



# Annual Report

October 2020 – September 2021





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Constructing a rainwater catchment, Uganda.  
CREDIT: St Judes Family Project



Conducting a household survey, Cambodia  
CREDIT: DWA, Kampong Thom



Picking okra, Tamil Nadu, India  
CREDIT: PBRC

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QSA respectfully acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of the lands on which our office is located. QSA pays its respects to elders past, present and emerging, and recognises that the land always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

This 2020-21 QSA Annual Report was presented at the QSA Annual General Meeting held virtually via Zoom online conference on 19 February 2022.

# Our reach



QSA works with partners on three continents, supporting eight development projects in Uganda, India (Tamil Nadu) and Cambodia, and refugee and asylum projects from Australia. Achievements this year included:

2,244 children from public schools in **Tamil Nadu** joined interdisciplinary activities learning about local environmental and climate issues.

716 rural **Cambodian families** grew crops in home gardens to provide nutritious food and supplement household incomes.

**270 Ugandan farmers** increased food production on average by 55% by water harvesting, adoption of bio-fertilisers, organic pesticides, diversification and seed saving.

125 asylum seekers in **PNG** received clothing, shopping vouchers, phone cards and basic phones.

Refugee families in **Australia** received food parcels and food vouchers during COVID lockdowns, and phone cards to maintain contact with family and friends.



# Report from the Convenor

2021 was another challenging year. COVID-19 has had a more significant impact this year as the Delta strain spread further into our project footprint in Asia and Africa. Education in preventing COVID-19 continued as a priority, but increased joblessness and lower incomes have put development work on the back foot, seeing people in many localities lose past gains. Some predict it will take a decade or more for rural communities to recover financially. Despite these setbacks, resilient communities continue to pivot and innovate where possible.

Quaker Service Australia (QSA) has been able to also respond to other crises around the world. With the return of the Taliban, the unravelling of freedoms in Afghanistan has seen a vast humanitarian and refugee crisis unfold. While Australia has accepted only a small number of refugees to date, QSA has provided \$30,000 of assistance to three asylum seeker and refugee support agencies with better connections. This past year has seen a continued focus on First Nations projects within Australia, with funding committed to these programs and one still under consideration. Ongoing on-the-ground dialogue continues with the active involvement of the Australia Yearly Meeting First Nation Peoples Concerns Committee.

This year we welcomed several new members to the Management Committee and the QSA company. It is great to see their input as they become familiar with our work at a closer and more profound level. One of the innovations implemented this year was the development of an online portal of resources known as e-QSA to facilitate greater awareness, compliance, induction and training materials, along with material from the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

Corporate governance is a crucial focal point for accrediting bodies across most industry groups these days. This is raising the level of professionalism in aid and development agencies. QSA continues to step up with its active participation in ACFID acknowledged with representation on committees continuing the strong legacy of involvement in the sector. Participation in the Church Agency Network gives QSA a collegial network of peers to work on world problems together. QSA also continues as an active member of the Refugee Council of Australia.

Like other development agencies, QSA's funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) has levelled out in recent years. There may be scope to add other funding grant submission avenues in future years.

QSA staff continued to work remotely from the office this year, and we needed to make greater use of IT with project partners while in-person monitoring was impossible. Independent evaluations of the effectiveness of QSA projects have been undertaken this year, with great feedback received on the transformative impact of projects in Cambodia. Skills development is enabling local communities to become more self-reliant. It is also empowering



communities as new skills and knowledge is shared. QSA's impact is being felt well beyond the local projects as our project partners become models for others to learn from. Our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals is mapped in our project proposals complementing the work of other in-country development agencies. Our project partners are increasingly noticing the environmental impacts of global warming, and we will need a greater focus on these impacts in the coming years.

Awareness of preventing sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment continues to be a priority across the sector. A commitment to educating our partners, and they, in turn, those involved in their projects, allows a focus on wellbeing to look out for safeguarding each other, and evaluations of the effectiveness of this education will continue. Community-led solutions are the proven positive approaches QSA takes in resolving grass-root community concerns.

Despite the many challenges this year, our supporters have remained strong and faithful in funding projects. Online giving continues to grow as the Stripe payment facility on the QSA website is increasingly used by Friends. We continued receiving good support from The Quaker Shop in Adelaide and the wider Quaker community. Bequests make a big difference to our ability to fund new project initiatives. They enable QSA to put Quaker testimonies to an even greater application by taking timely actions to support communities in need.

A big thank you to all involved with QSA this past year. Together we have made a difference in a turbulent world. Consulting, listening, and discerning will help us shape the future of those we assist. When our focus remains on meeting the needs of others in partnership with on-the-ground partners, QSA will continue to have a significant life-changing impact. I invite you to continue that journey with QSA this coming year as we respond to poverty alleviation, boosting food security, creating greater sustainability, promoting gender equality and child rights. A better world is achievable when we all work together, seeking to be the change where it's needed the most.

**Garry Duncan**  
Convenor



*Young boys tending eggplants in Uganda  
CREDIT: St Jude's Family Project*

# Statement of Purpose and Quaker Testimonies

*Equality*  
*Integrity*  
*Peace*  
*Simplicity*  
*Community*  
*Sustainability*

Quaker Service Australia's (QSA's) purpose is to practically express Australian Quakers' concern for building a more peaceful, equitable, just and compassionate world. To this end, QSA works with communities in need to improve their quality of life with culturally sensitive, economically and environmentally appropriate and sustainable projects.

QSA is the international development agency of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia, and the testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, environment and equality guide all its work. Central to QSA's work is the Quaker belief in the equal worth of all people, a belief rooted in Quaker experience over more than 350 years.

## Where we work and why

QSA was established in 1959 as an aid and development agency and legally incorporated association. QSA adopted a new governance structure in December 2016, and in April 2017, became a company limited by guarantee.

QSA operates and manages activities from its office in Sydney and does not have any overseas presence. QSA favours community-initiated projects and partnering with existing community-based organisations. Many of our partnerships developed organically from networks and historical connections.

QSA's approach is consultative and inclusive. We play a consultative role in project design, ensuring that community members are actively involved, and activities are appropriate to their needs, interests and situations.

