partners of Mercy Works.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR /3 **MERCY WORKS 25 YEARS** 14 **CLEAN WATER - SUPPLYING PNG** /7 REBUILDING HOPE AFTER THE STORMS /8 FROM REFUGEE CHILD TO ADVOCATE /10 **NOURISHING FUTURES IN TIMOR-LESTE** /12 CLEAN CLOTHES, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES /13 A NEW LOOK FOR MERCY WORKS /14 **CHAIR'S REPORT** /15 **KEY PROJECT OUTCOMES** /16 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS /18 **OUR PEOPLE** /19 **THANK YOU** /20

In the spirit of reconciliation Mercy Works acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we walk, live and work. We pay tribute to all of those who have nurtured this country over many thousands of years, deriving spiritual and physical needs from the seas, forests, soil, rivers, lakes and streams, and to Elders past and present. We join our First Nations people in honouring these lands as sacred. We welcome the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

From the **Executive Director**



Dear Friends....

It can hardly be a coincidence that the late Pope Francis proclaimed 2025 a Jubilee Year with the theme "Pilgrims of Hope"—the very same year that Mercy Works celebrates our 25th Anniversary with the theme: "25 Years of Walking Together and Changing Lives."

Our 25th Anniversary Celebration on Thursday,
23 October was a truly hope-filled evening. We
gathered in deep gratitude to honour 25 years of
community development and transformative action.
We were privileged to be joined by representatives
from our partner projects, who shared powerful,
hope-filled stories. Our generous donor and supporter
community, along with school representatives from
around Australia, joined us both in person and online.

We were reminded that Mercy is not just a word it is a lived experience, shared humanity, and transformative action.

The words of environmental thinker **David Orr** effectively capture our mission:

"Hope is a verb with its sleeves rolled up. Hopeful people are actively engaged in defying the odds or changing the odds. Optimism leans back, puts its feet up, and wears a confident look."

This edition of **The Bilum** is filled with tangible stories of hope in action. Here are just a few highlights of some of our new projects:

Hope in Action: Project Highlights

Remote Laundries in Gunbalanya, NT

In partnership with the Gunbalanya Aboriginal community, we support a free laundry service that provides employment, health education, and combats the spread of scabies, a condition that can lead to rheumatic heart disease (RHD). Alarmingly, 98% of people living with RHD in the Northern Territories are Indigenous.

Refugee Voices: Farid Ghalib's Story

Our Senior Project Coordinator, **Farid Ghalib**, shares his journey as an Afghan refugee seeking safety and freedom. His story fuels his compassionate work in our refugee programs. We are proud to partner with Afghan Women on the Move, who recently launched "My Mother and I: The Untold Stories of Afghan Women"—a powerful platform amplifying the voices and cultural heritage of Afghan women, in stark contrast to the silencing they face in their homeland.

Clean Water in Papua New Guinea

In response to the spread of water-borne diseases like typhoid, local artisans have installed water tanks across the Highlands and Western Province. These tanks, placed in schools and health centres, are providing entire village communities with access to clean water.

Emergency Relief Funds to the Philippines

In late 2024, Typhoon Christine struck communities in the remote Panay Island in the Philippines where our partner projects are based. Natural disasters, like this one, are made more severe by climate change. Homes and livelihoods were destroyed. We approved additional **funds** to help rebuild homes and restore hope. In April 2025, I found it deeply moving when I had the privilege of visiting the affected areas and meeting some of the grateful recipients.

With Deep Gratitude

To our donors, grant contributors, schools, Sisters of Mercy, Mercy Congregation Leaders, staff, volunteers, Board Directors, and Committee members—thank you. Your unwavering support makes our mission possible. A special thank you to Joe Zabar, our Board Chair, for his wise leadership and compassionate counsel.

Looking Ahead

The need is great, and the call is urgent. As we journey into 2026, may we continue to walk together in hope, compassion, and action.

"We must be shining lamps giving light to all around us." - Catherine McAuley

Every blessing to you and your loved ones for a healthy and safe 2026!

With gratitude,
Sally Bradley rsm / Executive Director



MERCY WORKS CELEBRATES A MILESTONE OF COMPASSION, PARTNERSHIP AND HOPE

Laughter, music, and heartfelt gratitude filled the air as Mercy Works celebrated 25 years of walking together and changing lives at its Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser on 23 October 2025. The evening, held at Cloister Hall in Parramatta, Sydney brought together friends, partners, Sisters of Mercy, schools, volunteers, Mercy organisations and supporters to honour a remarkable journey of compassion and transformation that began in 2000.

The event opened in the courtyard with pre-dinner drinks and music performed by talented students from Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta, whose uplifting performance set the tone for what was clearly going to be a joyful and memorable evening. A deeply moving Traditional Water Blessing Ceremony led by women from the Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation followed, symbolising connection to Country, renewal, and shared spirit. It was a poignant reminder of the Mercy Works mission, to walk alongside communities in humility and partnership.

As guests gathered in the open courtyard outside Cloister Hall, they were invited to explore an inspiring exhibition of Mercy Works' projects across Australia and the Asia-Pacific, each example telling a story of empowerment and resilience. From the maternal health programs in Timor-Leste, to education and livelihoods projects in Papua New Guinea, to the support of women and children in the Philippines, and the refugee and Indigenous partnerships across Australia, the exhibits painted a powerful picture of Mercy in action.

The theme of the night, "25 Years of Walking Together, Changing Lives", echoed through every narrative, every photograph, and every conversation. Each project display reflected how the generosity of Mercy Works supporters has created opportunity, dignity and self-reliance for thousands of people.

A highlight for many was the vibrant "Gifts that Give Back" market stall, where guests could shop with purpose and take home handmade items representing the cultures Mercy Works serves. Bilums from Papua New Guinea and tais cloth from Timor-Leste, each represented how these initiatives are transforming lives and strengthening communities. Every purchase directly supported artisans and families striving for independence.









As the evening's formal program began, MC Brigid Glanville, former ABC Chief NSW Political Reporter, and alumni of OLMC Parramatta, welcomed guests and introduced the Mercy Works video, which captured moving scenes from projects across the region.

