



Dear Friends of Shoshana!

Christmas Letter 2007

Christmas and the holidays draw ever nearer. In the shops, one already hears Christmas music. And perhaps at this time of year no one wants to hear anything of India or its poverty. Nevertheless, I would like to let you know something of my October trip.



Naveen – 7 years old, needs a chance for a decent life. The son of the nurse Anandakumari at our Ramapuram Medical Center, he was born without an anus, and even after six operations, he still has several major problems. Added to his many terrible experiences is his inability to attend school because the other children mock him and tell him he stinks. Thanks to several spontaneous donors, we were immediately able to buy him disposable diapers. He will now be able to return to school. But he still faces the prospect of many operations before he can live a life even close to normal. The operations will be free, but the costs of the tests: x-rays, MRIs, and so on are prohibitively expensive, so we badly need donations for the cost of the tests as Anandakumari seeks a doctor who will perform the surgery. Any assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Bindu, our Admin Assistant in India

Bindu's visit to Germany caused a change in her attitude. Her trip was a learning experience; she now knows that Shoshana donors do not have unlimited funds, but often do without so that they may contribute to help her poor citizens. Since she returned, she has doubled her efforts. She now understands that all contributions need not come from foreign donors, but from Indians as well. But she will have a hard time finding Indian donors: most Indians think that rich westerners can bear the entire burden of donations. And the prosperous Indians forget that about 70 % of the population do not share in the prosperity, but live in abject poverty.



Bindu, (2d fm left) at a meeting with four of our nurses

Unsuccessful attempt or worthy initiative?

So as not to be totally dependent on donations, I wrote to the CEO of a large firm, explained what we do, and asked for help. His reply was that there was no future in sewing instruction, that the answer lies in technology, that the needy women would better benefit

from training in computer skills and information technology. What are all the poor girls and women, who can neither read nor write, supposed to do with information technology training? What good is computer training when they have nothing at home to eat? Direct help is necessary, so that children should not have to work instead of going to school.



Poorna with one of her sons

Shoshana Projects are Effective!

A pleasant surprise was the visit to Poorna, one of Adilakshmi's former students in Tenali. We were overjoyed when she told us about what she now does. Thanks to her sewing classes, she sews for all her neighbors and earns money to supplement what her husband earns, which only covers household expenses. Despite being a small sum by our standards, it is enough to enable her to send her sons to college. While they now live in a small room, nonetheless her sons will have a much better future.

Poorna is only one example of more than 500 students that underwent our sewing training and education.

Adilakshmi converted some years ago with her family from Hinduism to Christianity. Difficult times with much want and rejection are now behind her. Since she has become involved with Shoshana, everything goes forward with her family. Now she is happy that she can also help others.



Poorna and Adilakshmi, our instructor in the Tenali Sewing Center.

Our work does reach the needy in India. Although not magnificent successes, what we do accomplish with our limited means is significant. I am astonished again and again how entire families gain a new outlook on life, and a brighter future becomes possible.

A personal Request:

In case you have not yet exhausted your budget before Christmas, we would be grateful for any support you can give us and the women in India in their battle against poverty! With the assistance of what you can contribute, Shoshana can bring light into the darkness, and I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sincerely yours,

Martha B. Järn