

How our world has changed since the last edition of *Tidings*! Coronavirus has caught us all by surprise and reminded us how precarious are the blessings we nearly always take for granted. In our own anxieties we will need to spare a thought and send a prayer for our overseas friends who will have to cope with the outbreak but without a health service like ours.

We have seen other, less momentous, changes in our work overseas. Tom is no longer in India and we miss him of course. But, Phillip (see below) has undergone a long apprenticeship and has stepped into Tom's shoes admirably. Not only has he brought a new focus upon the long term support of patients but he is ensuring that the money raised is being used to the best effect.



We are seeing changes in Zambia too and will, in the future, be looking to support local schools and hospitals directly without the need to maintain a centre in Monze.

Finally, a small change. In order to save money and to give you a little less to read we are making *Tidings* shorter. You will still be able to find a comprehensive account of the work on our website but from now on we will be keeping this newsletter for highlights, important new developments or special concerns. Have a good Lent.

Keeping the wheels turning in Monze

Most of the terrain in the Zambian Southern Province is rough and sandy. There are no smooth pavements and few tarmac roads. The wear and tear on wheelchairs is phenomenal and as a result, every week people come from far and wide seeking help when their wheelchairs become unusable.



Fortunately, we have been able to help. Robbie, a carpenter who is himself disabled, has the skills to bring new life to dying mobility aids. We have provided the funds to employ him and to pay for the materials he needs. The owners pay nothing. They leave happy and mobile. There are a few cases where the wheelchair is beyond repair and, in Monze, it costs £100

for a new one. Recently we were able to buy 4 new wheelchairs for Choongo Special School. If anyone would like to support this valuable enterprise, wheelchairs will be available for purchase from our soon-to-be-updated alternative gift catalogue. You will be helping to keep the wheels turning.




Period Poverty

'Period poverty' has recently become a 2020 phrase in Wales as the Welsh Government has announced that £3.3 m will be provided so that free sanitary products will be available to 'any learner who needs them'. In Zambia, our menstrual hygiene programme goes a bit further. The menstrual hygiene products funded by HHI are environmentally friendly too.



During the school holidays our two HHZ seamstresses, Alistair and Primeldah, make sanitary pads with washable fabric and prepare sanitary packs for local schoolgirls. At the start of term, appointments are made with schools and a program of outreach is planned. Female students receive education on menstrual hygiene, managing puberty and dispelling the myths about periods. All the girls receive a free pack at the end of the session. A report of each visit is kept and emailed to the UK to confirm that visits have been made and how they were received by the staff of the school visited.

 HEALTH HELP ZAMBIA <small>MENTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM</small> <small>REPORT FORM</small>	
Name: <u>07/01/2020</u>	School / Place: <u>ASHA KIRAN ASHRAM</u>
Contact Person: <u>ASHA KIRAN</u>	Designation: <u>ASHA KIRAN</u>
Phone Number: <u>91 977 37604</u>	Home Address: <u>11, 00845</u>
Sanitary Age Group:	
Below 12 years:	
Between 12-14 years:	<u>12</u>
Between 14-16 years:	<u>11</u>
Above 16 years:	<u>9</u>
No. of students:	<u>-</u>
Total beneficiaries:	<u>22</u>
General Comments:	
<u>It was very good and the school administration appreciated the program and requested that they should be visited in the next months.</u>	
Challenges faced:	
<u>There weren't any challenges.</u>	
Reported by: <u>Alistair Primeldah</u>	

Changes at Asha Kiran Ashram

Santhosh, the founder and director, is suffering from increasing ill health, and so he is looking for a successor. He has identified one possibility - a man called Pattanaik whom Edmund first met last year. He has worked on children's projects in the past with Santhosh; the present project is coming to an end, so he seems a good choice. Whilst working in Chhattisgarh a few years ago he was imprisoned for his faith but, undeterred, he preached to all the inmates on Sunday.



Shaba Begum enjoying physiotherapy

The centre is continuing to thrive, with 32 children on the books, nine of whom are residential. Several children have been able to move on and work for a living - a great testimony to the effectiveness of the education and training received at Asha Kiran Ashram.



Other children are developing well as a result of the skilled care that they receive - physiotherapy, tailored education, vocational training, good food, fun and games, and a stimulating environment.

One disabled child helping another at lunch time

We continue to support Asha Kiran with a grant of Rs. 45,000 (£500) a month, which covers a bit less than a third of their running costs. They get a government grant for a similar amount, and Santhosh raises the rest through his extensive contacts. There is a pressing need to construct a new space for the physiotherapy that benefits the children so much and it has become a funding priority for HHI. We are applying to a range of foundations for grants but this is very competitive. We can provide full details of our plans if any supporter or group of supporters feel that this might be an enterprise they can help with.



Thangaratnam enjoying being with other children

Great progress at Thanal House



Laundry time at Thanal House



One of the HHI team was very impressed by developments at Thanal House, a home for destitute and often desperate women. The reduction in numbers there was a real sign of progress because Salini has been able to reunite a number of the ladies with their families. Her recruitment of a man who speaks all the official Indian languages has been very helpful in this process. But, amongst the successes, tragedy still haunts the lives of many of the clients. One lady, for example, was rescued from a life of prostitution, but the social stigma led to her husband's suicide and her children will now have nothing to do with her. Thanal house is ministering to those who are most needy and is in many instances the only place which offers any care to this vulnerable group of people.

Happy Valley Special Needs School

There are 43 children on the roll, although 6 no longer come, so about 32 of the remaining 37 come on any particular day. Many of the children have cerebral palsy, which is quite common in the area. This and some other disabilities respond well to physiotherapy, so a physiotherapist comes in three mornings a week to work with the children. Some of the results have been astounding. Shahi, a boy who has been coming to the school for three years, has progressed from being able only to lie on a mat to being able to stand up on his own. He is continuing to receive help to improve his balance. Some more children come in just for physiotherapy. Other children need speech therapy – provided by a qualified speech therapist who visits three days a week to work with these, with encouraging results.



For older learners, there is a programme of vocational training - making umbrellas, candles, necklaces and paper bags out of old newspapers, as well as kitchen work, cleaning and gardening. The idea is that such skills will give them a start in life and give them a chance to make a living or at least to make a useful contribution to home life.





Many thanks to all of our supporters for your continued generosity in providing funds for the work of HHI in India and Zambia.

We are particularly grateful to the 100 or so benefactors who choose to make regular donations via the banking system, and we apologise for not acknowledging these gifts more regularly.



HHI can now accept payment for goods and donations via the wonder of payment by card. If you wish to make use of this facility, you can do so in person, online or by telephone.



Mr & Mrs Ledgard of Llandeilo have arranged (if Coronavirus allows!) to host a charity 'At Home' event on **Saturday 27th June 2020**. If you are interested in attending, please contact the office for further details.



Need a mid-week speaker or someone to lead a Sunday service?

If you would like one of our team to speak about the work of HHI at a meeting of a church group or of an organisation to which you belong, or to lead worship at a Sunday Service, please contact us using the 'phone number or the email address given at the bottom of this page, and we'll do our best to accept your invitation.

Health Help International

(registered charity no.1078353)

Stow Park Church Centre, Brynhyfryd Road, Newport NP20 4FX

tel: 01633 671055 email: healthhelp@live.co.uk

web: www.hhi.org.uk