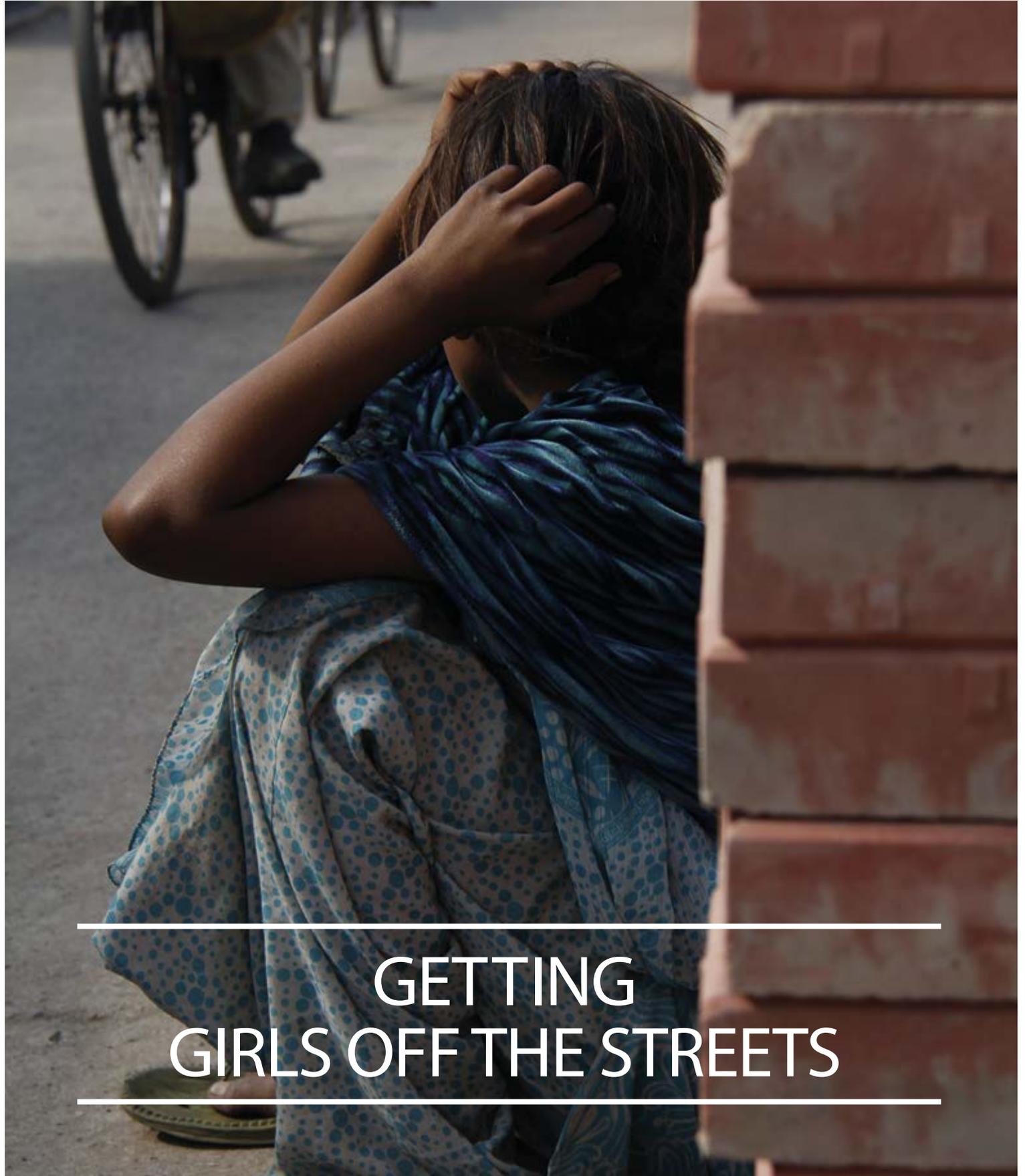


SIM PROJECT FOCUS

MAY 2015 ISSUE 4



GETTING
GIRLS OFF THE STREETS

SET THE CAPTIVES FREE (ISAIAH 61)



SPOTLIGHT ON SLAVERY



35 MILLION PEOPLE
are trapped
in modern slavery today.



2.5 MILLION
people trafficked are
subjected to sexual and
labour exploitation.

80% human trafficked
are women.

