

## Healthy Savings

Uraladani & Barabandha are two poverty stricken tribal belt areas in the district of Kalahandi, Orissa State in India, where people live on low daily wages from collecting Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) such as bamboo, seeds, leaves, gums and fibres which are sold at very low cost. These low wages mean it is hard for them to save for emergency needs such as childbirth and sudden health problems.

Skillshare International development worker Dr. Dinesh Baliga has been working with grassroots non-governmental organisation Seba Jagat to implement the innovative idea of a unique daily saving practice in Matikundis (Earthen Pots). The aim of this savings scheme is to ensure that mothers can access and pay for health care. By using the Matikundis as a money box, many of the women of this tribal belt were highly motivated to save money.

Sudra Patra, a tribal woman from the Gond community is dependent on wages from collection of NTFP. At the time of her third pregnancy her family was suffering economic hardship. She was not spendthrift but very often money was being spent unnecessarily. Her husband drank and would take money from Sudra every day to spend on alcohol. During her past two deliveries Sudra had many medical problems and wanted a way to save money to cover hospital expenses for this birth. Seba Jagat suggested saving in an earthen pot.

When Sudra went into labour there were complication. She needed to be taken to hospital and her husband did not have the money to pay. Sudra told her husband about her earthen pot and asked him to fetch it from where it was hidden. She then told her husband to break the Matikundi. Inside there was a



▲ Sudra Patra with her Matikundi.

total of 786 Rupees, this was six and a half months of her daily savings. With this money Sudra paid for a safe delivery at the nearest hospital.

Sudra managed this crucial moment in her life herself without depending on anybody. "Realising what Sudra had achieved led her husband to stop drinking and now Sudra Patra's family is enjoying a good, healthy lifestyle," recalls Dr Baliga.

The Matikundi is enabling many women to have safer births and access much needed health services.

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### JARGON-BUSTER SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH:

Social determinants of health are the economic and social conditions under which people live which determine their health.

The term social determinants of health grew out of the search by researchers to identify the specific exposures by which members of different socio-economic groups come to experience varying degrees of health and illness.

Source:  
<http://www.healthknowledge.org.uk>

### Returned Development Workers

## Giving children access to excellent healthcare



▲ Children having fun at the Baylor Children's Clinical Centre of Excellence.

Alan Pattison has just returned from two years working at the Botswana-Baylor Children's Clinical Centre of Excellence (COE) in Gaborone. The COE is one of the largest paediatric HIV and AIDS centres in the world, caring for over 1,500 children in its various clinics, as well as having research, training and community outreach programmes.

Alan was primarily responsible for fundraising, but also got closely involved in many of the other activities at the COE, including initiating what he hopes will turn out to be the first telemedicine project in Botswana. Telemedicine uses technology such as computers and telecommunications to deliver healthcare services at a distance. This project will help link caregivers with children living with HIV and AIDS who live in poor and remote communities with expert advice about treatment and care.

The COE is part of a wider network of centres across the world that forms the Baylor International Paediatric AIDS Initiative (BIPAI). Alan's responsibility as a regional development worker also covered BIPAI centres in Lesotho and Swaziland. "This meant that I was called up at two days notice to help out the Lesotho government's \$40 million bid for HIV and AIDS funding from the Global Fund" he recalls. "Working in Maseru in the middle of winter was a bit of a challenge as I only had clothes for warm Botswana and it was -15°C in Lesotho."

As the COE is a partnership between the Baylor College of Medicine in Texas and the Government of Botswana, it is fortunate to have many of its core costs covered by central grants or by the government. However, as its programmes have rapidly expanded, each new service requires funding, which is where Alan's skills were most needed. The outreach programme brings the COE services to the most disadvantaged communities around Gaborone, ensuring that those least able to access medical treatment and advice for their children were able to do so in the security of their own homes or at the day care centre. The initial grant for the programme was rapidly running out, but Alan managed to secure the interest of one of the world's largest private foundations – the WK Kellogg Foundation.

Although most of his work was office-based, Alan considers his most satisfying moments as throwing two Christmas parties for the children. "I don't think that there is any better expression of what we were achieving than seeing 250 healthy, happy children running around playing games."

Alan Pattison. ▶



### Development Workers

#### NEW

Kumari Anju  
Legal Adviser at UNIFEM, Nepal

Joel Mollen  
Fundraising Officer at COPA, Kenya

John Cornwell  
Programme Adviser at Ngei 1 Youth Development Group, Kenya

Geoffrey Kanugu  
Special Education Adviser at Lesotho College of Education, Lesotho

Alex Sindiyo  
Occupational Therapist at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Rehabilitation Unit, Lesotho

Paula Diaz Mendez  
Environmentalist at the Katleho Moho Association, Lesotho

#### COMPLETED PLACEMENT

Ian Draycott  
Business Adviser Renewable Energy for Bothale Jwa Phala Trust, Botswana

Alan Pattison  
Fundraising Coordinator at Baylor Children's Centre, Botswana, Botswana

Robyn Cox  
Fundraiser & Communications Adviser at Ditshwanele, Botswana

Patrick and Patricia Okinedo  
General Practitioners at Hospital de Mavalane, Mozambique

Ignatius Oloyi  
Programme Coordinator at Inter Community of Women Living with HIV, Swaziland

Skillshare International  
**News in brief...**

## Donation to go to HIV and AIDS Centres

Earlier this year the Skillshare International office in Mozambique received a donation of around 74,000 condoms from Medis Farmaceutica. Some of them will be donated to Kindlimuka – an organisation working with people living with HIV and AIDS. The rest will be distributed to health centres. Kuyakana – a network of organisations representing HIV+ women and other associations for women living with HIV and AIDS by our partner the Mavalane Hospital.

