



On this auspicious festival of lights, may the glow of joy, prosperity & happiness illuminate your days in the year ahead.

Wishing all our supporters a Very Happy Diwali & Prosperous New Year.

In line with our aim of helping to expand opportunities for poor and vulnerable people, we have embarked upon our latest collaboration with two inspirational charities in India.

We continue to build partnerships that respond to locally defined problems with culturally sustainable solutions. We hope to extend our impact through these new partnerships and to continue to help marginalised communities in India, develop their capacity to meet basic needs and create solutions to poverty and injustice.



The two new partnerships

The Medlife Foundation

Medlife Foundation is a charity based in the state of Gujarat, North West India, **'giving people not just a new smile, but a second chance at life.'** The medical team at the Foundation perform reconstructive surgery FOR FREE for children and adults whose families could not otherwise afford them. In poor communities of India many thousands of people are born or live with disfiguring clefts.

The Issue

A cleft is a birth defect that occurs when the tissues of the lip and/or palate of the fetus do not fuse very early in pregnancy. A cleft lip, sometimes referred to as a 'harelip', is an opening in the upper lip that can extend into the base of the nostril. A cleft palate is an opening in the roof of the mouth. In most cases the exact cause is unknown, but it's thought to be a combination of genetic (internal) and environmental (external) factors.

Stigmatisation

As a result of this deformity, most:

- cannot eat or speak properly.
- aren't allowed to attend school.
- are shunned and ostracised by their communities
- will never get married or hold a job.
- succumb to a solitary life lived in the protection of their homes.

The difference Medlife Foundation makes can best be summed up below



In conservative rural societies, where looks can seem to be of paramount importance, 'looking different' can cause a severe sense of insecurity and inadequacy. Cleft children are often bullied which can lead to a lack of confidence. If the child or adult has a speech impediment caused by their cleft, this can lead to difficulty with communication and associated feelings of inadequacy and isolation through shyness or inhibition.

...they face very difficult lives, filled with shame and isolation, pain and heartache.

People with unrepaired clefts are often viewed as outcasts and ostracised. They will never know the simple joys that we take for granted, like going to school or making friends or having a livelihood. Their clefts usually go untreated because they are poor – too poor to pay for a simple surgery that has been around for decades.

Medlife Foundation provides:

- free initial assessment via hosting rural camps
- free cleft surgery to thousands of poor people in India.
- programme for training doctors and medical professionals across India
- treatment for the "whole child" with comprehensive, total rehabilitative care including: speech therapy, general dentistry and orthodontics.

As a medical charity, Medlife Foundation has a unique two pronged approach to delivering its services. In addition to performing all surgery at nil cost to the beneficiary, it also hosts an innovative training and empowerment programme for newly qualified doctors. Thus providing the safest and most cost effective surgeries and follow-up care which in turn has enabled it to expand from a simple philanthropic concept in 2006 to Gujarat's leading cleft charity, bringing smiles and second chances at life to thousands of poor people and their families.



The new partnership

Financial aid for poor patients

This partnership is born out of a mutual ideal that good healthcare should be available to all, regardless of wealth. That principle remains at the core of our belief and we pledge that all beneficiaries will receive a comprehensive package of financial and healthcare support from the first point of contact throughout the pre and post operation period and related after care term.

The beneficiaries are drawn from some of the most marginalised sections of rural Gujarat and often families travel days from their homes in order to have their loved ones treated. In some cases, given their dire personal predicament, some of the patients are so malnourished they are not

healthy enough to be operated on and are provided food and related care weeks before surgery. Indeed some of the patients are so poor they have no money to get home after surgery, sometimes they have no shoes and no money for food. The partnership will also cover all related costs of care such as return travel to the hospital, accommodation and other expenditure that may otherwise be a barrier to treatment.

We are of the view that these life changing operations are one of the best ways to liberate the lives of these vulnerable people. Helping them to stand independently, provide all the necessary support (medical, financial and otherwise) and finally enabling them to gain personal freedom from societal oppression. Finally, we believe that everyone deserves

to live their lives with dignity and for those born with a cleft lip, cleft palate or other facial deformity, dignity begins with a smile.



