

# INSAF Newsletter

**November 2008**  
**Volume 33 Issue 2**

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## **INSAF PROJECT EFFORT DOWN IN 2008**

Perhaps it is the downward draft of the market and the economy at large — the INSAF project effort is down dramatically this year. The cumulative project effort so far this year teeters at just over \$27,000 in comparison with \$83,963 and \$110,701 for the full calendar years of 2006 and 2007, respectively. However, there is still some time left in this year, so let us see if there is a surge in project activities in the coming weeks.

Highlights from this year so far:

- ♦ Joginder and Meera Kundra had made a major commitment in 2006 to support the building of a **Children's Home in Pondicherry**. After contributing \$56,000 during 2006-2007, the Kundras have sent an additional \$9,900 this year. In addition, Madan & Usha Goel have also added \$2,000 to the project in addition to their \$2,000 last year. Please see the Newsletter from November last year for some pictures of the initial construction at the children's home. We'll share further information as it becomes available.
- ♦ Ashok and Sanju Soni have been supporting the **Shri Om Parkash Soni Charitable Hospital** in Jagraon, Punjab, which provides free medicines and other medical services to needy patients irrespective of caste, creed, or religion. This year they have sent \$10,000 to support the hospital. Ashok & Usha Sachdev have also sent \$905, which includes a \$155 contribution from INSAF, to help the hospital. You can read more about this on Page 6.
- ♦ Additional funding is under preparation for two projects. One is to support the work of the **Maheshwary Charitable Trust**, Hoshiarpur, Punjab. The Trust is dedicated to helping those in need through a variety of services as you can see on Page 3. The other is for several projects through Sodhana in Chipurupalli, Andhra Pradesh, including the Ramalingapuram Village Adoption Project. Project details can be found on Page 2.
- ♦ Fremont, California High School senior Radhika Gosavi developed and implemented a project at Aazgaon village on the Maharashtra side of its border with Goa. Please see Pages 5-6 for pictures and other details.
- ♦ A clinic founded by a young lady veterinarian in New Delhi is working to help the stray animals there. Pictures and details on this Project are on Page 4.

Many thanks to the Project Sponsors and Project Leaders. Let's see if we can do more in 2009. Here is wishing Happy Holidays and a great year in 2009 to each and everyone in INSAF.

## **RAMALINGAPURAM VILLAGE, Andhra Pradesh**

Over the past 3 years, a group of 8 INSAF families has "adopted" Ramalingapuram (R'puram), a small village in Andhra, making a long-term commitment towards its progress. During 2006-2007, a classroom was added to the Primary School in collaboration with Sodhana, an NGO based in nearby Chipurupalli. Subsequently, a pre-school has been started at R'puram. INSAF funding in 2008 was at \$2,000. Now, with an eye towards Yr 2009, a 2nd pre-school is likely to get our support at the 2nd of two villages under the R'puram panchayat. Excerpts from communications with Dr. P.D.K. Rao of Sodhana are included below:

27 June 2008

"..... The additional room constructed in Ramalingapuram upper primary school has been very useful. The pre school in Ramalingapuram village is going on very well....."

21 Oct 2008

".... We are happy to inform you that our pre school methodology is becoming very popular. We trained 100 tribal youth from Adilabad district who went and started 100 pre schools under the leadership of Mr. Monohar Prasad I.A.S who took voluntary retirement to start this work. Also, Mr. Chaya Ratan, Principal Secretary women and Child Welfare sent 46 Anganwadi staff, 2 from each district, (AP has 23 districts) to be trained by Sodhana in its pre school methodology.

We are celebrating Nov 14th children's day. We will be extremely happy if any one from INSAF can grace the occasion as the function will be held in Purayavalasa, hamlet village of Ramalingapuram. Ramalingapuram Panchayat consists of two villages (1) Ramalingapuram (2) Purayavalasa separated by a distance of ½ a kilometer. Seeing what has been happening in Ramalingapuram, villagers from Purayavalasa approached us repeatedly requesting a volunteer in their primary school, and for starting a pre-school for their children. They were very eager and contributed and constructed a pre school hut. We started a pre school there and also provided a volunteer to the primary school.

