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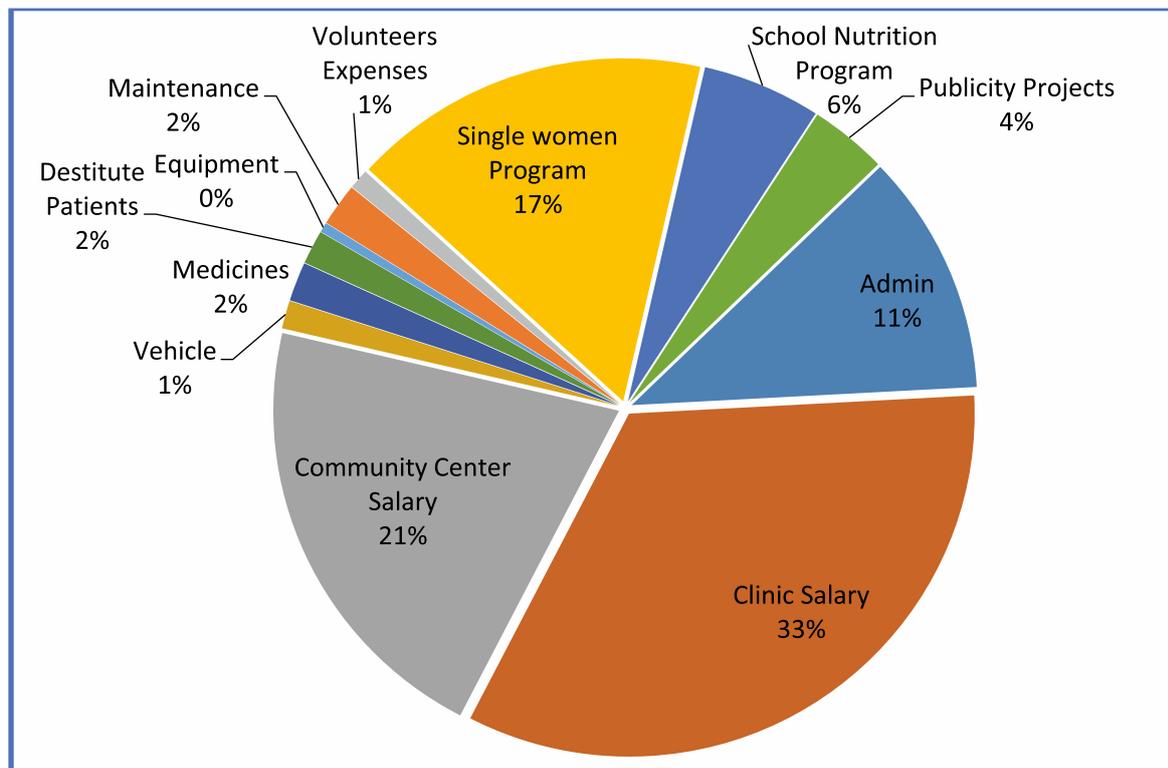
rural health, education & environment centre

Annual Review 2018-2019



BUDGET REPORT 2018-19

Funding for running our project primarily comes from 3 European Nishtha support Trusts, in Austria, Germany and the UK. We are very grateful to everyone who has given so generously this year enabling us to run a full range of services and programs from our clinic and community centre in Rakkar village.



Foreign Income: Rs. 45,03,581

Expenditure: Rs. 72,28,633

Local Income: Rs. 2,58,631

Expenditure: Rs. 256,461

Our expenditure from our foreign account exceeded our income because we had an accumulation of fixed deposits which were reaching eligibility for income tax and therefore we agreed to use those rather than bring the full funds in from abroad this year.

Building our Corpus Fund – Our trustees are concerned that global financial uncertainty and our relatively successful fundraising this year suggests that we should build our corpus fund for the purpose of ensuring the long term financial security of Nishtha Clinic and Community Centre. A Corpus or Endowment Fund is a growing sum of money which is placed in fixed deposit accounts here in India which still earn 7-8% a year. The earnings are calculated as part of our annual income and enable us to reduce the running costs required from the foreign Trusts who support us.

Received for Corpus Fund: Rs. 20,66,688 Total Corpus Reserve: Rs. 56,25,063



Nishtha Trust's main objective is to work for the benefit and development of society as a whole by improving the welfare of families, particularly the women and children.

We run a Primary Health Clinic which extends into the surrounding villages through our health education clinic and program to help single women who suffer greatly from social stigma and lack of opportunities in society. Whereas in the past most of our patients came from the local villages, these days increasing numbers come to us from further afield having been unable to find relief in other health facilities or having received confusing or ineffective treatments. People come to us from far and say 'you are our last hope'. It is therefore our responsibility to give them as much time and attention as we can to try to help them through our holistic approach to medical problems. We have a small in-patients' facility which is frequently occupied by long term destitute patients who have nowhere else to go to recover from strokes and other degenerative illness. We also look after a number of children with very severe problems.

Nishtha Trust

Complementary to the work of the clinic, Nishtha Community Centre reaches into 5 local primary schools and 3 baby crèches by supplementing the government midday meal with fresh fruits, vegetables and protein rich foods. It also provides help with lighting, equipment and educational materials including books. Many children flock to our after school program where they can borrow books from our library, attend computer classes and enjoy a wide range of creative activities. The young people of the village benefit from our sports programs, sponsorship for needy college students, self-defense training for women and girls and many more programs. We also run a very active and highly innovative environment program to improve the awareness of the local people to waste and pollution problems that affect the health of the village. This work includes running a small organic farm demonstrating natural methods of cultivating the marginal land in this area.

Nishtha Clinic

The costs of running the clinic, our core programme includes the salaries of our 6 long term clinic staff: Dr Kusum, Ram the dispenser, Suresh his assistant, Azad, the night watchman and 2 cleaning staff: Rasma and Goodie all of whom have been working steadily throughout the year. This year it also includes Dr Sara who has fitted in very well with our work and is an invaluable addition to our medical team.

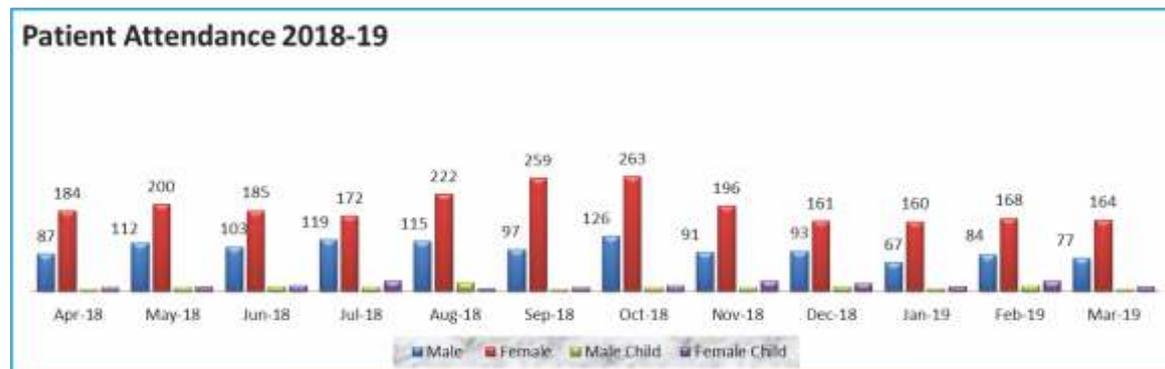


Our clinic utilities include the electricity bills which totalled Rs.9,116, the monthly bill for the clinic mobile phone, maintenance (36,684) which included some considerable repair work on the consulting room slate floor and the usual expenditure on plumbing materials and repairs.

