



SPRING GREETINGS!

WE HOPE YOU AND THOSE YOU CHERISH ARE WELL.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, our focus has been on pivoting to meet evolving needs and working in the space of uncertainty. This requires innovation and flexibility. Like many organizations across the globe, The PRASAD Project and its licensees experienced challenges at a new and heightened scale.

Despite this destabilization and uncertainty, there were things we could do, like continuing to regularly assess and focus on priority needs - food security, healthcare and economic recovery - as well as ensuring financial and organizational flexibility. We also found that everyone who was able, wanted to help:

- In New York State, we collaborated with new partners to provide Protective Personal Equipment and food to those in need.
- In India, our Self-Help Group members supported our outreach efforts across the Tansa Valley to provide emergency rations to struggling Adivasi families with lack of food and income.
- In Mexico, volunteers provided food to low-income families who lost their income sources.
- New and existing Donors stepped up and met our immediate needs.

From implementing new guidelines and resources to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread to educating the communities that we serve, the pandemic has given us the opportunity to raise the bar for PRASAD. Challenges like these can have a lasting positive impact if we choose to learn from them. We believe that if we apply the lessons learned in the last year, we can position ourselves for a stronger future.

Warm regards,

Thomas Korula
Board Co-Chair

Dr. Vivek Panchapakesan
Board Co-Chair

Dr. M. Cecilia Escarra
Executive Director

PROGRAM UPDATES



PRASAD CHIKITSA

We are delighted to report that, after being required to suspend or severely limit many of PRASAD Chikitsa programs due to the pandemic, most are now up and running at full scale. Here is an update:



Healthcare: General and specialized medical services, eye surgery, and dental services are now available at the healthcare center in Ganeshpuri. In partnership with Tata Motors Ltd., and using our mobile hospital, PRASAD Chikitsa has been organizing health camps and awareness talks across 19 villages for mothers of children aged infant to 6-years identified to have severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and moderate acute malnutrition (MAM). We are also providing vitamins and nutritional supplements.

Community Development: The program is promoting income generation activities like floriculture for farmers and exploring new business opportunities for Self-Help Groups (SHGs), which at a membership of 3,000 strong have already achieved total savings of approximately USD \$500,000!



AGRICULTURE

Tree Planting: This year, PRASAD Chikitsa will distribute 7,500 saplings, 4,500 orchard trees and 3,000 shade and re-forestation trees to farmers and SHG members. The orchard trees will produce crops for market within two years. Including the 7,000 planted in 2020 we'll be just 500 shy of our goal of planting 15,000 in three years!

Kitchen Gardens: Since 2005, PRASAD Chikitsa has helped 11,000 Adivasi tribal families cultivate small organic gardens big enough to help diversify their diets with nutritious vegetables and provide a surplus to sell at market, generating income and increasing family food security. In the next 12 months, we will help 300 more families start kitchen gardens.

Floriculture: As the markets and temples reopen, the demand for floral offerings is on the rise. Adivasi farmers can earn \$700 – \$800 a year growing jasmine, marigolds, and golden champa and selling both loose blossoms and head garlands. This year, PRASAD Chikitsa will provide 50 farmers like Ramesh Bhad with 300 jasmine saplings each. Read Ramesh's story, *Thriving on Jasmine & Ingenuity*.

SETTING A FUTURE PATH FOR PRASAD CHIKITSA

- In 2020, we conducted a Needs Assessment with consultants who regularly work with large corporations in India. The purpose of the Needs Assessment was to help us better understand community needs, review the impact of PRASAD Chikitsa's work, identify program gaps, and chart a course ahead for the next 10 years. Here are some highlights:
- Overall, the consultants were moved by the impact of PRASAD Chikitsa's work: *"The long-term, sustained effort of serving a vulnerable population has created an evident model of community transformation."*
- Health Care and Women's Empowerment and Self-Help Groups are the strongest programs and excellent models that could be replicated in India.
- PRASAD Chikitsa has done a remarkable job reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS and TB in the region.
- Recommendations include: streamlining activities in a smaller radius of villages and then expanding beyond that radius; developing a comprehensive strategy for agriculture and water conservation; improving community education and skills development; addressing livelihood programming/opportunities and capacity building.