If the funding can be increased from USD 2,000 to USD2,750, we will be able to meet the financial requirement for these activities in Purayavalasa also. That way INSAF will be helping fully the educational needs of Ramalingapuram Panchayat children. I request you all in INSAF to give a thought to this and let us know ....."

(Note: The sponsoring INSAF families have agreed to this request).

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK WITH SODHANA**

In addition to the education related work at R'puram (please see the article on the left on this page), INSAF has also been collaborating with Sodhana in several community development activities in the Chipurupalli area for more than 20 years. During 2007-2008, the following activities were supported with a contribution of \$2,300:

1. **Educational and Medical Aid:** Under this project, stipends are paid to volunteers and coordinators who organize cultural training and national festival functions. Financial assistance is provided to poor students and to poor families in the event of a medical emergency.
2. **Women's Empowerment:** Under this project, Sodhana coordinators are working with about 2,000 women from about 20 villages to help them organize into self-help groups. The goal is to promote the economic development of their families through monthly savings and loans from the banking system. Funding from INSAF helps pay stipends to volunteer coordinators.

The following excerpts from communications with Sodhana's Dr. P.D.K. Rao provide additional background.

1 Nov 2008

".. Sodhana to a large extent confined its activities to 3 mandals: Chipurupalli, Garividi and Meraka Mudidam. We do not want to compromise on quality by over expansion. What we are happy to note is the quality of our work is attracting others both Governmental and non Governmental agencies. We like to assist these agencies if they want to start similar work in their areas. We are willing to share what all we learned with them, so that the concepts are made accessible to more number of people. Sodhana has always tried to maintain a low profile, yet over the years the quality of our work has been discussed about, and we do not want to become a development tourism centre. ..."

### **Calling Member Volunteers for 2009-2011**

INSAF members who can spare a few hours per month are hereby requested to step forward to help provide leadership to INSAF for the next term of the Executive Committee which runs Feb 1, 2009 through Jan 31, 2011.

Please send an e-mail by December 15 to the Editor at sharma@interspex.com for further follow-up. Please do consider this flexible leadership position and help make INSAF more effective in helping those who need us.

## **MAHESHWARY CHARITABLE TRUST, HOSHIARPUR, PUNJAB**

The Maheshwari Charitable Trust carries out a significant number of charitable activities in Hoshiarpur, Punjab. These activities are supported through INSAF by virtue of an annual commitment of about \$1,000 by the **Surinder & Nirmal Maheshwary Family (including Drs. Suneer & Laura Maheshwary)**.

Since 2002, the Late Shrimati Dwarki Devi Scholarships are awarded to 6 students (3 male, 3 female) at the S.D. Higher Secondary School, Hoshiarpur. Shrimati Dwarki Devi Ji, Surinder's mother, was a pious lady who always had a soft heart for poor people (servants, vegetable vendors, street hawkers) and gave them the same respect as she did to doctors and attorneys. The Trust also provides awards to deserving girl-students in the form of tuition support and books. An annual contribution of about \$250 is made to a semi-government-run orphanage. In addition, an annual handicrafts workshop is organized by the Trust to help handicapped persons with food, clothing, and other necessities. The Trust also organizes an annual food-kitchen event for the poor.

In 2007, the Trust spent over \$6,000 for various charitable activities. About \$2,500 of the total was donated to help build a new S.D. Public (English Medium) School. Our Surinder Maheshwary inaugurated the school's annual awards function in November 2007, where Punjab's Education Minister was the Chief Guest. In addition, Drs. Suneer and Laura volunteered at a meal service, organized by the Maheshwary Trust, at a local orphanage.

Now Surinder and the Maheshwary family are working through the Trust to start a small school, Dwarkidevi-INSAF Vidya Mandir, similar to Ekal Vidyalaya. The school would have 1 or 2 rooms with one teacher for extremely poor people who normally would not have the opportunity to attend any school because of their unfortunate circumstances. The initial step is to acquire some land for the school. Many other details need to be worked out but as Surinder said, "God willing, it will happen". Please stay tuned for further updates in future Newsletters.

### **E-Newsletter or Paper Copy?**

How do you feel about getting an e-copy (pdf file) of this Newsletter via the e-mail? It would save INSAF about \$2.50 per family per year. However, we do understand if you prefer a paper copy. We'll ask for your preference via the e-mail.

