



VRI
VOLUNTEERS FOR
RURAL INDIA

Chair's Annual Report

2009-2010

Samta Patel
22nd August 2010

REGISTERED OFFICE
Volunteers for Rural India,
(formerly known as IVCS – Indian Volunteers for Community Service),
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Registered Charity No. 285872

AIMS and OBJECTIVES

- To relieve poverty in India, particularly by undertaking voluntary work and fundraising, to assist village development schemes of a charitable nature
- To educate the public in the United Kingdom about Indian culture and tradition and other aspects of Indian life
- To undertake voluntary work in the United Kingdom in education, social services and similar charitable activities, particularly for the benefit of persons of Indian origin

Partner Development Project in India
Society for Agro-Industrial Education in India,
Amarpurkashi Village (APK),
PO Bilari, District Moradabad – 202411,
Uttar Pradesh, India

Patron

Robert Evans, former MEP

Chair's Report

This year, we have been focusing on changes to increase the number of Project Visitors to our partner development project in India.

These changes were initiated at an Extraordinary General Meeting held prior to last year's Annual General Meeting, when the committee recommendation to change the charity's name to Volunteers for Rural India (VRI) was approved.

Work was then undertaken on the website and the profile of the charity raised by creating a VRI Facebook group and an account on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/VRICCharity>).

Website

The website was redesigned to make it more visually appealing and easier to navigate. Our particular thanks to Janet, Shobhana and Rosie for all their hard work. Key activities undertaken included:

- new home page, logo and colour scheme
- update of all the text
- new photo gallery which can be maintained without the involvement of the web designer
- change in web hosting for the website which allows more control and allows the addition of new websites as necessary
- change in web hosting for the domain name resulting in ownership of the domain names
- automatic redirection from the old website to the new website www.vri-online.org.uk
- update of entry on Charities Commission website

Project Volunteers

A total of twelve volunteers successfully participated in the scheme last year with a further three from the charity "Asian Foundation for Philanthropy". The feedback received from them was positive.

Donations and Fund-raising

Fund-raising this year concentrated on web-based sources such as the "Big Give" website and the "Buy a Brick" campaign on the VRI website.

Donations were received for the Jafapur School, the Children's Scholarship Fund and the Rural Development Fund, amongst others, and totalled just over £7,000. Further details are given in the Treasurers Report.

Use of Funds

This year, funds were used for the following:

- Health Centre salaries for staff who include a co-ordinator, a part-time cleaner and a medical assistant. An eye camp was held in November 2009 which was funded by Villages – ESPOIR, an organisation set up by a Project Visitor from November 2006 to raise funds for villagers in India. Of the 310 patients examined for various eye ailments, 110 were identified as cataract patients. Of these, 31 were judged suitable for operation at the Government Primary Health Care Centre in Bilari. In the operation theatre, the doctor was assisted by our co-ordinator and four volunteers. Our staff and volunteers ensured that the patients had beds and medical care for two nights in Bilari and visited each patient every day to provide advice and further medicine. In some cases, injections were given to relieve pain.
- Two free health camps where a total of 227 patients (106 women and 121 men) were examined by doctors including general physicians, eye specialists and dentists.
- Medicines for the Health Centre to start a revolving medical fund.
- One year's school fees for 100 children from the primary school.
- Salary of a school co-ordinator for the primary school. The role includes administrative work, following up pupil absences, liaising with parents, recruiting pupils at the beginning of the school year, overseeing teachers and part-time teaching.
- Roofs on two classrooms at Jafapur School in order to qualify for the status of an Inter College (equivalent to a High School with a Sixth Form).
- Staff team building. A full coach of staff and families went to Rajghat on the banks of the Ganges for the day. The outing provided an excellent opportunity for staff to chat informally and get to know new members.
- Science Fair which attracts teachers and pupils from schools in nearby villages and towns. It is a great opportunity for pupils to put science into practice and also encourages people from the towns to come to the village and see the excellent work being done there. Funds go towards the hire of marquees and stalls, materials for displays and experiments, refreshments for staff and students and prizes for the best exhibits.
- Publication of the International Journal for Rural Studies, a twice-yearly journal focusing on rural issues.

Trustees

VRI is governed by an Executive Committee (as listed below), who are also the Trustees and are elected by its members for a term of three years. The Executive Committee meets four times a year. All Trustees receive a small welcome pack including the Charity Commissions' booklet "CC3a – The Essential Trustee : An Introduction" and some advice on where to obtain further information.

	Name	Office	Elected
1.	Samta Patel	Chair	2008
2.	Janet Wilson	Vice-chair	2008
3.	Jyoti Singh	General Secretary	2008
4.	Hari Dhanoo	Treasurer	2009
5.	Mukat Singh	Field Director	2008
6.	David Blair	Executive Committee	2008
7.	Pushpa Devi	Executive Committee	2009
8.	Sunil Gupta	Executive Committee	2009
9.	Neel Lakhani	Executive Committee	2008
10.	Tom Lloyd	Executive Committee	2008
11.	Monica Morawietz	Executive Committee	2010
12.	Stephen Ostrowski	Executive Committee	2008
13.	Deepak Paretha	Executive Committee	2009
14.	Fatema Paretha	Executive Committee	2007
15.	Pawan Rawal	Executive Committee	2008
16.	Victoria Russell	Executive Committee	2007
17.	Verena Samuel	Executive Committee	2007
18.	Nayan Shukla	Executive Committee	2008
19.	Shobhana Singh	Executive Committee	2008