

The difference 25 years make in the life of a child



Dear Friends,

As our anniversary year comes to an end, I reflect on the families I treated in the slums 25 years ago. I remember the sadness I felt when I witnessed first hand the deep disadvantage that it was to be born into a slum.

In the next few years as I offered basic healthcare, I could never have thought the difference that 25 years would make to the lives of the many children I was treating. For example, when two-year-old Divakar came into our health centre in Kanak Durga slum colony to get vaccinated, little could I have dreamt that this introduction to Asha would transform his life completely and that we would one day see our work bear fruit in a way I could not have expected.



Divakar (Center, in white) and other members of the Children's Group in Kanak Durga slum colony

Today a confident young man pursuing a post-graduate degree in Management from one of the most prestigious MBA institutes in Pune, 23-year-old Divakar has been living in Kanak Durga Camp all his life. His family of five share one room with walls made of mud and only a tin sheet as a roof. His father is a daily wage labourer earning about \$4 per day.

As for many children, the Asha centre in the slum became like a second home to Divakar. At the insistence of his mother, a member of our Women's Group, Divakar joined the Children's Group in his slum at the age of 5 and became its president by the age of 9.

Staff at Asha worked hard to support Divakar throughout his schooling years. He attended English and computer classes, proving very popular with both teachers and volunteers. Although he thrived, the idea of attending college was still a distant dream. However, in the year he finished school, we also launched our Higher Education Programme and with our guidance and financial support he was able to secure a place at

Delhi University, followed by a post-graduate diploma.

Since graduating, Divakar has had the opportunity to intern with British mining group Rio Tinto and Australian financial provider Macquarie through the Internship Programme. He then found a good job at the Open Hand Café at the American Embassy School. Now with an educational loan granted through our Financial Inclusion Programme, he has taken the bold decision to undertake an MBA.

For Divakar, Asha's development over the past 25 years could not have been more crucial. The opportunity we have provided him will ensure he has an equal chance of securing a good job and furthering a life of dignity for him and his family. **As I let myself look to the future, I think of the children being born today and hope that these services will remain available to them, so that in the next 25 years there will be thousands more stories of hope like Divakar's.**

It is because of this dream that this Christmas, in our anniversary year, we ask you to support our on-going work with children. I truly believe that the future of Asha will be seen through the lives of children growing up in the slums today.

On behalf of all the staff in the Asha family I would like to thank you for your generous support over the past 25 years. Together we will continue to transform lives.

May God bless you and your family this Christmas.

Dr Kiran Martin
Founder and Director



Divakar speaking at an event in front of the Australian High Commissioner

Help us transform the next 25 years for thousands more children

Give the gift of Hope this Christmas

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." Mark 10:13-16

In 1988, 36% of slum children suffered from severe malnutrition; today the figure in Asha slums is 1%, while 99% of under-fives are assessed as healthy for their age



In 1988, less than 50% of slum children went to school; today attendance rates from Asha slums are 98% and almost 900 trailblazing students have been accepted into higher education, many at Delhi University

Life giving healthcare

That ensures children are given the best start in life

\$15 will vaccinate 3 children against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis
\$30 will provide full medical care and vaccinations for a child's first year of life



Activities to help them thrive

Our children's groups are educational and fun

\$175 will run a children's group in one slum for a year
\$40 will pay for a Christmas party for 30 children

Children in Asha slums form advocacy groups to tackle issues like ensuring their peers attend school, children less than 5 years of age get vaccinated and other basic rights; over 2000 children get this training each year

Education for the future

From school through to university we help slum children realise their potential

\$30 will pay for an educational workshop for 30 children
\$65 will provide career counselling for 10 children
\$300 will pay for university tuition fees for one student for one year



I would like to give \$ _____ for _____ this Christmas.

Full Name (including title): _____

Address: _____

Town/City: _____ Postcode: _____ Country: _____

I wish to add a personal Christmas message to a child in the slums:

If you are a US taxpayer then you can 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: lhempston@hotmail.com EIN #010557632 | ASHA (USA) is a 501 (C) 3 registered charity.

To donate online: Please visit our website at www.asha-india.org/getinvolved/donate

To send cheques directly to Asha:

Please fill in your details above, write a cheque made payable to "ASHA COMMUNITY HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY"
(cheques must be made in this name) and post it 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.

Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas from all at Asha