

## A Letter from Jyotika Patel, member of PRASAD Board of Trustees



*"I realized that I had found a direct path to those whose needs are so great."*

Jyotika Patel

Everywhere in the world, there are men, women and children for whom the most basic food, medicine and shelter remain beyond reach.

And at the same time, there are people who wonder, "What can I do to help?" "How can I become involved?" "If I make a donation, how will I know that it was used for programming?"

When folks ask me these questions, I tell them that I understand; it can be hard to know where to begin. It can be hard to believe that one person's participation could be more than a tiny whisper against a roaring clamor of need. It can be even harder to know, beyond doubt, that one really has made a difference and how.

I tell such folks that I once asked the very same questions. And I tell them about PRASAD.

When I read PRASAD's vision statement, "...healthy communities prospering in harmony with the natural environment, and in which people are inspired to improve the quality of their own and others' lives..." I realized that I had found a direct path to those whose needs are so great.

Through PRASAD, I am responding to people's immediate, daily needs of food and medical care, but what about the next day, the next family, the next crisis?

As a PRASAD supporter, I know that I am also helping people to implement sustainable, community-wide economic, educational, environmental, health and agricultural programs.

To those of you who already support this important work, I offer you thanks on behalf of the more than 75,000 individuals who benefit from PRASAD's programs every year.

And to those who still wonder, "What can I do to help?" I offer this answer: If you want to be involved, if you want your money to go directly to support people in need, then choose PRASAD.

This newsletter will introduce you to some of the individuals, families and villages with whom PRASAD is working to craft long-term solutions to challenges that have plagued them for many generations. I hope their stories inspire you to join them on their amazing journey toward well-being and self-sufficiency.

Please visit us at [www.prasad.org](http://www.prasad.org) and discover more about PRASAD's mission and the many ways in which you can participate.

With love and gratitude,

Jyotika

Dear PRASAD supporters,

I am greatly encouraged by the growing number of our supporters who are personally promoting PRASAD Australia's work, and supporting fundraising and awareness-raising events. This effort is vital to achieving our vision. I thought it timely to reiterate PA's mission, values and vision and how you can be part of these.

**OUR MISSION:** PRASAD Australia's mission is to work with PRASAD Chikitsa to build a sustainable future for children, families and communities living in poverty, and to foster opportunities for their self-reliance.

**OUR VALUES:** Selfless service, enduring commitment, and respect for all people, regardless of race or belief.

**OUR VISION:** Our current vision is to fully fund the RCH (Reproductive and Children's Health) program by 2011.

PA's support for the RCH program has been growing steadily by about 10% per year. Unfortunately, the needs of the RCH program have been growing at a much faster rate. Currently we provide only about 60% of the funds needed and the balance is met by other PRASAD entities. This means some of the other projects that PRASAD in India and elsewhere would like to develop further have to be delayed or scaled down.

As you know, we achieved a major milestone of becoming an approved Overseas Aid Deductible Gift Recipient (OADGR). The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Taxation Office do not grant this status easily. It is a credit to PA that we have met all their criteria. With this status we can now confidently approach philanthropic and business organisations for additional financial support.

My request to PRASAD Australia supporters is threefold:

1. Continue your great support and spread the message to your friends and colleagues.
2. If you can, hold a fundraising or awareness-raising event. We can help you with this.
3. If you know of an organisation you think may be aligned and willing to help achieve our vision, please let us know.

Once again, thank you for your great support.

Peter Raines  
Chairman, PRASAD AUSTRALIA

# Program at a glance: PRASAD Chikitsa Fights HIV/AIDS

## The challenges

The number of HIV-positive cases in India is estimated to be 2.3 million.

Of those individuals, one in every five is believed to be in the state of Maharashtra, in the Tansa Valley, where PRASAD offers its HIV/AIDS programs.

The state of Maharashtra is particularly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS: It sits at the crossroads of major transportation routes used by a variety of travelers, including tourists, migrant workers and truck drivers. Prostitution has also become an issue in the area.



Women distribute information about HIV/AIDS at a busy marketplace in the Tansa Valley.

## PRASAD's response:

- Increase awareness about HIV/AIDS and related diseases.
- Diagnose early and treat existing HIV/AIDS patients.
- Provide comprehensive medical care and counseling to those affected.

**Your donations help us to provide:**

**Awareness training and education** – Between 2004 and 2009, PRASAD staff and volunteers reached more than 60,000 men, women and children in villages, schools, jobs and market places, and among self-help groups, law enforcement and medical communities and high-risk groups.

**Testing and counseling** – Family Health Center provides counseling before and after testing; collaborates with other healthcare providers to give prenatal testing to all pregnant women, with their consent; provides antiretroviral therapy (ART) free to infected pregnant mothers, and their infants, if born with the disease.

**Treatment and support** – Treat HIV-positive individuals for secondary infections; collaborate with the Indian Government to get ART to patients who need it; FHC outpatient clinic and day care center for HIV-infected adults and children. By January, 2009, more than 1,080 HIV-positive individuals had registered with PRASAD. That figure includes 128 children who are HIV-positive and 399 patients on ART.



Truck drivers listen as PRASAD staff discuss HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention during market day in the Tansa Valley.



Non-Government Organization (NGO) representatives attend an HIV/AIDS Awareness Training at PRASAD'S Family Health Center.

To read more about how your support is helping us to ease suffering and improve outcomes, please visit us at <http://www.prasad.org/programs/case-studies/hiv-case-study.php>.

