



**KERALA
PARTNERSHIP**

*Meeting People,
Meeting Needs,
Making a difference.
Charity Number 1088159*

NEWSLETTER DATED APRIL 2025

WHAT'S HAPPENED SINCE FEBRUARY 2024

Your support over the last 12 months has helped so many individuals and families; as ever we say thank you all for your generosity at a time when there are growing demands on our own personal finances.

The last newsletter gave highlights from the main projects—how the regular schemes were going along and how it had been possible to set up new projects.

We have kept that approach for this newsletter and it is a delight to report that your donations have meant it has been possible to keep up the momentum of creating new opportunities to help those in need!

THE REGULAR PROJECTS

Caring for elderly people (4 main schemes)

1. The 10 pension schemes continue to run smoothly with monthly pensions given to 100 individuals to assist in their household / family expenses. We have checked again with the schemes' coordinator that the £2 monthly pension remains helpful and effective and the response had been a resounding 'yes' - it is a good help toward the cost of food and medicines.

2. The Old Age Home is running well under the direction of Peter (Danam) and Nursing Sisters Kavitha and Reena. Many of the long-term residents are becoming frail and sickly but Peter maintains the high standards of care and treatment despite the inevitable costs. The Home had been repainted since our last visit and everywhere was 'fresh'. There is still no financial help given by the local Authority despite the requirement for them to do so, lack of public funds given as the reason.

K.P. monthly grant is £250 and the running cost is approx £1000—£1100 per month.



Sr Reena on the left; Sr Kavitha on right

The two Pakal Veedu (Day Centres) continue with great enthusiasm shown by those who organise them and the ladies who eagerly attend! (....and there are two men who regularly attend the Vattavila scheme!)

3. Mulluvila sees 35 or so ladies coming twice each month for a full day of talking, activities and refreshments centred on the cooked lunch. All involved said how these days are a real highlight for them and how much they look forward to these get-togethers. (K.P. grant of £50 per month)

In addition to Pakal Veedu the organisers support 10 households every month with a food-kit . The kits are given to those in greatest need and do not necessarily go to the same households. (a further K.P. grant of £50)

4. Vattavila scheme has over 30 members attending for a half-day every fortnight; there is open discussion when individuals can explain their own worries and problems and others then offer comment, support and encouragement. As we have reported before at the end of the morning after 'snacks' each members receives a food-kit to take away (K.P. Grant of £110 per month).



Vattavila—food kits! (..and please be reassured I'm not trying to conduct a ladies choir in the photo on the right!)

Community health and social support

Nursing Sister Kavitha works some time per week in the old age home but principally she is funded by K.P. To support housebound individuals living in the areas nearby. These are individuals referred by the Local Authority (that again says it has insufficient funds to discharge its obligation to offer care) and who Peter and Kavitha have seen and assessed as being in real need .

About 60 visits are made by Kavitha each month (these can be extended sessions with someone) and about 15—20 individuals are receiving her assistance. Here is a recent report we received from Peter:

'...Dear Sir, Nurse Kavitha is doing community nursing service very well. Visiting patients and providing injections, I V fluids, Wound dressings necessary help and support.. Apart from taking care of the patients, she also help with their other needs. Whenever she visits them she check their BP Sugar and Oxygen level etc. and mentioned in her dairy. Cleaning their house and surroundings. Bed sheets and clothes are washed and new ones are given to the needy. Bedridden patients are bathed and feed . Drinking water is also boiled for them. Meals are cooked and

delivered from the old age home to those who have faced difficulty for preparing food . Sometimes she help the patients to admit the hospital. Similarly, some people ask for the help of Kavitha to go shopping and spend time with them. At that time she help them as needed. Support is given to the Children for education.

She

understands the needs of the family and help them. Thus community service is doing in a very good way to benefit patients. Thanks to you and your family for all the help and support for doing this work

Thank you so much.

(K.P. grant per month £80)

Children's nutrition

This project has grown from the 10 nurseries we reported on last time to 19!

We learned that the news about the project had spread across the areas near Neyyattinkara and more nurseries had adopted it—great!



