

# SEW FOR CHANGE NEWS

Spring 2022 | Issue 4



A publication by Canberra Circle of Women



Hello friends, volunteers and supporters - it has been a very busy few months and there is so much to tell you - so please sit down with a cuppa and enjoy our wonderful news and successes for the past 3 months.

What a big few months it has been! We have sent lots of packages worldwide, have managed to meet the needs of vulnerable girls and women in four countries and we are making an impact on reducing the shame and stigma about periods and reproductive health.

So thank you all - we are all in this together and the impact we have changes lives.

As we move into Spring we have our next market coming up quickly and we really need this to raise some much needed funds. I was hoping that the company who rallied with a substantial donation last year, might rally again - but alas it was not to be. We have just \$1800 currently in our account which is rather low - but hopefully we will increase it with the next market!! So please share our market far and wide.

I am grateful to all those individuals who helped us raise funds for Zambia this last 6 weeks - we have send 5 boxes to these women and girls - and it is so appreciated.... your donations really helped us to do this.

Thank you for helping us make a difference!

*Bringing positive Change to the world, one child at a time!*



**Our new email:  
sewforchangeact@gmail.com**





We are now on the way to have Canberra Circle of Women recognised - it is an incorporated organisation but there is much to do to become a charitable organisation in its own right..... but here is the amazing lineup of the Board and we are very happy to have such amazing women to lead the organisation and bring it into the years ahead.

### The **Sew for Change Board**

- Carol Mead - Chair
- Rebecca Davey - Secretary
- Kiren Lewis - Treasurer
- Leisl Centenera
- Micaela Centenera
- Jacky Cook
- Chandanie Kottege
- Jessica Weber

So what do these changes mean for our work and for our volunteers?

I guess simply put - we need to have more resources both in people and expertise as we have grown so large over the past two years. What started in the kitchen in my home with three of my friends, has grown to a level which none of us could imagine.

The Board is especially consistent with growth and expertise, with all of the Board having extensive experience in the not for profit sector and most heading up organisations, both in the public and private sector. My belief is Boards should be skill based, and we have been so fortunate to attract amazing women who have expertise in the areas which will help us to grow.

The year ahead will be interesting and not doubt full of challenges, as a fledgling organisation - but it is a good move forward into the future.

Likewise the Market Committee, as our commitment to the markets is strong, it assists with the day to day freight and purchasing requirements, without the markets we certainly would not have the reach required to meet the needs of those we serve.

### This is the new **Market Committee**

- Carol Mead
- Leonie Kentish
- Jenny Pettigrove
- Chandanie Kottege
- Annette Maunsell

I thank the committee for their assistance in this very important job, and thank Annette Maunsell for volunteering to become the Market Volunteer Coordinator (something I was not doing particularly well!)

Some discussion has been had about how the structure will change - and so I thought it would be good to have a look at this here. The Canberra Circle of Women will be the overarching community organisation which has a range of programs that it looks after. These include all the work we do - these will become programs of the organisation. In essence the work will not change, we will still pack Days for Girls Kits, send items overseas, and we will hope to add an education portfolio to help disadvantaged girls reach their potential.

*Education builds strong women of the future.*





# Sew for Change - making a difference

Sew for Change is a local volunteer program which support women and children in a variety of ways. We sew menstrual kits through Days for Girls international to help women and girls globally - these kits last 4 years and make a significant difference to girls and women reducing period poverty and enabling better outcomes for their future. Our packing days pack these kits so we can send them out to the world.

The sewing circle is run once a month on Fridays and everyone is welcome. We have sewing kits, including kids clothing, and spare machines to use, everyone is friendly and welcoming and ready to help newcomers. We look forward to meeting you!

