



2020 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

NAVIGATING THE WATERS OF THE NEW WORLD: ADDRESSING COVID-19 IMPACT AND RECOVERY



Warm greetings! We hope that you and your family are well.

The effects of the pandemic have overwhelmed global health systems and caused businesses and factories to shut down. The poorest and most vulnerable are being affected disproportionately, with women and children bearing the heaviest brunt, but your support has helped us to make a difference:

- You provided Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) to the Catskills Medical Center in Sullivan County and to healthcare workers in New York City.
- In Sullivan County, you helped PRASAD CDHP maintain the hotline for dental emergencies and reopen the dental clinic.
- In the Tansa Valley, India, you supported the delivery of vital medical services, the production and distribution of more than 1,300 face masks to community members, the delivery of nearly 3,600 food packages to 2,240 Adivasi families, and the planting of more than 7,000 trees.

Overcoming this crisis and getting back on track will require leadership, innovation, funding, and collaboration among all stakeholders.

Just as this crisis has inspired many of us to refocus on the things that matter most to us personally, we are also using this time as an opportunity to bring that same focus to PRASAD to ensure the sustainability of our programs over the long-term.

Despite this destabilization and uncertainty, there are things we can do right now, like continuing to regularly assess program needs and ensuring financial and organizational flexibility with scenario planning that supports our mission and vision.

Stay well.

Warm regards,

Tom Korula
Trustee and Co-Chair

Dr. Vivek Panchapakesan
Trustee & Co-Chair

Dr. M. Cecilia Escarra
Executive Director



Archana's Story: Turning Crisis Into Opportunity

More than 94% of India's working women are employed in the informal sector, which lacks job security and decent and timely wages, leaving many in poverty. PRASAD Chikitsa's Women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) help women become entrepreneurs through training programs. As their businesses grow, women earn and control income, allowing them to become decision-makers in their families and communities. A virtuous circle – this encourages more women to do the same.

Archana Lad lives in Saiwan with her three children and husband Haribhau, who works at the post office. In 2007, Archana joined the Mahalaxmi SHG and opened a small tailor's shop. Her income is important because Haribhau's salary is not enough to support the family. During the COVID-19 lockdown, Archana had fewer customers, and her income declined dramatically. Concerned, she asked the PRASAD team for advice; they suggested making face masks.

Now, Archana makes masks and cloth bags and displays them in her shop on the main road in Saiwan. Regular customers and shoppers at the local grocery market next door buy her wares. Archana has not only been able to bring her income back to the level she needs but has increased it from \$40 to \$48 per month! With support and advice, Archana found opportunity in what could have been a family crisis.

"Right now is difficult. Many people have lost their jobs and many business have shut down. I am grateful for my long association with PRASAD and their perfect guidance. Even in this challenging situation, they are in touch with us and continue to support us." Archana Lad

Creating Sustainable Food Security in COVID Times

On a plot of land as small as 1,000 sq ft, a family can cultivate an organic kitchen garden, which has multiple benefits: easy access to high nutrient fresh fruits and vegetables, adding diversity to a rice-based diet; surplus to sell at market, generating income to purchase protein-rich foods; and an improved microenvironment at the family home. Ganesh's story shows how kitchen gardens are a sustainable solution for family financial and food security.

Ganesh Ghatal, his wife, Anita, and his parents all work their one-acre rice paddy during the 3- to 4-month monsoon season. Until recently, they subsisted on the rice and selling the straw. In the off season, Ganesh is a day laborer and Anita helps in her son's daycare center.

Ganesh's family regularly uses PRASAD Chikitsa's health care services. When PRASAD's doctors noticed Ganesh's son, three-year-old Viraj, was malnourished, they enrolled the family in the Kitchen Garden initiative. The addition of nutritious vegetables would improve Viraj's health and create a new income source for the family. During the lockdown, PRASAD also supported the family with food rations.

PRASAD provided vegetable and marigold seeds and guidance to get started with the kitchen garden. Ganesh cultivated okra, bitter gourd, fenugreek, cucumber, cow pea and chilis, vegetables the family couldn't afford to buy. Anita dried the chilis and made spice mixes. Ganesh earned \$130 – increasing his regular annual salary by nearly 25% - selling surplus vegetables and marigolds.



Both the kitchen garden and Viraj's health have flourished. ***"Thanks to PRASAD's training and good quality seeds, we have a bountiful garden! My son's weight has increased, and we've reduced our household expenses."*** Anita Ghatal

Restoring Forests One Tree at a Time

In the future, pandemics are likely to occur more frequently. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that three out of every four new infectious diseases in people come from animals, including Covid-19. Part of this increase is due to ecosystem destruction. As humans destroy habitats - clearing space for farms or more living space - people come into close contact with wildlife and the diseases they carry. PRASAD is working to mitigate this risk through our forest restoration project. Our goal is to plant 15,000 by 2022. We have planted 7,000 to date.



PRASAD CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM



Dentistry is an essential health care service because of its role in evaluating, preventing and treating oral diseases, which can affect overall health. In July, we reopened our children's mobile dental clinic following the American Dental Association guidelines developed subsequent to COVID-19. Due to the Pandemic, extra precautions have been mandated to ensure our patients and staff are safe during appointments.

The new requirements mean extra expense, extra time per appointment, and more funding needed to provide these services.

PRASAD de MÉXICO

PRASAD de México's volunteer team has performed free eye surgery on more than 33,000 adults and children with cataracts and cross-eyes. Because of the pandemic, and in consultation with the local government, PRASAD de Mexico has cancelled eye camps until



further notice. Meanwhile in Guerrero State, PRASAD de Mexico volunteers distributed food packages to low-income families of informal day workers – like street vendors, whose livelihoods depend on tourism, which is currently non-existent.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR PRASAD?



PRASAD Chikitsa is constantly evaluating the situation in the Tansa Valley to provide access to safe health care, ensure food security, and promote Covid-19 recovery and long-term sustainability. Currently, we are focused on keeping our medical center open six days a week, helping 300 Adivasi families start kitchen gardens, providing 500 in-home water filters, and continuing to work with women's SHGs, among other services.

PRASAD Children's Dental Health Program's objective is to continue to offer quality services and increase the number of children served. We are also exploring virtual oral health education for schools.

PRASAD de México's volunteer team will reopen eye camps in rural areas of Mexico when it is safe; they are also exploring new program opportunities.



YOUR GIFT CHANGES LIVES

Your gift to The PRASAD Project funds innovative solutions that help break the cycle of chronic poverty, creating opportunity and empowering families, youth and communities so that all may prosper in harmony with the natural environment.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT PRASAD

MONTHLY GIVING: Sign up to become a PRASAD Partner, and, as a bonus receive an elegant scarf donated by Love Quotes™ on your one-year partner anniversary.

MATCHING GIFTS: Ask about your employer's matching gift program.

HOST A VIRTUAL EVENT: For more information visit our website at www.prasad.org

HOW YOUR GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

- \$20** supports protective equipment for a dental visit in the U.S.
- \$30** provides 10 medical visits in India
- \$60** supplies two water filters in India
- \$70** provides an eye surgery in India
- \$100** trains 10 farmers to produce bio-fertilizer in India
- \$300** supplies two farm wells to sustain kitchen gardens in India
- \$1,000** helps 20 families to start a kitchen garden in India

Please donate to PRASAD so we can help where it's most needed.

Visit us at www.prasad.org

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