Board Chair loe Zabar and Executive Director Sally Bradley rsm each reflected on the spirit of the milestone.

"Tonight, we celebrate a story of compassion and community," said Joe. "For 25 years, Mercy Works has stood with people in vulnerable situations, offering practical help and hope." Sally added, "Inspired by the legacy of the Sisters of Mercy, our mission has always been to walk alongside communities, especially women and children, empowering them to build a better future. Together, we honour the past and commit ourselves anew to the work of mercy."

A captivating panel discussion followed, featuring Mercy Works' program partners from across the region. Sister Gilbert Pathrose som, a Hospitaller Sister of Mercy from Timor-Leste, shared stories from the Teresa Orsini Maternity Clinic in Maucatar, where her team provides essential healthcare and nutrition for mothers and babies.

"Every life saved, every child nourished, is a sign of what we can achieve when we walk together," she said.

PHOTOS Left page (L to R) Theresia Boyek rsm, Joe Zabar, Sally Bradley rsm,

Clockwise from top right: Panel discussion moderated by MC Brigid Glanville

Teachers and students from St. Catherine's Catholic College, Singleton. (L–R) John Rochester, Eveline Crotty rsm, Margery Jackman, and Margie Abbott rsm.

Baabayn water blessing.



Sister Theresia Boyek rsm, who leads programs in Simbu, Papua New Guinea, spoke of the women's livelihood and education initiatives transforming rural communities. "Mercy Works helps people believe in themselves again. When women learn new skills and start small businesses, they not only change their lives, they change their villages."

You could hear a pin drop in the room as guests listened intently to stories of courage and collaboration as Dianne Balatero from Mercy Work's partner program in the Philippines, shared stories of how survivors of gender-based violence and human trafficking are reclaiming their dignity.

Throughout the night, guests were reminded that every act of generosity, whether volunteering, donating, or purchasing a handmade gift, contributes to this ongoing story of mercy. The funds raised from the event will directly support Mercy Works programs helping families overcome poverty, displacement and inequality across the region.

As the program drew to a close, Sally thanked guests for their support and invited them to continue the journey.

"Mercy is not a moment, but a movement," she said.



"Each of us has the power to make a difference. Together, we can keep walking alongside our sisters and brothers across Australia and the Asia-Pacific, building communities where everyone can thrive."

For 25 years, Mercy Works has been standing where the need is greatest, offering not just charity, but partnership and opportunity.

One act of mercy can transform a life.

To continue walking with us on this journey of hope, visit www.mercyworks.org.au/donate

STEP INSIDE THE **EVENT WITH OUR QUICK** HIGHLIGHT REEL



Mercy Works thanks the following event sponsors:

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Dubock Funerals Eureka Street Maxxia **NSBC Group**

PHOTOS Clockwise from top left: Audience viewing a video presentation on Mercy Works and its impact.

Theresia Boyek rsm contributing to the panel discussion.

Display showcasing skills training initiatives currently underway in PNG Audience members actively engaged in the discussion.

Clean Water

High in the rugged mountains of Papua New Guinea's Simbu Province, clean water has long been a luxury. In many communities, fetching water from contaminated streams is a daily struggle that too often leads to deadly diseases. But this year, that story is beginning to change.

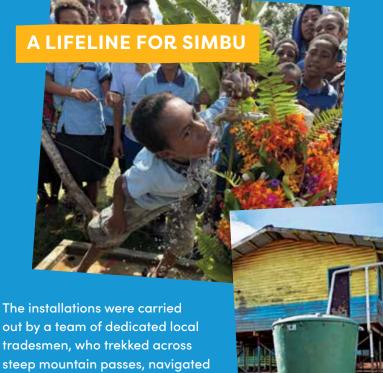
When the Simbu program identified an underspend at the end of 2024, Mercy Works seized the opportunity to respond to one of the community's most pressing needs – long term supply of safe, potable water. A 2022 study in the nearby Goroka area revealed that only 28% of children had access to clean water, with typhoid and dysentery posing constant threats. (J Paediatr Child Health. 2024 Jun;60(6):188-192. doi: 10.1111/jpc.16553. Epub 2024 Apr 25).

Working with the Kundiawa Diocese, a new activity was launched to install essential rainwater collection and storage systems across schools and health clinics. The initiative was designed to deliver immediate, tangible impact... and it did. By mid-2025, 14 rainwater systems had been established.

In recognition of the program's success, Mercy Works expanded the project for the 2026 financial year, implementing another 14 systems ahead of the rainy season. Each system includes improved roof guttering, a "first flush" diverter to remove debris, a 9,000-litre tank, and a concrete water stand with disabled access.

'the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family' is a key article (#25) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.





The installations were carried out by a team of dedicated local tradesmen, who trekked across steep mountain passes, navigated landslides, and often hand-carried materials when roads were blocked. Their perseverance brought lasting change to some of the region's most

isolated communities, providing access to clean water for hundreds of children, patients, and health workers. One of these tradesmen, Aaron Ketiga, sadly passed away from typhoid and tuberculosis shortly after the first installations – a tragic reminder of why this work matters so deeply.

Local teamwork played a key role, too. Behind each tank stands a community who contributed labour, collected sand and stones, and prepared the sites ready for construction. The results have been remarkable.

At the remote Goglme Health Clinic, which serves over 13,500 people, manager Ms Joan Ko-ou described the project as an "amazing job." For the first time, staff and patients have clean, running water for drinking, washing and care. "Clean water and sanitation are our greatest priorities," she said. "Mercy Works has made such a difference."

Mercy Works continues to expand this vital work through additional Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) projects in Timor–Leste and the Philippines bringing dignity, safety and hope to some of the Pacific's most remote corners. As clean water flows, so too does opportunity and a powerful reminder that access to water is access to life.

PHOTOS Clockwise from top left: Sally Bradley rsm with the Mercy Works team behind the installation of vital water tanks in remote schools and medical clinics.

A student enjoying fresh, safe water thanks to the school's new tank installation.

Water tank installed.

Rebuilding Hope After the Storms



When twin typhoons struck the Philippines late last year, entire communities lost everything. But with your support, the Mercy Works **Emergency Shelter Appeal helped them begin** again by providing shelter, safety, and the tools to rebuild their lives. Each home restored is a testament to the power of community and compassion in times of crisis.

