



PARTNERS

THE NEWSLETTER OF INDIA PARTNERS

SEPTEMBER 2008

Sewing Seeds of Hope

Girls born into India's lowest social class have three strikes against them.

first, they are rural.

India's wealth is concentrated in its cities. By and large, village India is poor India.

Second, they are Dalits, Untouchables born into the lowest rank of India's social system. They are discriminated against and scorned to the point of being literally untouchable by members of the higher castes. The types of jobs that Dalits may hold are the least desirable and worst paid in Indian society.

Their society discourages Dalit women from leaving the home to work. Even when they can, the work that is most often available is backbreaking labor in the fields. For this, a woman wakes up around 5:00 a.m. to prepare the day's food, works from roughly 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (i.e., daylight), and receives about 40 rupees (about one dollar) per day. To provide the context for a daily wage of 40 rupees, one kilogram of rice, enough to provide one meal for a family of six, costs about 18 rupees; a bottle of soda costs 12 rupees; and a little packet of cookies costs 5 rupees.

Their unskilled husbands often work as day laborers. When the men cannot find work, the family's meager resources are stretched to the breaking point. Pastor Isaac Benarjee, Director of India Abundant Ministries, writes, "In this situation, the husband, wife and children have to suffer. Therefore, if the wife is also supporting the family, they can have at least their daily bread."



Their lifelines to hopeful futures

census, fewer than half (48%) of India's females 15 and older are literate, while 73% of males can read and write. Untold thousands of girls

and young women are sold into human slavery each year.

Three strikes. Are they out?

No! Tailoring schools supported by India Partners give young Dalit women in rural villages the opportunity to learn a valuable skill and provide for their futures. Three of these schools have already helped scores of women, and more are finding hope through tailoring every day.

These underprivileged Dalits are serious about their desire to learn a skill since their social class severely limits their vocational options. After the seamstresses complete their tailoring program and begin working, they will earn about 100 rupees a day, roughly \$700 per year for a six-day workweek—about 2½ times what they could earn as field hands.

Moreover, a home-based business such as sewing (Continued ☞)

A woman who is childless—either because she is single or, if married, cannot bear children—will not likely be cared for in her old age. For a woman in this situation, a skill that she can do on her own, such as tailoring, is her lifeline to a hopeful future. Without such a skill, the elderly childless woman is sometimes forced to beg on the streets; the young woman may end up working on those streets.

third, they are female. According to India's most recent

I want to help sew seeds of hope! Here's my gift.

- sewing machine \$80
- one month's tuition \$23
- My Gift _____
- half-share \$40; quarter-share \$20
- full seamstress tuition \$140
- Where Most Needed _____

One-time Gift

- Enclosed is my gift
 - check is enclosed
 - credit card information below

Credit Card

Please charge my donation to my Visa/MC:

Card # - - -

Exp. Date /

Name on Card (Print): _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Or donate online at www.indiapartners.org

Pledge

- I pledge \$ _____ per month for _____ mos.
 - from my credit card. Information below, left.
 - from my checking account. Information below, right.

Automatic Withdrawal from Checking

I hereby authorize India Partners to withdraw my gift monthly from the account indicated on the **enclosed voided check** beginning (month/year) _____ / _____

Preference for withdrawal: 1st of mo. 15th of mo.
Name(s) on Check (Print): _____

Signature _____ Date _____



India Partners

P.O. Box 5470
Eugene, Oregon 97405

Toll-free: 877-87-INDIA
(877-874-6342)
Phone: (541) 683-0696
www.indiapartners.org
info@indiapartners.org

India Partners is a Christian international development and relief organization committed to supporting self-help ministry projects in India.

Our annual report and independently audited financial statements are available upon request.

India Partners is a 501(c)(3) charity. Donations are tax-deductible according to law.

Tax ID#: 93-1164757



Member of the Association of Evangelical Relief & Development Organizations



A higher standard
A higher purpose

Board of Directors:

Suzanne Broetje Michael Gerlicher
Brent Hample James Krueger
Susan Paiement Dean Rees
Steven Stirling

Staff:

Brent Hample, President/CEO
Donna Glass, Regional Representative
Joseph Fancher, Communications Officer
Brian Palmer, Office Administrator

Sewing Seeds of Hope

(Continued from page 1)

enables a mother to care for her children while being at home, earn a modest but decent wage, and even save a little money by making the family's own clothes. Mothers who work in the fields, on the other hand, are not usually allowed to bring their children with them. Field workers' children as young as six years of age have been found at home without any supervision.

An experienced seamstress teaches the young women sewing skills and basic business practices (pricing their materials and their labor, optimizing piecing to minimize costs, monitoring cash flow).

When she graduates, each seamstress is awarded her own treadle sewing machine. And there is follow-up to make sure that she does well in her business. (See Mahima's story.)

That's not all. Prior to entering the training, the women are understandably often despondent over their prospects. But our partners attend to their emotional and spiritual needs, too. The classes at the tailoring schools include regular times for prayer and devotions. Pastor



These graduates are grateful and happy

Benarjee's goal is "to reach these women with the message of Jesus Christ and encourage them to work hard and look for a better life."

Taken together, the sewing training, the business training, the gift of the sewing machine, and the spiritual mentoring work together to ensure the women's success. They understand the value of their training, and they are grateful for the opportunity. No wonder that there is a waiting list to get into these schools, and that the dropout rate is essentially zero.

The training, the education, the sewing machine, and the mentoring are provided free of charge to each thankful woman. But the cost isn't free, of course: sewing machines must be purchased, teachers and custodians paid. That happens with your financial investment in the lives of these deserving women.

With your help,
they will be trained and given hope for their future. You can provide the means for one woman to attend an entire sewing school course (\$140) or the gift of a sewing machine (\$80). \$23 will provide a woman's tuition for a whole month: what a bargain!! Your gift of any size will be received and used with heartfelt thanks.
May God bless your kindness!

Mahima



Excerpts of a letter from Pastor Benarjee, Director of IAM:

"Mahima was born and brought up in a Christian family. She could not complete her 10th grade due

to family burdens. After praying for few years the Lord opened a door for her to join in our Sheila Free Tailoring Training School for Women in the year 2004. Now she is earning every day an average of Rs. 100 and supporting their family. She has been great blessing to the church, to her family, and at the same time to the community.

We praise God for her changed life. The training makes the difference."

"Her success is turn[ing out] to be a great blessing and a challenge to other poor village women to make commitment for a change in their lives."

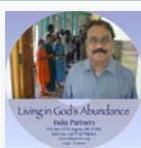


India Partners

PO Box 5470
Eugene OR 97405
toll-free 877-87-INDIA

Partnering with the people of India in ministry by cultivating relationships, sharing resources, and encouraging self-sufficiency through the compassion and wisdom of Jesus Christ.

Living in God's Abundance, our DVD featuring the work of India Abundant Ministries, is available. To request your complementary copy, please call us toll-free at 877-87-INDIA.



Team Up



With Us

Consider having your church team up with a Christian nonprofit to serve together in ministry.

If India is your area of interest, India Partners can be your partner in ministry. India has tremendous social and spiritual needs that your church's support and our expertise together can help to fill. We invite you to get to know us and our partners better. We are here to help you and your church help the disadvantaged of India with the love of Christ.