

IMPACT NEWSLETTER

IMPACTING CHILDREN AND COMMUNITIES



SEPTEMBER 2026

WFA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



AGM

Annual General Meeting

To all our Sponsors, Supporters and Friends

Under the World Families Australia constitution, we are required to hold an Annual General Meeting. The meeting for 2026 will be held on Tuesday 20 October at 6.45pm (Central time). You can attend in person at the office at 50 Fern Grove Boulevard, Salisbury East, or by Microsoft Teams.

Please RSVP by 13 October to wfamanager@worldfamilies.org.au if you plan to attend.

If you are interested in nominating someone or yourself for a position on the committee, please complete the below nomination form and return it to WFA by 13 October, either via email to wfamanager@worldfamilies.org.au or post to World Families Australia, 50 Fern Grove Boulevard, Salisbury East, SA 5109.

WORLD FAMILIES AUSTRALIA INC
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2026
Nomination form for Committee Member

Position

Nominee

Nominated by Signature

Seconder Signature
(Self-nomination acceptable)

Signature of Nominee

All positions will be declared vacant. President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and General Committee members will be voted on. Six committee meetings are held each year and you can choose to attend in person or via Microsoft Teams.

Meskele Kristos project - Ethiopia

I first visited Lalibela in 2008, meeting a group of destitute children, many of them orphaned, living by begging and shoe-shining. A project was set up which supported about 30 young people over the years. In 2009, a critically ill child entered the project and funds were raised to send him overseas for life-saving heart surgery. Christine Hoffman (a previous WFA project officer) and I travelled out to a town several hours away from Lalibela where it was thought his family might be living. After showing photos to many people, someone recognised the family and helped us to connect to his mother, who lived in a small town nearby called Meskele Kristos.



Original classroom in Meskele Kristos Primary School

This area was vulnerable to famine and drought, and it was evident that the poverty in Meskele Kristos and other remote village areas was one of the causes for children and young people to end up destitute on the streets in Lalibela, seeking better access to food and an education. So, a project was set up to support the Meskele Kristos Primary School, which at that time provided grades 1-6. There were only roughly-made clay benches and, like many regional schools, had class sizes of 60+ with only a tiny blackboard and no electricity. There was a prevalence of illnesses connected to lack of sanitation and clean water latrines, alongside high rates of malnutrition.

Funds were generously donated for a library, classroom, tables and chairs, and long drop latrines. The project supported a feeding program at the school to help address malnutrition and encourage school attendance. The WFA Ethiopian Medical Project assisted a number of Meskele Kristos children in accessing medical care. In addition, through advocacy to another overseas group, a water tank which harvested roof rainwater was constructed at the school to improve access to clean water for the community. A feeding program was commenced and funds were being raised for kitchen to improve the sustainability of feeding the many students.



New school building, library, furniture and classroom

This project was underway when COVID happened, closely followed by a civil war, leading to many years of instability in that area and an inability to progress the program. After many years of not being able to progress, it was decided to close the project and direct the funds to a cause as close as possible to the original intention of food provision to the most vulnerable.

In late 2024 Save Your Holy Land Association (SYHLA), an Ethiopian NGO, requested WFA assistance for a life-saving humanitarian response to support highly vulnerable community members affected by the prolonged conflict and instability in the region, which has severely impacted livelihoods and food security, and so remaining funds were directed to this cause. SYHLA distributed essential food items, including wheat flour and cooking oil, as emergency support to 93 vulnerable people. Priority was given to pregnant and lactating women, people with disabilities or affected by HIV/AIDS, women-headed households, and those who were bedridden or living with significant chronic illnesses.