Following Typhoons Trami (Kristine) and Man-Yi (Pepito), which hit just three weeks apart, entire villages were torn apart. Homes were flattened, livelihoods washed away, and families left clinging to little more than faith and resilience. In the Bicol Region alone, more than 2.7 million people were affected.

In the wake of the devastation, Mercy Works through its long-standing partner, the St Mary Euphrasia Integrated Development Foundation (SMEIDFI), moved quickly to help families rebuild not just their homes, but their sense of stability and hope.

A Swift and Compassionate Response

Mercy Works launched an Emergency Shelter Appeal with a goal of raising \$47,000 to assist those most affected.

Thanks to the compassion of our supporters, we raised \$33,756, allowing us to provide emergency housing materials for families across Panay Island, Catanduanes, and Garchitorena (Camarines Sur).

Through close consultation with local government units (LGUs), parish leaders and community groups, our focus turned to what families needed most: safe, secure shelter.

a symbol of restored dignity and independence

out from the window of their new concrete home, built to last.

Maricel at her front door as the local priest blesses her new home, marking

Maria standing in front of newly delivered building materials—essential supplies that will help rebuild her home and restore stability.

"After the storms, many families were still sleeping under makeshift roofs of tarpaulin and scrap iron," said one project coordinator. "They had nowhere to feel safe. Shelter was not just a physical need – it was emotional, too."

Restoring Shelter and Self-Reliance

By July 2025, 41 families (258 individuals) had received vital building supplies including galvanized roofing sheets, timber, plywood, and nails – placing in their hands the tools to rebuild their homes and restore their independence.

Through careful budgeting and community cooperation, the project exceeded its original targets, even supporting households that suffered only partial damage.

Despite shortages of materials and unpredictable weather, rebuilding went ahead steadily, powered by the Filipino spirit of Bayanihan, the deep-rooted tradition of neighbours helping neighbours. Families shared tools, labour, and encouragement, ensuring no one was left behind.

Partnerships that **Strengthen Communities**

The project's success lay in collaboration. SMEIDFI worked hand-in-hand with municipal engineers, social welfare offices, and parish leaders to ensure every house was safe, sustainable, and suited to local needs.

Orientation sessions empowered families to take part in the building process, while transparent communication fostered trust and accountability. What began as a disaster response evolved into a community-led rebuilding effort, creating not just homes, but lasting resilience.

STORIES OF RECOVERY AND GRATITUDE

Neighbours Helping Neighbours

- Maricel's Story

"My husband built our house himself. With three children in school, we couldn't afford to hire help. But when our neighbours finished rebuilding their own homes, they came to lend a hand. Their kindness made all the difference."

"Before, we were the ones seeking shelter in other people's houses during typhoons," her husband said. "Now, we have a place we can offer to others – a safe space for neighbours when the rains come."

More Space, More Hope – Samantha's Story

For Samantha, a sturdy home means her children can sleep soundly and dream freely again. "Our old home was so small and damaged. Now, we finally have space, and our children feel secure. That sense of safety means everything."

Rebuilding in the Mountains – Maria's Story

Maria's home stood in one of the most isolated parts of the community, reachable only by trekking the rough mountain paths or crossing the sea when tides allowed. Her family faced overwhelming challenges rebuilding.

But the spirit of bayanihan came alive. Neighbours rallied to help carry construction materials across steep terrain and worked side by side until Maria's home was rebuilt. "It's not just a house," she said, "it's a home where we finally feel safe."

Peace at Last– Obet and Jane's Story

Though electricity hasn't reached their area yet, the family is content with solar lights and the simple comforts of a real home with space to share meals, and a small room where their daughter can sleep safely.

"I never thought we'd have a home made of concrete," Jane shared, her voice full of quiet gratitude. "This home is a beginning. I want to start a small business here, something of my own, just like we built this house with hope."

A Collective Effort That Lasts – Sally Bradley rsm, Executive Director of Mercy Works

What began as an urgent relief effort has become a symbol of optimism and resilience for these communities. Roofs have been rebuilt, but more importantly, lives have been restored. "We are deeply grateful to all who contributed. Your generosity enabled families not only to rebuild their homes, but to do so

with dignity, pride, and hope for the future. Visiting this remote area in March 2025 and meeting some of the grateful recipients was truly humbling. The impact of this rebuild will be felt for years to come."

Hope Returned Because of You

Because of your compassion, 41 Filipino families now sleep under sturdy roofs, protected from the storms that once tore their lives apart. Your kindness has turned devastation into renewal and despair into possibility. Together, we've shown that no storm is strong enough to wash away hope.



Your Impact at a Glance:

Emergency Shelter Appeal: PHILIPPINES (Dec 2024–Jul 2025) 41 FAMILIES (258 individuals) received housing assistance

\$33,756 RAISED

BUILDING KITS included: galvanized roofing, timber, plywood, nails, and other materials

PRIORITY given to solo parents, elderly, people with disabilities, and low-income households

COLLABORATION with

LGUs, parish leaders, and SMEIDFI for delivery and design SPIRIT OF BAYANIHAN

– community

cooperation ensured all

families rebuilt together

From Refugee Child to Advocate

FARID'S JOURNEY INSPIRING

MERCY WORKS' REFUGEE PROGRAM

When Farid Ghalib sits with newly arrived refugees, listening to their fears and hopes, he understands them in a way few can. As the Refugee Projects Senior Coordinator at Mercy Works, his compassion is rooted in his experience of being a child who once fled war, lost his home, and rebuilt his life from the ground up.

Farid was five when he first learned what terror truly meant. Growing up in Kabul during the civil war, the roar of fighter jets and the shriek of sirens were part of daily life. His childhood ended abruptly the day he and his father walked through their city, recently overtaken by the Taliban, where public executions marked a grim new reality. Soon after, his family joined the millions forced to flee Afghanistan.