Dignity begins with a smile



Kamla Foundation & Medlife Foundation

Changing minds - changing lives



We want our mission to be yours



Manav Sadhna

Manav Sadhna is another inspirational charity based in a quiet corner of Mahatma Gandhi's Ashram in Ahmedabad. Their mission is simply to serve the underprivileged. At Manav Sadhna, they advocate the philosophy of love all, serve all. By seeing God in every individual (Manav), mere service is transformed into worship (Sadhna). To this end, Manav Sadhna is engaged in constructive humanitarian projects, that cuts across barriers of class and religion, while addressing issues faced by some of the most marginalised members of Indian

society. In executing this mission, Manav Sadhna is guided by Mahatma Gandhi's unshakable beliefs in love, peace, truth, non-violence and compassion.



Kamla Foundation & Manav Sadhna



Love all, serve all

Changing minds - changing lives

Slums

Slums are the product of broken down village life. The irregularity of rain, prevalence of unemployment, the caste system, the appeal of city life, and a lack of basic facilities are some of the factors that lead people to migrate from their villages to urban spaces. These spaces are congested, unhealthy, and lack basic health and education amenities. The residents of these spaces consist of migrants - often landless labourers, who come to the city in search of employment.

Ramapir no Tekro, also known as the 'Tekro', is the largest slum area in Ahmedabad and is located directly across the road from the Gandhi Ashram. It is home to approximately 150,000 residents. The slum consists mainly of people falling under the classification of 'Untouchables' or 'Dalits' (meaning 'downtrodden') as many of them are called politically. As a group they are some of the most economically deprived members of Indian society. The entire development is considered an 'encroachment' because the land is owned by the government and is therefore temporary; however, people have been living in the Tekro for over 50 years.

Today, through government attention, most of this slum area has electricity, water, pavements and a gutter system. However, due to heightened social issues such as alcohol/tobacco addiction, poor diet, superstitions, backward traditions, high-interest loans and illiteracy, many slum-dwellers

continue to live in the same cycle of despair and poverty. They earn their income performing menial tasks such as rag-picking, cleaning homes, shining shoes, driving rickshaws and working as potters or day labourers.

Through years of development work, Manav Sadhna has come to understand that empowering women often empowers the entire family. Unfortunately, young girls generally end up becoming the most neglected members in their community, since greater attention and importance is often given to boys. By creating income-generation opportunities for these disaffected girls and promoting strong values, we hope to eradicate many of the challenges the Tekro residents face, so that they may become empowered to improve their quality of life.

'Earn and Learn'

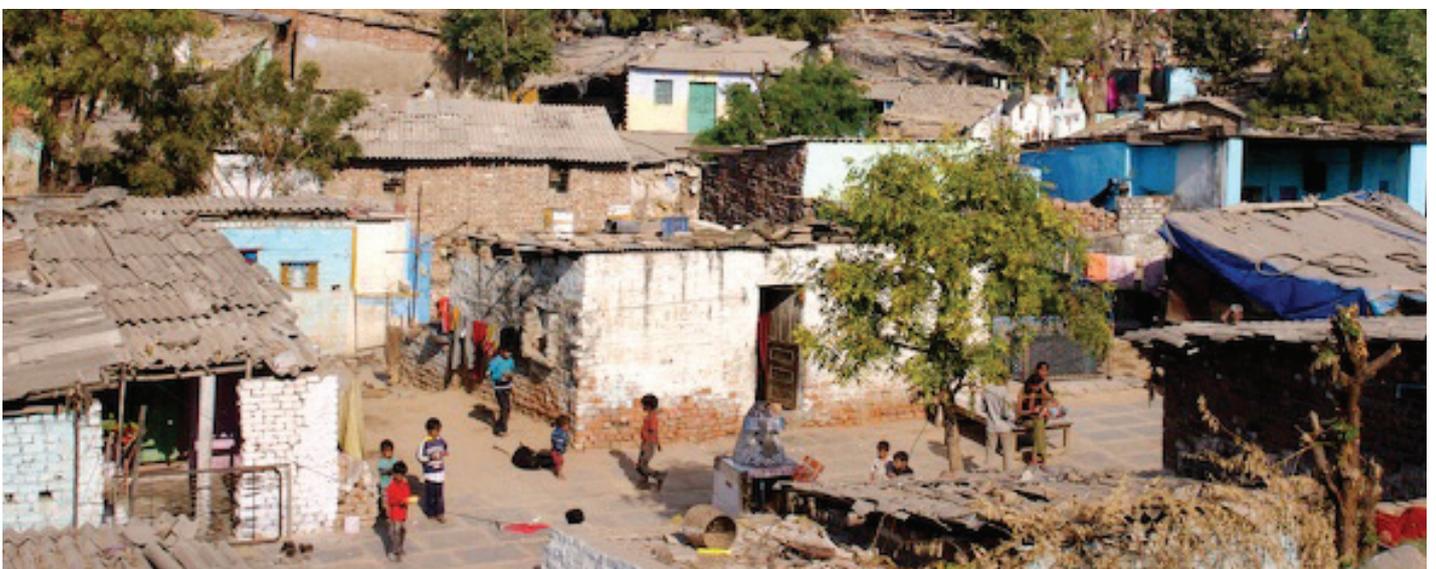
Life in the slum forces many children into hazardous street labour, depriving them of their mental and physical health, innocence, childhood, and education. According to UNICEF, twelve per cent of children in India work as child labourers. Manav Sadhna's Earn and Learn project helps to support the development of these children by enrolling them in morning school and then encouraging them to attend Manav Sadhna after school.