## **WARM WELCOME:**

A very warm welcome to the following new INSAF members:

Sh. Rakesh & Ms. Geeta Kapur, Short Hills, NJ  
Drs. Suneer & Laura Maheshwary, West New York, NJ  
Sh. Ranga & Ms. Bhanu Raghavan, Dayton, OH

## **INSAF SPONSORED CHILDREN UPDATE**

Sixteen children based in Maharashtra, Haryana, Punjab, and Kerala are being sponsored by 8 different INSAF families. Here are updates on some of the children.

**Bhawna (SOS Children's Village, Rajpura, Punjab),** 5, is growing up well and has received her immunizations and a periodical medical exam. This year, Bhawna's performance has been excellent and she has been promoted to UKG. She scored 89% marks in LKG. Bhawna is now more responsible in doing her homework and studying for exams. She is good at telling rhymes, alphabets and numbering. She likes dance and actively participates in School/Village activities.

**Akanksha (SOS Children's Village, Rajpura),** 5, was promoted to UKG with 86% marks. Akanksha is an innocent girl with attractive eyes. She attracts everybody with her cute smile. She is vocal with her family members but she becomes shy with strangers. In evenings she usually enjoys on swings and she likes to play and sit on different slides with her siblings. At home she loves to play with kitchen set, doctor set, teddy bear, balloons and dolls. She likes to draw pictures on the walls.

**Krish (SOS Children's Village, Rajpura),** 5, is 3 ft 2 in. tall with an attractive personality. He was promoted to UKG after scoring 97.7% marks in LKG. He stood first in his class and got the prize. According to his teachers, he is an active, sharp, courteous and an energetic boy. From this academic session, Krish had been studying in the Village Kindergarten. Now he is studying in Patel Public School, which is a good reputed English medium school in our city and is close to the Village.

**Shalini (SOS Children's Village, Rajpura),** 7, is a smart girl. This year, Shalini has excelled in passing class I with 98% marks from Jasper School with an A+ grade.

(Continued on Page 4)

## Animal India Trust, New Delhi

INSAF member **Aruna Marathe** started a new project last year to help stray animals in New Delhi. Under this project, one month's medicine expenses of a mobile medical clinic, operated by the Animal India Trust, were covered with a contribution of \$300. The first picture below shows Veterinarian Dr. Yaiphabi Devi performing a neutering operation on a dog. Dr. Devi, the founder of Animal India Trust, is originally from the State of Manipur. The second picture below shows staffers Anil Kumar and Ramesh Rawat carrying a dog. Following some constructive feedback provided by Aruna, the Animal Trust has obtained a wooden stretcher for carrying the animals. Aruna had pointed out that the method of lifting shown could separate the dog's shoulders or lead to osteocondroital degeneration.

The Animal Trust provides vaccinations against rabies and distemper, parvo, etc. During 2008, they have sterilized about 400 dogs per month in New Delhi.



## SPONSORED CHILDREN'S UPDATE (Contd. From Page 3)

Shalini has done well but she needs to improve her handwriting. Shalini has grown to be more playful and naughty girl. She likes dance and takes part in extra curricular activities held at the Village and her School.

**Shreya (SOS Children's Village, Rajpura)**, 7, is growing up to be a pretty and courteous girl. Shreya secured 64% marks and was promoted to Std II of Patel Public School. She has scored good marks in all subjects except Mathematics as she is weak in this subject. In order to improve her Math, she would have to put her extra efforts. For support, Shreya has been provided extra tuition for this subject. Shreya is close to her biological brother Krish and sister Bharti. She enjoys playing both indoor and outdoor games with her siblings.

**Bharti (SOS Children's Village, Rajpura)**, 11, is now four feet five inches. Bharti has passed class V board exams and has been promoted to class' VI. She is good in studies and secured 84% marks. She is a charming and loveable girl. Sometimes she helps her house mother in little domestic chores and in her kitchen garden. She likes to work on computers and has interest to read storybooks. She happily rides on her bicycle. Her favorite subjects are Science and Mathematics. She has interest to become a doctor. Besides studies, Bharti is good in singing and she attends music classes regularly. She can play Harmonium also. She participated in Shabad (prayer music) and group dance on SOS Day celebrations on 23rd June, 2008.