While still in the COVID-19 recovery phase, PRASAD Chikitsa has been working on short- and long-term plans to implement these recommendations.



PRASAD CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Though schools remained closed, in July of 2020 we were able to re-open our Mobile Dental Clinic at our office in Ferndale. We are now working with the New York State Department of Health to bring the Mobile Clinic back to schools this fall. In the meantime, we have distributed toothbrushes to children and produced five dental health education videos that have been shared with school nurses and public health programs in Sullivan County.

PRASAD DE MEXICO

Though the eye camps remain suspended due to COVID-19, PRASAD de México has remained active helping individuals access eye surgeries and distributing essential food supplies to struggling low-income families in the Guerrero State.

STORIES: DONATIONS IN ACTION

Thriving on Jasmine & Ingenuity

When PRASAD Chikitsa started its Floriculture program in Inampada hamlet in 2016, Ramesh Bhad signed up. Paddy farming was providing enough rice for sustenance and a small income, but it wasn't enough to support his wife, Laxmi, their three sons, daughter-in-law, and infant granddaughter, even with Ramesh's sons also doing day work in local factories. But, planting his three acres of forest land with 300 Jasmine saplings from PRASAD has been a game changer.

Along with the saplings, PRASAD Chikitsa provided soil enriching fertilizer and taught the family how to plant and care for the saplings. Over time, by selling the jasmine at local markets and temples, the Bhad family earned enough to buy a used van to take jasmine blossoms and garlands to larger markets in Mumbai. The van has also become a new source of income, as, for a small fee, the family also takes neighbor farmer produce to Mumbai. Thanks to hard work and ingenuity, the Bhad family is self-sustaining and thriving.



Ensuring Bright Students Can Finish Their Studies

A dedicated nursing student, Yogita Parshuram Khirkhire, 20, was crushed when faced with ending her studies because she couldn't afford the fees. Her widowed mother, Pratibha, the family's sole wage earner, couldn't help, and, because of pandemic challenges, she couldn't ask extended family for help either.

Pratibha is the president of the Adne village Self-Help Group, Nityasai. There, she learned about PRASAD Chikitsa's scholarship initiative and encouraged her daughter to apply. Yogita did and received a scholarship to continue her second year of studies. Overjoyed, Pratibha said, *"During this difficult time when all possible options seemed closed, PRASAD Chikitsa was our only ray of hope. They did not disappoint, and I am so relieved. My daughter will become a nurse!"*



The PRASAD Project

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Executive Director

Dr. M. Cecilia Escarra

Spokesperson

Phylcia Rashad

P.O. Box 576
Ferndale, NY 12734
845-434-0376
Email: prasad@prasad.org

Visit us at www.prasad.org



YOUR SUPPORT IS MORE IMPORTANT NOW THAN EVER

Though we made great strides in combating the pandemic and addressing its far reaching consequences, 2021 continues to be challenging for those we serve across our programs in India, Mexico and New York State.

As we re-open our programs at full capacity, the need is even greater than before because health issues and economic instability have compounded. We are optimistic, and we must persevere, but to do this we need your help. Please consider giving a spring gift of rejuvenation now or becoming a PRASAD Partner (monthly donor), if you're not already.

Please mail your gift to the address provided or visit www.prasad.org today!

PS. U.S. CARES Act Tax Break for Charitable Donations Extended: For the 2021 tax year, taxpayers who take the standard deduction can take a charitable deduction of up to \$300 and married couples filing jointly can take \$600. For those who itemize, there is no cap on the amount of donations they can deduct. (Contributions to donor-advised funds are not eligible.)



Visit our website:
WWW.PRASAD.ORG



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Philanthropic Relief, Altruistic Service And Development

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