QSA does not participate in nor allow any of its funds or resources to be used for proselytising, terrorism or support for political candidates or organisations.



# Report from the Executive Administrator



This has been a complex year for QSA, its project partners, and project communities in Australia and overseas. We now understand that COVID-19 will have a significant, long-lasting impact and we have learned so much from it.

As an organisation, we have adjusted to working remotely. While we miss the chance to sit around together to discuss ideas, we have experienced new opportunities from working with Zoom. Previously monitoring visits were on an annual basis, and we spent the rest of the year communicating with email and some phone contact. With Zoom, we can have more frequent contact, check documents, see posters and other material shared by project partners, and gain far more towards relationship building than we could simply by using email. It is worthy of continuing as a communication system even when monitoring visits are possible.

Project partners have also learned from new ways of working. For example, when sharing information such as ways to stay healthy during COVID-19, they used loud hailers in remote areas with little consistent phone or internet coverage to overcome restrictions on group activities. Other partners have developed skills in making short videos to explain new ideas that can be shown on large or small screens. All are valuable skills for future use and in different locations. Last year, health inputs and knowledge were required. This year we've focussed on restoring incomes as financial constraints seriously impacted rural areas due to reduced movement and market closures. For many households, their neighbours were the only customers for surplus produce or handicrafts.

The review of QSA by a Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) appointed team went well and gave us some new ideas. QSA passed as a fully accredited agency. As a result, it can continue to receive significant funding from DFAT via the Australian NGO Cooperation Program to support the projects that QSA submits to DFAT. This funding dramatically expands QSA's reach and the number of projects we can support. But passing the accreditation is about more than simply financial support. It is recognition by peers and experts involved in the same type of work that QSA is acting in the best way possible. The reviewers know the markers and criteria that make for a good agency, giving appropriate support to its project communities, so they become self-sufficient and sustainable.

However, having achieved this re-accreditation, it is not enough to simply sit back. We can improve our processes, policies and approaches, and there's scope for new ideas to be incorporated, building on the firm footing created.

QSA continues involvement with peer agencies as members of the Church Agencies Network and ACFID. We have signed letters advocating change in political decisions in Australia, and letters of support for community groups experiencing difficulties, as part of a much bigger picture than simply ourselves. We give thanks that we can do this.

We are also aware of the achievements of our project partners, demonstrated by the progress they've made as a result of the training received. This is clear from an evaluation conducted in Cambodia summarised in this report which I encourage you to read.

Thank you, everyone, for your continued interest in and support for QSA and its work. Your donations make what we plan to achieve possible. I hope you enjoy reading the project reports. As always, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the QSA office if you have any questions or wish to learn more. You'll also find information on the QSA website at [www.qsa.org.au](http://www.qsa.org.au) or by following us on Facebook.

**Jackie Perkins**  
**Executive Administrator**

# International Development

QSA's practical expression of development favours ongoing, community-led initiatives to achieve food security, water security, and poverty alleviation with appropriate and sustainable change. We focus on sustainable development and are not involved in emergency relief. Our work aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

QSA uses an indirect model, working with long-term partners who understand their communities' needs and provide ongoing support at the grassroots level. This means our support with some project partners is long-standing, as they move their project activities to different communities in need, based on requests received and longer-term planning.

We support and encourage interdisciplinary, holistic and sustainable approaches that are culturally appropriate and relevant to the local context and resources, including technology. Focus areas include ecology and climate adaptation, nutrition and health, gender equality, female empowerment, child protection and inclusiveness.

Agriculture is central to poverty reduction and hunger eradication in rural areas in developing nations. Women are vital to this process as the mainstay of many rural economies, so most of our work focuses on empowering them and enhancing their economic capabilities.

Climate change adaptations and reducing the impact of natural disasters are a crucial part of the training provided as agriculture is frequently the most affected activity.

QSA projects primarily focus on helping women build and strengthen skills in permaculture and other organic farming methods. With training and support, they establish home food gardens to provide nutritious food for their family year-round, and where possible, a surplus to supplement household incomes. We also aim to improve their quality of life and those of their families and communities. By improving their economic situation, women are confident to make more decisions in their families and accept leadership roles in their communities.



*Infograph: Proportional expenditure on QSA's international development projects in 2021 by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).*



# The year that was 2020/21

As COVID-19 continued to impact all countries worldwide, QSA supported partners as they made adaptations within their projects to deal with the pandemic's health, economic and social effects. However, in vulnerable communities with limited resources, many families have continued to face extraordinary hardships.

After being involved last year in hygiene education, provision of protective materials and emergency food supplies, our partners have focused this year on dealing with the longer-term impacts of COVID-19, where possible working towards "COVID recovery". Fortunately, most of their project activities have now returned to normal, despite ongoing restrictions and short-term lockdowns in several regions.

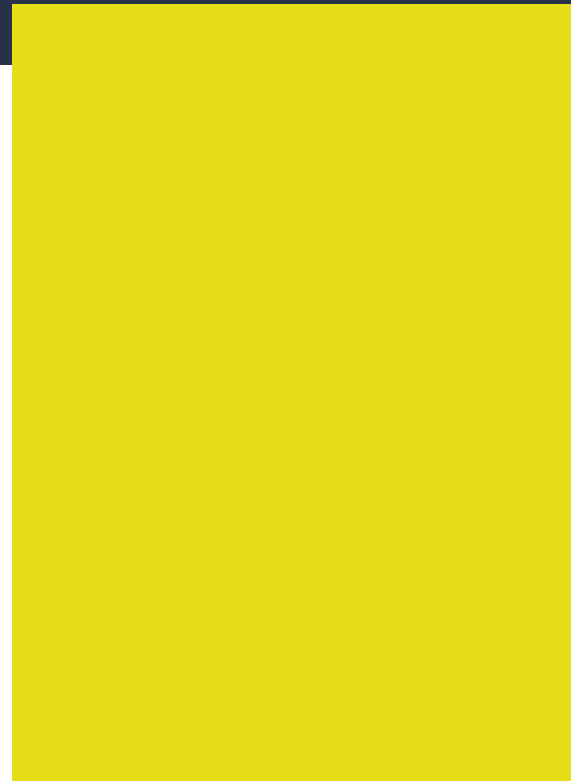
It's pleasing to hear reports that families who've participated in QSA projects have fared better during the pandemic and recent natural disasters, including flooding, with their new skills and capabilities. In addition, our partners report communities with whom they worked were better able to manage when they lost jobs and incomes due to COVID-19. For example, using permaculture knowledge and skills, they planted or expanded home food gardens to provide food and supplement family incomes when they lost jobs and incomes.