**Raisa Khurshid (Pune)**, 14, is shown with her mother. Raisa is in 10<sup>th</sup> grade in Baburao Sanas Karyashala. Raisa got only 37% marks in her 9th class final exam — perhaps affected by her mother's health problems. She practices her Namaz and Koran reading regularly.



**Shailesh Shinde, (Pune)**, 17, on the right, is in his 11th grade (Science) in Bhawe High School. In his 10th grade S.S.C. Board Exam, Shailesh scored 76.2%. Shailesh is in good health and would like to become an Engineer.







## CALIFORNIA TEENAGER DEVELOPS AND IMPLEMENTS PROJECT IN AAZGAON

Radhika Gosavi, a Fremont California High School senior, approached INSAF in June this year with a funding proposal. Would INSAF be willing to help fund her desire to volunteer for a week at a school in Village Aazgaon near Bhomwadi on the Maharashtra side of the Goa-Maharashtra border? Her grandparents had roots in Bhomwadi, and she still has relatives there. Radhika learned about INSAF through Padmashri Lad of INSAF, whose family in India knew Radhika's grandparents in India.

The project was considered by Padmashri, her husband Raj, Ashok and Darshan Mehan, Kaye and Bhav Sharma. They saw this as a great opportunity to encourage a promising teenager to help make this world a better place and to help a village school in India at the same time. Radhika was provided with a sum of \$1,000 from INSAF to help her buy materials for the school and to help with her local expenses.

Radhika spent about 4 weeks in India this past summer — 3 of those weeks getting ready for the week at the Aazgaon school. She asked the school staff in advance about their needs. Then she combined their input with her ideas and purchased many educational and sports materials such as a microscope, models for the heart and the digestive system, a globe, a TV and a DVD player etc. In early November, Radhika met with the INSAF sponsors and shared a video and slides from her stay at the school. The INSAF sponsors realized how the experience may have indeed had a long term positive impact on both Radhika as well as the Aazgaon school. Please see Page 6 for a letter to Radhika from the school.



### Pictures on the left:

**Top:** A function organized at the Aazgaon School (Aug 08)

**Middle:** Radhika with a group of boys and girls looking smart in their uniforms (Aug 08)

**Bottom** (L to R): Kaye & Bhav Sharma, Ash Mehan, Radhika Gosavi, Raj & Padmashri Lad (Nov 08)



To  
Radhika Gosavi

Dear Radhika,

We are very glad you chose our school in Bhomwadi, Aajgoan to conduct your project. The kids thoroughly enjoyed the experience and were totally engrossed in it. They not only learned a lot of valuable lessons, but more importantly they realized that learning is really fun. They really enjoyed watching the DVD's about transportation cleanliness, cities etc. The effectiveness of the visual presentations was seen by now quickly the kids grasped the concepts and the longevity of the experience. The children were very enthusiastic and their response was absolutely spontaneous. Along with the kids, the teachers too enriched their knowledge about using media other than books such as science experiments, creative artwork, sports, educational videos, and more. This convinced them that exposure to these different learning techniques, especially the hands on activities, made a lot of difference in the effectiveness of the children's learning. The positively different viewpoint on education that the children gained will definitely be lifelong companion.

The abundance of motivation and inspiration that you provided will surely help in leading the children to success. Your interaction with the kids was a pleasure to observe.

We are also forever grateful for all your donations to the school through the funds provided by INSAF, USA. The equipment was and will always be very intriguing for the kids and has provided excitement and thrill for them. The basic necessities that you provided such as writing desks benefited the kids a lot by helping to improve their posture, and provide a clean and even surface for studying. Also we greatly appreciate your provision of all that was in our wish list including books, a science kit, globe, sports equipment, DVD's and more.

Thank you so much for all your help and creative ideas. From this experience, we have decided to keep the room reserved for these activities where the students can come everyday to enrich their learning experience. Our teachers will surely build on the work that you have begun, and the kids cannot wait for you to return!