# Thank You PRASAD Chikitsa Staff

Three million people suffer from HIV/AIDS in India. In 2005 the PRASAD Chikitsa HIV/AIDS program was established to respond to the alarming increase in the number of children, women and men being diagnosed by PRASAD Chikitsa medical staff in the Tansa Valley. Currently, 20 skilled and committed staff members are working on the HIV program where to date there is a total of 1,302 registered beneficiaries, including 157 children and 2,292 Integrated Counselling and Testing Centre clients. Not only has this work been recognised by the Project Director of the Maharashtra State AIDS Control Society, the PRASAD Australia Board would like to thank each and every staff member of PRASAD Chikitsa, especially Marie Elrington who has returned home after 20 years of dedicated and selfless service to PRASAD Chikitsa.

*Thank You, Thank You, Thank You.*

## Milestones

PRASAD Chikitsa was offered a Certificate of Appreciation by the MSACS (Maharashtra State AIDS Control Society) and the NACO (National AIDS Control Organization) for its contribution in the treatment of HIV/AIDS. The only nongovernment organisation in 2009 to receive this honour.

PRASAD Australia receives Overseas Aid Deductible Gift Recipient status from the Australian government. All donations to PRASAD Australia are now tax deductible.

The PRASAD Project organised the first international meeting in which representatives from Australia, France, Italy, India, Spain, Mexico and the USA met in April for four days at Gurudev Siddha Peeth, Ganeshpuri, India.

PRASAD Chikitsa expanded the Family Health Center with donor support and a grant from Abbot Laboratories in partnership with Direct Relief International.

The Family Health Center was formally recognised by the Indian government as an HIV/AIDS Integrated Counseling and Testing Center (ICTC) under Public Private Partnership. This ICTC status means that reports from the Family Health Center will receive international acceptance. The Center was also awarded status as a Linked Antiretroviral Therapy Center (LAC). As an LAC, the Center will receive free public educational materials, rapid HIV test kits, protective kits, antiretroviral (ART) medicine (in six-month increments for each patient) and free staff training through India's National AIDS Control.

## Update on Fundraising

PRASAD Australia fundraising for 2009 began in June and concluded in December, with four fabulous fundraising events. These events would not be possible without you, the many volunteers, and the many hours offered by all of you. The PRASAD Australia board members extend their heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for your extraordinary effort in all you have done. Your support enables PRASAD Australia's ongoing work with PRASAD Chikitsa's Reproductive and Child Health clinic in the Tansa Valley.

*We applaud and salute you — thank you! See you at the next event!*

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*Thank you for your donation.  
it will make a difference!*

Please return to:  
PRASAD Australia  
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Phone: 03 5334 1230

PRASAD

# Update on Fundraising

## June

### Melbourne's 'Eat, Give, Grow' dinner and art auction raises over \$9,000

The Melbourne ashram community held an 'Eat, Give, Grow' art auction and dinner, where guests enjoyed jazz music and light refreshments while appraising artwork for auction in the foyer, as the sun set beyond the gorgeous Eltham Hills.

Guests were then invited to the dining hall, where a sea of flickering candles reflected off beautifully set tables. During dinner we were serenaded with the extraordinary voice of James Montfort, followed by jazz, and then with a finale of Latin dance numbers. Dinner was a feast of Middle Eastern flavours followed by a heavenly dessert. The evening ended in the foyer with tea and coffee while guests collected raffle prizes and auction purchases.

## September

### The country town of Castlemaine raises over \$2,400 at a spring luncheon

In the tranquil town of Castlemaine, Victoria, a traditional Indian lunch was enjoyed by more than 65 Castlemainians at the historic Buda Heritage Home and Garden, where they were delighted with spring songs by the baritone Peter Hunt.

## November

### PRASAD Australia art auction and cocktail party in Sydney raises over \$30,000

PRASAD Australia held its second Sydney Charity Art Auction and Cocktail Party at the National Trust headquarters on Observatory Hill. The event was coordinated by the PRASAD Australia Sydney team with the support of the board of directors. This time, however, there was amazing additional support from the community, which gave tremendous assistance, expertise and experience to the central coordinating team.

Hence, another highly successful event exceeded everyone's expectations. Guests took advantage of the balmy, Sydney summer's evening and the view over the city while they mingled and enjoyed delicious refreshments and cocktails. Inside, fine art, jewellery, sculpture and pottery were on display. Artists and designers from across the country contributed artworks, which were sold by both a live and silent auction. The event officially started with a beautiful rendition by David Jobst, a Shakuhachi master flautist. Then the attendees, with bidding cards in hand and the expert guidance and encouragement of our auctioneer, Shauna Farren-Price from Lawson Auctioneers & Valuers, raised in excess of \$30,000 on the night.

A wonderful time was had by all, with a number of astute buyers walking away with some amazing artworks purchased at bargain prices.

## December

### Brighton, Victoria, dinner guests donate \$1000

A buffet dinner and entertainment featuring traditional Indian dancing in a beautiful tranquil setting at seaside Brighton, Victoria. Dinner guests donated \$1000.

If you feel inspired to help with or hold a fundraiser please contact Indira Kennedy on 0412 464 548 (Melbourne) or 0400 820 110 (Sydney) to discuss how we can help you.



Preparations for the art auction and cocktail party in Sydney at the National Trust headquarters on Observatory Hill

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The PRASAD Project NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

www.prasad.org

## My gift to PRASAD Australia

Here is my Donation (please tick):  \$200  \$20  \$50  \$300  \$30

or \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible

My cheque/money order is enclosed

Make cheques/money orders payable to PRASAD Australia Relief Fund

or Please debit my:

Mastercard  Visacard

Card No:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Expires  /

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me more information on:

- How I can become a regular donor  
 Applying to become a member  
 Leaving a bequest to PRASAD Australia  
 PRASAD Australia

### PRIVACY STATEMENT

Details you supply to us are entered into the PRASAD Australia database. We adhere to the Privacy Act. We do not disclose your information to third parties.

Thank you for your support