## Sewing Circle

**14 October** Friday 1-4pm

**11 November** Friday 1-4pm

**9 December** Friday 1-4pm

## Sewing for Sri Lanka

**4 September** Sunday 10 - 3pm

**2 October** Sunday 10 - 3pm

**6 November** Sunday 10 - 3pm



We are on facebook

email [sewforchangeact@gmail.com](mailto:sewforchangeact@gmail.com)



## DFG Kit packing days

**16 September** Friday 1 - 4pm

**16 October** Sunday 10 -2pm

**20 November** Sunday 10 - 2pm

**16 December** Friday 1 - 4pm



**DAYS FOR  
GIRLS**  
TUGGERANONG ACT  
AUSTRALIA TEAM

**Venue - SHOUT Meeting Room - Building 1,  
Pearce Community Centre, Collett Place  
Pearce.**

**Everyone is welcome at our packing and  
sewing days.**



# Volunteer Update



## Sewing Circle

The Sewing Circle is going from strength to strength and we now have another 3 overlockers which have been serviced for use on Sewing Circle Days. Currently we have 3 sewing machines and 5 overlockers with a few more being serviced in the weeks ahead. The ladies have lots to keep them busy and there are now two designated bays of storage for machines, fabrics and everything needed. This is a friendly group with lots of expertise available for everyone, and everyone is welcome.

## Sewing for Sri Lanka - New Mumma and Joey Packs

See the kangaroo and joey graphic - that is part of our new label for this important pack. In Sri Lanka the Mums deliver their babies, wrap them in something and bundle home. We know that infant mortality is high and infection rate in the mother is a concern. So we are putting together these new packs for Sri Lanka - through a designated sewing day every month. The sewing is easy and everyone is welcome - kids too!!



Each pack contains packs for the mumma and the baby (joey)

For the New Mumma

Days for Girls Kit, toiletry kit and two bras

For the Joey

Cot sheet, 4 nappies (and pins), a throw, facewasher and soap, clothing and little toy



Lastly we thank all the knitters from several of the knitting groups across Canberra (and beyond). Currently the fish and chip baby knitting, while so appreciated, is taking a lot of money to freight overseas and so we ask that you help us to send them to the kids in need overseas. Currently we are managing over 100 of these sets as donations every week.

Each jumper set costs about \$1 to send so we ask that if you donate fish and chip baby jumpers - that you help us to send them to the baby's overseas- we just do not have the funds in our coffers to add these to the freight we already send - so please consider a donation with your jumpers.... we want to keep accepting them, but helping us with freight costs is the only way we can get them to where they are so desperately needed.

Thank you so much - with love Carol







# Spring Market

PEARCE COMMUNITY CENTRE  
COLLETT PLACE  
PEARCE

10 am to 2pm

24 & 25 September



## Volunteers Wanted



We need a little of your time to help at our Spring Market!  
We need help in greeting visitors, selling our products, taking payments, the raffle and assisting and supporting our stall holders and customers. 10am to 2pm Saturday or Sunday  
No experience necessary and it is lots of fun!



Please email the coordinator Annette on :  
[sewforchangeact@gmail.com](mailto:sewforchangeact@gmail.com)





# Pakistan News

The weather in Pakistan has been extremely wet in their unprecedented rainy season with flooding and it has been difficult to get distributions out to the women and girls. But, as rains cleared both Lubna and Sara took advantage of finer days to distribute in their communities.

This week we are sending boxes of kits to Pakistan with assistance from the Canberra City DFG Team and we have lots of knitted jumpers and winter items to send as well - this is for the start of winter and as the shipments take 9 weeks from Australia and the clothing will reach Pakistan at the beginning of their winter season.

Children are keen to learn and pencils, pens and notebooks are very much appreciated. These are highly valued and essential for learning.

Sadly Lubna had a difficult experience lately when some opportunistic thieves broke into her house, stealing some of the contents of the room where she keeps donations. While the family was unharmed, she is very sad that items were lost that could help the children and the women. It caused a lot of distress, but I have assured Lubna that we would continue to send supplies.

We have been contacted by another woman in Pakistan but sadly at the moment we don't have the funds to support her work. I will keep it in mind but our funds are a bit critical at present and we are focusing on what we have in place at present.

I would like to thank Pak Express Freight - Ahmer and Adsar, who support us so well in getting our kits overseas. I hear stories often about abandoned kits in ports and people not understanding the intricacies of freighting to Pakistan - I particularly am grateful for a seamless service that they offer us.