Most of the planned project activities continued during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, albeit with hygiene arrangements and distancing in place. Project participants received protective equipment and information about staying safe during the pandemic. When large gatherings were prohibited, staff conducted training in small groups or one-on-one in some areas. Some funding reallocations accommodated COVID-19 project changes, but partners allocated less than \$2,000 directly to COVID-19 expenditure, mainly for materials like masks.

Since March 2020, QSA staff have been unable to make in-person visits, but regular monitoring meetings and training by video conference was introduced, supplemented by increased remote financial spot checks.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, QSA continued to emphasise and follow up with partners the heightened need for safeguarding and the potential for gendered violence, recommending increased monitoring and checks on staff and participants.

A total of 9,616 people participated directly in our projects this year, including 3,328 children and young people and 4,073 women. Fifty-nine per cent of participants were women and girls, and approximately 10% were living with disabilities.



*Soap making for use in COVID-19 hygiene programs in Uganda  
CREDIT: St. Judes Family Project*

# India (Tamil Nadu)

## Pitchandikulam Bio Resource Centre (PBRC)

This project in South India focuses on organic farming training for food security, mainly raising awareness of small-scale initiatives, including demonstration plots, herbal kitchen and homestead gardens.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, not all the activities could go ahead as planned. Unexpected heavy rains also created significant setbacks in farming activities. However, 501 adults (434 women) participated in agricultural livelihoods activities. The farmers were particularly receptive to the idea of reducing agricultural chemical inputs and using small-scale initiatives appropriate for those with little or no land. Feedback indicated that training content and frequency improvements were necessary to improve farmers' knowledge retention and practising of organic farming methods. Approximately 28% of the project expenditure funded climate change adaptation and mitigation, directly referencing agricultural productivity for food security and income generation.

Training 11 women entrepreneurs in herbal remedy production and marketing helped them provide healthcare and veterinary products in rural communities where access to formal health services is limited and veterinary care expensive. They also received intensive business training and support.

COVID-19 restrictions also closed schools for much of the year, so environmental education activities could not go ahead as planned. However, alternative activities, including excursions and creative arts sessions such as traditional storytelling, took place in outdoor areas, under the supervision of teachers and with parental permission. As a result, while engagement was inconsistent, the activity relieved students from lockdown. Community programs also helped draw attention to the connection between health and the environment via traditional and locally-sourced herbal remedies. A total of 974 students (488 girls) participated in these non-formal education sessions, and eight teachers (four women) received additional in-service training.

Half the project budget and time was spent on agricultural activities, a further quarter on environmental education and training, with the remainder allocated to health education (predominantly COVID-19) and income generation. Activities not undertaken this year will be conducted as soon as possible in the next project year when hopefully conditions are more favourable.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (\$42,139) and QSA (\$10,094), with a further \$4,572 donated by QSA for tree planting. It involved 6,353 adults - 2,423 women (4 with disabilities), 1,661 men (21 with disabilities), 972 girls and 1,272 boys. Continuing the previous year's work addressing COVID-19 health measures, 4,548 participants received specific health advice, training and support.



*Improving soil with compost  
in Tamil Nadu, India  
CREDIT: PBRC*



# India (Tamil Nadu)

## Vasandham Society

This project focuses on awareness-raising, education, and mass mobilisation of community members in the Varusanadu Valley to improve sustainable traditional and organic agriculture practices, improving household and community water management, health and nutrition. QSA provided no funding to this project this year. However, delays to planned activities and the carryover of funds from the previous year enabled activities to continue during the year.

When fifteen farmers' groups were visited, three needed strengthening with additional training and support. One new group was also created and provided some training. Partner staff made several visits to each group, focussing on the newer and weaker groups and providing training to group leaders on village resources and mobilisation.

This project partner collaborated with three local NGOs to provide COVID-19 awareness training and face masks, herbal immune booster preparation, hand sanitiser and soap to 1,300 families in communities with limited resources and COVID-19 awareness. A further 150 families received regular food supplies. Project partner staff also received training and resources from local officials, which they passed on to the community. They also received training in using poly-tunnels to grow crops and netting to protect crops from animals and birds.

A vital feature of this work is community awareness of health, agricultural and environmental messaging in community events, attracting many thousands of people. Unfortunately, these could not go ahead due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, a series of pamphlets were prepared and distributed within the communities. In addition, the campaign continued to reduce plastics use, especially single-use plastic bags, and staff noted a marked reduction in their use and in plastics litter in the area.

One activity that could go ahead was preserving the water storage areas, protecting them from encroachment by people planting crops too close to the perimeter. During the past year, work to restore eight of these water bodies and remove encroaching plants continued, but de-silting has not started. Water management committees will continue this work and provide local oversight, ensuring resources are available for the local community.

QSA fully funds this project, and carryover funds from last year supported 1,760 people participating in activities this year.

Due to difficulties in facilitating training workshops during COVID-19, an expansion of the project 'Think Green and Think Clean' managed by Trinity Rural Development Service Centre was not possible. However, planning for another project commencing in December 2021 was started towards the end of the year.



*Tree planing in Tamil Nadu, India CREDIT: Vasandham Society*

# Uganda

## St Jude's Family Projects

This year has seen massive improvements to farmers' skills and knowledge, and as a result, the majority of households now have sufficient food and have boosted their incomes.

Most St Jude's farmers achieve stable family food security with almost three healthier meals per day despite climate variability and COVID-19-related challenges. Farmers have achieved an average 55% increase in their food crop production through water harvesting, adoption of biofertilisers, organic pesticides, soil fertilisation, diversification and seed saving. Bananas, cassava and yam provided an essential buffer for those coming close to food shortages.