Life in Pakistan's refugee camps was harsh amid crowded shelters, scarce food, illness, and loss. Yet even in those conditions, Farid discovered an unspoken spirit of resolve. When he finally entered school, he couldn't read or write and failed every subject. But he refused to give up. Within two years, he rose to the top of his class, a triumph born from determination rather than circumstance.

That same determination has guided his life's work. Returning to Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban, Farid studied law and political science, later earning a master's degree in Human Rights, Gender, and Conflict Studies. His career has spanned the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Australia for UNHCR, and Amnesty International where he was always advocating for those whose voices are suppressed by war, displacement, or discrimination.

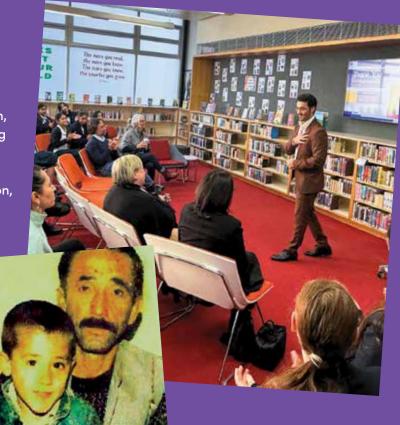
PHOTOS Clockwise from top: Farid Ghalib, Refugee Projects Senior Coordinator at Mercy Works.

Farid presenting to students and staff at Our Lady of Mercy College, Parramatta during Refugee Week, sharing stories and insights. A childhood photo of Farid with his father.

Today, at Mercy Works, Farid channels those experiences into programs that give refugees safety, dignity and hope. Through initiatives such as Know Your Rights and My Mother and I: The Untold Stories of Afghan Women, he helps others find the confidence to rebuild their lives and share their stories, both acts of steadfast defiance against oppression.

"Education and compassion transformed my life," Farid reflects. "Now, my work is about helping others find that same transformation and to see that even in the darkest times, there is always light."

For Farid, every refugee story is a reminder of the possibility that from loss can come leadership, and from silence, strength.



FROM SILENCE TO STRENGTH: **Mercy Works Supporting Afghan Women**

Too often, the voices of Afghan women in Australia remain unheard; hidden by cultural barriers, language challenges, and the absence of platforms to share their lived experiences. Without these stories, a wealth of resilience, wisdom, and ancestral knowledge risks being lost.

Mercy Works is addressing this gap through My Mother and I: The Untold Stories of Afghan Women, delivered in partnership with Afghan Women on the Move (AWOTM). Running from July 2025 to June 2026 in Sydney, the project will empower 20 Afghan women to document their journeys and see their narratives published, digitally preserved, and brought to life in a short documentary film.

Writing workshops held in safe, inclusive spaces invite participants to bring their personal histories to light. In a time when the Taliban has limited and intermittently cut off internet access in Afghanistan, silencing women's voices once more, it is impossible not to marvel at the courage it takes for Afghan women to share their stories publicly.

Community storytelling events and collaboration with academic institutions will help these voices reach wider audiences - confronting stereotypes, reinforcing identity, and opening pathways for advocacy.

As one participant reflected,

"Our stories are our strength. Now, with Mercy Works' support, the world will hear them."





BUILDING CONFIDENCE: How Mercy Works Supports Refugees with Legal Skills

For many newly arrived refugees, navigating Australia's legal system can be daunting. Without clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities, everyday challenges, from renting a home to starting a small business, can quickly become overwhelming.

In May 2025, Mercy Works responded to this need by launching the Know Your Rights Legal Empowerment Course in New South Wales. Delivered in collaboration with global law firm DLA Piper and the Afghan Women Support Association, the program aimed to build legal confidence and independence among refugees and people seeking asylum.

Over four weeks, 38 participants from countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, and Sudan attended sessions covering Australia's legal system, tenancy law, entrepreneurship, and human rights. Mercy Works' leadership and coordination ensured that the content was accessible, with translation support provided to overcome language barriers. This helped to create engaging interactions during which attendees actively posed questions or sought further clarification.

The outcomes were life changing. Participants spoke of feeling a greater sense of insight, capability and self-assurance. After visiting a session, Sally Bradley rsm, Executive Director of Mercy Works, remarked,

"through this inspired initiative, I'm so heartened to see uncertainty blossoming into autonomy, with Mercy Works assisting people to find their footing and rebuild their lives with self-respect, knowledge, and optimism for the future."

Nourishing Futures:

MERCY WORKS SUPPORTING HEALTH AND LIVELIHOODS IN TIMOR-LESTE

In the remote mountains of Timor-Leste, daily life is a constant challenge. With 42 per cent of the population living in poverty, nearly half of all children under five experiencing stunted growth, and one in five people lacking access to clean drinking water, communities face a struggle for basic survival.

In Maucatar, near Suai in the Cova Lima province, Mercy Works, together with the Hospitaller Sisters of Mercy, is changing this story through the Maucatar Health, Livelihoods Training and Women Empowerment Project. From a small maternity clinic and two homes for vulnerable young women, the Sisters deliver protein-rich nutrition to mothers and children, provide health education, conduct village and school outreach clinics, and offer livelihood grants and training, helping families grow food, raise chickens or pigs, and weave for income.

The impact is tangible. Bonifacio, a local farmer, received a \$525 livelihood grant from Mercy Works, which allowed him to build a secure chicken coop, purchase chicks, and buy feed. The coop protects the chickens from predators (such as foxes) and allows them to be segregated by age, ensuring a healthy, productive flock.

For Bonifacio, the project created a reliable source of income to supplement his market gardening, and he hopes to expand the coop and learn more about chicken health with ongoing Mercy Works support.

Meanwhile, nutrition programs have transformed the lives of families like Regina's. As part of these initiatives, chicken and eggs are both distributed and cultivated locally, providing a vital source of high protein. Her granddaughter, Ambei, was born at the Teresa Orsini Maternity Clinic, where Mercy Works funds additional protein and nutrient support to combat undernutrition and stunting – a serious issue in a country where 47 per cent of children under five are affected and 27 per cent of people face acute food insecurity.

PHOTOS Clockwise from top: The Gusmão family standing proudly in front of their multi-bay pigsty, built with the support of a livelihood grant.

Anfonio beginning his journey in pig farming after receiving a grant and training.