*Carol Mead*  
**Pakistan Coordinator**



*Currently we need the following for Pakistan*

- Toys & balls - clean
- Winter weight clothing including knitted items
- Toothbrush and paste
- Toiletry items
- Stationery and pencils for school
- Kids underwear all sizes
- Hats and beanies - all sizes



# Sri Lanka News

Since the last update, 280 DfG kits and knitted baby clothes were shipped to Thilini Upananda our Women's Health Ambassador at ChildFund SL. Portland VIC Days for Girls Team very kindly donated these kits to us. My special thanks to Dianne Burch and the team in Portland who not only donated the DfG kits and knitted baby clothes but also paid the applicable freight cost for these to be sent to Sri Lanka. Included in this consignment were 80 knitted baby sets, 70 beanies, 12 children's jumpers and 9 blankets.

In June, another 60 knitted baby sets, 10 children's beanies, 10 knitted teddy bears and 2 blankets were also sent to the Central Province of SL. A big Thank You to our wonderful knitters in Canberra who knitted and donated these items! These baby items will keep new born babies and infants warm and protected from the chill winds and cold nights of the central province of Sri Lanka.

The end of August is the expected date of arrival in Sri Lanka for these two shipments.

During July, ChildFund SL in collaboration with their local implementation partner T-Field Child Development Federation (T-Filed) commenced the delivery and distributions of DfG kits and health education in Nuwaraeliya District – Central Province. T-Field provides Health, Nutrition, Education and Vocational Training programs to uplift living standards of children in tea plantations in Nuwaraeliya District. During the month of July, 298 DfG kits were distributed to disadvantaged school-aged girls from multiethnic backgrounds living in five tea plantation estates in Nuwaraeliya area.





# Sri Lanka News (Cont)

DfG Kit distributions and the delivery of health education was carried out by our newest Women's Health Ambassadors Philomina and Thivyayini of T-Field. As mentioned in previous updates, these DfG kits are part of the donation made in 2021 by Lismore and Iluka DfG teams.

In August another 73 DfG kits previously donated by Cairns DfG team were distributed by Philomina and Thivyayini to girls living in two tea plantation estates in the same region. On behalf of all the recipients in Sri Lanka I would like to thank Lismore, Iluka and Cairns teams for your marvellous generosity and support. My special thanks to Thilini Upananda for facilitating the distributions in Nuwaraeliya region through T-Field!

On another note, we are planning and preparing to put together a pack of a few essential items for new mothers and their newborn babies in disadvantaged communities as a trial project. As part of my early planning, I have established contact with Amalika - a very enthusiastic and committed schoolteacher in a remote part of Sri Lanka. Amalika will coordinate the distribution of our New Mumma & Joey packs once we begin to rollout our trial project. Amalika will do this in collaboration with midwives attached to Public Health Offices in the region. Please watch out for more information in future updates as we progress with the expected rollout of the pilot project later this year.



*Chandanie Kottage*  
Sri Lanka Coordinator



# Philippines News

What's been happening in the Philippines...

We are very happy to be back to normal in that there's currently a steady and regular stream of boxes leaving Australia and arriving in the Philippines, fingers crossed for non more hold ups and shipping delays.

Our incredible team on the ground have made up for lost time and in the past month have distributed kits and other essentials to eight new locations.

We are also thrilled to be working with the amazing people from Roundabout, and I want to give a special shout out and huge thank you to Jodie from the team, who has been giving us mountains of baby clothes and essentials to send to the Philippines. This has allowed us to send double the number of boxes we have previously to both our dumpsite and orphanage locations.

Another thanks goes out to NextMedia magazines in Sydney who provided us with many boxes of toys and children's magazines. The kids were over the moon to receive these items. As always we are so grateful to all who help us in so many ways, from making and assembling kits, to donations, it truly takes a small army to make it all happen. Thank you!

If you have items you would like to donate items you can drop donations to my place in Hughes. Feel free to email me at [micaelageorge@hotmail.com](mailto:micaelageorge@hotmail.com) and I can provide you the details.

*Micaela Centenera*  
**Philippines Coordinator**



## Items we currently are in need of

- Warming medicine
- Over the counter medications (these can be expired) Gumboots - children and adults
- Shoes - children and adults
- Summer clothing- babies, children and adults
- School supplies
- Children's bedding



# Zambia News

I often say that Sew for Change all started with a box of fabric... likewise in Zambia - it started with a box of fish and chip baby jumper sets!!!!

