

Rotarians against Child Slavery

(A Newsletter for the proposed Rotarian Action Group - See website www.racsrag.org)

"Rotary Internationalendorses & supports the rights of children to food, shelter, health care, education, and freedom from abuse, violence & **slavery**. Rotary clubs around the world are committed to protecting these rights for all children, regardless of race, creed or nationality."

(Article 42.020.3 – RI Code of Policies Rights of Children)



Issue No 15

We could end slavery, if we demand it

For many years, Rotarians have been successfully battling on many fronts, against killer diseases, low literacy levels, poverty, lack of water and non-existent sanitation. But there is one struggle which has never featured on Rotary International's radar..... **until recently**. This is the struggle to help eradicate the evil practice of slavery.

We know that the majority of the estimated 27 million slaves are children who are forced to work in factories, in fields, in homes, in quarries, in restaurants and in the sex trade where they are used and abused and for the young girls, repeatedly traded on the female used body markets.

Anti-Slavery day in the UK – 18th October

However, positive things are happening in the UK. **18th October 2010** will mark the first Anti-Slavery Day in the UK. The Anti-Slavery Day Act which was passed into law before the general

We could eradicate slavery. The laws are in place. Governments, the multi-nationals, the World Trade Organisation, the United Nations, they could end slavery, but they are not going to do it until and unless we demand that they do it.

In recent times the Security Council of the UN has addressed slavery only once, and then in a very restricted way. In 2005, it passed Resolution 1612 on children and armed conflict, which condemned the forced recruitment, abuse, rape and exploitation of child soldiers. This resolution was a good first step, but it called for no action beyond "monitoring and reporting"

If we really want to eradicate slavery, the Security Council has to take slavery seriously as it does a threat like nuclear proliferation and go beyond just observing and reporting on the problem

Members of the Action Group could contribute by lobbying for the topic to be included on the agenda of Rotary Day at the United Nations. This event is held annually in November. **Write to Bradley Jenkins, the RI Representative to the United Nations and ask him to bring the matter to the attention of whoever is responsible for drawing up the agenda for that event. His email address is bradjenkins1@verizon.net.**

election, has created an annual day to provide a focal point for raising awareness about the many people in the UK and around the world who continue to be trapped in modern slavery, and to

promote the need for many individuals and organisations across society to play a part in ending it. The date also coincides with Europe's Anti-Trafficking Day.

Action Group members off to India in November

Four members of the Action Group will be off to India next month. They will participate in an NID (immunizing children against polio) on 14th November and will subsequently visit several humanitarian projects. These will include visits to a Shelter for Trafficking Victims in Bihar State and a Child Slave Rehabilitation Centre near Allahabad. Here they will hope to see the new vehicle which has been the subject of a recent successful Matching Grant bid. The vehicle will be used in raids to release children from bondage and for transporting the rescued children for health check ups, restoration to the children's homes and for court cases. Three of the members are from England, ie Stephen Sypula from the RC of Stevenage Grange, Raj Pandey from the RC of Hertford and Mark Little from the RC of Norwich St Edmund. The fourth member is from the USA, ie Carol Metzker from the RC of West Chester Downtown, Pennsylvania.

Rehabilitating traumatised minds



On each of my visits to two Child Slave Rehab Centres near Delhi, India, I have been more than impressed by the rehabilitative skills of the staff at those Centres, by the level of training & education provided for the children and also by the love and devotion shown by those who care for the freed slaves. But is that enough ?



For the freed slave, freedom is not the end, only the beginning of the road back to normality. Rehabilitating traumatised minds is not an easy task. There is no body of knowledge & expertise built up by doctors & psychologists about how to help the freed slave. When slavery is the only life you have ever known or can ever remember, when

your identity is wrapped up in your subjugation, finding a way through to a new life is very difficult.

One method of rehabilitating traumatised minds which is achieving considerable success in India is through the efforts of an organisation called Kolkata Sanved.

Kolkata Sanved, uses dance movement as an alternative approach to recovery, healing and for the psychosocial rehabilitation of victims of violence and trafficking and other vulnerable sections of society.