Most farmers are now earning US\$100 per month or more from improved crop yields (quantity and quality) and enhanced small-scale enterprise skills. Working in groups has significantly enhanced bargaining power and logistics. Diversity and adaptation of enterprise and marketing and sales methods have been vital for farmers to survive during COVID-19 lockdowns and movement restrictions. Many farmers generated additional income through banana products, liquid soap making and hand sanitiser.

Schools closed for most of the project year. As a result, no more than 25% of lunch requirements have come from project-grown vegetables, cassava and banana. In addition, only 60% of the trees planted survived. St Jude will continue working with these schools for an additional year.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (\$76,310) and QSA (\$16,542) and involved 2,349 participants - 883 women, 388 men, 646 girls and 432 boys and a total of 26 people living with disabilities.

## Dream Farm Kyakabunga Group

In partnership with St Jude Family Projects, QSA supports this young NGO from Kiruhura in southwestern Uganda. Dream Farm is developing its skills and capacity in organisational and project management, community participation processes, and organic agriculture.

A group of 20 farmers continued learning how to improve their food production and knowledge in nutrition through fortnightly community training and extension visits to their respective gardens. The training centred on enhancing ecological farming practices and included nutrition, hygiene, growing crops and vegetables to earn income, and marketing or selling their harvests at local outlets or markets.

This project was fully funded by QSA (\$2,177), and 163 people participated in activities this year.



*Students transplanting beans in their school garden in Uganda.  
CREDIT: St Judes Family Project*



# Cambodia

After few COVID-19 cases and no deaths before early 2021, Cambodia experienced a significant increase in cases from February 2021 and implemented strict lockdowns, travel and meeting restrictions, particularly around Phnom Penh. The economic downturn from border closures, travel restrictions and business shutdowns continued. While the Government introduced payments for the poorest families, most received no assistance and their situation was severely reduced.

Our project partners reported increased need due to COVID-19 and continued to support their communities, although this year it has transformed from emergency aid to longer-term livelihoods support. While there were delays to some project activities, most were able to continue (with COVID-safe arrangements) because they were outside. However, many families suffered further when devastating flooding hit in October 2020, affecting more than 800,000 households, particularly in the north.

## Bun Rany Hun Sen Development Centre (BRHS)

The BRHS Centre continued to be seriously impacted by COVID-19. Commercial handicraft sales dramatically dropped when borders closed, international and domestic travel stopped, and restrictions on events were imposed. The Centre cut production at its facility in Pursat but maintained staff numbers with some reallocated, for example, to mask making. However, purchases from producers who work at home in surrounding villages and normally supply the retail facility were drastically cut, and their incomes dropped by around 50%.

Handicrafts training in Pursat halted in March 2020 due to government restrictions but continued in rural areas where it changed to one-on-one instruction. Severe flooding in the country's north further disrupted work at the Centre. BRHS staff worked on flood relief, and production and training were delayed when flooding prevented travel in many areas.

QSA and BRHS are talking with a local university about preparing a business and marketing plan to address ongoing sales and marketing problems exacerbated by the pandemic.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (\$59,675) and QSA (\$15,342) and involved 150 participants (134 women).



*Flooding in Pursat, Cambodia, October 2020  
CREDIT: BRHS*



*Weaving scarves in Pursat, Cambodia  
CREDIT: BRHS*



*Sewing masks in Pursat, Cambodia  
CREDIT: BRHS*

# Cambodia

## Department of Women's Affairs, Kampong Thom (DWAK)

Sixty farmers received training in permaculture techniques, climate change, and equipment and materials for home food gardens. As a result, 85% achieved food security for at least eight months, and 60% earned more than USD50 per month selling surplus produce. Hygiene and sanitation is a feature of this project. Participants learn how to build and use a toilet, and this year, 20 families received materials to construct a toilet.

Two project activities were postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions, and the number of project participants declined by 50%. Using these funds, sixty families received water tanks or materials to build wells, providing water for household use and irrigation.

Awareness training helped communities develop a greater understanding of gender issues and child protection, and participants in three villages reported a decline in domestic violence in their community.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (\$56,485) and QSA (\$11,656) and involved 100 participants (92 women).



*Family receive materials to build a well as part of a permaculture training project in Kampong Thom, Cambodia  
CREDIT: DWAK*

## Khmer Community Development (KCD)

Long periods of COVID-19 restrictions in Kandal Province and nearby Phnom Penh meant KCD staff could not visit target communities for much of the year. As a result, many planned meetings and training sessions were postponed, and participant numbers were down almost 20%.

Aware that COVID-19 seriously impacted its target communities, KCD launched a survey to assess their needs. They then expanded activities (and reallocated funds) to promote nutrition and food security, including fish and chicken-raising operations to provide food and supplement family incomes. KCD also focused on developing its capacity to deliver programs remotely and maintain communication with communities, including staff training in



# Cambodia

online production and remote learning.

While staff were unable to conduct planned project activities, they utilised their time in a range of capability enhancement activities. They developed resources, including guides and training in several key areas, including needs assessment, environment, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH), gender and disability.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (\$55,611) and QSA (\$13,670) and involved 321 participants (212 women).

## Department of Women's Affairs, Pursat (DWAP)

COVID-19 did not significantly affect this project as most activities were completed outdoors or before March 2021, when restrictions increased. After permaculture training, 80 farmers established home food gardens, producing vegetables and fruit, achieving year-round food security and (for some) a surplus to generate supplementary income. In addition, women leaders gained new knowledge about gender equity, inclusiveness, climate change and child protection. They shared this with women in the community, demonstrating increased confidence to intervene in domestic violence, migration and child harm.

Severe flooding across Pursat in October 2020 destroyed rice fields and damaged infrastructure. DWAP reported that farmers who had participated in permaculture training fared well, using their knowledge and skills to grow food crops in home gardens to replace crops and income lost with business and market closures. An evaluation conducted in May/June 2021 produced encouraging results about the project's impact. More detail is provided in the next section.

This project was funded jointly by DFAT (\$85,426) and QSA (\$18,042) and involved 343 participants (333 women).