Sincerely,



Mr. Mathkar  
School coordinator



Mrs. Vengurlekar  
Head mistress



Mrs. Deshpande  
Block Education Officer  
BLOCK EDUCATION OFFICER  
Panchayat Samiti, Sawantwadi

महाराष्ट्र शासनाचे व. १  
वा. सावंतवाडी, जि. सिव्हर

श्री. विनायक मंदिर, सोमवाडी  
वा. सावंतवाडी, जि. सिव्हर

Magnifying glasses  
Plastic Animal set  
Kalidoscope  
Felt for Board  
Test+Tubes+Holder  
Phpaper  
Marathi story Books  
Digestive system model  
Heart Model  
Earth globe  
25 sheets of poster paper  
Showcase  
Tackpins+stationery  
Hardboard Board  
Nails+ other hardware  
Desks  
Baskets

12 sets of crayons  
4 sets of markers  
View master + slides  
Microscope  
Puzzle  
2 sets of glitter glue  
Foam sheets  
Foam flower cutouts  
Foam animal cutouts  
4 scissors  
6 glues  
Educational DVD's  
Educational Puzzle blocks  
English story books  
Basket+ball/Hoop+Ball  
Soccer Balls  
Eklavya Story cutouts  
Pigeon & ant Story cutouts  
Shivaji Story cutouts  
Water cycle  
Rainbow  
DVD player  
TV

All of the following items were received.  
Aajgoan from Radhika Gosavi through the funds provided by INSAF. 10mwadi,



Mr. Mathkar  
School coordinator



Mrs. Vengurlekar  
Head mistress



Mrs. Deshpande  
Block Education Officer  
BLOCK EDUCATION OFFICER  
Panchayat Samiti, Sawantwadi

महाराष्ट्र शासनाचे व. १  
वा. सावंतवाडी, जि. सिव्हर

श्री. विनायक मंदिर, सोमवाडी  
वा. सावंतवाडी, जि. सिव्हर

Above: Letter to Radhika Gosavi from the Aajgaon School, Bhomwadi, on the Maharashtra side of the border with Goa, and the list of items provided to the school by Radhika (with help from her family) with funding from INSAF. Please see Page 5 for additional details and pictures from the Aazgaon project.

## O. P. SONI CHARITABLE HOSPITAL, JAGRAON, PUNJAB

The Om Parkash Soni Charitable Trust has run a hospital in Jagraon, Punjab, for poor and needy patients, regardless of their caste or religion, for a number of years. In 2008, a contribution of \$10,905 (which includes a \$155 contribution from INSAF) has been sent by Ashok & Sanju Soni, and Ashok & Usha Sachdev. In 2007, a total of \$5,905 was sent by the Sonis and the Sachdevs. Slightly edited excerpts from a 2006 audit document, which could not be provided earlier due to space reasons, are being provided below.

From: Tehsildar, Jagraon

To: Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Jagraon

".. In reference to your noting dated 31 Mar 06, I visited Om Parkash Soni Charitable Hospital being run by O.P. Soni Charitable Trust, Chowk Kalan, Jagraon on 4 Apr 06 at about 12:40 PM and found that the monthly average of patients visiting the Hospital is more than 3,000 (verified from prescription register). Free medicines are being given to the patients and other facilities like pregnancy test, sugar test are also being provided.

I also verified from one patient, Surinder Kumar son of Man Singh of Jagraon, who was being injected an I/V drip which was supplied by the Hospital. Nearly 10-12 other patients were sitting there. All of them disclosed that each and every patient visiting the hospital gets medicines free of cost.

On the ground floor there is general OPD and on the first floor there is the Eye Dept, which is equipped with modern apparatus like an eye test machine and computer etc.

A team from the Christian Medical College, Ludhiana, visits the Hospital on every Wednesday. After proper check-up, eye patients are also provided free medicines including eye drops etc. Stocks of medicines are kept in a proper and hygienic condition.

The Trust has undertaken commendable welfare activities in the area since 16 Oct 97, and has incurred substantial expenditure amounting to Rs. 2,074,480 (over \$50,000) as per Income Tax records.

Further, the antecedents of the said Trust have been verified and nothing adverse (found). The Trust is doing a commendable service to the society.

Signed: Tehsildar, Jagraon. 10 April 2006.