INDIA

has the highest number
of modern slaves.



BANGLADESH

is in the top 10.



Talking about girls on the streets

"Young ladies, please welcome the team from the *Redlight-Greenlight* aftercare home," the school principal said.

As the four of us take our places up front to the sound of polite applause, I look around the room: there are about 50 girls, heads covered, seated in orderly rows on the floor of this non-profit school in a predominantly Muslim area.

Holding a homemade flip-chart with stylised cartoons, our team social worker begins to tell the story of three children, each from a different community, who are sold into a different type of slavery. The stories are fictitious, patchworked together from the many accounts we have heard from the 113 girls who've come through the doors of *Redlight-Greenlight* in the past three years.

As she goes through the stories, the social worker asks the audience, "What would you do if you were in this situation? What do you think the girl was thinking when she got a job offer that seemed too good to be true?" We are surprised at how ready the girls are to share their ideas, opinions and experiences.

Then one of our staff workers tells a true story of one of the girls who has come through *Redlight-Greenlight* aftercare home.

"Imagine a girl just like you. When she was in Year 7, she was approached by a young man in her neighbourhood. Every day when she walked to school, he would walk with her. He complimented her and showed interest in her. He did this for three years. He even gave her a love letter written in his own blood." The girls exchange knowing glances, giggling uncomfortably.

"When she was in Year 10, the young man told her, 'Marry me. Let's run away together!' This girl thought, 'Wow. If he would sacrifice his own blood for me, he'd do anything for me.' So she ran away with him. He slept with her, and the next day he sold her to a brothel, and she never saw him again. Later we found out that he had done the same thing to many other girls."



We then invite questions from the class, share statistics about trafficking in India, and discuss what kinds of help survivors need - not only physical rescue, but also emotional support, legal help as they testify in court, trauma counselling and care from loving family and friends so they can learn to trust again.

As the girls leave, their questions hang in the air: "I think there's a brothel between this school and my house... what should I do about it?" "What should I tell my friend who's been receiving a lot of unwanted attention from a neighbourhood boy?" "Since half of victims trafficked are sold by someone known to them, people they might call 'aunty' or 'uncle', who can we trust?" There are no easy answers, but we're grateful that we've gotten the group talking about these issues.

Afterwards, the school staff thank us for coming. "This was one of the best workshops we've ever had," the principal tells us. "You really got our girls to talk. I think we need to get their parents to talk about this too."

Getting girls off the streets

God is using SIM's *Redlight-Greenlight* project to raise the issue of sex trafficking and abuse with young women in India, where there are an estimated 14 million modern slaves today (globalslavery.org). Three out of four human trafficked victims are women, who are subjected to sexual exploitation. Workshops like the one that the *Redlight-Greenlight* project run are helping young women discuss and understand the issues of abuse and slavery so they are better equipped to stand against it.

More importantly, *Redlight-Greenlight* runs a first stop shelter for girls aged 12-17 who have been rescued from trafficking and exploitation. The goal is to get the girls off the streets, and facilitate them on path of healing and restoration - physically, mentally, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

Once the girls reach 18, some move to the sister-project, *Beauty for Ashes Restoration Home* that supports the women in further education and vocational training. The project helps the women break free from addictions and destructive behaviours and empowers them to see how they can be agents of change for others.

Redlight-Greenlight is one of SIM's *Girls off the Streets* projects based in India. Just across the border, the *Children's Uplift Program* provides shelter and care for at-risk mothers, children and pregnant women who have been forced onto the streets of Dhakar due to poverty, homelessness or trafficking.

A key part of the *Children's Uplift Program* is to provide education and vocational training so that the women are able to be provide for themselves and their families. The women are taught how to read. They attend parenting classes and vocational skills training. Upon graduation they have the opportunity to be employed by a local partner organisation where they can make jewellery or sew garments to earn a stable income.