*Fish farm building food security and generating income in Kandal Province, Cambodia. CREDIT: KCD*



*A woman who received a water jar for irrigation and household use in Pursat, Cambodia. CREDIT: DWAP*



# Project Feature: Measuring Women's Empowerment

Promoting women's empowerment is a driving force behind reducing poverty and aiding economic growth. It also enhances gender equality and women's ability to make decisions over their own lives and those of their families. Therefore, a key focus of QSA projects is gender equality, particularly social and economic empowerment to reduce family violence.

In Cambodia, QSA supports a Department of Women's Affairs project in Pursat (DWAP) to increase women's empowerment and income generation opportunities. The project aims to enhance women's economic circumstances and address the impact of climate change through permaculture techniques. Women can establish home gardens and achieve year-round food and water security with permaculture training and gardening equipment.

As part of regular project evaluations, QSA and DWAP conducted an assessment in 2021 to measure the effectiveness of the project and the extent to which it achieves the intended impacts, specifically increasing the empowerment of women. The evaluation assessed changes over time in empowering women involved in the project's permaculture, gender and safeguarding training between 2018 and 2021.

In May/June 2021, we conducted focus group discussions with women who had participated in training 3-4 years earlier and control groups of women who had not yet started the training.

In the final report, the consultant commented,

*This evaluation has highlighted significant themes indicating the project is positively impacting women's lives. It appears to be changing lives, improving safety and developing confidence.*

All groups identified that their quality of life or life satisfaction had improved due to the training. A clear theme was a reduction in violence, indicating that family violence declined when women contributed to household incomes. Following the training, women are more confident, have more skills, feel they contribute, are more valued and have more involvement in household decision-making. They are pleased to be improving family health and nutrition and generating additional family income.

*After the project, the farmers are changing their lives. They have the technical knowledge to grow and raise chickens, achieve year-round food security, good health and nutrition, send children to school, reduce domestic and sexual violence. They may save money to rebuild their house, build a toilet, buy seeds and seedlings by selling surplus produce and chickens or set up a small shop at their house. (QUOTE: Focus group participant)*





# Issues Feature: Locally-Led Development

Localisation is an increasingly used term in the international development sector, particularly since the outbreak of COVID-19 with travel restrictions and national border closures. The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) uses the following working definition. “A method to drive more effective development outcomes by improving the agency of affected people and local actors so that development action is locally informed, locally-led and meets the needs of local people.”

While the language of localisation emerged through the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, the international development sector, including QSA, has supported localisation efforts for some time using different terminology. COVID-19 has shown that localisation is particularly relevant to development programs with a blurring of lines between humanitarian support and development cooperation programs.

DFAT strongly believes in localisation and has incorporated several intermediate outcomes in the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) Program Logic, including quality relationships with in-country partners, support for locally-led development processes and a commitment to strengthen the capacity of in-country partners and civil society more broadly. As an NGO accredited with DFAT, QSA must demonstrate how we work towards these localisation outcomes.

Why is localisation considered necessary? The theory is that by improving local partners' technical and non-technical capacity, Australian Non-Government Organisations (ANGOs) can assist them in achieving their objectives. They can also become more financially and technically independent and sustain their activities when ANGO assistance ceases. The emphasis is on helping local partners achieve their objectives, not the ANGO's objectives, through project designs appropriate for the local situation.

While most ANGO's work through local partners, there is a wide variety of relationships with the local partners. Some are more contractual, and for a set time, so they are less about empowering local partners. Others are part of a network and continue for much longer times (even decades) with a significant focus on empowering the partner.

QSA is committed to building the capacity of in-country implementing partners and communities. Rather than operate ourselves in these locations, we work with long-standing partners that are best placed to deliver benefits to their local communities.

How does QSA progress localisation? There is a formal intention in our policies and processes to localise. We consult with our partners, listen to what they tell us and work with them to design projects that align with their objectives. However, this is not always easy as QSA has several compliance requirements of partners, such as child protection, gender equality, anti-fraud and counter-terrorism, which are not always in keeping with local partners' priorities. The other obstacle is that as QSA has the funds, there is an inherent power imbalance. Whilst QSA staff work hard to minimise that power imbalance, it is always there.

Local partners must have organisational systems (some form of management structure, financial management procedures) and project management skills to design and implement locally appropriate projects. QSA also works with our partners to assist them in building their capacity so that they feel more confident and competent.

Localisation has always been part of how ANGOs operate. However, with COVID-19 travel restrictions and border closures, localisation and locally-led development have become increasingly necessary. As travel restrictions ease and borders reopen, it will be interesting to see if the localisation effort continues or if risk aversion sees a slowing or reversal of the trend.

*Visting people living with disabilities to assess their needs, offer support and encourage project participation  
Kandal Province, Cambodia  
CREDIT: KCD*



# First Nations communities Friends' School, Hobart

## First Nations Communities

QSA continues its involvement on the Quaker Yearly Meeting First Nations Peoples' Concerns Committee, which significantly adds to knowledge and understanding of, and advocacy for issues including the preservation of sacred sites and discussions about sovereignty.

Two significant, complex applications for funding came to QSA (a total of \$95,000) during the year, and discussions and planning are still underway at the end of this financial year. One of these projects is quite unusual and very interesting. It plans extensive dialogue with many community groups and First Nations elders to develop sustainable long-term evidence-based criteria, to inform clear, culturally informed, and appropriate problem identification. This research will apply to various settings within First Nations place and country. We look forward to being part of this fascinating journey.

In addition, QSA continued its support for the Madjitol Moorna Inc. choir based in Carmel, Western Australia. The \$7,500 provided enabled the choir to continue when funding from tickets was impossible. The choir continues to help spread the Noongar language across the Perth metropolitan area and into the state's southwest. The songs in language are being shared in many schools and featured in the Denmark WA Festival of Voice.

QSA also contributed \$5,000 to support the Warlpiri and Anmatyerre people from Yuendumu as they observe the murder trial of Kumanjari Walker by video link to Alice Springs courthouse. The funds are held as the trial is now deferred until early 2022.