Regina with her granddaughter Ambei, pictured in front of her cultivated plot of land-made possible through a grant and strong community support.



Regina's husband is blind and unable to work the land, but the community, inspired by the cooperation cultivated through Mercy Works programs, has banded together to plant multiple plots of peanuts, papaya, cassava, and other crops to feed livestock. An initial \$150 investment in peanut seeds is expected to yield around 100 sacks, potentially bringing in \$1,500 for the group and supporting food security and income for the broader community.

Through protein provision, health education, income-generating opportunities, and community collaboration, Mercy Works is helping families improve nutrition, protect health, and build sustainable livelihoods. Every chicken raised, every plot of land cultivated, and every health visit provided brings a family closer to a future where malnutrition, disease, and poverty are no longer a certainty.

For communities in Maucatar, Mercy Works is not just delivering aid – it is nurturing resilience, self-sufficiency, and the promise of a healthier, more secure life.



CLEAN CLOTHES, HEALTHY **COMMUNITIES:**

Mercy Works Partners with Remote Laundries

In the heart of the Northern Territory, where the red earth meets the endless blue sky, something as simple as clean clothes can mean the difference between illness and health.

For many remote Aboriginal communities, washing clothes isn't easy. Machines break down, detergent runs out, and access to hot water is unreliable. Yet clean bedding, towels and clothing are vital for preventing serious diseases such as scabies, kidney disease, and rheumatic heart disease (RHD) – conditions that are tragically common and entirely preventable.

Shamefully, Australia has some of the highest rates of RHD in the developed world. In the Northern Territory, prevalence among First Nations people is more than 1,000 cases per 100,000 – rates similar to some of the world's poorest nations.

RHD is caused by repeated infections that begin with untreated skin sores and scabies that thrive in overcrowded housing. According to the 2021 Australian Census, the proportion of First Nations people living in overcrowded dwellings was highest in remote areas (55% in very remote areas and 32% in remote areas) than in non-remote areas (e.g. 12% in major cities). The more remote the community, the more severe the problem.

In these conditions, infection spreads easily. Eight out of ten Aboriginal babies in remote communities will contract scabies before their first birthday. What begins as an itch can end in lifelong illness.



PHOTOS Clockwise from top: Loading a Remote Laundries washing machine—bringing essential services to remote communities.

AIG Board of Directors standing proudly in front of the newly opened laundry in Gunbalanya, marking a milestone for local access and improved health



That's why the Remote Laundries Project, an initiative of the Aboriginal Investment Group (AIG), is such a powerful and practical solution. Each mobile laundry is a secure, purpose-built facility with commercialgrade washers and dryers, clean water, and a steady supply of detergent. Most importantly, it's free for the community to use.

"Sometimes, people think washing is just about cleanliness," says one AIG team member. "But here, it's about saving lives."

Each unit also provides sustainable employment for five local residents, who manage and maintain the facilities, helping build community pride and economic strength.

Mercy Works has stepped in to assist in covering ongoing operational costs in the West Arnhem community of Gunbalanya. A community so remote that they are cut off from road access each wet season.

By partnering with the Remote Laundries Project, Mercy Works and its donors are assisting families in Gunbalanya to stay healthy in the homes and community they love.

Because when families can wash their clothes, bedding and towels safely, they can break the cycle of infection and begin a new cycle of dignity, health, and hope.

PROJECT: Remote Laundries LOCATION: Gumbalanya, NT **PARTNER:** Aboriginal Investment Group GOAL: Improve health, social and economic outcomes for the Aboriginal community of Gunbalanya.

A NEW LOOK FOR

25 YEARS OF MERCY

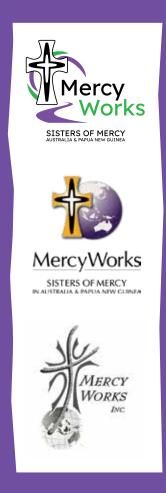
From its beginnings in 2001, the Mercy Works logo has evolved to reflect our mission and growth.

In the original design by the late Anne McMillan rsm, a central cross acknowledges our Indigenous brothers and sisters and is grounded in our world, yet open and outward-looking to wherever mercy calls us. The stylised Mercy Cross (depicted as outer radiating leaves) is also irregular in shape, symbolising both an affinity with the inner cross and a responsiveness to diverse needs.

In 2008, a new strategic direction for Mercy Works, to focus overseas programs in the Asia–Pacific region, was ratified by the Board. Under the leadership of the late Mary Duffy rsm, the logo evolved again, returning to the traditional Mercy Cross, now positioned alongside the globe to highlight our connection with this part of the world.

As Mercy Works celebrates 25 years of compassion and service, our new logo captures the spirit of our story. The timeless Mercy Cross sits at its heart. A flowing green and purple path-like swish sybolises the journey we share—Walking Together. Changing Lives. The colour green representing growth and new life, and purple reflecting dignity, empowerment and the enduring spirit of mercy.

Together, these elements embody who we are: walking side by side, creating lasting change, and celebrating 25 years of mercy in motion.



ABOVE: The Mercy Works logo through

From its original design in 2001 (bottom), to the refreshed look in 2008 (middle)

GIVE TIME, CHANGE LIVES: VOLUNTEER WITH MERCY WORKS

Volunteers are the heart of our Mercy Works Connect program, dedicating time, skills, and compassion to mentor school students and adults from refugee or asylum seeker backgrounds.

"I believe education is the key to success," one volunteer shares. "Helping young people achieve their best-especially when they've faced so muchis something I care deeply about."

Volunteers work in schools across NSW, Victoria, and Western Australia, supporting individuals or small groups. They also assist adults, helping break down cultural barriers, foster inclusion, and provide encouragement where it's needed most.

"I get so much joy from working with students," another volunteer reflects. "It's wonderful to be part of what they do."



Join Us Today

If you're looking for a meaningful way to make a difference, consider joining Mercy Works Connect. With training, ongoing support, and the chance to change lives every day, your time truly is one of the greatest gifts you can give.

