



RAYS OF HOPE



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Dear friends,

Due to the current health crisis, exceptional measures have been established.

KIRAN applies the directives of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and World Health Organization, in order to ensure the safety of all and to prevent the spread of the virus.

During this time, **KIRAN is closed to children, most staff, visitors and friends of KIRAN.** We continue to adjust our approach as necessary and we will keep you informed as the situation evolves. Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Take care of you and of your loved ones!

Ahyan Shandilya, Executive Director

BEAUTY & SMILES

To lead us through tough times

When I planned to start with the creation of a KIRAN History book at the occasion of our 30th anniversary, I could not imagine that I would look through our yearly photo books while being confined to my office, because all movements are restricted during this three week long "lockdown". But how lucky I am to work in such a nice room, where the huge, beautiful painting of a tree is "watching" over me, and inspiring me with thoughts of confidence that KIRAN will bloom and bear good fruits in spite of all hurdles.



And then, to see all these photos of the beginnings of KIRAN gives me so much joy in this troubled time. Yes, how good it is to remember all the beauty and smiles, the loving hands and creativity of these children, and be deeply thankful for it all !

Perhaps it could be helpful to each of us in this present situation to remember all the good things life has given us while we took them all for granted. And perhaps this pandemic of the Coronavirus would afterwards turn into a "pandemic of sharing", because we will have come to realize that on this planet we are all one family who cares for each other. May God heal not only our bodies, but also our mind and heart!

Sangeeta J.K



Painted by Anil and his team from Art & Design

COVID-19

Awareness among Kiran



The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on and recognized it as a pandemic. The entire world is affected by it and fighting their way out. India stands at an important turning point.

KIRAN has taken all the necessary measures to fight against COVID-19. In continuation of different measures, several meetings were organized with KIRAN staff and village residents to make them aware of coronavirus disease, educate them on precautions, safety measures and facts related to it. The posters with key messages of regular handwashing and promoting hygiene were displayed at various sites in KIRAN village.

The reliable updates, education and communication material (from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and World Health Organization) has been shared regularly with the team to avoid myths and misperceptions related to it.

A MESSAGE FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR

The spread of Coronavirus and the measures taken by Indian Government to contain the epidemic are affecting the daily life of us all. Our thought and concern go to the children with special needs and their families, especially those living in the distant villages, who are now facing new or increased problems in getting enough nutritious food and the necessary medicines. Their parents in these days may have their income through labour reduced or even stopped because of the lockdown.

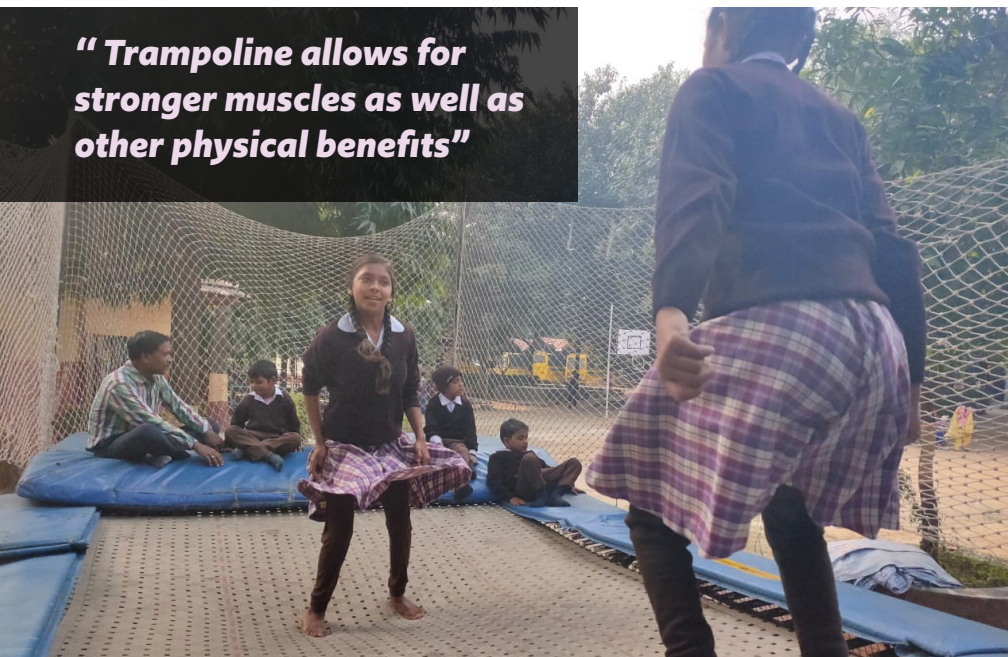
While our school is closed and the regular clinical activities of rehabilitation are suspended, Kiran's teams are keeping in touch with the families of students of our school and children followed by the rehabilitation units, so as to care for their urgent needs. Community Based Rehabilitation

