

# Friends of India

Friends of India would like to thank you for your continued support and to wish you every happiness for the Christmas season.

News update

December 2010

## A Taste of India raises over CHF 26,000 for Kleen Kitchens for Kids (KK4K)

Nearly 250 Friends of India supporters filled the Salle de Spectacles in Founex, Switzerland on November 18<sup>th</sup>, to hear about our KK4K project and to enjoy an evening of Indian culture.



Seated at candle-lit tables, guests were first treated to a beautiful classical Indian dance, Kathak style, by Annjali Shah. A delicious, authentic Indian meal was then eaten off palm plates, which had actually been made in the production unit on the site of our new project - the FOI Residential Learning Centre in Tirunelveli, South India.

Film presenter Anjali Guptara

showed excerpts from her documentary 'Forgotten Women', highlighting the plight of many women in India, and FOI Treasurer Ted Talbot explained the real reason for the event – the need to raise money for new stoves for our KK4K project. Examples of these actual stoves were positioned on the tables around the room.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all who came along, supported and generously donated.

To help us when organising future fundraising events, we would welcome your feedback on this event.

### How does FOI work in India?

When we take on a new project in India, we always consider its sustainability for the future. While we help to get a project up and started, our aim is that it can become self sufficient, or be supported locally, within 3 years. To do this, we are helped by our committee of like-minded people in India, based in Chennai, who are willing to identify and follow-up projects for us.

Their three main aims are currently:

- ▶ Enabling our projects to become self-sufficient (including looking for local donors).
- ▶ Establishing a fund for providing children's education (they are now looking into the best ways of doing this – we will keep you posted).
- ▶ Arranging for local volunteers to link up with deprived and vulnerable children, as 'foster' brothers and sisters, offering emotional support, days out etc. (It is not always just money that is needed.)

### IDEAS FOR LAST MINUTE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

- ▶ Maybe you have decided not to send Christmas cards or presents this year? **Why not give a donation to Friends of India instead?**
- ▶ And what to give to the person who has everything? **How about making a donation to one of our projects (e.g. see the 'Music Scholarship Fund' overleaf)?**

### Latest news on KK4K

Friends of India is working with local partners in Tamil Nadu to help clean up the smoky atmospheres of *anganwadis* by providing clean-burning stoves - 'Kleen Kitchens for Kids'.



**Anganwadis** are government-sponsored mother and child care centres for children aged 0 – 6 years. About 25 children attend each *anganwadi*, which is run by an *anganwadi* worker and provides some basic education, health advice and nutritious food. The *anganwadi* is usually just one room, with meals cooked in the same room, over a traditional wood fire. This means the children and women are forced to breathe in lethal fumes from the cooking fires. (Indoor air pollution is linked to 400,000 premature deaths in India each year)

It costs us just 10 CHF to replace a traditional fire with a new efficient stove. With improved air flow and insulation, the new stove maintains higher temperatures, dramatically reducing the amount of smoke and toxic fumes. It also uses up to 60% less fuel and reduces the cooking time by up to 50%.

### A breath of fresh air for 150 000 children!

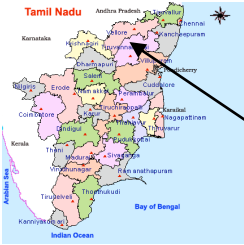
During this year, two districts in Tamil Nadu (**Thiruvallur** and **Villupuram**) have become the very first in India to boast of smokeless stoves in all their *anganwadis*.



Photo: Envirofit International

Following on from this success, we are now helping to supply new stoves to all the *anganwadis* in two more Tamil Nadu districts – **Dindigul** and **Theni**.

▶ This will be directly improving the day-to-day living of around 150,000 children in some 5,630 *anganwadis*! NB. The local government and *anganwadis* themselves are also contributing to this project - for every CHF 1 raised by FOI in Switzerland, the equivalent of CHF 6 will be obtained locally in India.



Friends of India is currently working with its Indian partners in five geographical 'communities' across Tamil Nadu in southern India: **Chennai - Madavakkam - Arni - Kovalam - Madurai**

**Arni** is located about 100km south west of Chennai, within the Tiruvanamalai district of Tamil Nadu. Here is an update of what is happening in this area...

### Expansion of the Richard Walsh Music School

This year, funds from FOI are paying for a major extension to the Music School, which was opened in 2009. This extension will include a recording studio as well as providing more space for the students. Building work is progressing well, and the inauguration is planned for early in the new year.

The Music School is set within the residential **Amalarakkini Special School for the Blind** which provides special education and training for around 100 visually impaired children. Music is now part of their curriculum, and the children have access to both western and Indian musical instruments – from keyboard, guitar, violin and flute, to muruthangam, tabla and tavel. Thanks to further contributions from FOI this year, the school now has around 50 instruments. The Music School is also



offering musical training to children of the surrounding Dalit community (the lowest caste groups), who would otherwise never have access to such a resource.

### NEW - Launch of Music Scholarship Fund

After graduating from the Music School, we would like to provide opportunities for some of the children to continue their music studies. CHF 1650 will sponsor one student to continue into further education for three years, covering all their fees and accommodation. Our aim is each year to provide sponsorship for 3 students leaving the school.

### ARE YOU A MEMBER OF FRIENDS OF INDIA?

To do what we do, we rely on a regular income from people like you. Your annual membership of CHF 100 (160 for a couple) helps to fund our ongoing work. In return, you receive news and updates on our projects and events.

- ▶ Our membership year runs from **1st January** each year, so please remember to **RENEW NOW!**
- ▶ Or if you would like to become a member, please email us with your details and pay as shown opposite.

**AND REMEMBER...** we welcome donations any time of year – and 100% of your donation will go directly to our projects in India.

*NB. Pam Walsh will be visiting our projects in the new year, so we will give you an update on her return...*



### Two more classrooms for St. Joseph's School

St Joseph's is a primary school for girls and boys, where the language of tuition is English. After the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, the boys move onto another school where they can continue

learning in English. However, the only option for the girls is to continue their education within a Tamil language school. To improve the future opportunities for these girls, and to allow them to continue learning in English, St. Joseph's wants to expand, to incorporate a senior school for the girls. To get this started, FOI has already paid for two more classrooms to be built and construction work is almost completed. The school now has further plans for expansion, so that it will meet local government standards, and we are currently looking at these options.

### New project to empower women in rural areas.

FOI has recently contributed to the setting up of new tailoring centres for women and girls in two villages – Mullandram & Pulivandal. Agriculture and brick-making are the main occupations in these remote villages, where the economic situation is very poor and the daily wages not sufficient to maintain a family. Women and girls will firstly be trained in tailoring skills and then helped to find relevant employment. The request for these centres came from the women themselves, who were looking for ways to improve their earning capacity. By learning a new skill locally, they save time and money. With 7 or 8 sewing machines at each centre, it is expected that 80 women will participate in these courses during the first year. This is a formula that has worked well elsewhere and we are thrilled to be helping here too.



### To make a donation or pay annual membership

**Bank:** UBS Geneva  
**Bank account name:** Friends of India  
**Bank account number:** 240-439931.40 D  
**IBAN number:** CH 68 0024 0240 4399 3140 D

**Post Office:** CCP17-753012-7

- ▶ Or you can do this online at [www.friends-of-india.org](http://www.friends-of-india.org)

### How to contact us

**Address:** Friends of India, 28 Chemin de la Combe, 1260 Nyon, Switzerland  
**Telephone:** +41 (0)22 361 0440  
**Email:** [info@friends-of-india.org](mailto:info@friends-of-india.org)