Learn more:



Chair's Report



This year, we proudly celebrated 25 years of Mercy Works—a milestone that deserves recognition and gratitude. We honour the wisdom and foresight of the Sisters of Mercy, whose vision a quarter of a century ago laid the foundation for an organisation dedicated to compassion and justice.

Over these 25 years, we have much to be proud of. Mercy Works has helped thousands of people find pathways out of poverty, or at the very least, live with dignity as they strive for a better life in challenging circumstances. Yet, the truth remains: more needs to be done.

Global uncertainty continues to weigh most heavily on those with the least. Today, we witness the heartbreaking plight of people whose lives have been upended by war, natural disasters, and the tyranny of political and economic power wielded by those who prioritise self-interest over the common good.

It is often easier to look away than to confront these realities. As individuals, we may feel powerless to address the injustices we see around us. But that does not mean we should give up.

Despite the challenges we face here in Australia, rising costs of living, housing pressures, and more, we can still be a beacon of hope. Together, we can be a force for good, working to make the world a better place. One person, one community at a time.

At our 25th anniversary celebration, we heard powerful first-hand accounts from courageous changemakers who are bringing hope and opportunity to their communities. These stories remind us of what is possible when hope is matched with action and when communities unite for the common good.

I am proud to chair an organisation that inspires action and serves as a practical vehicle for change. A conduit between those in our broader Mercy family who have resources and those communities, here and overseas, who need them most.

Every project we fund makes a positive difference. Not only to those who receive support but also to those who provide it. Together, we bring hope to life through meaningful action.

This year's 25th anniversary was not only a celebration of our past, but also a foundation for our future. A future that calls upon the entire Mercy family-students, educators, healthcare professionals, community workers, staff, volunteers, and all who share our vision—to walk with us in continuing the legacy of the Sisters of Mercy who founded Mercy Works all those years ago.

Finally, to our generous supporters: thank you for your ongoing commitment to Mercy Works and the people we serve. To Sister Sally, our dedicated staff, and my fellow board and committee members: thank you for your tireless efforts. Without you, none of this would be possible.

As I reflect on the year past, I am comforted by the knowledge that together, we can create a more just and compassionate world. In doing so, we continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the poor and vulnerable, both here and overseas.

Joe Zabar / Board Chair

Key Project Outcomes

In Fiscal Year 2025, Mercy Works partnered with local leaders in four countries to deliver programs that strengthened communities and improved access to education, health, water, income, and emergency relief. Despite challenges, thousands benefited, building resilience and supporting long-term development.

Overseas Projects

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Daru-Kiunga Livlihoods Program, Western Province

Reached 1,980 beneficiaries despite serious flooding. Resources were redirected to help those impacted.

- Income Generation Projects: Sewing, duck and chicken husbandry training.
- Food Security: Seed distribution and horticultural training.
- Community Leadership: Two training events, reaching 16 villages, 110 participants.
- Clean Water Access: Two villages received water tanks and infrastructure.
- **School Management:** Nine volunteer teachers engaged, training in four schools.
- Women's Empowerment: Training for 60 villagers from nine villages.

Mercy Works Livelihoods Program, Simbu Province

Positively impacted 2,024 beneficiaries in FY25.

- Life and Technical Skills Training: Delivered locally, providing individuals and families with lifechanging new skills.
- Updating Agricultural Practices: Farmers improved vegetable production and duck husbandry; duck production tripled.
- Strengthening Community Self-Help Groups/ Cooperatives: Significant progress in livelihood enterprises, including cassava flour (production doubled) and soap making.
- Micro Enterprises: Small financial grants enabled individuals to invest in income-generating activities.

PHILIPPINES

Emergency Response – Tropical Cyclone Trami/Kristine

An appeal was launched and funds raised to assist families whose homes were damaged in the Catanduanes project area. (More on p. 8)

• Support Provided: 41 families, comprising 258 individuals in remote areas, received emergency assistance to recover from the cyclone's impact.

Healing and Empowerment of Women and Children, Legazpi City

- Rehabilitating Survivors of Gender-Based
 Violence (GBV): 39 girls and women assisted,
 with 17 receiving residential care; 10 successfully
 transitioned to independent living.
- Household Income Generation: 21 families received small grants to invest in income-generating activities.
- New Skills Training: 17 individuals trained in fish processing to develop alternative livelihoods.
- Gender Advocates: GBV awareness training delivered to 141 school representatives; five victim advocates trained to strengthen community support.

TIMOR LESTE

Health, Livlihoods, Training and Women Empowerment, Maucatar

The program reached 11,788 recipients during the reporting period.

- Remote Clinics: Mobile clinics visited 18 remote villages, delivering testing, treatment, and health education
- Training of Village Health Workers: Built local capacity by equipping health advocates with enduring skills.
- School Health Program: Thirteen schools received visits from trainers providing education on sexual health, nutrition, dental care, and safe water.
- Safe Water: Two schools, serving 392 children, received new rainwater tanks.
- Livelihood Activities: 692 villagers trained in improved farming methods to enhance food security and income. (More on p. 12)

Australian Projects

INDIGENOUS

Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation, Mt Druitt, NSW

Mums and Bubs program nurtures strong families through culture, learning, and practical support. 25 mothers and 31 children participated.

- Created cultural skirts, woven belts, and clapsticks through TAFE-led classes and weaving workshops.
- Held "Mum and Me" photoshoot celebrating heritage.

- Guest speakers on domestic violence awareness and community services.
- Connected children to culture through art and play.
- One-to-one support restored children to three families and secured housing for four mothers.

Nallei Jerring Leadership Program, Western Victoria

Empowers young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to strengthen identity, leadership, and community connection. In FY25, 117 students from 24 schools participated.

- Six culturally rich workshops delivered across Ballarat, Melbourne's Inner West, and Melton.
- Speakers: Indigenous artists, health leaders, and AFL players.
- Career expos linked students with universities and employers.
- 95% reported stronger cultural knowledge; 90% increased confidence and leadership skills.
- Specialist schools engaged for disability inclusion.

Jtungu Wattyjarra – Family Together, Adelaide, SA

Supports Aboriginal women and families with advocacy, cultural connection, and practical help. 72 adults and 56 children were supported.