team is bringing medicines and other essential items to the families in particular need in the villages of Varanasi and Mirzapur districts served by us under the T.S. Eliot and GANESH projects.

In these exceptional days, the attention to the needs, physical and psychological, of children and adults with disabilities is our concern and must be the concern also of their communities and all public service system, as the Head of Disability Dept. of Ministry of Social Justice has recently reminded to all the government authorities and main stakeholders in the society. Kiran Society is standing by all the children with special needs and their families. We will do whatever is in our possibilities to support them.

Dr. Moreno Toldo

"Trampoline allows for stronger muscles as well as other physical benefits"



TRAMPOLINE ACTIVITY *With the Physio-Occupational team*

Every year, the team of physiotherapists and occupational therapists organize trampoline session for students in an open field. The trampoline sessions started in the month of November 2019 and continued till beginning of March 2020. This trampoline is fully equipped with the necessary safety features.

Trampolining is fun, and motivates most of the children to be active. Trampoline allows for stronger muscles as well as other physical benefits. Along with this it also helps in gaining confidence and improving balance. During this period, a total of 21 sessions were conducted for 80 children.



PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

Caring for children and their parents



"To provide psychological support to the children with disability and their parents through counselling, therapy & intervention."

Parents & Child Care Unit (PCCU) works as an entrance door for Kiran Society wherein several kinds of services and intervention to children and parents are provided. The professionals assess the individual cases as per their need - Psychological intervention is one of them.

Standardised tools and checklist have been used to assess as well as to provide guidance and counselling regarding the condition of the child and their family issues.

Psychological evaluations help in providing effective services. In this process every child is evaluated by a psychologist to establish an individual rehabilitation plan, individual education plan for school admission.

The team also provides a psychological report to children which assists them in the process of obtaining "Disability Certificate".

NETWORKING MEETING - *With Collaborative Partners*

An annual networking meeting with local collaborative partners for outreach services.

A network meeting on 16th March 2020 aiming to review existing collaborative strategies among partners in providing rehabilitation services was

organized in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. A discussion has been held to know how each partner was promoting inclusion in their respective areas and to explore other

potential areas for collaboration. The team from Kiran presented the data from the outreach medical camps conducted with each respective partner during the last year. This has been followed by sharing of the outcome, challenges, gaps in service provision and learnings.

Some of the suggestions were to increase the number of camps and facilities, better mobilisation, better communication and to work jointly on capacity building and financial sustainability. Each partner has expressed generous gratitude towards KIRAN and assured to work in a more organized way.





INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

"An equal world is an enabled world"

Two events on International Women's Day were organized on 4th and 6th March 2020 at Sikhar and Majhawa block in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh. This year, the theme was "An equal world is an enabled world".



These programmes were aimed to bring existing self-help groups of women (SHG) on a common platform and make them aware of their rights and the importance of equality. The members of SHG were given privileged for the organization of the overall programme in collaboration with community workers from Kiran.

More than 800 women participated in it on their own. These two events were enthusiastically managed by key members of SHG (President, Secretary and member of SABLA groups). Many women have shared their views, desire, and aspirations. The importance of girl education and the use of women's rights were demonstrated through songs and drama.

PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS FROM SPECIAL EDUCATION



The students from Special Education participated and provided their support in organising the events for International Women's Day on 4th and 6th March 2020 at Shikhar and Majhawa blocks of Mirzapur district in Uttar Pradesh.

As part of their course curriculum, they have been involved in several community based activities. Such participation improves their skills and confidence on community mobilising and involvement, exposure to organise grassroots level events, and challenges in different environments settings.