The Concept

Earn: After school hours, instead of working to polish shoes, pick rags, or sell water pouches, the children come to Manav Sadhna to make greeting cards

and other arts and craft items. They make between 35 to 55 Rupees per day in the safe haven of Manav Sadhna, and are also able to earn more during the holiday season, when the project gets an influx of orders. This project is self-sustaining, as income from the crafts (made by the children) ensures the viability of the project year on year.

Learn: The children also have an opportunity to develop their own talents through special activities, events, and sessions. They are provided with value-based learning, a nutritional snack every day and their home environments are monitored through frequent discussion with the children as well as home visits conducted by the outreach staff.





The children themselves become agents of change within their communities by practicing small acts of kindness every day - they share what they have done with each other and with Manav Sadhna staff regularly. They are also encouraged to learn and are supported with their homework. The children also have a variety of routine check-ups conducted annually through Manav Sadhna's medical and dental camps. For further details about the programme and products please log onto their website www.earnlearn.org

The new partnership Rudra Centre Project for Girls

Rudra Centre Initiative for Girls will have a dual focus of providing basic education, capacity building and creating income-generation opportunities for this marginalised group. The Project will create eco-friendly newspaper bags, making block-printed bags, paper mache and a range of other related products. Further creative ideas will be developed based on the skill-level of the girls and the necessary training required.

A survey in the Tekro area has been instigated to assess where this programme of work will be most effective. Based on the findings of the survey, we will have a better understanding of the target number of beneficiaries and the location, suffice to say that for the first time we will be taking this Project into the slum community. An educational curriculum

will be developed in parallel to ensure that we're providing services that are most beneficial and the intention is to run the Project six days a week on an annual basis.

Aim of the Programme

- **providing an opportunity for the girls for a better future**
- **helping them to realise their full potential**
- **equipping them with basic education and opportunities for income-generation**
- **providing confidence with viable options to move forward in their lives**
- **empowering the young girls**
- **development of girls in turn supports entire families and strengthens the community**
- **having fun**

The key milestones will be;

- **selecting the right candidates**
- **understanding their needs**
- **develop a tailor made programme of support**
- **training the participants to create high-quality products**



...and finally

As we begin to roll out our programmes of work with our new partners, I would like to encourage you to join with us on our journey and help us reach out to some of the most vulnerable members of Indian society.

In order to achieve our ambitious plans, we need to continue to build upon the fantastic fundraising efforts begun by you, our wonderful supporters. Please help us to widen this network of support by getting our message across to a bigger audience. We want to raise both, awareness of the work being done and money to increase our capacity to make a meaningful difference.

It is fair to say that it is not the investments that determine how any great organisation is judged, but the outcomes of those investments. For us, those outcomes continue to be guided by our ability to innovate, influence, and in the end generate impact. Doing this effectively and in a way that delivers value for money will continue to be our priority.

Bhupendra

Thank you for your support



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