Equipment this year included materials for our rain water harvesting tank, a length of plastic hosepipe and two electrical extension boards

Vehicle expenses include Rs.11,559 for insurance, tax, pollution certificate and the commercial number plate for our ambulance. The scooter which is used by the environment team needed repairs, the Summo which takes the children to Tapovan and does the school nutrition runs cost Rs.17,991 for various repairs throughout the year. The Xylo which is primarily used for the outreach clinics cost Rs. 29,968 for Insurance and repairs.

Medicine costs totalled Rs.83,325 this year, most of the larger payments to LOCOST (an Indian company that provides affordable medicines) and the rest in many small bills to local pharmacies,



This year we have seen 3,829 patients in the clinic, the significant majority being women (2,334) while the men seen numbered 1171. We saw 307 new patients, many of whom come from far away having heard about our clinic. The number of patients seen each month peaks in the monsoon months. Each month the clinic is open an average of 16 days (4 days a week) - during which an average of 288 patients are seen. We therefore see an average of 18 patients each day.

Medical Interns: Our work in the clinic has been enhanced by 7 medical interns this year, 5 from the UK and 2 from Austria. They are recently qualified doctors eager to gain medical experience whilst they bring fresh ideas and recent knowledge to our discussions about difficult cases.

Roz Henderson who was with us in April 2018 talks about her elective experience:

"My time at Nishtha has without a doubt been an eye-opening one. With any medical placement you never quite know what to expect, and then with an elective abroad that's even more so.

Arriving off the slightly harrowing overnight bus from Delhi you enter Dr Barbara's beautiful home (which is actually a temple), and everything feels suddenly more calm after the hectic Delhi lifestyle. This is where you stay during your time here, eating freshly cooked amazing vegetarian food together every day and just generally enjoying the peaceful atmosphere.

The elective work itself consists of clinic work three days a week and a health education outreach programme the other two. In the clinic you're sitting in on consultations, which can be on anything from an infected toe, to depression, to drug resistant TB. Treatment comes in all shapes and sizes, and includes both the allopathic and the homeopathic in equal measure, which was something that took me a little getting used to after just finishing my strictly allopathic studies. What I can definitely say is that patients here have a lot of respect for homeopathy and I saw patient after patient returning much improved and much happier.

Outreach programme was one of my favourite things to do here, as you get to go out to small rural villages with the team and help out with the education programme. It gives you a real insight into village life in the region, one that you wouldn't see if you were simply travelling or working in a big city hospital.

If you're looking for somewhere to get really hands on then this may not suit, the main practical things you'll be doing will be taking blood pressure and giving occasional injections, although I did also get to help out with some acupuncture and cupping therapy which was interesting.

Nishtha has more branches than just the clinic, including environment schemes, community projects and a single women's programme so I liked getting the chance to see how these schemes worked as well, along with seeing just how complex and difficult running an NGO can be.

Overall it's been a really great experience doing my elective here, and I would definitely recommend it!"



The Clinic Destitute fund is an emergency medical fund to enable our Clinic to provide medical care for those who are unable to access it without financial or practical assistance. This year we have had high expenses for feeding our long term stroke patients in our clinic. All of whom have been rehabilitated.



Sunita, who required such attention over her pregnancy and delivery last year has this year only required one payment though she comes regularly to our clinic for check-up. Now she seems to be coping very well and her family are taking care of her and her son.

A special sponsorship fund for her son Anku, provides Rs.1,500 a month to pay for extra food for the mother and baby, and the remainder is put into an

investment policy for the future of this fatherless child.

Our destitute fund pays for many people's medicines and treatments which they otherwise would be unable to afford such as **Dhani Ram** an elderly diabetic villager who regularly visits the clinic and we pay for his medicines which cost Rs.592 a month.

Pawan, a migrant Nepali labourer, stayed in the clinic from October 2017 after he suffered a stroke and, unable to work and with no relatives around he was completely destitute. We provided his meals from Barbara's house while he went four days a week to CORD for physiotherapy and twice a week received acupuncture and other treatment in Nishtha. By January his physical improvement was so good that it was decided that he could be discharged, He decided to go back to his family in Nepal so we gave him the money for his bus fare.

Sandeep, a much younger stroke victim stayed with us intermittently from May 2018 until December. He made good progress with acupuncture and physiotherapy from CORD and was able to walk and use his effected arm quite well when he left.

Special Services

The UK Trust provides a fund for the Clinic special services and destitute patients which has this year been spent on transport for patients to Tanda Hospital (primarily in the ambulance). Rs.15,167 has also been paid out of this account for special medicines and assistance for Arushi. This includes 3,000 to Mishru, her excellent carer, for staying many nights while she was in hospital in December. Arushi has had a very difficult year and it is a blessing that we have had the funds available to pay for her essential medical help and extra care. Because she has a "smart card" which is provided for the very poor, single women and the disabled she is able to get 100% of her costs for free in the hospital up to a limit of Rs.50,000.

The Nishtha Germany Trust Clinic Destitute and special services Fund also pays for medicines for needy patients as well as special needs for our disabled patients.

Arushi and Sanjoli who suffer from severe Cerebral Palsy both require attendants to relieve their mothers and allow them to go out to work. Arushi's attendant Mishru has been helping her the whole year whilst Sajoli has had two changes of attendant during the year.



Sejal and Sonakshi (left) are twins who are suffering from growth hormone deficiency. They are being treated by Chandigarh Government Hospital where they visit bi-monthly. Nishtha pays the cost of their medicines which is Rs.7,500 a month but is going to increase according to the weight of the children. The results are very encouraging, Sonakshi's weight and height gain is excellent, and even Sejal, who is so much smaller, is bright as a button and mentally developing very fast now. We are very grateful to our sponsors that we are able to continue to help these children.



Dr. Barbara with Nicola Tansley, a "retired" psychologist, head teacher and inclusive education specialist visits us regularly to check in with our children with disabilities and gives us lots of very helpful advice. Sadly there are quite a number of children with cerebral palsy who we do our best to help. This year Sanjoli got a new wheelchair but her condition is so poor that it needs a lot of padding and modification for her

to be able to use it. Arushi has been quite unwell through the winter but is now recovered but great care needs to be taken that she does not get a recurrence of her pneumonia. 3 other children, Shaksham, Priya and Bhagwanti all need very specialised care and facilities. We are very grateful to Nicola for working out good strategies for helping them.

Nishtha sumo jeep has been taking 7 children with special needs and 3 stroke patients to Tapovan for their physiotherapy treatment steadily throughout the year. The 3 stroke patients have now all stopped and returned to their homes having gained a good deal of their mobility back. The children include **Sanjoli** who we discussed sending to the local school last year but her Grandmother decided it was better for her to continue go to Tapovan. We bought her a new wheelchair last year but she is having difficulty using it because she has such severe problems of stiffness and extension. Nicola is advising us how we can improve the situation.