- Advocated for kinship care and ATSICPP with Child Protection.
- Assisted families responding to child protection concerns.
- Strengthened community voice through Aboriginal Justice Agreement consultations.
- Delivered yarning circles, mentoring, and workshops for women leaving prison.
- Provided emergency food, accommodation, and essentials post-release.

Yaanyji Ngalan – Walking Together St Mary's Primary School, Bowraville, NSW

Supports Gumbaynggirr students' cultural identity and wellbeing through education, healing, and connection. 51 students (62% Aboriginal) participated. Staff began trauma-informed training; Aboriginal Education Workers created sustainable resources. Partnerships with Elders strengthened cultural belonging. Teachers embedded culturally safe practices.

REFUGEE & ASYLUM SEEKER Know Your Rights Pilot Program, Sydney, NSW

Four workshops (May 2025) on legal rights, starting a business, tenancy, and human rights.

- Participation: 38 attendees (22 female) from seven cultural backgrounds.
- Impact: Evaluation results showed a significant shift in understanding—from minimal prior knowledge to the majority expressing confidence in the subject matter.

Romero Centre – Gateways to Employment, Brisbane, QLD

Job training and confidence–building for people seeking asylum. In FY25, the program exceeded its KPIs, supporting 108 participants, with 51 securing employment.

- Workshops: Fifteen sessions delivered on financial literacy, health, and digital skills.
- Employer Partnerships: Strong collaborations established with Deloitte, RSM, L'Oréal, and HOBAN Recruitment.
- Impact Story: A young asylum seeker gained their first Australian work experience through the program and transitioned to permanent employment.

Mercy Works Connect - NSW, VIC and WA

Provides tailored learning and mentoring support for school students and adults from refugee or asylum seeker backgrounds.









\$TUDENTS 1,355

MPower Program

Based in Western Sydney, this initiative mentors Sudanese youth transitioning from high school to tertiary education and employment, fostering confidence and long-term success.

- Expansion in FY25: Matched 17 volunteer mentors with 18 post-secondary Sudanese students.
- Reading Angels Program: Launched in early 2025, training 27 student volunteers as peer tutors to strengthen literacy support.

Financial Statements

INCOME STATEMENT

For year ended 30 June 2025	2025	2024
Revenue	\$	\$
Monetary Donations and Gifts - From Members - From Other Parties	463,647 1,251,827	469,602 1,087,384
Grants - Other Australian	110,490	133,850
Grants - Other International Bequests	26,787 7.995	27,987 -
Other Income - Interest Received - Distribution Received from Investments - Gain on Revaluation of Investments	143,505 106,446 33,501	114,713 126,218 36,848
Total Revenue	2,144,198	1,996,602

Expenditure	\$	\$
International Aid & Development Programs Expenditure		
International Programs		
- Funds to International Programs	516,103	360,758
- Program Support Costs	91,211	111,163
Community Education	55,368	42,996
Public Fundraising Costs	80,316	92,136
Accountability and Administration	255,436	192,122
Total International Aid and Development Programs Expenditure	998,434	799,175
Domestic Program Expenditure (incl Monetary and Non Monetary)	749,220	610,534
Loss on Revaluation of Investments	-	-
Total Expenditure	1,747,654	1,409,709
Excess of Revenue Over Expenditure	396,544	586,893

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

2025 2024 For year ended 30 June 2025

Assets	\$	\$
Current Assets		
- Cash and Cash Equivalent	523,714	703,077
- Trade and Other Receivables	5,919	3,855
- Financial Assets	3,114,701	2,704,515
- Other Assets	19,592	20,391
Total Current Assets	3,663,926	3,431,838
Non Current Assets		
- Financial Assets	1,699,743	1,559,795
- Property, Plant and Equipment	14,327	9,218
Total Non Current Assets	1,714,069	1,569,013
Total Assets	5,377,995	5,000,851

Liabilities	\$	\$
Current Liabilities		
- Trade and Other Payables	61,242	35,568
- Other Liabilities	74,010	48,094
- Employee Benefits	59,301	135,532
- Lease Liability	-	-
Total Current Liabilities	194,553	219,194
Non Current Liabilities		
- Employee Benefits	26,057	20,816
Total Non Current Liabilities	26,057	20,816
Total Liabilities	220,610	240,010
Net Assets	5,157,385	4,760,841

Equity \$ **Retained Surplus** 5.157.385 4.760.841 **Total Equity**

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For year ended 30 June 2025

	Retained Earnings	Reserves	Other
Balance as 1 July 2024	4,760,841	-	-
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	396,544	-	-
Balance as 30 June 2025	5,157,385	-	-

The income for our programs comes from a wide variety of donors, including the Sisters of Mercy, associated ministries, Corporations and members of the public. During the year, specified donations have been received for Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste, Philippines, Mercy Works Connect and other domestic projects.

Obligations for projects carried forward to FY26 are adequately covered by cash and cash equivalents. These funds have been directed towards the retained earnings and will be

The ACFID-Code-compliant financial statements comply with the presentation and disclosure requirements of the ACFID Code of Conduct. Refer to the ACFID Code of $Conduct\ website\ for\ further\ information.\ \underline{https://acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/}$

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with relevant legislation, accounting standards, provide a true and fair view of their financial position and performance, and that the organisation can pay its debts as and when they become due. These financial statements have been reviewed and approved by the Board. The full statutory financial statements separately from the Annual Report is available on: https://www.mercyworks. org.au/who-we-are/financial-statements-and-annual-reports/



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT FOR MERCY

The accompanying summary financial statements, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, and the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial report of Mercy Works Limited for the year ended 30 June 2025.

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on that special purpose financial report in our report dated 6 November 2025. That financial report, and the summary financial statements, do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on that financial report

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, or the relevant Australian Accounting Standards. Reading the summary financial statements, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial report of Mercy Works Limited.

The Board Members of the entity are responsible for the preparation of a summary of the audited financial report.

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summary financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810 Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements.

In our opinion, the summary financial statements derived from the audited financial report of Mercy Works Limited for the year ended 30 June 2025 are consistent, in all material respects, with that audited financial report.