Through facebook I contacted the page Knitting Jumpers for African Babies on facebook, run by Marion. I decided to spend some funds (at \$27.50 a kilo) and send a box to Nawa in Lusaka Africa. It was a pleasure to help the babies and new mothers with this essential clothing. This was the first of 5 boxes -thank you to all who helped with the funds to get these to where they are needed.

We have sent bras and underwear for the new mothers and village women, plus small knitted toys. As Nawa said 'there is great jubilation among the women.' When you don't have a bra, or a pair of underwear it is so difficult.

Now we are on to looking at DFG kits for the girls and women. Nawa has opened up the first one we sent her and in Nawas own words, 'Carol how are you? These (kits) are too good to be believed. I get amazed by what you do.'

Once we have a pathway to get a better freight option, I think that the girls and women will have their lives changed with the DFG Kits. If anyone has any contacts for freight to Zambia I would love to chat.

Also there is a huge need in Zambia for young mothers to have support to go back to education. If a young girl does not have access to education, her future is very bleak, and pretty much all that lies ahead is a life of servitude or exploitation, or early marriage and too many children. If you want to assist please contact me - there are always ways we can assist - a pair of shoes for school, supplies for babies such as formula, or school fees.

*Carol Mead*  
**Zambia Coordinator**



## Items we currently are in need of

- New underwear (undies) cotton not lace if possible - sizes women's 10 to 16
- Bras, nursing bras, camisoles and sports bras - size 10 to 18
- Summer clothing - babies and children
- Small toys
- School supplies



# Bra Donations Needed

**We send them to Pakistan & the Philippines**

Your pre-loved bras are needed by the girls and women of the Philippines and Pakistan - who need them not only for dignity but also to stop them developing chaffing and infections, such as boils in hot and humid climates.

Imagine going to school and trying to play sport without a bra. Or nursing your baby. Or working through the hot day in the kiln factory.

Bras are very much a luxury in poorer rural communities, and often women don't have even one bra to use. Bras certainly are one of the most consistent items we are asked for. And they are so appreciated.



We make Days for Girls Menstrual Hygiene kits and include a bra for the girls and women at the same time.  
Pakistan



A bra makes so much difference when you go to school, especially in sport Philippines

We need all sizes of bras, in preloved good condition and clean. Sports bras and nursing bras are very much appreciated as well.

## Drop off points:

### SHOUT Office

Pearce Community Centre, Collett Place, Pearce

### Motherly Instincts

3/52 Woollongong Street, Fyshwick

### Arthritis ACT

170 Haydon Drive Bruce

### The Markets Wanniasa

Waniassa Shops, Sangster Place Wanniasa

### Fernwood Tuggeranong

184 Scollay Street, Greenway

**DAYS FOR  
GIRLS  
AUSTRALIA**







### Social Media

We are active on Social Media - it is currently under two groups



**Sew for Change**  
**Canberra Circle of Women**

## Thank You

Every week we receive wonderful donations of fabric and wool, usually from people who are downsizing.... Please try to go through these donations first, we are now finding that we are not able to sift through the mountainous donations at the moment. However if you cannot go through it our wonderful friend Liz will do it for us.

We are grateful as we use those fabrics in our work and we treasure that you thought of us to make use of them in the best way possible.

We thank the following organisations for their continuing support.

Nexis Financial Services, Intimo, SHOUT Inc, Pearce Community Centre, CWA - we are currently supported by five chapters, Brindabella Print, Roundabout Canberra, Global School Partners, Uplift Australia, Rotary Daybreak Group, TransDirect, Pak Euro Cargo Company, Uniting Church Weston, Probus and VIEW Clubs, Knit and Natter, The Sewing Room, Rosemont Mogo.

## VOLUNTEERING

If you would like to be involved as a volunteer at the Pearce Crafter's Market there is a lot to do.

Each market raises \$3000 to \$4000

Email: [pearcecraftersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:pearcecraftersmarket@gmail.com)

## Pearce Crafter's Market Dates 2022

24th and 25th September

3rd and 4th December



### Contact Details

You are welcome to contact Carol Mead on my phone

(text is best) 0423388354

Or email

[sewforchangeact@gmail.com](mailto:sewforchangeact@gmail.com)