Arushi has been fewer times this year because of her extreme poor health. Shakshan is a local 2 year old and Priya aged 4 from a migrant labour family both have CP. Arushi Sharma, the daughter of a migrant labour family who returned to their village during the winter. There is also Pridhi who also has CP. We bought spinal jackets for Arushi and Sanjoli and orthotic foot splints for Priya as advised by the Tapovan physiotherapists.

Tapovan Attendance Chart 2018-19													
Name	Apr	May	June	july	Aug	Sept	oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	fe b	Mar	Total
Sanjoli	13	21	24	5	21	21	23	25	25	22	23	19	242
Arushi (Misro)	19	24	19	11	0	17	15	9	0	18	8	10	150
Arushi Sharma	10	19	12	18	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	81
Pawan	16	21	25	26	21	20	14	13	11	6	0	0	173
Bhadhur	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Udhy	11	7	19	0	11	2	17	0	22	7	13	14	123
Sandeep	0	10	25	26	14	0	18	25	24	2	0	0	144
Priya	0	3	21	21	10	8	13	22	23	17	19	8	165
Paridhi	0	0	0	9	12	12	0	3	0	10	7	9	62
Saksam	0	0	0	0	14	4	7	7	10	9	11	3	65

In order to run this program the UK Trust provides a budget for Fuel & Vehicle Maintenance Costs of Rs. 48,000. This year we spent: Rs.51,560 entirely on fuel costs. Because of the increase in expenditure we have reviewed the condition of the vehicle and have undertaken a major service and replacement of some engine parts (paid for from our local fund) which will hopefully improve the fuel average.

Health Education clinics



Village visits by our health team have been well kept up this year. Only in February and March they were fewer because we are very dependent on Dr. Kusum to keep up this program and she was unfortunately on compassionate leave. She offers essential medical information and consultations not only to

single women but also to many other people in the local communities. Her

presentation is so varied and interesting that people really enjoy her visits. They are considered to be a very valuable part of our health program and one which is much appreciated by the villages. A small stipend is provided for local village women who assist the Single Women Activist in organising specific programs.

Outreach Clinic Data 2018-19					
Months	Visits	Attendees	Patients	Single Women	Children
April	7	338	251	87	0
May	6	331	167	43	80
June	7	231	176	56	40
July	7	224	205	69	0
Aug	8	331	264	137	0
Sept	7	240	185	89	0
Oct	7	275	208	88	0
Nov	7	206	197	49	0
Dec	7	243	231	68	0
Jan	8	304	222	71	0
Feb	5	193	101	55	0
March	5	211	200	58	0
Total	81	3127	2407	870	120

Nishtha Community Centre



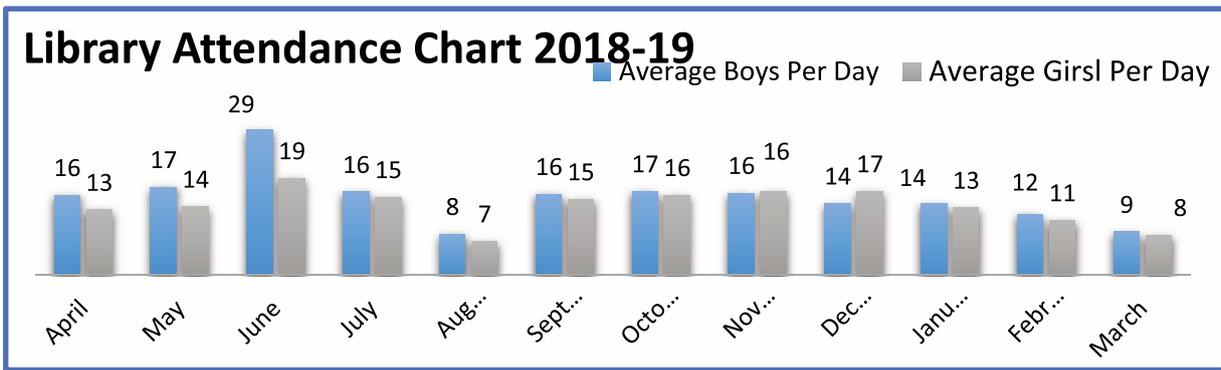
The primary cost of running the community centre programs is the salaries of our extremely valuable staff. They include Vandhana who works as the CC assistant as well as engaging with the environment project and on our organic farm; Salochana the community centre cleaner and drivers cum activists Ravi and Arvind. It also includes Vijay and Ankush who both work on the accounts and administration in the

mornings but move to the community centre in the afternoons where they run the computer centre and engage in any other activities going on including the library, sports and tuition program. They also come every Sunday for our sponsorship students meetings which they organise and also run the computer training for them. In addition, this budget pays utilities and maintenance which included the repair of the garage roof and various equipment this year including new stools to fit our increased number of students into the computer room.

Children and Youth Programs An average 20-25 kids rush to Nishtha for our after school program to participate in the different activities going on in the community center, Ravindra, our librarian is very engaged when the children arrive, motivating them to read by doing storytelling, helping them find interesting books suitable for their age. The kids love it when new books and magazines arrive and spent lots of time on the floor of the library playing indoor games.



To make our library more lively and attractive for kids, this year we ordered of Hindi, English and dual language fiction and non-fiction books online and from catalogues. This year we purchased 100 new picture story books for children. We also took out annual subscriptions of various competitive and women's magazines of interest to local people as well as interesting magazines like Champak, Intellyjelly, and some comics.

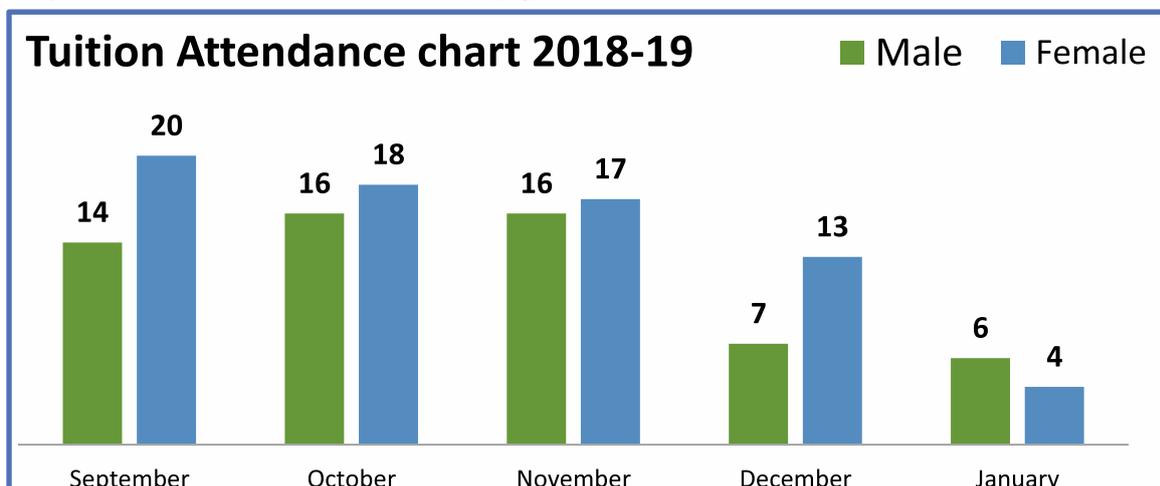


Outreach Libraries for Schools: Ravindra runs the outreach library in four hilly schools for those poor family students who are deprived of imaginative fiction. Ravindra prepares the book boxes for every school according to the student strength in school and keeps changing the contents and refreshing the boxes every two months. This outreach library is very popular among kids; they are very excited by getting Hindi and dual languages books.