Water tank built at the school by Engineers without Borders; children at Meskele Kristos



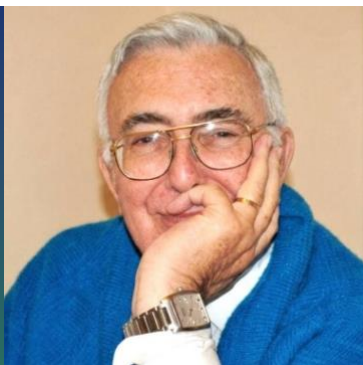
Food supply program

For those of you who followed this project over many years, you will remember Bimiraru, a young child we met on our first trip to Meskele Kristos, who had a deformed leg and was only able to get around by ‘scooting’ on his hands. The program has assisted him with regularly attending a prosthetic clinic in a large city, with a new prosthetic leg being needed every few years as he grows. This young man is now attending Woldia University, and was recently assisted with a new prosthesis through WFA’s Ethiopian Medical Project.

Sandi Petersen
Project Officer, Ethiopia

Testimony Faith Homes - Kenya

It is with significant sadness that we share the news that John Green, the founder of Testimony Faith Homes, passed away on 10 March at the age of 85 after a prolonged illness.



John arrived in Kenya in 1968 with his wife Esther, and for 57 years was committed to rescuing, raising and loving hundreds of children who had been orphaned, abused or abandoned. Based in his unwavering faith, the Testimony Faith Homes were built as a family environment rather than an institution, reflecting his beliefs about care and community. He was deeply involved in running the Homes, including helping establish a nursery and primary school, and later secondary education for the children of the Homes and the local community. His leadership emphasised long-term care and upbringing of children in a family rather than institutional care. A memorial service was held on 17 March and a funeral service the next day. Both services were attended by over 1000 people who were realised by, influenced by or worked with John in his many volunteer roles in the community related to the care and well-being of children in the Eldoret region. The services were honouring, inspiring and deeply emotional. John was first dad and then beloved grandpa. He will be deeply missed by so many. We had the privilege to meet him and Esther in 1988, and they had a profound effect on our lives and we love them dearly. Many of you who travelled to Kenya and met him will also mourn his passing.

Dani Potter
Project Officer, Kenya

Bonga Housing - Ethiopia

In the March newsletter there was an article about Ayelech and her family in Bonga, who we are raising funds to build a home for through the Bonga Housing Program. Thank you for the donations sent so far – this has purchased building materials which are being stored while we wait for enough funds to continue. We still have a way to go to reach the goal of \$AUD 3,500 - \$AUD 4,000, and we welcome donations of any amount to help toward building a house for Ayelech and her family. Please contact WFA (kerrywalker@worldfamilies.org.au) if you would like to make a donation.



Sandi Petersen
Project Officer, Ethiopia

Good Shepherd - Thailand

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd are an international congregation of religious women who are present in 72 countries. Globally, they recognise the most pressing needs of today as poverty, human trafficking, forced migration, gender inequality and violence towards women and children.

WFA supports the Good Shepherd Phuket Town 'Care for Migrant Children' program in Thailand. This program provides quality education, child protection, nutrition, health support and life skills development for vulnerable migrant children and their families. In 2026 the program is providing services to 325 migrant children from Myanmar living in Phuket, Thailand. All the children in the program come from disadvantaged families living at poverty or near poverty levels – most of whom entered Thailand to work without formal documentation, so they have no choice but to accept jobs that are dirty, difficult, dangerous, paid below minimum wages, and they are often exploited.

The program runs three main activities:

- Education: migrant children from Myanmar are protected and educated.
- Community healthcare: basic healthcare and counselling are delivered to migrant workers and their families, particularly those undocumented or needing support due to language barriers.
- Community empowerment: migrant workers and their families are empowered to increase their income and quality of life by understanding their rights and developing vocational skills.
- Networking: creating a strengthened network of relationships, with the program working closely with Thai government agencies, NGOs, community-based organisations and the Phuket Encouragement Education Centre.