Through our *Girls off the Streets* initiative, SIM's goal is to raise awareness about exploitation, sexual abuse and child trafficking in the hope of preventing girls and women from becoming victims. We're also on a mission to set them free because,

"He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners." Isaiah 61:1 (NIV)



GIVING THE VOICELESS A VOICE

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, ... defend the rights of the poor and needy.” Proverbs 31:8-9

When people are abused or oppressed, they lose their voice. Poverty, Ignorance and Disease make society's most vulnerable – children, women, people with disability – feel powerless.

SIM started our aid and development arm, SIMaid, to follow the call of Christ to empower the poor and vulnerable in society through education and opportunities so they can rediscover their voice.

Everything we do as an organisation is aimed at reaching the unreached with the light and love of Christ.

Through our *Girls off the Streets* program, girls like Priya[^] are experiencing healing and finding strength to overcome the effects of terrible abuse and sex slavery. Priya was hospitalised for a week after she was violently raped. Over the past few months, she's been staying at the *Girls off the Streets* aftercare home in India, receiving counselling and medical care.

Priya was so traumatised by her abuse that she refused to open her mouth at the dentist to be treated for a toothache. The team at the aftercare home spent weeks with Priya, patiently helping her take small steps towards overcoming this fear until she was finally confident to go through with the check-up.

Now Priya is one of the most vocal girls in the house! At a recent group therapy session, Priya was one of the first to speak up. **“Being around people who care for you is a lifeline [through a difficult or scary situation];”** she said, **“as well as praying for God’s help.”**

Through the generous support of caring supporters like you, Priya has hope for her future. She has rediscovered her voice and the messages she speaks show the transformation taking place in her life.

Your generous tax deductible gift can help speak up for other vulnerable girls like Priya and help them find their voice!

[^] name has been changed

GIVE:

Your gift to our *Girls off the Streets Fund* (09340) can help free girls and women from sex trafficking and abuse in India and Bangladesh so they can experience freedom, dignity and hope. You can [give online](#) or use the response form at the back of this newsletter. Gifts over \$2 are **tax-deductible**.

GO!

Ben and Penny from Victoria are preparing to go to Bangladesh to work with a partner of the *Children's Uplift Program*. The company helps provide employment opportunities to women. Ben will work as an Operations Manager and Penny as an English teacher. They are looking for individuals to support them financially through a regular pledge. This support is not tax-deductible, however if you would like to support **Ben and Penny**, please use the response form at the back of this newsletter.



WE CARE ABOUT KIDS



Sadly, children are among the most vulnerable to the impact of poverty, conflict and natural disasters. Children are often left defenceless against injustice and exploitation. That's why many of our projects focus on assisting children – because we care about kids!

Through our aid and development arm, SIMaid, SIM Australia is showing God's love to children without exception, helping them safely access opportunities for education, health care, nutrition and more so they can reach their full potential in their families and communities.

SPOTLIGHT ON BURKINA FASO



- Population: 18,365,123 (2014 est)
- Capital: Ouagadougou
- Government: Semi-presidential republic
- Religion: Muslim 52.2% Ethno-religionist 26.44% Christian 20.69% Other 0.67% (2013 est)
- Located in west Africa, Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world with over 46% of the population earning less than US\$2 per day. It's rated 181st out of 187 on the Human Development Index.

Its economy is based on subsistence farming of millet, sorghum, corn,

peanuts and beans. Most farming is done by hand, as few can afford to use draft animals. Crops are hindered by periodic drought and soil erosion, contributing to chronic malnutrition.

It's estimated over 10% of the population in Burkina Faso have a disability (approximately 1.8 million people). There is a severe lack of support services for people with disability and they face challenges of transport, accessibility, neglect and discrimination. People with disabilities are commonly seen as a drain on family resources.

**Sources: CIA World Factbook, Wikipedia, Lonely Planet, Operation World*

HELPING MALNOURISHED KIDS

SIM assists well over 1000 malnourished children every year in Burkina Faso through our tax deductible *Caring for Kids* project.