School children's Tuition: This year we commenced Tuition classes in mid- September for Govt. School kids, who need extra support in their main subjects. We appointed two young teachers, Sanjay, a B.ed student and trainee in Govt. School Rakkar and Shalini, who is doing her Master of Art course in English. In addition of these two appointed teachers,

Aman a B.ed trainee teacher volunteered to help to teach poor kids. Sanjay is teaching in Rakkar School where he could identify the weaker students and convince them to come for Tuition class. The teachers did immense work to help the children understand their math problems and clear their doubts in science and English. In the beginning months 30-35 students attended the Tuition classes, which were handled with the additional help of our staff members Ankush, Vijay and Ravindra. In November



and December suddenly many students from the nearby Private Bhagsu School asked to join the program. Usually we reserve these classes for Govt. school kids but we allowed these children to join it because they also come from local poor families. By January the numbers had dropped due to the intense cold so we stopped the program in the middle of the month.

Children's sports programs:

We run **sports events** for the schoolchildren and this year our **cycling** program has been doing really well with the encouragement of our civil service volunteers Luisa and Severin.

On December 8th a **full day sports program** was held for around 100 local children in Rakkar. They had a wonderful time playing badminton, volley ball, hula hoop, diablo, skipping and lots of running and jumping and tug of war after that they all enjoyed home cooked black channa and banana before wanting more games and exhausting our staff.



Table Tennis: Nishtha kids are delighted with their new table tennis table bought with some of the proceeds from the Nishtha Cycle tour donated locally. It is a lot of fun, requires skill and concentration and uses up lots of energy after school.

Cricket a common sport in India gets more popularity between October to December month. It's peak time when Rakkar playground is fully engaged with young boys. As usual this year we prepared a clay pitch and provided the bats and wickets and then the teams got on with organising the team sand program. We no longer buy trophies or provide snacks so the cost of this program has become very much less for Nishtha.

Playground development:



This year we have concentrated our playground development to improving the existing structures. We put up various metal sign boards so as to try to encourage local people and the children to use the play equipment appropriately and keep the place clean. We have filled the depressions under the slides and swings with plastic bricks to prevent waterlogging and create a soft landing.



Earlier this year, we were conducting the **cycle program** on our local playground but seeing the way in which the boys, many of whom are quite proficient cyclists would grab the bikes and generally behave in a disruptive manner, putting the girls off from learning to ride, it became clear that we needed a new strategy. Therefore, Mohinder kindly offered his nearby field where a new space was created to

effectively teach the girls how to ride a bicycle out of the way of everyone else on the ground. The ground was flattened and a cycle track created with a new roller which Mohinder had made by filling a concrete pipe with cement and attaching a handle. Street signs were placed to make it more authentic and to prepare them for the road. It is a closed space which cannot be looked in on from the street, which gives the girls security and enables teaching in small groups. The girl's interest and progress is now very much improved. Nowadays, around eight to ten girls are participating in small groups with Luisa to learn riding a cycle. They play different games on the cycles, learn how to fix simple things on a bike and provide information about the traffic rules. The girls have been learning quickly and many of them are now very proficient.



Computer Training:



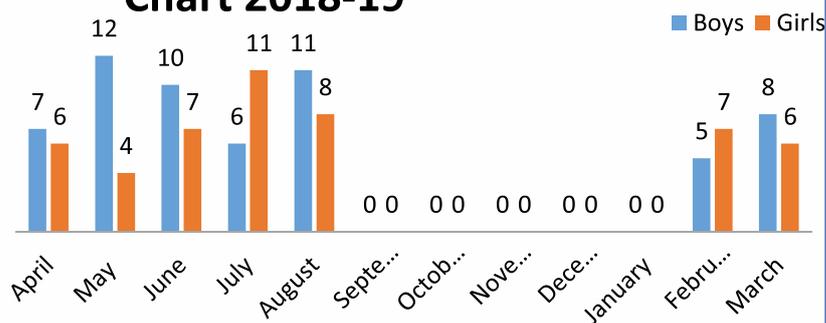
Run by activists Vijy and Ankush, Nishtha computer lab is very popular with the children. It is also used by our sponsorship students in a regular Sunday class as well as by aspirants who are applying for a job or preparing their CV.

There are 7 desktops, 3 laptops, a printer and a projector available for the computer training.

Every day we hold computer classes for Government School kids in two groups (3pm – 4pm, 4pm – 5 pm) to familiarise them with typing and programs such as Paint, Word, Excel, Powerpoint and how to use the internet. We also use liber key, an

Computer Class Attendance

Chart 2018-19



educational software package provided by Frank Alaska Quinn through which students learn in a very fun way. Tux math teaches them how to do basic calculations and Marble Earth finds places.

Typing software and many other education materials are available in Liber key.



22 sponsorship students come each Sunday to learn a basic computer course, enabling them to write a resume, letter, make job applications and project presentations for their college courses. Vijy and Ankush are always available to give students advice about their courses and career possibilities. We have good internet speed so the students can easily access information and forms.

Workshop Program

SOCH Workshop for teenage girls



Nikita and Soujanya, two highly enterprising and experienced young people held a vibrant 2 day workshop for 20 adolescent girls from the villages of Rakkar, Khaniyara and Tillu. Supported by our Community Centre staff, the girls danced, dreamed and explored the themes: Self, Others, community and Habitat. The team hopes to follow up the workshop with a number of

support sessions for the girls and an adapted version for adolescent boys.

First Aid Training

Six members of the Welsh St John's ambulance team gave a wonderfully hands on training to 22 members of our staff and student group. They gave invaluable instruction on how to respond in case of emergencies which is a huge help in this rural area and left us all feeling empowered to help others when needed. Thank you so much Des Kitto and your wonderful team



A Pottery Workshop organised by Severin, Luisa and Ravindra took place on the 15th and 16th of October in the Rakkar Primary School yard. Everything was set up so that as soon as the school classes ended the children were presented with the prepared clay and set to work. At first they were a bit shy to get started but as soon as we showed them how easy it is to wash the clay off your hands they eagerly started to create local style lamps, pots and even images of gods which they sculpted themselves. The 20 children spent a good hour absorbed in their work. By the end of the second day we had many beautiful results ready for firing. The children eagerly looked forward to picking up their creations once they were fired at the local pottery studio. After colouring them, the children happily took their creations home for use during Diwali.