K.P. monthly grant remains £80 and teachers and parents who can afford to make some contribution are giving each week so that an 'egg and milk' scheme can start in their place (some weeks it is 'egg and banana').

This is partnership working in action. It is good that a K.P. Initiative has encouraged local people to take part.

Employment projects (women's cooperatives and self-employment—'petty business' - schemes

We revisited some of the established schemes and saw how well they are doing. Each time it was lovely to see the pleasure of the women knowing they were working for themselves and earning money. It may not have been much money but there was a genuine pride felt by all that they were 'starting to make their way'.

Photos show the ladies at Punnakkunnu that we featured in the last newsletter—they were delighted to see a copy!

They make and market soap, lotions and cleaning fluids.



NEW PROJECTS STARTED SINCE FEBRUARY 2024

'Petty Businesses'

Between February 2024 and the end of December **18 new 'petty businesses' have been started through the careful use of your donations.**

This level of job creation is marvellous—we estimate these 18 small enterprises are supporting over 50 people across the 18 households.

We have details of all 18 and we met 12 of them. All are women and are from homes where they are the sole 'breadwinner', typically because the husband had either died or left the family or is unable to work due to illness or disability.

The N.I.D.S. Project coordinator is Alphonsa whom we have known for many years and she summed up the feelings of the ladies when she said about your donations:

'...Thank you so much. Your service to poor society is truly appreciated. We are doing so many good things to poor people only because kind hearted people like you are supporting us—let's keep it going together like this always...'

K.P. Plays no part in selecting who receives the 'petty business' grants—it is the volunteers who know who has the determination and ability to use the money to run a sustainable 'petty business'.



Photos show Jane and Bethan with Usha who sells on the roadside.

Close up photo shows her 'meal deal' - selection of items to make a meal!



As well as Punnakkunnu we went to see the ladies at Vidhura ('Azuvi' candle making cooperative) - you may remember K.P. gave both a special grant last time to purchase extra moulds for candle making . We learned that both businesses are doing well with the 'new' candle sizes being in demand.
Each lady in these two cooperatives is earning between £20 to £30 per month—brilliant!

This review of the regular projects was good: the elderly projects you fund provide care and comfort to those who have become unable to work and for those able to work the employment projects you fund give the chance to achieve independence.



Spending time with the residents at the Old Age Home.



Another exciting employment project was agreed during our visit which was for a very enthusiastic group of 16 ladies living in the village of Punnakad. They had no regular income to cover daily expenses such as food, school fees and expenses for their children. They relied on getting manual work on a day-to-day basis but this is not a reliable source of income as the village lies between a main railway line and a river—this makes travel in and out difficult and time consuming. It also means that accessing the larger stores for supplies was not practical.

We met 15 of them with Alphonsa and they explained their plan was to make weekly trips to the larger town to purchase food and grocery items in bulk from wholesale suppliers and then process and package these so that the finished goods could be sold to local shops and 'petty businesses', or by house-to-house selling.

A major part of the plan was to buy rice and grain in bulk, grind it and then pack into household sized amounts.

Three of the N.I.D.S. Volunteers were willing to give help, training and support to the enterprise on matters such as financial management, and marketing / selling.

We had a good discussion about a basic 'business plan' that had been presented to our N.I.D.S. Partners before our visit. This showed the potential to make a profit of £100 per week—£400 approx per month which would give an income of £25 to each of the members per month.

We willingly agreed to provide a grant of £600. Since our return in December we have received information that the business—named KARUNYAM—has started.

Photos below and overleaf: As you look at the photo below Alphonsa is standing left of Jane, and the lady in yellow on the front row is Simi who was the spokesperson for the group as she speaks English.





**KARUNYAM—bulk purchase! UPDATE: more photos and news received on 29/3/25—
income of £15 per month for each lady since starting!**

The 18 petty-businesses plus the Karunyam project supporting 16 ladies means a total of 34 ladies have received grants to become self-employed.
Thank you for your donations that has enabled this.