INCEPTION WORKSHOP

Inclusive education

KIRAN works on the development of children with disabilities through different intervention. One of the major interventions is the promotion and implementation of the inclusive education. For such intervention, KIRAN recently received a small action grant from Embassy of Switzerland in India for a project "Improving access to Right to Education and Right to Information for children with disabilities through advocacy, in Pindra block of Varanasi district, Uttar Pradesh."

An Inception workshop was organized on 18th March 2020 to create a common understanding among team members on project goals, objectives, implementation plans, timeline and available resources. This will be helpful for a smooth implementation of the planned activities under this action.

playing with colours, trying to paint each other with pink, green, yellow, purple,... pigments. It didn't take long before they all called my name to make me come out of my room and had me completely coloured in green in a few seconds!



But what is Holi festival exactly and why all those colors and what is the meaning of it?

Holi is an explosion of colors and a feast of sweets. It is an annual celebration, and a time to gather with our near and dear ones, those who are close to our hearts. To celebrate the triumph of good over evil, the burning of the vile *Holika*, and the survival of the heroic *Prahlad*, all over India, people are lighting bonfires the night before Holi. This way, they burn all the bad things they don't wish in their lives anymore as a symbolic gesture.

Alix, volunteer in Kiran

HOLI FESTIVAL

An explosion of colors

It's only been a week since I arrived in Kiran as a volunteer and already I had a taste of India's incredible culture. Indeed, I was just in time for Holi festival which took me right away to the heart of India and its many holidays and celebrations. On Tuesday 10th of March, I could hear the excitement of children early in the morning and see them from behind my window,



Matteo from Italy

Pauline and Alix
from FranceSeán from
Ireland

KIRAN'S VOLUNTEERS

Let's hear about their experience

In which ways are you contributing to Kiran's activities?

Alix - This year isn't an ordinary one for Kiran as it's been 30 years since Sangeeta JK initiated the rehabilitation center that is now offering so many services to help children and persons with disabilities or from marginalized sections of the society. As well as helping the communication team, I have been trusted with the layout of a photo album providing an overview of Kiran's history.



Matteo - Within Art & Design team, I first started helping carpenters on their various jobs. After a while I had the opportunity to create and make chess boards. I am also involved into different tasks related to Kiran's maintenance: building tables, doors and any other woodwork...



Pauline - Having worked in the voluntary sector for 10 years in France and for a few years as a social and professional counselor, I know the importance of developing self-confidence and skills for children, youngsters, marginalized and persons with disabilities. Being more involved in the training centre at first, I then participated to some events and I met with regular and potential donors. Today my mission has evolved as I'm committed to local sponsorship.



Seán - After school, I assist the caretaker (or Didi) with evening snacks, I play boardgames with the children and I also help them with English and Mathematics homework, especially those with learning difficulties and intellectual disabilities. As well as this I have recently begun to teach English to staff and students at Kiran.



What made you decide to volunteer in Kiran?

Alix - It took me a long time to make that call to the *Paris Foreign Missions*, the organisation from whom I received that mission to Kiran. When I say "received" it's not lightly, as I truly consider being here as a gift. After few years working as a Product and Graphic Designer in the South of England, I knew it was time for me to move on and start a new chapter of my life. My first decision was to go back to France, but soon enough I realised there was another call I couldn't ignore. I had to use my skills to serve a better purpose.

Matteo - My decision to come to Kiran was driven by my taste for adventure. I really like to get involved and to challenge myself. Being a sociable person, I love to relate to people and especially to the youth. Kiran being such a lively place, full of children always keen to play, it truly appealed to me.

Pauline - My mother being a Buddhist, I decided to travel with her to India 2 years ago. She loves this country and the fact that spirituality is everywhere. After that experience, my routine in France no longer suited me and I was looking for something more. I returned to the Church and discovered the *Paris Foreign Missions*. This organisation choose a mission for you, and it could be to any country in Asia! That's why it was a providential gift for me to get the opportunity to come back to India and especially in Kiran.

Seán - After 5 years of studying, including 2 years of Applied Psychology, and with potentially 5 more years of Psychology Masters and Doctorates in the future, I decided it was time to take at least one year out of my studies. I had planned on travelling for a while, and I also wanted to get experience working with children. My aunt, a friend of Kiran and who has been coming to India for many years, told me about the Society. I then became very interested in what they were doing and I decided to apply and work with them for a few months.