Drawing Course by Suvajit Mandal:

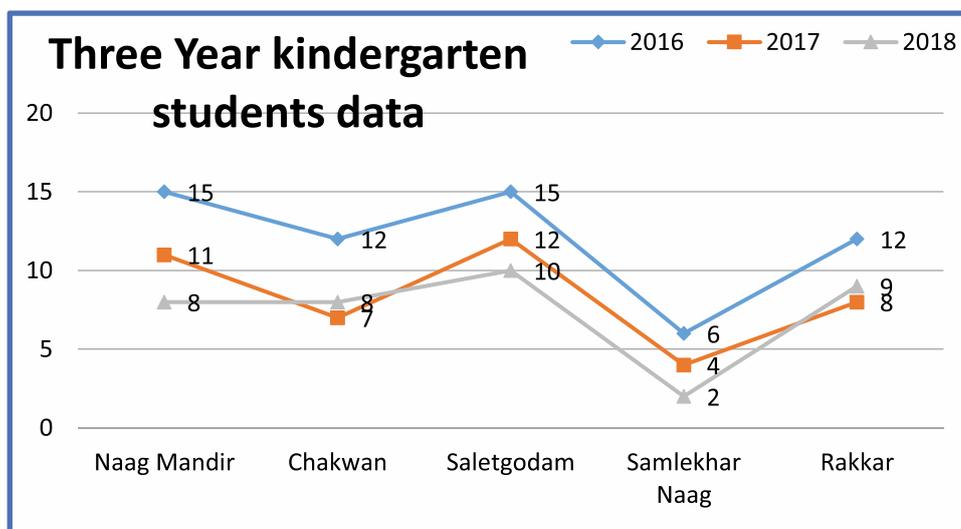
Suvajit Mandal, a professional fine artist who has been staying locally took a two week drawing course in the community Centre for the children. They practiced drawing human faces, animals, birds as well as Gods and Goddesses. He has also very kindly donated two of his paintings to Nishtha where they are proudly displayed in the Community Centre.

Sand Art Therapy: Jaquie Kilty, former Nishtha UK Trustee and experienced psycho therapist, along with Kishwar Shirali, our local retired therapist held Sandplay therapy sessions for school kids in Nishtha community center once a week for around 5 months this year. During each two hour session they would see 5-6 children, providing a short time when they can introspect and express themselves peacefully.



Anganwari Program

The Nishtha UK Trust looks after the Pre-School Children from 5 local kindergartens. The following chart shows how the numbers of children attending the government kindergartens is reducing over the past three years with the result that some are no longer viable. Therefore we no longer visit Samlekharanath anganwari.





We distributed toys like small balls, puzzles, mind games and creatures to add more fun in the kindergartens. This year the kindergartens also got some playing material from the government, so now they are more welcoming and interesting places for kids. Despite that, the kids numbers have continued to decrease this year due to the government pilot project of introducing nursery classes in government schools and because more and more people

send their children to private baby crèches. From the beginning of 2019 we are reduced to visiting only 4 kindergartens.

Although we had no official funds for the infrastructure improvement of the creches, we found it imperative to help the Mohli village crèche as their food and equipment was being raided by rats and mongooses getting in through the broken window screens. In response to urgent appeals from the staff, Nishtha repaired the window grills and screens to make the room safer and more hygienic for the children.

Offering fruit and other nutritional snacks to these particularly low income children is the best way we can improve their access to sound vitamins and proteins. Many children in this social-economic level are still undernourished and their parents have little chance or inclination to buy fruits and healthy snacks for their children. The proliferation of commercial chips and other snacks means that these are what the children are given, leading to poor eating habits and long term health consequences. This cost amounts to around Rs. 500 per child a year.

Wenlido program



This year we held a total of 5 workshops. Ravindra and Deepa are the trainers assisted by Vandhana who is still a trainee trainer. In May we held a very successful program for 8-11 year olds followed by a 3 day training for 12 new girl sponsorship students. This was followed in June by an exuberant one day with 21 8-11 year old girls. This was Ravindra and Deepa's first attempt to train children and they learned a great deal, in particular that 21 is too large a number of children to manage!

Three workshops were held in the second half of the year: a two day basic residential Wenlido training for 12 young girls (age 12-15) of Rakkar village from 6th to 7th October. Ravindra and Deepa Gurung, were the certified trainers and Vandana was the actual trainer for this training.



The first day starts with each participant introducing herself and then the trainer giving a general introduction about the Wenlido program, how it was started and why it's essential for every girl whether she is still a child, an adolescent or an adult. It continues covering specific topics, group discussions and physical activities including the most interesting board breaking activity. This activity makes women realise their innate strength and ability to face problems with strong attitude.

During the second day the participants review the previous day and embark on learning new things. They hold sessions on vital topics like sexuality, domestic violence, avoidance as well as exercises to deter an attacker. They learn safety techniques and how to create boundaries to avoid trouble. They also play some special games through which they learn how to avoid taking on the role of the victim in a situation.

The feedback reflected how nervous these young girls felt at the beginning of the workshop and how it gave them confidence and strength. Some people were very enthusiastic about our tasty meals! All felt it was very valuable.



A second 2 day basic residential training was held from 13th-14th October for 16 adolescent girls from Rakkar village. Again it was held by Ravindra, Deepa Gurung and trainee Vandana. Since this was a 3 day schedule condensed into 2 days due to lack of time, some topics had to be excluded and the rest fitted into sessions lasting until 6.0 pm. Somehow we were able to manage it and even squeezed in discussion about vital new

topics such as cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is increasingly common, especially among teenagers, where some people enjoy the power of being able to hurt or embarrass others on social media. In this time when everyone, especially teenagers are using social media they need to learn how to identify fake and fraudulent online friends, never share personal information online and be proficient in recognising and taking legal action against cyberbullying. At the end several women expressed their wish to receive this training again to build up their skill in using the defensive techniques taught. They said "It's fantastic to know about your own body parts, the importance of breath, why and when we take a deep breathe in a critical situation to give ourselves strength".

From 16th – 18th November, with some difficulty Nishtha organized a three day basic residential wenlido training for 9 adults. It's always hard to get a full group of adult women due to their busy schedules, so the trainers did well to get 9 people together for the group. The three days went off very well with two of the women declaring at the end that had they had this training some years ago they wouldn't have had to suffer as much as they have in their lives.

Public Health and Environment:



Water filter maintenance: To protect the people from common water borne illness, Nishtha has installed 6 water filters in schools and places where local people can access clean filtered water. Suresh along with other staff members do the routine maintenance of all the filtration systems and when needed he replaces the old tubes with new ones. These filters are in regular use by the local people who fill their buckets and water bottles from the “blue taps”

knowing this water is pure for direct drinking and for cooking. It's really of benefit especially in the rainy season when the water coming down the pipes into our homes gets very dirty. Whilst in the past we used to have a great many patients with gastrointestinal problems, as per our clinic patient records, since we installed the filters the number is very much less

This year we spent an additional Rs. 8,000 on a new pre-filter for the clinic system as the old one was no longer functioning. This one is a much better and is capable of filtering out all the visible sediment that comes down the line during the monsoon. Thus saving the efficiency of the finer filters.

Clean Rakkar Project:

This year we have spent money on new collection bags and special bags for the brick making. We also buy masks and rubber gloves for plastic collection and spend money on banners and painting slogans and information on boards and walls advertising the program. Those who participate in our programs are rewarded with refreshments.



Despite all our best efforts to educate our neighbours how to segregate and manage their waste we are being constantly challenged by disconnected Government initiatives. This time they have installed bins in all the surrounding villages which are made of plastic, have removable lids and most importantly, no system of servicing them has been introduced. The result is that they overflow with unsegregated stinking garbage and then local

residents decide to set fire to them to destroy the garbage with horrendous consequences.

