



Novi Survat Charitable Organisation

(New Beginnings – for the destitute of Goa)

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Winter is looming although the weather in Devon is still unseasonably mild but very wet and windy. Roger & I had a good trip to Goa in November and managed to fulfil the tasks we had earmarked to be done. It was lovely to meet all (or nearly all) the children who have graduated from Starting Point – a number of them are young adults and when you realise you knew them as young children it makes you realise how time is ticking by.

Starting Point School.

It was a real pleasure to meet the children who have graduated from Starting Point as well as the new children. At present there are 45 children who are registered to attend but as the year goes by this will probably reduce to 30 / 35 as some of them drop out and some may move or return to their native village.

Jane and her staff continue to do a marvellous job but Gracie & Davalbi must find feeding so many children each day quite a task. Due to the increasing number of hotels and visitors to Goa the price of fish and chicken has risen alarmingly so Gracie is having to shop around to keep to the budget or find alternative menus. She likes to make sure the children have a different main course each day that is nutritious as well as fruit for pudding.

Those of you who have visited Starting Point will be familiar with the arrangements for transporting children to and from school i.e. an eight seater minibus with up to 20 children on board! However whilst we were in Goa a new law came into force that a maximum of eight children were to be carried. In typical Indian form no one was aware of this new law until our minibus was stopped one afternoon resulting in Jane having to attend the magistrate's court next day and pay a fine of 2500 rs (£25). It appears that the local police had stopped very many taxis and school buses and as the new law had not been 'advertised' there is now a three month settling in period before any more fines will be made! Jane was advised to 'pay up and shut up' as if she contested the case it would be referred and not heard for up to two years during which time our minibus would be impounded!

Day Care Centre.

We still have a problem with staffing but are able to maintain a good level of patient consultations. Hopefully Smisha will be fit enough to return in the near future which should relieve the workload on the other physiotherapists.

It is hoped to engage part-time speech and occupational therapists to extend the treatment we are able to offer these disabled children.

It is wonderful to see the progress these children make; bearing in mind we only see them twice a year. To see a child walking for the first time or just being able to sit upright on their own and carry out simple tasks is inspiring and must make life so much easier for the families and much more to the children themselves.

Sponsors / supporters.

Thank you to Jenny Wooler who organised a sale of 'unwanted items' that raised over £200.

We are sad to report the passing away of Len Solley who for years has been a generous donor. We extend our condolences to his widow Vivienne.

Thanks are also due to Michelle and Rebecca who once again have been kind enough to look after our stall in the Exmouth Indoor Market in my absence.

Our grateful thanks to Alay Patel, Chris Bevan and Ruth Greenwood for their very generous donations following the sad passing of members of their families. Bequests such as these are, unless a specific request has been made, used in relation to the education of children as we feel that this has a long term benefit. For various reasons some educational sponsors are unable to continue with their sponsorship and we as trustees feel that it is right to ensure that the children's education should continue so we have an account that provides and protects each child's educational needs through to university if necessary.

We are grateful to all of you who contribute in many ways. Fundraising can sometimes be very disheartening, for example Julia & Roger recently spent a whole day at a school Christmas Fayre with a variety of items to sell including some from Goa. They raised just £25 - £5 of which they had to use to pay for the table!

Educational Sponsorship Scheme.

As stated previously Roger & I were able to meet all but five of the sponsored children and take their photographs. The remaining five Jane will hopefully email me in the next week and then I will be able to send sponsors their annual photo update and copies of the school reports where available.

Apika who graduated as a doctor last July is now on her one year internship, Deepa is studying for her A levels and her ambition is to become a lecturer in Biology, whilst Biyama, Karishma, Malik, Rubina, Seema & Senny are completing their school certificate year and have all expressed a wish to carry on and take their A level course should they achieve sufficient results.

These are fantastic achievements for children who had little hope of receiving an education but have proved that with a little help they can compete with the best.

Outreach work.

Jane continues to help destitute families under our 'outreach programme'. She has been providing fruit, clothing and toys to the children and clothes to the adults. Some of the clothing is that that we have taken out with us and some is purchased locally such as saris for the ladies and shorts for the men. It should be remembered that these people have only one set of clothes and after months of wear whilst engaged on road building etc they become rags.

Jane, who has a weekly budget to spend, has also distributed food and milk to street children in Panjim and other outlying villages where she comes across desperately poor families.

Once again I have to express our gratitude to all you who support, fundraise, sponsor and donate to our work. You are all in so many different ways responsible for our success and can be all be proud of the achievements of the children and staff.

So, on behalf of all the children, staff and trustees may I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and trust that 2016 will be both peaceful and prosperous.

Clive.