Caring for Kids supports SIM's Piela Medical Centre which provides residential and at-home treatment for children who are suffering from moderate to severe malnutrition. The project also provides care for orphans. The aim of the project is to restore malnourished children and support the growth and development of orphans through:

- medical treatment for associated illnesses
- fortified milk/formula & nutritious enriched porridge
- monitoring their growth until they reach their target weight
- teaching mothers about hygiene, nutrition and health

Piela Medical Centre is located in Gnagna Province, one of the poorest parts of Burkina Faso. The Centre assists children from the Gourma, the Mossi and the Fulani people groups. Through the government, the Centre currently receives enriched milk powder that is used in the rehabilitation of malnourished children. Project funds are used to purchase infant formula and regular whole milk powder for the orphans.

***"Defend the poor and fatherless;
do justice to the afflicted and needy."
Psalm 82:3 (NKJV)***

HELPING KIDS WITH DISABILITY

SIM's *Help for the Handicapped* is another tax-deductible project helping kids in Burkina Faso. The project helps to empower people with disabilities to live autonomously through physical rehabilitation and social integration.

Help for the Handicapped supports The Centre for the Advancement of the Handicapped (CAH) which was founded by an SIM missionary nurse in 1989. Located in the Mahadaga area, CAH has over 40 full-time teachers, social workers and therapists. In the past three years alone, CAH has assisted more than 950 adults and 1700 children with disabilities through medical treatment, post-surgery care, physiotherapy and specialty equipment.

CAH runs a school for children who have hearing or visual impairments where the children can learn through sign language or braille. Last year 280 students were attending the primary school. CAH has recently expanded its housing system for children with disabilities and now has boarding capacity for approximately 100 children. The school has some of the highest pass rates in the region. CAH also provides sponsorship and support for children with disabilities to attend local schools in their villages.



Tani was born blind. As an orphan, she was forced to sit alone at home each day as her carers went to the market, to the fields or to school. **Tani thought there was no future for her, that she may as well be dead.**

One day a team member from the *Help for the Handicapped* project heard about Tani during one of his community visits and offered her a place at the CAH school where she was able to begin her education through braille. With the encouragement and support of the CAH school teacher, Tani excelled in her studies and grew in self confidence. She enjoyed developing friendships with the other children who could relate to the challenges she had experienced with her disability.

When she completed primary school, the team at *Help for the Handicapped* approached a local high school about enrolling her. With classes of 60-80 students, the high school teachers were concerned Tani would not be able to keep up, but eventually they agreed to accept Tani as a student.

Tani is now at the top of her high school class! Tani's achievement was a catalyst in opening the door for other children with visual impairment to attend high school. Tani can now live with dignity and purpose because she was able to find love, care and support through the *Help for Handicapped* project.

"These children are rarely recognised as full persons because of their disability," said Eleanor Morris, a returned missionary of SIM Australia who worked with the *Help for the Handicapped* project as a physiotherapist.

*"They learn what it is to be loved. . . .
Time and time again, I witnessed
the transformation this love produces:
from rejection to dignity,
from desperation to hope."*

GIVE:

Your gift to our *Community Transformation Fund* (09320) can help to transform lives through projects like *Caring for Kids* and *Help for the Handicapped* in Burkina Faso, empowering children and adults to fulfil their potential. You can **give online** or use the response form at the back of this newsletter. Gifts over \$2 are **tax-deductible**.

SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS



A better life. It's something many of us hope for ourselves and our children. In Australia we think about better education and health services. But for many farm families in rural areas of Ethiopia and Niger, a better life means not suffering from malnutrition. Sustainable sources of food are essential for their survival.

NIGER: SOWING SEEDS OF CHANGE

SIM's *Sowing Seeds of Change* project in the Sahel region of Niger is training farmers and facilitating land regeneration and food sustainability programs. The project also runs a health program for women, empowering them through nutrition and hygiene education and traditional birth attendant training to reduce the risk of disease and complications during pregnancy and childbirth.

Many families in this rural community struggle to survive due to insufficient food, poor nutrition and sanitation, especially when annual millet crops fail due to insufficient rain, pests and diseases. SIM started doing development in the Sahel region to address this need.

Ruth Perkins, Australian midwife and project manager for the health training program for SIM's *Sowing Seeds of Change* uses storytelling and role plays to train traditional birth attendants to care for women during pregnancy and childbirth, reducing the risk or impact of complications.