Our response has been to empty the bins in our village, to segregate the waste as much as possible and dispose of it. We then removed the bins and delivered them to



the Panchayat yard. Complaints to the panchayat have been met with a stonewall because these bins was a government initiative sanctioned 2 years ago, prior to the new Smart City body who now have their own plans for managing waste. The waste collection services have not been told to collect from these new bins in the villages but say that it is the duty of the individual panchayats. The panchayats

however themselves have no plan what they are going to do.



Our program of educating and collecting plastic waste has therefore continued with considerable obstacles and need to explain to the local residents what is and is not happening regarding waste collection in their village.

Clean up programs have been held every month with our local children and staff and the plastic waste continues to be collected and made

into bricks using both the original and the new machines.

Nehru Youth Organisation in collaboration with NISHTHA environment team, organised a village clean up with our sponsored students and the trainee teachers from the local school. Mohinder gave a good speech about the problems of waste plastic and together they picked up 12 bags of waste from the water channels and village paths

Success in finding uses for the plastic blocks. This year we have made a total of 578



blocks from the two machines. The softer blocks which are tied with string have been used as packing under the ground below the slide and swings on the playground. This has two advantages, it is safer surface for the children to land on and it prevents waterlogging. We are very pleased with this and are doing more so that all the slides, swings and climbing frames will have soft landings. We were also able to sell 460 blocks to a local resort

who are using them to construct a berm.

Publicity for our Plastic Recycling Program



Nishtha was invited to give a presentation at the State Waste Management Workshop in Shimla which was very successful and resulted in a team of 32 Block Development officers, Junior Assistants, Technical Advisers and the Pardhans of 20 villages from Una and Hamirpur Districts visiting Nishtha to see our plastic brick making. Despite heavy rain we explained and demonstrated our program and they expressed interest and considered how they might implement our education, plastic collection and block making. We feel very encouraged that some progress has been made towards controlling the plastic waste in a wider area.



This was followed by three separate groups of panchayat members being sent on a tour which included visiting Nishtha and our waste management program. Mohinder, Vijay Kumar and Vijay Badwarj talked them through our whole program and showed them how our brick making machine works. We hope that this publicity will result in our being able to share our project in other areas.



We also got some good publicity from a BBC Look East feature on the block making machine created by Steve Archer and Les Brunton when Philippa visited the Duxford Aviation Society in July where the machine had been created. This feature cannot be put on social media due to constraints by the BBC but is available for you to see privately.

Incinerator Roof

We have constructed a roof over the new incinerator for dirty and hospital waste in our garbage centre paid for by a donation from Sonalika Tractor Intl. Ltd. It functions very well to keep the Incinerator dry and allows smoke to go up through the roof by means of a long chimney. Severen undertook several experiments to improve the functioning of the incinerator and taught our cleaning staff how to use it effectively.

Special Events

Nishtha stall during the Rakkar Mela in May this year again featured banners, posters and information about our environment program and encouraged everyone to segregate their waste and deliver their clean soft plastic to us.

On 5th June, World Environment Day Nishtha team set up a table, canopy and banners on the new junction outside the Community Centre. Our



staff and volunteers stopped passers by offering them a sherbert drink and talked to them about preserving our clean water supplies and not throwing or burning waste plastic. We distributed our specially designed pamphlets in 3 languages: Hindi, Tibetan and English, which shows how to segregate your waste into recyclable, non-recyclable, biodegradable and burning material.

“Bheena dooj” is the newly invented female equivalent of “bhai dooj” which is a festival



when sisters welcome and honour their brothers by applying a tikka or sacred red mark on the forehead. Nishtha’s Single women’s group decided to celebrate this day to honour and rejoice in our relationship with our female friends and acquaintances. On 1st Nov this year 80 single women from 7 blocks gathered together in the Nishtha premises to celebrate this “Bheena Dooj” festival. They applied a red “tikka” and a

wrist band on each other, signifying their wish for long and happy lives together as sisters. Some “Lions club” members and Nishtha’s Director Dr. Barbara attended as guests in the program. They not only encouraged the single women in their collective effort striving for their rights but also assured them of every possible help they might need

Nishtha Benefit cycle Tour was organised by two of the Nishtha UK Trustees:



Imogen Batterham and Chris Kenyon who took a leap of trust that Nishtha in India could deliver a great trip suitable for both high flying cyclists and people who enjoy going out on their bikes at the weekends.



Was it a challenge? Yes they all said: nearly 500 kms over very hilly terrain with a total ascent of the height of Mt Everest and Ben Nevis put together – indeed it was! But did it match up to your expectations? Yes they agreed and more because they hadn't counted on the great company, wonderful views and great food and fascinating cultural component of the trip. Highlights included the visit to the Golden Temple on arrival, insight into the plight of the Tibetans, the friendliness of the support team and visiting Nishtha for a day, learning about the work we do and being infused by the joy of the children!

As well as raising over 20,000 pounds for the Nishtha corpus fund, the group

also very kindly provided the money to buy two new bicycles and a table tennis table for the children. We are immensely grateful to everyone who participated!

Single Women's Programme



Luisa, our Austrian volunteer reports on her experience observing the Single Women Activists at work:

"Following Sunita around for a day was very helpful for me to understand the way in which the single Women Activists work on the ground. Every day in all weathers they go out by bus and walking to reach around 15 different villages in each month. Every month they attend a whole day meeting at Nishtha as well as coming to Nishtha weekly meetings so the Nishtha team

can stay in touch with their work. They visit the various government offices with requests and appeals for individual single women and organize public forums, press conferences and bi-annual block level meetings. In addition they organize the Nishtha Health Education

camps which reach out into remote villages each block in turn and provide the opportunity for women to understand their health issues and receive advice from our medical team.

Personally, I think that they are doing great work with the participants of the meetings. The support, which they provide for the other women, is enormously important. Without our Single Women workers, a lot of Single Women would be in a very bad condition. What is important for them is the fact that someone is listening to them and that they have a network of other women within their villages as support. All of the women we visited were extremely friendly and voluntarily opened up and told me their stories. I think that wouldn't have happened without the ongoing work of the activists who have built up a steady store of trust from the villagers. Sunita spends a good amount of time recording and documenting everything. She has proper details about a lot of women and has created a social network among them. The topics they talk about are always current and they try to be informed about every support system for the others. I am greatly impressed by the honest, serious and important work they are doing to fundamentally help these most deprived and looked down on women."

A full Report on the Single Women's Program this year is being prepared and will soon be available on our website.

Single women Data 2017-18				
Blocks	Total Member	New Member	Beneficiaries of Scheme	Attendees of Health Camps
Kangra	642	33	216	62
Dharamsala	932	91	240	78
Nagrota	800	18	95	328
Rait	1087	38	173	176
TOTAL	3461	180	724	644

Single women's capacity building workshop

Luisa, our volunteer who joined the workshop writes: "A three day Gender Awareness Training was held for the Single Women from 21st to 23rd September led by Manju, a local woman who is an expert trainer. This program was organized for the Nishtha single women's team of activists who commonly encounter issues related to gender inequality in their work in the villages. Single women are the most deprived women in society, having very little status in the family and often



suffering demeaning behaviour and abuse. For our activists, negotiating their own lives is difficult so they need all the support and tools we can provide in order for them to be able to help other women in difficulty in the villages. On the first day, Manju, introduced herself to the group of 16 local women participants, as well as Ravindra, Nishtha's Community Centre activist and myself who am a volunteer for Nishtha. We began by singing and dancing together to form a bond between us.

