



THE SREEPUR VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2009

Robin's Story

On 4th June our patron Jim Fitzpatrick MP and his wife Sheila held a fundraising dinner in the Churchill Room at the House of Commons. Over 100 people attended and had a delicious dinner and a relaxed and enjoyable evening. There was a raffle and a very successful auction – the main prize was a signed copy of Barack Obama's book *The Audacity of Hope* which went for £3500. All of the prizes had been donated by friends and constituents, and an amazing £18,727 was the total amount raised.



Trisha Silvester, Peter Wilkes, Jim Fitzpatrick, Karen Clark and Sheila Fitzpatrick

News from Pat Kerr

Management

Our plan to develop leaders and managers amongst the older children who have left and made their way in the outside world is starting to bear some fruit. At the moment four ex-children work for us as managers. Maya designs and develops cards and other products in Sreepur Village Trade, Rabeya is assistant store manager, Rina manages Sreepur Village Trade and Prodip is Executive Assistant to the Senior Management Team.

Long term 'succession planning' is crucial but so difficult! We want to make sure that the investment you are making in Sreepur continues to benefit people for years to come and the only way to do that is to have the right people in place in the team at Sreepur – and to invest in them having the right skills.

Because of the nature of a project like this the management at SPP has been rather autocratic. Although everyone has a say and changes are extensively discussed in the end I (with support from Trish and the trustees) have made most of the final decisions! Now that things are settling down, more and more decisions are being made by the senior management team. Recently the team – Khadija (Executive Director), Mr Choudhury (Dep. Executive Director), Subrata (responsible for Fund Raising and Donor Liaison in Bangladesh), Prodip (Exec Assistant) and myself – went on a two days training in Dhaka. Using the skills we gained we are gradually improving the management systems we have in place and empowering the group to thoroughly discuss then decide on operational policies.



Rina as a young girl at Sreepur 1988



Rina working with a group of SVT producers, October 2009

Fostering

Most people will know that we now foster many of our children in the local village community. We have noticed that the children in foster homes do very well at school and generally acquire greater community skills. Some months ago we were given some funding by the British High Commission to carry out a study of this programme. All the children in foster homes and their guardian in each community family have been interviewed and over the next couple of months we will be informing government and other key people about our use of this method of care. We also plan to get their opinions on whether fostering could be used more broadly in Bangladesh. This is very exciting and we will let you know the final results of this project early next year.

This photo shows one of our foster families. Bappy is the little boy in the blue T-shirt – he was born in December 1999. He was abandoned by his mother at birth in the Dhaka Medical College



Hospital, and was referred to Shishu Polli Plus in 2002 by the Centre for Training & Rehabilitation of Destitute Women in Dhaka. They were unable to trace any of his family members. Bappy had some behavioural problems at Sreepur, and we placed him with a foster family last year. His foster mother Monowara (in the yellow sari) was one of our destitute mothers, and is now employed as a permanent member of staff as Section Assistant in the Child and Mother Care unit. Bappy loves living with his foster family and is doing well in Grade 1 at our Junior School. He is an intelligent and affectionate little boy, who loves playing cricket.

Pat

Olive harvest



We have just harvested a fruit known locally in Bangladesh as olives. They are not olives as we know them, but are a type of hard fruit which the children love. All the toddlers and children are given a snack mid-morning and mid-afternoon, and this fruit is a favourite. This was the first harvest for these trees, and it looks like a very successful one!



New Website

This year the trustees decided that it was time to update our website. We invited quotes from two design companies that we knew, and appointed Miranda and Richard Gray of Footmark Media who drew up an exciting proposal at a specially reduced fee. The new site will launch in early November – we are just ironing out domain transfers and switching to PayPal for taking donations. The site includes some video clips including a lovely one of the toddlers eating which appears on the home page as you enter the site. It has loads of photographs and lots of stories, so I hope you will take some time to visit it, and tell us what you think. www.thesreepurvillage.org