Three education programs are offered in 2026:

- Primary education program: 91 students, aged 12 years and above, attend the Phuket Learning Encouragement Centre, preparing for higher education, vocational pathways and future employment.
- Preparation group: 120 students, aged 7–11 years, have instruction in Burmese, Thai, English, mathematics, science and social studies, to prepare students for successful transition into formal education.
- Childcare program: 120 children aged 5–6 years participate in an early childhood education program that promotes school readiness through language development, early literacy, numeracy, creativity, social interaction, emotional development and play-based learning.



Additionally, nine students are currently studying for the GED, an American high school equivalency qualification which will allow the students to apply to university. The GED exams are expensive, and the cost is currently being covered by donations. The success of these students will be a great inspiration to encourage other students to continue with their education.

During 2025 changes in Thai government regulations governing migrant learning centres required the program to reorganise its educational services while ensuring that no child was excluded from learning opportunities. The first six months of 2026 demonstrated the adaptability and commitment of the Good Shepherd Phuket Town team as they continued providing services to hundreds of migrant children and their families. The transition to a new operational model has strengthened collaboration with government agencies, improved program sustainability, created a stronger framework for future service deliver and ensured children continued learning in a safe, caring and supportive environment.

Jenny Minck
Project Officer, Thailand



Medical Projects - Ethiopia

WFA has two Ethiopian Medical Projects - one which supports the Bonga Hospital (MOP-H) to provide inpatient care of children and a school health screening program, and the second responds to the needs of individuals needing medical or surgical support (MOP). Over the past year the funds in MOP have been drawn on to provide transport and medical costs for a young man from Meskele Kristos for a new prosthetic leg, and for a young man from Lalibela who has required several flights, medical and living costs to access treatment for a deteriorating health condition. We are now seeking donations to this project so that we will be able to assist others who may need our help. If you would like to support this cause, please contact WFA (kerrywalker@worldfamilies.org.au) and label your donation as 'MOP'.

Sandi Petersen
Project Officer, Ethiopia

*'I can do things you cannot,
you can do things I cannot;
together we can do great
things.'*

Mother Theresa

WORLD FAMILIES AUSTRALIA

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ABN | 33 361 460 443

Office hours: Tuesday and Friday mornings



Speakers are available to tell groups about the work of WFA. Please contact us through the office: (08) 8258 7909.

Last day for your gift this quarter is **1 September 2026.**

Any articles for the next newsletter should reach the office by **19 October 2026.**

Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of World Families Australia.

If you would like to receive the Newsletter via email rather than a hard copy please message: office@worldfamilies.org.au

Front page image: Promthep Cape, Phuket. Envato Elements

Project Officers for WFA

ETHIOPIA

DEKIA	Dee Lumsden
ADDIS-BGW	Morgan Smith
BULBULA	Kate Drogemuller
LIWAN, BONGA, SUPPORT FOR SIGHT IMPAIRED & MEDICAL OUTREACH	Sandi Petersen
BONGA - RURAL	Emma Lewis
JIMMA-DOC, DOLB & DOLS	Trevor Anderson
BONGA FEEDING	Anna Szava
SAMERRO	Gemma Pilcher

INDIA

MINJUR	Jenny Minck
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INDONESIA

BALI LIGHTHOUSE	Kate Drogemuller
MISSION UPLIFT	Ben Bonython
RUTH/NAOMI COMMUNITY CENTRE	Chrissy Sulisty

KENYA

NEEMA & TESTIMONY FAITH HOMES	Dani Potter
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PHILIPPINES

PHILEMON	Elaine & Bruce Smith
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SRI LANKA

COLOMBO	Anna Szava
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THAILAND

GOOD SHEPHERD PHUKET	Jenny Minck
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PROJECT OFFICER ENQUIRIES

Attention your email to the relevant Project Officer:
Email: office@worldfamilies.org.au

FINANCIAL/SPONSORSHIP ENQUIRIES

Kerry Walker and Robyn Merritt,
Sponsorship/Financial Officers:
Email: kerrywalker@worldfamilies.org.au
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