## The Friends' School, Hobart

QSA provides modest funding to support several exciting social justice, human rights and environmental projects at the Quaker school. This funding was described by the school as "... a valuable and impactful aspect of our students' education."



Students of the Friends' School following presentation of the Students Against Racism Workshop  
CREDIT: Friends' School



# Refugees and asylum seekers

## Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Like many other development agencies and individuals, QSA is concerned about the plight of millions of refugees and asylum seekers of all ages fleeing persecution and harassment. The newly emerging climate change refugees and the extreme life difficulties faced by minority groups and peace activists in Afghanistan are particularly concerning. Due to its size and expertise, QSA has limited capacity to support people in Afghanistan, so instead, QSA has approved financial support to better-placed organisations that will provide tangible support for refugees and asylum seekers. These organisations include:

- Refugee Council of Australia (10,000)
- Settlement Services International (\$10,000)
- Asylum Seekers Centre (10,000)

For QSA, membership of the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network has enabled localised information to be shared, augmenting that from individual members of QSA and selected Friends.

A key focus for these organisations has been the distribution to refugee families of food parcels and food vouchers, especially during COVID-19 lockdowns. They've also provided phone cards for families to maintain contact with family and friends and allowances so students could continue their studies when they lost jobs during lockdowns.

At the end of the last financial year, QSA gave Caritas PNG, working with the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, \$10,000 to support their work. For 125 refugees/asylum seekers still in PNG, this provided clothing, shopping vouchers, phone cards and a few basic phones. It also funded general advocacy and support to men waiting for medevac results and travel, supported those waiting on visas for the USA and Canada when international borders closed and funded face masks distributed to the six Port Moresby locations housing refugees.



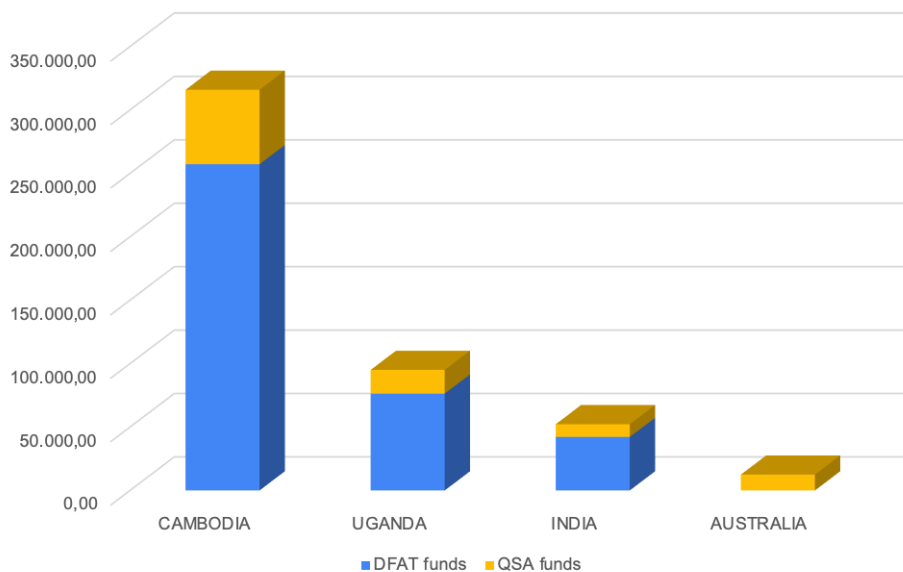
In their report to QSA, Caritas PNG noted they provided awareness-raising activities to students regarding refugees and their issues and ongoing advocacy work with the PNG Government. They also make weekly visits, especially to the more vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers, listening to them, offering advice, counselling and encouragement. In addition, they've attended to some of their queries and recognised and addressed mental health issues, notably when relocation processes were halted indefinitely due to COVID-19.

QSA could not have achieved this alone, as it does not have people in the various regions with the skills required. Therefore, it makes more sense to support those that can give this much-needed support via other organisations.

*Sangee thanked the Asylum Seekers Centre community for supporting her and other people seeking asylum with food by sharing a recipe for vegetable kurma. Check it out: <https://loom.ly/ujD421g>  
CREDIT: Asylum Seeker Centre*

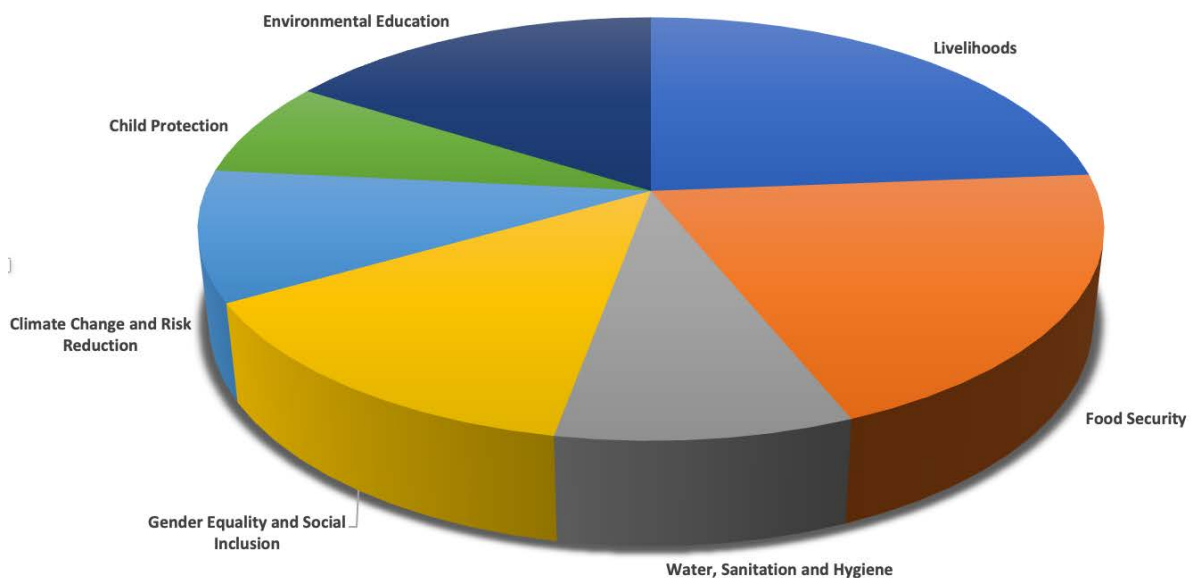
# Program statistics

## Project expenditure by country



The above graph shows the proportion of total project costs contributed by DFAT via the ANCP program. DFAT funded 81.5% of QSA's international project costs and 75% of QSA's total project budget this year. This is an increase compared with previous years and is due to a reduction in QSA's project activities due to COVID restrictions.