Cimma and her husband, an agricultural worker, attended one of Ruth's training seminars. Cimma learnt quickly and soon became a mentor to the other birth attendants. She was well respected in the area and women came from other villages so that Cimma could attend to their pregnancies.

Lives are being transformed through *Sowing Seeds of Change*.

"Over the last couple years these farm workers have had a lot of opportunity for personal growth – from learning how to calculate the profitability of a farm or business, to techniques for improving field crop yields... It was encouraging to hear stories of how some of these men have experimented on their own farms, sometimes with yields surpassing those on the research farms," said Ruth.

ETHIOPIA: FOREST FRUIT & FORAGE (5Fs)

The Awi people of Injibarra, Ethiopia face famine routinely. Population growth put pressure on land resources, leading to erosion. SIM's *Forest Fruit and Forage for Farm Families (5Fs)* project teaches the Awi people sustainable farming techniques that are vital to ensure the future of their families and their environment.

The 5Fs project began in 1999 with a focus on forest revegetation to improve quality of life. Locals showed great enthusiasm for the fruit training and production, so this aspect of the project has seen significant expansion. Now the scope of the 5Fs project includes education and training in fruit and vegetable production as well as growing fodder and forest seedling to sell to other farmers, or to the government and other organisations.

Through the project, farm families are able to make improvements to their houses, buy school uniforms for their children through income generated through farming. They are also able to incorporate a larger variety of fruit and vegetable in their diet, helping to prevent malnutrition and illness.

The 5Fs project is situated on the main road between Addis Ababa and Bahar Dar, enabling farmers to market their products from the project to passer byers. People are now stopping and asking for products– apples and plums are growing and selling particularly well. The fruit sellers in Injibara are also taking fruit to sell to locals and visitors in the town. This is exciting news and many are benefiting!

GIVE:

Your gift to our *Community Transformation Fund* (09320) can help to transform lives through projects like 5Fs and *Sowing Seeds of Change*, empowering farmers to provide food for their families. You can **give online** or use the response form at the back of this newsletter. Gifts over \$2 are **tax-deductible**.

My Response

- Please email me monthly enews about projects mission
 Please mail me SIM Mission Together newsletter
 Please mail me information about leaving a bequest to SIM
 Please remove me from your mailing list

I will GIVE

Project	Project Number	Amount
TAX-DEDUCTIBLE		
Girls off the Streets Fund	09340	\$
Community Transformation Fund	09320	\$
Where Most Needed	68011	\$
NON TAX-DEDUCTIBLE		
Support Ben and Penny	041802	\$
OTHER:		\$
TOTAL		\$

^ All donations to SIM projects will receive a receipt. SIM Australia will use gifts to meet the needs of the projects specified. Should a project raise funds in excess of its target, we will apply it to similar projects where most needed. Donations for SIMaid projects over \$2 are tax-deductible.

MY DETAILS (*required fields)

Donor Number (if known) _____ *Title Mr / Mrs / Ms / Miss / Dr / Rev _____
*First name _____ *Surname _____
*Address _____
*Suburb _____ *State _____ *Postcode _____
*Phone _____ Email _____

MY GIFT:

One-off gift
 Regular pledge: Monthly Quarterly Yearly Payments to begin: next month OR date ___ / ___ / ___
Please debit my: Visa Mastercard Amex
Name on card _____ Signature _____
Card no. ___ / ___ / ___ / ___ Expiry ___ / ___

Please make all cheques payable to SIM Australia.

Give to SIM Australia through Steer Inc - visit www.steerinc.com/

Direct Debit (download the form at www.sim.org.au/other-ways-to-give)

SIM Australia facilitates missionaries from anywhere to everywhere, working in a diverse range of ministries. SIMaid is the aid and development arm of SIM Australia, and as such seeks to follow the teaching and example of Jesus Christ in offering practical help to communities in poverty. SIMaid directs resources into sustainable aid and development projects in partnership with local communities to empower them to live with dignity and hope.

Contact Details

PO Box 42, Penshurst NSW 2222

www.sim.org.au (P) 02 9580 1422 (E) partner.relations@sim.org.au

SIM Australia ABN 46 002 679 441 SIMaid ABN 43 484 030 223

PFN154

simaid
aid that gets there



SIM
Serving In Mission