



Making young people's dreams a reality

Dear friends,

I am delighted to share with you the results of our final year high school students this year. Over 250 students have scored a first division and are now eager to enter university.

As I look at their faces full of hope and eyes gleaming with dreams of a better future, I am reminded of the day we launched our Higher Education Programme in 2008. At that time I could have only imagined it would have an impact like the one we are seeing now. Slums are characterised by filth and garbage surrounding living spaces, blaring noises from the neighbourhood and large families crowded into tiny one room homes. For the children growing up amidst such deplorable conditions, the idea of getting into college and studying alongside students from well-off families was completely remote.

But I knew that these young people had incredible capacity and strength, and were capable of reaching great heights. And all we needed to do was to give them the belief that their dreams could be made possible.

Now, in 2014, we have literally hundreds of stories of successful young people from the slums. Students like Anil who show us what has been made possible with your support. And Shabnam, one of Asha's top scoring high school students, is hoping to continue the journey that has just begun.



Anil at his desk during his internship at Macquarie (2012)

Anil is a lively young man who lives with his parents and brother in Ravidas slum colony. By his dedication, and with the support of Asha, his story is proof of what is possible.

As he studied in high school, Asha encouraged him with regular counselling sessions, textbooks and sample exam papers. This coupled with his committed efforts helped him excel in his class 12 exams and opened up his chances of going to University.

However, Anil was indecisive about whether to study further, as his family's financial condition was not very good. His father, an auto-rickshaw driver, although very supportive of his dreams, was not able to afford his university fees.

Seeing Anil's passion and ability, Asha was able to step in and pay his college tuition fee as well as help him and his family through the complicated college admission process. After three years of studying at Delhi University, he completed a degree in commerce. Furthermore, his internship at Macquarie Global Finance Services through Asha's internship programme allowed him to add a professional edge to his qualification.

Starting to believe in his capabilities, Anil went on to study day and night for the competitive exams needed to secure him a government job. His dream came true

when he passed his exams and was appointed at the income tax office of the Government of India in 2013.

Not only this, Anil is also mentoring his younger brother Sunil, Asha topper from the year 2012, who is presently studying at one of the best colleges in the city. He wants to follow his brother's footsteps to pursue a career in finance.

Shabnam lives in Saraswati Camp slum colony. Her father is a barber while her mother works as a domestic help. She began receiving support from Asha at high school where she would attend workshops on exam preparation and stress management.

Shabnam has had to overcome numerous obstacles in her journey through school. When she was just beginning her final year of schooling, her mother was diagnosed with TB, leaving all the household responsibility on her shoulders.

Moreover, due to noise in the slum and outside on the roads next to her home, the only time she was able to study was at night. However, this too was difficult as her house is extremely congested with the entire family of seven members sharing one room. Despite these challenges, Shabnam continued to work hard and made use of all the resources that Asha provided.

Amazingly, when this year's exam results were declared, Shabnam learned that she had cleared her 12th standard National level examination with an average of 90%, including a score of 95 for Political Science, 93 in Geography and 90 in Hindi.

"My friends said that I am the topper from my community, I could not believe what they were saying. The results have given me a fresh inspiration to move ahead in life despite all the hurdles. Situations in life have made me stronger. Asha's assistance was incredible", says Shabnam.


Shabnam wants to pursue a career in Computer Science, but owing to the poor economic conditions of her family, her parents are reluctant to send her to college. With your help we will do all we can to help, motivate and counsel her parents and to enable Shabnam to achieve the dreams she has worked so hard for.



Shabnam outside her house in Saraswati slum colony

Shabnam and Anil's stories stand as a testimony of what students from the slums are capable of achieving when provided an opportunity. But their hard work can only get them so far when the financial and social obstacles remain set against them. They have the chance to transform their lives, but without your support, they have no one else to turn to.

I would encourage individual supporters to reach out to their networks and make efforts to raise resources for at least one student. It is my hope that churches, schools and other institutions will be able to support a larger number of students. By becoming a regular giver or making a one off donation, you could make the difference that will turn Shabnam's dreams into Anil's reality.



Dr Kiran Martin
Founder and Director

With the continued rise in university fees and other expenses, the cost of sending one child for higher education is only increasing each year. With your support we can ensure that no child is left behind due to lack of resources. Here's how we will put your money to work:

\$60 will cover one college preparation workshop for 30 children

\$95 will provide a student with new clothes for university

\$130 will buy books for one child for one year

\$425 will pay the university tuition fees for one child for one year

\$950 will cover all university expenses for one child for one year

Supporters from the US Can Make Tax Deductible Donations to Asha

The American Society for Health for All (ASHA, USA) (EIN #010557632) can collect funds for Asha from the USA.

To make a Tax Deductible Donation, please make your check payable to "American Society for Health for All" and mail to:

Louanne Hempton, American Society for Health for All (ASHA), 96 Sweetwater Ave #6, Bedford, MA 01730, USA

Email: lhempton@hotmail.com | ASHA (USA) is a 501 (C) 3 registered charity.

You can also send your contribution directly to Asha

To donate online, please visit our website at www.asha-india.org/getinvolved/donate

To donate by cheque, write a cheque made payable to "Asha Community Health and Development Society" and mail to:

The Administrator, Asha Society, Ekta Vihar, RK Puram Sector 6, New Delhi 110022, INDIA

Posting named cheques to India is a perfectly safe and secure method of making your donation.

Please be assured that you will not incur any bank charges when donating directly to Asha in India.

Yes, I want to become a 'Friend of Asha'

My contribution of _____ is enclosed.

I would like to become a Hope Giver and contribute _____ every month. My first contribution is enclosed.

Please send me a standing order form.

I particularly want to contribute towards _____

Please keep me informed about Asha's activities. My email _____

Full name & title _____ Organisation (if any) _____

Address _____

City _____ Postcode _____ Country _____