## International project participants by activity



The above image shows the proportion of international project participants by type of activity. It shows QSA's areas of focus and the spread of participants across activities designed to achieve specific development outcomes. Activities related to COVID health awareness and the distribution of protective materials were excluded from this graph as almost all participants were involved.



# Due diligence

## Feedback and complaints

### Due Diligence

Due diligence and risk management are built into the QSA company, its organisational and operational processes, and then into each project and context. QSA engages rigorous procedures in managing its funds and projects to ensure transparency and accountability, prevent and deter fraud and misuse of funds (including non-development, political, religious and terrorist activity), and promote organisational effectiveness and efficiency for QSA and its partners.

QSA undertakes regular monitoring and assessments in line with its policies, ensuring that all decisions and transactions are conducted fairly, honestly, and transparently. In addition, annual audits of all projects provide sound financial management, and QSA continues to strengthen its systems and manage its residual risks.

During 2020/21, QSA completed a re-accreditation to maintain its full status under the Department of Foreign Affairs Australian NGO Cooperation Program. The process provides DFAT and the Australian public with confidence that the Australian Government is funding professional, well-managed, community-based organisations that deliver quality development outcomes. The re-accreditation involved a rigorous independent assessment of QSA's organisational structure, systems and philosophies, including policies, project management and financial procedures.

### Feedback and complaints

Via its policy on Grievance Handling, Complaints, and Dispute Resolution, QSA strives to take into account the rights of all concerned using open communication, in a manner consistent with collaborative work practices and following Quaker teachings and ideals to resolve complaints, grievances and disputes.

As a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), QSA agrees to be bound by the association's independent, accessible, fair and confidential Code complaints handling process (more information below).



*A woman tending her chickens  
in Uganda  
CREDIT: St Jude Family Project*

# Code of Conduct

The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct establishes standards of good practice in governance, program effectiveness, fundraising, and financial reporting to enhance its members' transparency and accountability.

QSA is an ACFID member and has been a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct since 1996. Following its principles and values, the QSA Management Committee is committed to achieving the highest standard in every area of its work. It recognises that handling complaints well is a critical way of learning what is needed to improve our work. More information can be obtained from QSA or directly from ACFID.

The QSA Management Committee affirms its commitment to be bound by the independent, accessible, fair and confidential ACFID Code of Conduct complaints handling process and to comply promptly with reporting requirements, reasonable information requests and remedial or disciplinary actions recommended by the Code of Conduct Committee. Furthermore, QSA will monitor itself to ensure compliance with the Code and notify the Code of Conduct Committee if it becomes aware of significant transgressions by QSA or other signatory organisations.

QSA's adherence to the Code of Conduct demonstrates its commitment to ethical practice and public accountability and to supporting fellow ACFID members in the pursuit of their ideals and objectives.

QSA's Convenor is the contact person for receiving complaints:

convenor@qsa.org.au  
The Convenor, QSA  
Unit 14, 43-53 Bridge Road  
Stanmore, NSW 2048

For further information regarding the ACFID Code of Conduct, or to make a direct complaint, contact the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee:

main@acfid.asn.au  
www.acfid.asn.au/contact-us  
(02) 6285 1816  
Code of Conduct Committee  
Private Bag 3, Deakin, ACT 2600

*Sewing clothing for sale in the handicrafts shop in Pursat, Cambodia  
CREDIT: BRHS*





# Memberships and accreditation



ACFID  
MEMBER

## Australian Council for International Development

QSA is a member of ACFID, the peak body uniting Australian non-government aid and international development organisations to strengthen their collective impact on poverty. ACFID sets the standard for good practice in the sector. QSA has been a member of ACFID, and its predecessor ACFOA, since the 1970s.



## Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

QSA maintains full accreditation with the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and works with DFAT's ANCP to reduce poverty in developing countries.

Our policies, philosophies and practices are in keeping with rigorous professional standards. We are recognised as a non-government organisation in the international and development sector, delivering results against our objectives, offering value for money, and engaging with strong partners that support collaboration, capacity building and sustainability. The ANCP acknowledges and contributes to the support QSA receives from its generous donors in the Australian community.



church  
agencies  
network

## Church Agencies Network (CAN)

QSA is a member of the Church Agencies Network (CAN) that provides opportunities for collaboration at many levels, including advocacy, staff training and mentoring. CAN comprises church-based aid and development agency members of ACFID and the National Council of Churches in Australia. The members are Act for Peace, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Anglican Board of Mission (ABM), Anglican Overseas Aid (AOA), Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS), ACCI Relief (the newest member, is the aid and development arm of the Australian Christian Churches Movement), Caritas Australia, Global Mission Partners (GMP), QSA, Salvation Army International Development (SAID), Transform Aid (formerly Baptist World Aid), and Uniting World.



## Australian Charities & Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)

QSA maintains its status under the national regulator of charities, as a registered not-for-profit entity with a charitable purpose for the public benefit.



Refugee Council  
of Australia

## Refugee Council of Australia

QSA is an active member.

Asia Pacific  
Refugee Rights  
Network

## Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network

QSA is an active member.

# Company members

Following is a list of Members of the Company of QSA (serving 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021) in various locations, creating a network with Quakers around the country. A Management Committee (members noted by \*) governs the QSA organisation and is located in Sydney.

## **Rhoda DORRELL**, QLD – Member

A long-standing supporter of QSA and its work, Rhoda has actively supported refugees to settle in her area, teaching primary aged children about Aboriginal heritage and supporting local Indigenous communities.