Attached to this Newsletter as Annex A is an article written by Rtn Rachael Blair

of the RC of Annapolis, Maryland, USA, which describes the work of Kolkata Sanved..

Rachael's Foundation "Kindness in Action" has just started financially supporting Kolkata Sanved's programme of alternative therapy for traumatised and other victims.

If you would like to know more about Rachael's Foundation please click on the link below.

www.kindact.org

Child Sex Slaves in Northern Thailand

The newest member of the Action Group is David Black from the Rotary Club of Dunedin Central in New Zealand. David has been generating support from Rotary Clubs in Australia and New Zealand for the children of Northern Thailand who are constantly abducted by sex traffickers and used as Child Sex Slaves. He has promised to provide an article about his work in Northern Thailand which I hope to include in the next edition of the Newsletter.

In a recent email David wrote

"It is fantastic that a Rotary Action Group has been established to focus effort into this area. I, personally, could think of no better focus for Rotary once Polio has been eradicated, than to work to save the lives of innocent children who are subjected to daily abuse and atrocities that we cannot fathom. I often, when speaking to groups, remind them that if anyone in our developed society, suffers the atrocity of rape once in their lives, we have all manner of infrastructure to help them rebuild their lives, including Police, Rape Crisis, Victim Support, Counselling, etc etc. Even then, the victim's life has been irrevocably altered. In Northern Thailand, the victims are not raped once, but many times over, every single day. They are children, not adults, and there is no support for them. I believe the preservation of human life, no matter where in the world the victims live, must surely be the most basic objective of all Rotarians.

I look forward to working with you to help children in all forms of slavery to be free".

(David Black – Rotary Club of Dunedin Central, New Zealand)

Punarnawa Ashram

On page 1 of this Newsletter I mentioned that some members of the Action Group will be visiting, inter alia, a Shelter for Trafficked Victims in Bihar, India next month. Bihar is one of the poorest states in India and trafficking of young women and children is prevalent all over the State.

The Shelter, called Punarnawa Ashram, was funded by a private foundation and is now supported by Free the Slaves – an Anti-Slavery Organisation based in Washington DC. It was opened last February and supports 25-40 young women and girls at any one time for a 6 month average stay. In addition to legal assistance and help in accessing economic entitlements, rescued women and girls will receive shelter, medical care, help with emotional and psychological recovery, education and vocational skills training. Women will also be encouraged and supported to participate in advocacy on behalf of themselves and other trafficking survivors.

I asked Ginny Baumann, Director of Partnership (Free the Slaves) to provide options for those clubs which might be keen to help with some of the funding requirements of this new Ashram. These options are now included as Annex B to this Newsletter. If you are interested in obtaining further information about this Ashram or any of the funding options listed, please let me know.

Mark Little
Rotary Club of Norwich St Edmund
District 1080, England
3 October 2010

Action Group's Website: www.racsrag.org

Article by Rtn Rachael Blair, Rotary Club of Annapolis, USA

Kolkata Sanved was founded in 2004 by Ashoka Fellow **Sohini Chakraborty**, a sociologist and dance activist.

For *the victims of violence and abuse* living in NGO and state-run homes, rehabilitation continues to follow a stale routine - the usual counseling and vocational training in tailoring, block printing and knitting. There are very few innovations in counseling techniques or finding new opportunities for the victims. For *mental health patients* in the state run hospitals, little attention is given to the development needs of the patients, they are treated as prisoners living in a jail like environment and denied their basic human rights. Many *mainstream children* are sometimes hyperactive and/or slow to learn. Some children do participate and express themselves well but remain introverted. For the *domestic workers*, they face a monotonous, humiliating and often abusive routine with no outlet to express their rights in society. *Children suffering from HIV/AIDS* often have negative attitudes towards their bodies and their lives and must deal with negative stigma on a daily basis. *Children who live on the platform and in slums* face daily violence and aggression. They have to fight through daily activities in order to stay alive. This type of life keeps the children from loving their bodies and minds.