Manju then led us through an interesting and varied selection of physical exercises and activities, so that a trust and boundary evolved between us all. We engaged in mental exercises, discussions and reflections. We were introduced to role plays, where we were asked to walk, sit or speak like a man, or alternatively, a woman, and then compare the two roles. This nicely revealed how society differs in their treatment or responses to men and to women. The term "Gender Gap" was very clearly explained by Manju through various demonstrations. We talked about society and the impact it has on us, how important it is for us and about feelings and relationships. Last but not least, in the evening, there was a documentary to watch.



Everyone really enjoyed themselves thanks to the vibrancy of our trainer, Manju. The women asked a lot of questions and very actively participated in everything. Manju's exercises and demonstrations helped them a lot, to understand the theoretical terms. It felt like a very safe environment for everyone and after a time, the women opened up and told about their experiences of gender inequalities. I think

that the women profited a great deal from the workshop because they are so used to being disadvantaged and they had never experienced it differently. I would like to think that now they will think differently about how they regard their own daughters and other younger women. Moreover, the energy in the group helped them to understand, that inequality is not something natural, but a construct rooted in society. The women also gained a certain self-confidence in sharing their experiences with others and listening to others with similar stories. They realize then that they are not alone. This, from my point of view, is the most important thing for them. Being together, discussing and singing, so clearly makes them happy

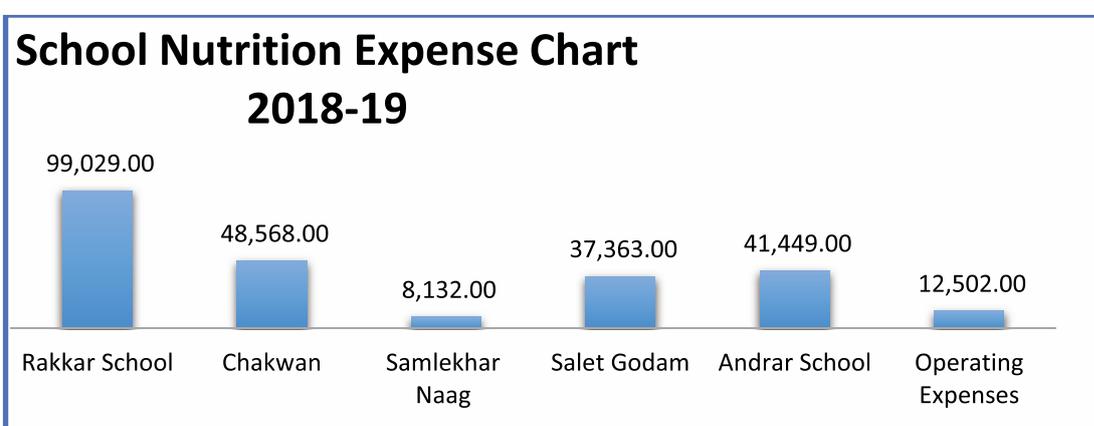
School Nutrition Programme



Nishtha supplied fruit and vegetables regularly to the children in 5 schools, the local Rakkar school and four others on the hillside behind our centre. Although the government provides a mid-day meal for the school children it is very limited indeed, with little more than rice and watery lentils. To improve the nutritional status of school age children, we add onions, tomatoes, tofu and seasonal vegetables for their

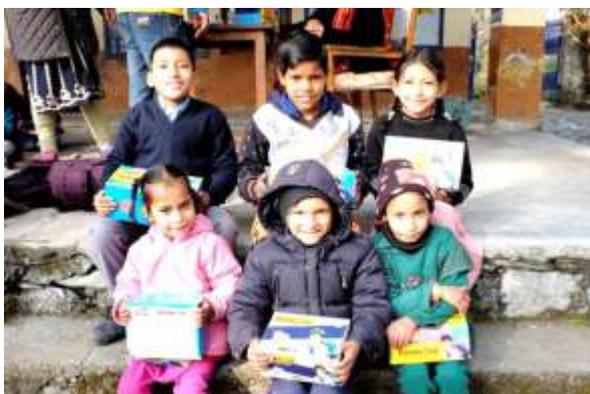
lunch and a piece of fruit per child each day.

School Nutrition Expense Chart 2018-19



Our staff and volunteers organise to purchase the supplies for the schools at the beginning of each week and work out the distribution according to the number of children in the schools. They then pack the materials for the 4 upper schools into the jeep and deliver once a week fruit and vegetables for 3 days. The materials for the Rakkar school are delivered daily since there are many more children and they are nearby.

School Shoes and Socks



In late January when it was very cold, noticing that several primary school children had very worn out shoes or were wearing sandals, our staff organised shoes and socks for the 39 children who really needed them. The children were very excited to have them as it is really very tough running around with holes in your shoes when there is snow on the ground! This

purchase was enabled through a donation of 15,580 from Dr. Barbara's special fund.

Students sponsorship Programme

Supported by the UK Trust, Our College Sponsorship program started in 2012 for single women's children who are unable to get higher education due to lack of financial support. This year 12 more university students enrolled in our sponsorship group, hence it's the largest group, 22 students, since we began in 2012. Although this is much higher than we have an official budget for, during their interviews it was quite impossible to decide who not to take! Therefore we decided to take them all and give even the one or two who we were hesitant about the chance to try. For most girls it is a choice between getting to go to college and gaining those three years of time for personal development or getting married. Fortunately our gamble paid off and we found ourselves with the most wonderful group who have really used the opportunity of our Sunday program to work with their overall development, improving their knowledge of Computers, spoken English and traditional dance.



We also gave them the chance to engage in the Wenlido training and gender trainings held in the summer which did a lot to remove their shyness and build up their confidence. Rather than having the several drop outs we expected, we now have a solid group of firm friends!

Vijay and Ankush teach them basic computer knowledge like typing, paint, word, excel, powerpoint and using the internet. This computer knowledge helps

a lot to them especially when they have to create presentations and data in university, search online study material or typing the documents.



Puja Anand, Nishtha trustee and an IIT trained electronics engineer, holds an hour long class in spoken English. She does a lot of activities and plays with the students to give everybody a chance to speak. Spoken English is like phobia for the students, they want to speak but don't have the courage. Through the activities and plays, students undergo a tremendous change in their ability to speak out. During the Nishtha cycle program event, the students enthralled

the audience with their English play, activities and song. Full credit goes to Puja Anand and the hard work, she puts in to make the students really able to talk!

Vijay Bhardwaj and Vandana teach the local Gaddi and Jhamakda dance skills to students who are very excited to learn. Previously we only did the Gaddi dance performance with 4 pairs but this year we added one more pair and also taught Jhamakda dance.

Our dance group participated in various events and even won second prize in the traditional dance performance in the Block Level competition. In November 10 of our sponsored students were given free passes to attend the Dharamsala International Film Festival. They very much enjoyed watching the movies "SYAAHI" "WATERBABY" and "TYSON".

In the end of December before the winter got serious, the students organized a two day nature picnic to Mathla Dhar a mountain hut owned by a Nishtha Employee's family. It was very fun and a great learning time for all the students, who coordinated with each other and worked in groups collecting wood for the fire, water from natural resources and cooking food. In night they sang and danced around the fire.