NOT FOR PROFIT ACCOUNTING SPECIALISTS

KESWICK SA 5035

Most

Ian Mostert CPA Registered Company Auditor No 539768 Dated: 6 November 2025



Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

Our People

OUR BOARD



Ioseph Zabar Board Chair / Finance, Risk and Audit Committee Member



Michael Cuzic Board Member / Finance, Risk and Audit Committee Chair



Francis Elvey Board Member / **Program Committee** Chair



Sr Catherine Ryan rsm **Board Member** (Resigned Nov. 2024)



Catherine Glenister Board Member/ Program Committee Member



Kerrie Walshaw Board Member / Program Committee Member

OUR MEMBERS

Karon Donnellon rsm

Elizabeth Moloney rsm

Institute Vicar, ISMAPNG

Duyen Thi My Nguyen rsm

Leader, ISMAPNG

Institute Councillor,

Theresia Tina rsm

Institute Councillor.

ISMAPNG

ISMAPNG



Steven Collins Board Member / **Program Committee** Member

Berneice Loch rsm

Board Member



Andrew Burke Board Member / Finance, Risk and Audit Committee Member



Margaret Scroope rsm **Board Member**



Margaret Madden rsm Institute Councillor, **ISMAPNG** Peta Goldburg rsm Leader, Sisters of Mercy Brisbane Margaret Jones rsm Leader, Sisters of Mercy Parramatta

OUR STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chris Bissett Finance, Risk and **Audit Committee Bernard Dobson Program Committee** Jim Hanna **Program Committee** Jenny Howard Finance, Risk and **Audit Committee** Renae Lowry **Program Committee** Fiona McKenzie Finance, Risk and **Audit Committee**

Patricia Monemvasitis Finance, Risk and **Audit Committee**

OUR STAFF

MERCY WORKS AUSTRALIA

Sally Bradley rsm **Executive Director** Martin Binoj Finance Manager Farid Ghalib Refugee Projects Senior Coordinator Cassandra Gibbs Indigenous Project Coordinator **Danielle Hayes** Fundraising and Marketing Manager **Andrew Lowry** Head of Programs Sandra Marreiros Finance and Administration Officer Katrina Richardson **Grants Coordinator Paul Taylor** Mercy Works Connect Coordinator - NSW **Katherine Cooney** Mercy Works Connect Coordinator - VIC Lisa Farrell Mercy Works Connect Coordinator - WA

MERCY WORKS SIMBU PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Theresia Boyek rsm

Acting Simbu **Project Coordinator** Joseph John Community Team Leader and Advocacy Officer Gabriella Kawage Life Skills Trainer and **Publicity Officer** Salume Kupo Office Administration and Trainer Brigitha Maima Finance Officer Merawo Mauglia Community Team Leader and Advocacy Officer John Rubi

Life Skills Trainer and Publicity Officer Saki Yepa Community Team Leader and Advocacy Officer

Thank You

UNITED IN COMPASSION, DRIVEN BY PURPOSE.

Across Australia, school communities are standing with Mercy Works to support vulnerable and disadvantaged people in Australia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, and Timor-Leste.

To the students, teachers, staff, parents, and friends who have contributed – **thank you** for your compassion and generosity. Your support is transforming lives and strengthening communities. You are giving hope where it's needed most.

Below is a list of schools that generously raised and donated funds between November 2024 and October 2025.

Academy of Mary Immaculate, Fitzroy All Hallows' School, Brisbane Aranmore Catholic College, Leederville Bunbury Catholic College The Cathedral College, Rockhampton Catherine McAuley Catholic Primary School, Orange Catherine McAuley College, Bendigo Catherine McAuley College, Mackay Catherine McAuley Westmead Emmanuel College, Warrnambool Holy Cross College, Ellenbrook James Sheahan Catholic High School, Orange Marymede Catholic College, South Morang Mater Dei College, Edgewater Mercedes College, Perth Mercedes College, Springfield Mercy Catholic College, Chatswood Mercy College, Koondoola Mercy Regional College, Camperdown Merici College, Canberra Our Lady Help of Christians School, Earlville Our Lady of Mercy Catholic College, Burraneer Our Lady of Mercy College, Australind Our Lady of Mercy College, Heidelberg Our Lady of Mercy College, Parramatta Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School, Kellyville Red Bend Catholic College, Forbes Sacred Heart Central School, Cootamundra Sacred Heart College, Geelong Santa Maria College, Attadale St. Aloysius College, Adelaide St. Aloysius College, North Melbourne St. Anthony's Primary School, Girraween St. Brigid's College, Lesmurdie St. Columba's Catholic School, Bayswater St. Columba's Primary School, Adamstown St. Denis School, Joondanna St. Francis Xavier School, Goodna St. Gerard's Primary School, Westminster St. John Fisher College, Bracken Ridge St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, North Mackay St. Kieran's Catholic Primary School, Tuart Hill St. Luke's Catholic Primary School, Woodvale St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, North Rockhampton St. Mary's School, Mackay St. Michael's Primary School, Baulkham Hills St. Monica's College, Cairns St. Patrick's College, Mackay St. Patrick's Primary School, Parramatta St. Raphael's School, Parkside Ursula Frayne Catholic College, Victoria Park





Every act of compassion matters. Together, we can create a world where justice and mercy transform lives. One life, one community, one act of mercy at a time.

Your support isn't just a donation—it's hope, opportunity, and dignity for vulnerable women and children in Australia, Papua New Guinea, and Timor-Leste.

With your gift, families can learn income-generating skills, access safe drinking water, and rebuild their lives after gender-based violence and human trafficking. You can help fight social injustice and empower communities to thrive.

Make a difference today.

Donate now at mercyworks.org.au/donate or scan the QR Code below.

Learn more about Mercy Works by visiting mercyworks.com.au



SCAN the QR code with your smart phone to donate



Walking Together Changing Lives

I want to donate!

Completed forms can be mailed to:

Mercy Works Ltd • PO Box 2023 North Parramatta NSW 1750 Contact us at: <u>mercyworks@mercyworks.org.au</u> or +61 (0)2 9564 1911

I would like to receive information about remembering Mercy Works in my will.





I would like my receipt sent to my email address.



SCAN the QR code with your smart phone to donate