## Just Give

Justgiving is a clever charity fundraising website. Now anyone can create a fundraising page to collect donations in support of any sponsored event or appeal. They automatically reclaim Gift Aid on all donations made by UK taxpayers, so at present for every £1 you donate the charity receives £1.28.

Emily Hodgkinson and Tamar Morton Jones decided to use Justgiving in a novel way at their civil partnership when they wanted their guests to give money to Skillshare International instead of buying presents. Emily explained, "It was incredibly simple to arrange for our friends and family to donate to our fund through the website and we were amazed to find that we had all raised over £1500 for Skillshare. What a great way to begin married life!"

Why not create your own fundraising page and take part in supporting Skillshare International's Lesotho Disability Appeal, to help improve the lives of people with disabilities in Lesotho?



▲ Emily and Tamar.

## IDCT making the grade

As the first group of 25 students from the Applied Conflict Transformation Studies programme (ACTS) are due to graduate in Asia and the Balkans this summer, we ask what are the Integrating Development and Conflict Transformation (IDCT) project's highlights so far, and what does the future hold?

The IDCT project had a mid-term review in February, bringing together its partners from Asia, Africa, the Balkans and the UK. The review showed that the three partner networks – Action Asia, Action Global and COPA, have strengthened and developed as a direct result of the project. All of them now have a dedicated fundraiser and a researcher to work with their programmes.

What is in the pipeline? The Action Asia Nepal programme was launched in April and the International Forum of Action Global members is planned for November. In the longer term, we are testing the viability of new ACTS centres in Africa (Kenya), Western Europe (UK) and South America (Guatemala).

## New Skillshare International Work Place Partners

Best Western Belmont House Hotel (Leicester), De Montfort Hall (Leicester), Fenwicks (Leicester), Regis International (Leicester), Trust Financial Planning (Leicester), Next plc (Leicester) and Medis Farmaceutica (Mozambique).

# Short-term Placement Long-term Success

Following Kyle McGrath's successful short-term placement in Lesotho last year, the strategic partnership between Skillshare International and Tribal Group Foundation has already yielded further positive results in 2007.

For a week in early March Stephen Banham, Managing Consultant from Tribal Group's London office, worked with the Swaziland Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. Stephen was seconded to implement an holistic management information system for use within the Environmental Health Department. This will better enable staff to carry out their data collection, reporting and public health services. "Ultimately, the system should enable targeting of resources which means that the most pressing health and environmental health needs of the Swazi people are met" explains Stephen.

Feedback from his development worker counterpart and the Ministry



▲ Stephan Banham with his colleagues in Lesotho.

has been glowing with representatives saying that Stephen, despite not coming from a background of Environmental Health, was "exceptional and exceeded expectations."

The second short-term placement took place in Botswana in April with Richard Beveridge, Director of Library Services for Tribal Education and Technology, assisting our partner The Botswana Network of AIDS Service Organisations (BONASO) for five days. The niche support he was involved in was setting up and remotely hosting a web based catalogue of their existing library collection and coaching librarians on how to use it.

In addition to providing expert consultants from their staff of over 2,300 for short-term placements, the Tribal and Skillshare International relationship extends into fundraising for our community health and disability projects. 2007 has been a tremendous year already, with Tribal winning an award for Effective Giving from the Charities Aid Foundation for their strategic partnership with Skillshare International. Their phenomenal fundraising efforts have raised just under £21,000 and will go a long way towards furthering our development work.



▲ Martin Cumella receives CAF award from Jenni Murray.



▲ Skillshare International staff, development workers and volunteers at our stand.

## Skillshare International at the World Social Forum

Close to 80,000 people gathered at the Moi International Sports Centre in Nairobi in January 2007 for the World Social Forum in the pursuit of new thinking to address devastated economies, the marginalisation of women and indigenous communities, environmental destruction and the exploitation of the poor. Skillshare International development workers, staff and two volunteers all helped to run a Skillshare International booth at the venue.

The attendance of local people and activists from grassroots groups from across Africa is one of the most striking differences between this forum and other international conferences. "The presence of people across all ages was marked, the issues cut across all generations," expressed Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, Head of External Relations.

Since the forum, follow up correspondence has poured into the East Africa office. Regional Director, Oliver Kantai reports that he has had a deluge of enquiries asking about collaborative projects. Donors have also shown either a new or renewed interest in the East Africa programme.

## Editors Note

Welcome to our second themed edition of Skillshare News. The focus this time is health...

As well as our themed articles we also have a review of the recent World Social Forum and a round up of Skillshare International news.

Please feel free to address your comments about this edition and suggestions for future articles to me at the UK office, or by email to [editor@skillshare.org](mailto:editor@skillshare.org)

Best wishes

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