## **Garry DUNCAN\***, NSW – Member, Convenor, Management Committee

An experienced high school geography teacher and business studies teacher in New Zealand and Australia and year adviser, Garry has a keen interest in student welfare and restorative justice processes. He has served on the Friends' School Board of Governors for three years.

## **John DUNDAS\***, NSW – Member

Retired bank officer and senior computer systems project manager. QSA office finance volunteer since 1999.

## **Miriam GOODWIN\***, NSW – Member (Retired February 2021)

With over 12 years of experience in public relations focussing on the technology sector, Miriam has worked in communications, business growth, and government relations services for more than 35 years.

## **Lesli GRANT**, WA – Member

Lesli's interest in development stems from a belief in social justice and the personal knowledge that everyone has skills they could develop to benefit their family, community, and country. She supports work restoring livelihoods and empowering people to fend for themselves.

## **Anne HERBERT**, VIC – Member (Retired February 2021)

An adult educator who has worked in various roles in Australia, Asia and Europe, Anne is actively involved with Quaker work in Europe and Australia.

## **Mary Jane HOGAN\***, NSW – Member (Commenced 17 March 2021)

Mary Jane is a retired teacher of English to adult migrants and international students with a strong adherence to social justice matters. She worked for 15 years as a freelance consultant in language assessment, managing test writing teams and delivering teacher professional development workshops.

## **Jo JORDAN**, SA & NT – Member

Jo brings extensive experience of worshipping with and serving her local and regional meetings. As manager of the Quaker Shop in Adelaide, she's committed to supporting QSA and its projects.

## **Rae LITTING**, NSW – Member

Rae has an understanding of cross-cultural issues from professional and lived experience. She has published QSA material in the Australian Friend and served on numerous Quaker Committees, including QSA Management Committee from 1999 to 2002.

## **Michael MORRISSEY**, NSW – Public Officer (Non-member)

Michael has experience in workplace health and safety (WH&S) management across various workplaces including manufacturing, transport and government. He's a member of the Safety Institute of Australia and has tertiary qualifications in business, human resources, WH&S, training and assessment.

## **Alex NICHOLSON**, ACT – Member (Retired February 2021)

Alex, a retired public servant, worked for 15 years with Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities throughout Eastern and South Australia. Has also worked extensively in the Pacific, including six years in Fiji with the Pacific Islands Forum and two years each with the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea Treasuries. He was Secretary to a Public Accounts Committee inquiry into the efficiency of Australia's Bilateral Overseas Aid and has post-graduate qualifications in Cross-Cultural Psychology.

## **Dan ONG\***, NSW – Member, Treasurer, Management Committee (Joined 6 March 2021)

Dan is an experienced risk professional in the financial services industry and a decision-maker in all areas of risk management. In addition, he has strong leadership and mentoring capability.



# Company members Office Team

**Jackie PERKINS, NSW – Company Secretary, (Non-member)**

Jackie has a Masters of Social Science (International Development) and experience in administering community centres, 12 years serving on the collective of women's health centres and 15 years experience as a medical herbalist. A part-time employee with QSA until 2004, she has worked full-time as QSA's Executive Administrator since 2004.

**Pia REIERSON\*, NSW – Member**

Pia has extensive experience with humanitarian and development work (since 1992) and expertise from a range of management and board work.

**Martin REUSCH\*, NSW – Member**

Martin lived in the Middle East for extended periods and worked extensively with asylum seekers and refugees.

**Chris SARGEANT\*, NSW – Member, resigned December 2020**

Chris is a retired teacher who specialised in working with high school students with learning and physical difficulties. She served as a drop-in centre volunteer, was involved in pastoral care matters and assisted in English as a second language training and support.

**Ann ZUBRICK, Ex-officio Member – Presiding Clerk of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia**

**Jacqueline SCHULTZE, Ex-officio Member – Secretary of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia**

**Tasmania Member - This role was vacant as of September 2020 (Member resigned July 5th 2020)**

**Young Friends Member - This role was vacant in September 2021.**

## QSA Office Team



**Jackie Perkins**  
Executive Administrator  
Projects Manager - Australia



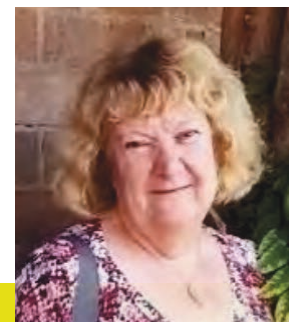
**John Dundas**  
Finance (volunteer)  
Treasurer



**Ai Leen Quah**  
Projects Manager  
- Uganda & India



**Fleur Bayley**  
Projects Manager  
- Cambodia



**Alis Middleton**  
Finance (part time)



# Financial summary

Funding received from the Department of Foreign Affairs for QSA's international projects was down this year due to a reduction in Government funding for the ANCP program. In addition, COVID-19 restrictions led to slightly reduced QSA expenditure on international projects and also resulted in a drop in participant numbers. As a result, some funding was rolled over to support the postponed project activities in the next project year.

Fortunately, QSA maintained its level of donations while COVID-19 adversely impacted many other NGOs and charities. Understandably, funding from Quaker Regional Meetings was down as they were unable to meet in person and unable to conduct fund-raising events due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, we're pleased to report that direct donations from individuals have remained almost unchanged during the past year.

We're grateful to continue receiving funding from The Quaker Shop in Adelaide. This year saw a slight increase in the funds for QSA. In addition, generous bequests received during the year will enable QSA to plan significant future activities.

A complete set of audited QSA accounts follows.





# Thank you

QSA is grateful to its supporters, volunteers and donors without whom none of this work would be possible.

We also thank the wonderful partners with whom we work. They are passionate and dedicated to meeting the needs of their local communities.

If you would like more information about our work or if you would like to make a donation, please contact the QSA office.



QSA's project partners have identified these gifts as the most meaningful to improve the quality of life for the communities with whom they work. These gifts help communities in Cambodia, Uganda and India, and are an economically and environmentally appropriate and sustainable way of gifting.

Select a gift and purchase from our online shop.

[www.qsa.org.au/living-gifts](http://www.qsa.org.au/living-gifts)



**Quaker Service Australia Ltd**

**[www.qsa.org.au](http://www.qsa.org.au)**

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