Name one impressive thing about Kiran's work and services?

Alix - While taking my first steps into Kiran's village a month ago, I couldn't quite believe the extent of people's work toward those children in a great need for attention. What I found really thoughtful was the way to get the parents involved into their children rehabilitation or education. By having them contribute according to their means, they keep their dignity and feel empowered to care for their children.

Matteo - When talking about Kiran, there isn't a single thing I am not impressed with. The organization works so well and is always trying it's best to answer everyone's needs. Most of all, I was deeply moved by the joy children bring along, it teaches you a lot! The warm welcome and the kindness of people makes you feel at home even being so far away from it.

Pauline - The implementation of a little shop runned by children with disabilities in order for them to learn to count and to be responsible is something that really impressed me. As well as the different ways apprentices deploy their skills on a daily basis: the snacks cooked in the morning with the vegetables growing in Kiran, the colorful and fragrant plants wonderfully maintained, the hand-painted silk stoles, the IQ Toys... So much beauty and creativity that inspires me.

Seán - What I find so impressive about Kiran Society's work and services is the fact that they are able to help and facilitate children and young adults from different backgrounds and with varying intellectual and physical abilities. Be it through formal academic education, or vocational training it is not difficult to see the impact that Kiran Society has had on their lives. Even when they have finished their work in Kiran for the day and they have all gone home, the children and the young adults' learned self-sufficiency and independence is still evident as they go through their day to day lives.

OUR FRIEND RAHUL

Visit to Kiran

It was in the year 2002 that we welcomed Rahul in the KIRAN. He had been found abandoned by the Brothers Missionaries of Charity when he was 8 years old, in 1998. Rahul showed to be extremely helpless; he was unable to take care of himself, forget about knowing how and how much to eat. We were just guessing that his disability was due to his experience of total rejection in early childhood.

Gradually, with the help of KIRAN's caretakers and the volunteers he adjusted to KIRAN's Hostel life, within the group of about 20 small boys, among whom many had either physical or mental limitations.

What surprised us most was the capacity for joy in this child; he used to express his happiness with his whole body, and he so much loved to sing and to dance.

On the other hand, his capacity for feeling sadness and frustration was equally deep: whenever he came across any change in the normal day to day life which upset him, he kept asking and pestering his caretakers about the "why" of such an "injustice" as he used to call it. The fact that Rahul never hesitated to express his thoughts and feelings was shown beautifully when he used to go with a small group of persons from KIRAN for prayers. There, not minding the crowd of people, he simply expressed his many intentions for prayer, or asked questions to the priest.



In short, I like to compare the life of Rahul to a very sensitive, beautiful flower in which lies hidden a pure heart. And when I get to hear today from this now over 30 year old Rahul, that "his time in KIRAN was so beautiful", I am really moved. We had done nothing special to this child, but maybe what he treasured most were the many beautiful relationships with caring persons who respected and loved him.

He was wishing to visit his KIRAN family again since a long time, and at last it could be realized in lately. Along with his assistant Appu, he came to spend three days with us. How surprising for us that Rahul remembered every detail of the KIRAN Village and of so many of his former friends and team-members. He was keen to meet everyone, and also visited community of Divya Jyoti, wherein his former teacher is now giving support as a volunteer. The joy to meet again was mutual!

It's a joy for us to know that Rahul is happy there in the Asha Niketan Community, working as an assistant gardener and feeling really at home.



PROJECT MONITORING VISIT

Mr. Niladri S. Chakraborty, Programme Officer from Jan Vikas Samiti visited KIRAN on 3rd and 4th March, 2020 to monitor the existing project supported by Liliane Fonds and Jan Vikas Samiti.

During his visit, different meetings were organised in institution and community. These meetings were attended by the team of Community Based Rehabilitation, target beneficiaries, stakeholders, Aganwaadi workers, teachers and Auxiliary Nurse-Midwife (ANM).



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GIFT A SMILE

*to children and
persons with
disabilities*



For more information visit us at www.kiranvillage.org
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"I can no other answer make but

THANKS,

and thanks, and ever thanks."

William Shakespeare