In 1996 Sohini started a dance project within Sneha (a shelter and care home for trafficked women and girls run by Sanlaap) as a volunteer. For twelve years Sohini experimented with breaking the barriers of traditional dance. This experiment proved that body movement, when used sensitively, could become a powerful tool for rehabilitation and advocacy. This tool transforms young victims of sexual abuse from being a "rehabilitative victim" to a "proactive advocate" - someone who has made peace within her violated soul and is now ready to voice her concerns through physical movement.

The success of Sohini's work led to the establishment of Kolkata Sanved in 2004 with five founder members who are residents of Sneha. Members communicate in workshops and performances on the issues of trafficking, violence against women, and child exploitation through the intimate and powerful medium of dance.

Today Kolkata Sanved has expanded its program to work in rural and urban India, Bangladesh and Nepal to establish dance movement as an alternative approach to recovery and healing for the psychosocial rehabilitation of victims of violence and trafficking, mental health patients, women and children suffering from HIV/AIDS, domestic workers, railway platform children and mainstream school children. Kolkata Sanved has performed and conducted workshops worldwide.

Dance Movement as an alternate mode of therapy and rehabilitation for these vulnerable populations is a proven success with the Sanved model. Not only does the process bring about positive changes in mind, body and spirit, it also enables the women, children and youth to interact with mainstream society on an equal footing.

Kolkata Sanved's self generated curriculum, Sampurnata (completeness/fulfillment) trains survivors of trafficking, exploitation and abuse to become peer educators, advocates, trainers and performers, enabling them to lead a life with dignity and respect.

<http://kolkatasanved.org/Performances.htm>

ANNEX B

Punarnawa ashram

Laxmipur, Dangaraha, Purnea (Bihar)

Details of Tentative Amount for the Required Needful Items

Ginny's notes added in blue

Also – note that all costings are tentative – if a Rotary club is interested in one or more of these, I would want to double check and get comparative quotes.

Items	Details (showing costs in rupees)	Cost in \$.	Remarks
Clothes (winter season)	Sweater 12Pcs x@ 500 =6000/- Shawl 12 Pcs x @ 300 =3600/- Gloves etc. 12 Pcs x 300 =3600/-	\$293	Use for survivors This is needed within one month – so may not be appropriate
Sewing Machine	Reintegration = 5 Pcs x5500 =27500/- Training = 2 Pcs x 5500 =11000	\$855	Use for survivors These are needed for the survivors who are going home after being trained in tailoring and will need their own machine - plus they need 2 more machines for training at the ashram
Fans (Ceiling)	12 Pcs. X 1200	\$320	Use for survivors
Utensil for Kitchen	Catering etc.	\$222	Use for Kitchen
Trunks	For keeping Cushion & Quilt 2 Pcs. X 3000	\$133	Use for storage These are metal trunks for storing items so they don't rot
Solar Lamp	12 Pcs x 40000	\$888 for each lamp, \$10,666 for all the ones that are needed. I'm not sure if this includes cost of installation – but that would not	Lighting These are large solar powered street lamps, which will be placed all around the grounds, to help with safety at night.

		be too much in addition.	
Solar Panel	2 Pcs x 42000	\$1,866 Not sure if it includes installation	Water heating – to go on the roof of each of the two main dormitory buildings – provide warm water for washing and washing clothes.
Motor Scooter (two wheeler)	1 Pcs	\$1,000	Coordinator and other staff use to get into next town for meetings etc.
Four wheeler		\$15,555 we would definitely need to get multiple quotes and carefully select vehicle	Ashram work – taking residents into town for medical needs, collecting bulk groceries, meeting with lawyers and officials etc
Speaker (Home theater)	Deck 2 Pcs+1Pcs	\$155	Cultural Activity – I'm not sure what this is exactly
Canopy – round “gazebo” type structure	1 Number	\$2,222	Use for Meetings & Cultural Activity
Shutter for Garage (Iron)	2 Pcs x 25000	\$1,111	Vehicle keeping
Walky talky	5 pcs x 500	\$55	For staff use around the premises, especially important in case of an emergency.