At the end of this term 6 of our students will leave us and we will take applications for new students to replace them. Although we theoretically only have money for 14 students, because some don't cost so much, (those studying arts are much cheaper than those studying science), this year we managed to make the budget go around all 22 students.

MA Sponsorship Students

Two years ago the Nishtha Germany Trust agreed to take on the sponsorship of three students who wished to do two MA year courses. All three have now taken their final exams and are awaiting their results.

Shilpa joined Nishtha Sponsorship program on the recommendation of Ram (Nishtha's employee), she is a single child of single mother, and her mother was working in a school kitchen for minimum daily wages, which is never sufficient to maintain any family. After completing her graduation from Degree College Dharamsala, she wanted to do further study in Sanskrit but her mother was unable to help her. Although Nishtha at that time had no funds to support MA students, she was such a good student that we agreed to find a way to help – fortunately the Germany Trust agreed to take her on.



Shilpa passed every semester in first division and is now waiting for her final semester result. During this time she has also learned basic computer knowledge in Nishtha and advanced programming in an institute run under the Government scheme. Her aim is to become a teacher, so she is preparing for B.Ed entrance exam to get the Government subsidized seat.

Shilpa is very grateful for the help she has received and says:

"I remember the very first day of Nishtha Sunday class, it was so terrifying for me to be in a group. Gradually I learned many new things along with confidence, which will always help me in the future. I regret not to have participated in the dance program, although I am so happy to be acted in English play"

Vishavindu is a single mother who has a 13 year old daughter suffering from cerebral palsy. She has been working under Government contract as a Kindergarten teacher which provides only minimum wages which isn't enough for her and her child's expenses, Nishtha helps her daughter by engaging a carer, thereby allowing her mother to work, buying medicines and pampers. Vishavindu is a very hard worker and has been supplementing her income by giving tuition classes to local children. She has a B.Sc. degree with computer knowledge but to get the promotion in her department she must have a Masters degree in maths and so in 2017 she asked Nishtha if we would help her financially. We agreed to help her fulfil her dreams and to improve her financial condition and applied to the Germany Trust for her expenses. She has struggled through the course, passing some papers and having to re-take others because it is very difficult for her especially when her daughter is sick and sometimes hospitalised. We hope that she will finally to clear all her exams along with her last semester exam which she has just taken.



Sakshi is the longest student in our group, and has been sponsored by Nishtha since intermediate school. She is the brightest and a very active student in a group, She was enthusiastic in every Nishtha program either computer, Dance, Spoken English or any other workshop and trainings. She passed her all exams in first division till Post graduation degree, which she got in 2018. In addition of this she did PGDCA (Post Graduation Diploma in computer Application) course from Government institute and is now working as a computer operator trainee in Commission office Dharamsala. She says, the Nishtha's training and knowledge attains here make her much confident

in every work. She is preparing for the highly competitive exam to get a government job. She says "In these five years I have learned much more than my peers, I attended many programs in Nishtha which empowered and developed me like Wenlido training, First Aid training, computer class, English class, Environment & sports programs"

Students Gender Training

A 3 day residential gender training was organised for our new batch of sponsorship students plus three Nishtha staff members from 12th to 14th June. Every year new students enrol our in sponsorship program, all coming from different places so holding some workshops or trainings helps us to get to know them and for these students to get to know each other. Usually we have been doing Wenlido training for the girls but this year, in the trust meeting one of our trustees suggested a gender training for both boy and girl students and recommended Manju as a trainer.

During the 3 day training the students discussed in detail topics like the definition of sex and gender. Sex is biological whereas gender is a concept created by society. The

discrimination between male and female in society comes under gender. The participants were asked to draw and describe the function of the male female body parts, it was quite astonishing that most were shy and don't know, especially about the opposite sex. At the start they were reluctant to talk but by the second and third day they listened properly and talked frankly with each other.

Much of the training was punctuated by playing games, which help to concentrate them on the training and build confidence in themselves. Manju and Ravindra sang a lot of motivational songs to maintain their interest, particularly during the long sessions.

Everybody appreciated the training and would like to do it again. They commented how this training had helped them to think about issues they normally take for granted or brush aside. They all felt they had got to know each other well and gained confidence in themselves. Some of the boys felt it would be helpful to have a male as well as a female trainer.

Nishtha Organic Farm Project

Under this Austrian budget head we buy equipment and seed for the farm and pay 2 workers. Sujata who also helps in the community centre and Sunil who is newly taken on full time and who is very helpful with the playground work and environment project. We have also spent a good deal of time and some expense chasing official documents to have the land we are using as an organic farm officially registered in the name of Nishtha. This tedious work has included making an elaborate record of the status of the land and the crops growing on it.



In India there are two growing seasons, the winter season is known as the Rabi season whilst the summer season which starts after the wheat has been harvested in May is called the Karif season and runs through the monsoon until the rice is harvested in November. We now have very good relations with the agricultural officer in Palampur who visited our land and suggested ways to improve our documentation. Our papers are

now with him for his approval. He will send them to the Dharamsala agricultural office who will then forward them to Shimla for the essentiality certification which will be the grounds on which the land can be registered in Nishtha's name as a natural farming demonstration centre.

In the meantime our visits to the Dharamshala agricultural office have drawn us into the Government drive to propagate understanding and practice of natural and organic farming in the area. In particular, they have come to realise the dangers of using pesticides and inorganic fertilisers



Economically it makes no sense at all in marginal agricultural land such as ours and is highly detrimental to the health of the population and the land itself. The government is therefore holding meetings and workshops which our team has also attended, to encourage natural farming methods: developing natural manure and composting, using traditional farming methods and saving the old varieties of seeds as well as developing successful varieties and

growing techniques. It feels very satisfactory to at last feel that we have the support of the Government for the work we are doing.



Nevertheless the effort required to rebuild the health of severely depleted marginal land is considerable and is taking time.

The team is greatly enhanced by Sunil who is able to do most of the heavy work while Sujata and Vandhana do the lighter tilling, seeding, mulching, weeding and harvesting.

Publicity projects

Nishtha 2019 calendar is now on all our friends and supporters walls and is a major stimulant for people to donate to us. A total of 102,425 was spent on printing, design work and postage of the calendar from this account. The annual report is distributed to our Trusts, Trustees and major donors. It is also submitted to the Government along with the audited accounts each year.

2017-18 Annual Report was also a very successful publicity tool. 50 copies were printed and distributed to our Trustees and principal supporters. It is also available to download on our website.

Our Facebook page is also a great way to keep our friends and supporters up to date with our activities throughout the year. This year we have posted 60 times and we have built up a following of over a thousand friends.

United Kingdom



Nishtha UK Trust

Charities Commission
Registration No: 1118248
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P O Box 203 Totnes,
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Registration No: 51 1/4/98
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Nishtha Austria

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Nishtha on Facebook
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Nishtha Office Phone
+91-98828-95838



Nishtha Rural Health,
Education & Environment Centre

Rakkar Village, Sidhbari,
Kangra District, Himachal Pradesh,
176057 India

phone: +91-98828-95838

e-mail: contact@nishtha.ngo

website: www.nishtha.ngo

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