Education Grants

Courses of study:

- Jane obtained specific donations to assist four young women with the cost of their studies.

Ganga studies in a Secondary High School in Venganoor; she is from a very poor family but she is bright and studies well, however, there has not been sufficient money to pay the school fees—the School's Principal has waived most of those although Jane did secure some funds for 2024.

The Principal reports that Ganga gets good grades in her exams and needs to be encouraged and supported to continue her studies.

K.P. will provide £200 for 2025 and the School will not charge the balance of the fees

- During early 2024 we were asked by N.I.D.S. If K.P. could offer any financial support to four students (Abinandh, Aswathy, Anugraha and Kamalam) all of whom had the opportunity to start nurse training courses.



Two new 'petty business' owners:
Top is Nirmala; small shop rented near to her home selling edibles
Below is Usha; 'hotel-at-home' selling snacks



All are from poor families and any surviving parents are not in regular work. All four want to train as nurses so that after qualifying they could earn good salaries and support their families.

Again in partnership with N.I.D.S. funds for their first year tuition and living costs have been made with a total grant of £400 from K.P.

Jane is seeking special funds so that another £400 can be granted in June to cover the 2025/26 fees; N.I.D.S. Will also contribute.

Our view is to help with higher education and vocational training grants if K.P. can afford it to help individuals achieve their potential so that in turn they can help to support their family. When K.P. assists it is always in partnership with other local groups.

School books and uniforms:

- You may remember that K.P. has often made small donations at the start of the school's year to pay for uniforms, books, satchels and so on. In 2024 we granted £100 to help 15 young children in the Kattakkada district. Another £100 was granted while we were in Kerala to someone well known to us—(Mr) Joy Solomon—to purchase school items for 10 of the pupils at the school he funds and runs.

Joy runs the wonderfully named 'Coastal Brains' charitable organisation based in the fishing village of Adimallathura.

Joy funds the costs of the teaching staff and other running expenses of the school and helps the older students to go on the higher education. As a boy Joy was himself sponsored by an Englishman right through to him gaining a degree which enabled him to work abroad as a teacher. Joy retired early and returned to Adi where he has been using his savings to help other children get a good education if they wished.

The expectation for many generations has been for the boys to follow their fathers onto the small fishing boats or to 'net fish' from the shore, with the girls working on shore-side tasks.

Joy is enabling those children who want to work in trades and professions other than the fishing industry to 'aim higher'.

Adi itself is facing huge change as its long history as a fishing village—able to feed its families and to sell to the neighbouring towns—is being disrupted by the construction and continuing expansion of the Vizhinjam International Deep Water Port situated about 2km down the coast. The dredging and construction work, that has pushed the shore line approx 2km into the sea, has hugely upset all of Adi's fishing activities.

So Joy is really trying to make an area-wide change and has been making great progress since we last carried out some work together before the pandemic.

At our meeting with Joy we learned about the employment schemes he is piloting in Adi for women and we agreed to keep in touch in the coming months as there may be scope for K.P. And 'Coastal Brains' to work together.

We hope you have enjoyed this newsletter reading how your donations have been used to give comfort and confidence to those who cannot support themselves due to age or infirmity, and to give chance and opportunities to those who have the potential and the enthusiasm to grow and progress.

K.P. Remains focussed on giving help directly to those in need and ensuring all who

receive help have ongoing support from trusted partners and volunteers.

You all make this possible and we thank you sincerely for your support.

David and Jane.

The last three pages show various photos taken at the projects and schemes, plus one or

two

other local shots!



TOP—one of the ladies working at the Vattavila Stitching Centre we have reported on before; the 6 ladies under the direction of the volunteer coordinator have a contract to supply ladies shifts / nightdresses to a large departmental store.

BELOW—a very happy seamstress with her new machine!





TOP—Jane handing Usha her petty business grant. Alphonsa went with her to purchase the sewing machine and overlocker machine.

BELOW—we had a number of ‘friends’ staying with us in the rented apartment—at least one in every room, but this one didn’t do any of the washing up despite his / her fascination with the bottle of detergent!