



Rural Health, Education & Environment Centre

ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14



Message from Nishtha Director: Dr Barbara Nath-Wiser

Goodbye and thank you to AKTION REGEN

Krishan Nath Baba Memorial Health Centre, named after my late husband was founded in 1991 when I found myself at a crossroads. I had returned from Vienna as a newly qualified physician in 1984. For 5 years I had worked at a charitable hospital where I learned a great deal about the medical problems faced by local people. I felt a need to establish my own clinic in order to work more effectively for the very poor in my village of Rakkar. It was a daunting prospect, but with the support of many wonderful friends I began my medical practice on a small scale in my own house.

Together with my Indian friends: Monica Ghosh, Kamla Bhasin, Abha Bhaya and Kishwar Shirali, we formed Nishtha Rural Health and Environment Centre and registered it as a charitable Trust. With the invaluable help of AKTION REGEN, an Austrian based organization, particularly interested in women's reproductive health issues, we were able to collect donations and receive them in India to run our health centre and subsequent community work. We started with 4 staff, most importantly my colleague Dr. Kusum Thapa, who works with me and takes charge of the clinic when I am in Europe raising funds.

When PHILIPS Austria made a generous donation we were able to construct the clinic building making use of a piece of land left to me by my late husband. Our



health centre was inaugurated in 1995, in the presence of the Austrian ambassador.

Today Nishtha is a widely-known and well-established medical and social institution. We take care of more than 4,000 patients a year in the clinic and since 2011 have been running health outreach programmes in remote villages twice weekly. Dr Kusum speaks to the women on reproductive health and other common health issues. These trips are organized by our single women's action group of 6 activists who work in 92 villages with more than 2000 members. We support the women in case of need, provide them with legal representation and help them to get access to pension funds and government social schemes.

In order to address the problem of child malnutrition and poor achievement in school, we provide vegetables and fruit to 3 schools and 6 nursery schools daily. In our community centre we have a library and a computer learning facility

and providing tuition classes for those children who cannot afford them.

We are also very active on environmental issues. We have installed water filters., drastically reducing instances of gastro-intestinal problems. We run a very successful clean village programme, teaching people to segregate their waste and plant trees.

We now have 30 well trained members of staff; many have been with us for more than 15 years.

"Nishtha" is a Sanskrit word meaning faith, trust and sound principles. I think this name was well chosen. It stands for my belief in the essential goodness of human beings and the faith which is important for the success of our work.

Today we are again at a crossroads. Due to a change in legislation Nishtha can no longer work under the umbrella of AKTION REGEN. We had to become independent and have now founded NISHTHA AUSTRIA. Our aims and ideals however have remained the same: to provide help where help is needed.

I wish to thank all our sponsors: AKTION REGEN, which has supported us for many years; Nishtha UK Trust, who stepped in to help us in 2005; Nishtha Austria who have just begun to help us, and our trustees, both old and new, who have served Nishtha so well, and all our members of staff.

Staff Picnic.



This year we filled a large bus with all our staff and travelled down the valley to Pong Dam to see the famous Bathu temples which have been submerged by this vast reservoir created in the 1970s by damming the Beas river. In May 2013 the water level was unusually low so we were able to rush to see them before the monsoon rains filled the reservoir and covered the temples from sight again.

It was a wonderful relaxing day picnicking together under our parachute tent on the side of the lake and admiring the rare and wonderful temple complex. For many of our staff these annual picnics are the only opportunity they get to explore their home state.

Administration Report

Our total income from abroad during 2013-14 was Rs.53,92,023. This year we received our final donation from Aktion Regen before the Austrian funding transfers to the Nishtha Austria Trust. As in the past the majority of this funding, (Rs.28,16,170) comprising 52% of our total income is used to pay the staff salaries and to run the Clinic and Community Centre. The new floor in the community centre was also paid for by a generous donation received via Aktion Regen as was the new play centre.

Nishtha UK Trust provided Rs.10,88,151.17 which is 20% of the total, which is allocated project wise providing funding for special needs patients including the children with disabilities, the anganwari project and for running the outreach clinic. Nishtha UK Trust funding runs the children's youth trainings, wenlido and sports programmes as well as the library and kids club. Public health and environment programmes are also paid for through this fund.

Funding from other foreign donors this year covered the school nutrition programme, made a large contribution to the destitute fund and bought shoes and sweaters for the schoolchildren.

Our total expenditure was Rs.63,60,978 which exceeded the income because 37% (Rs.23,48,763) was taken from funds set aside last year to pay costs related to the new land purchase, including fencing and the establishment of a pathway.

Within the expenditure on administration we pay each staff member Rs.2,000 a month dearness allowance to help them because the cost of the most basic daily needs including gas and staples has increased so much. We work hard to keep our

actual administrative costs to a minimum.

Mohinder who runs the Nishtha office and programmes has had more help this year from Vijay who now produces reports and helps with the accounts and from our new member of staff Megha. She has proved to be both clever and diligent and has learned how to manage the account work since she was taken on as a full time member of staff in February.

Local Donations

This year we received Rs.4,20,070 in local donations, primarily as contributions to the clinic and for medicines but also through our donation box.

We are very grateful to our very special local donors who are stepping forward to help us continue our work.

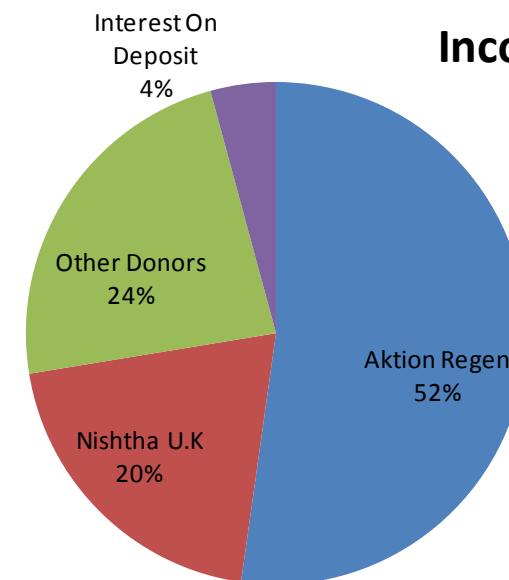
To those who contribute in the form of medicines, toys and hand made items, we are also very grateful

We are proud to have produced **Nishtha 2014 Calender** - advertising our work and thanking our donors.

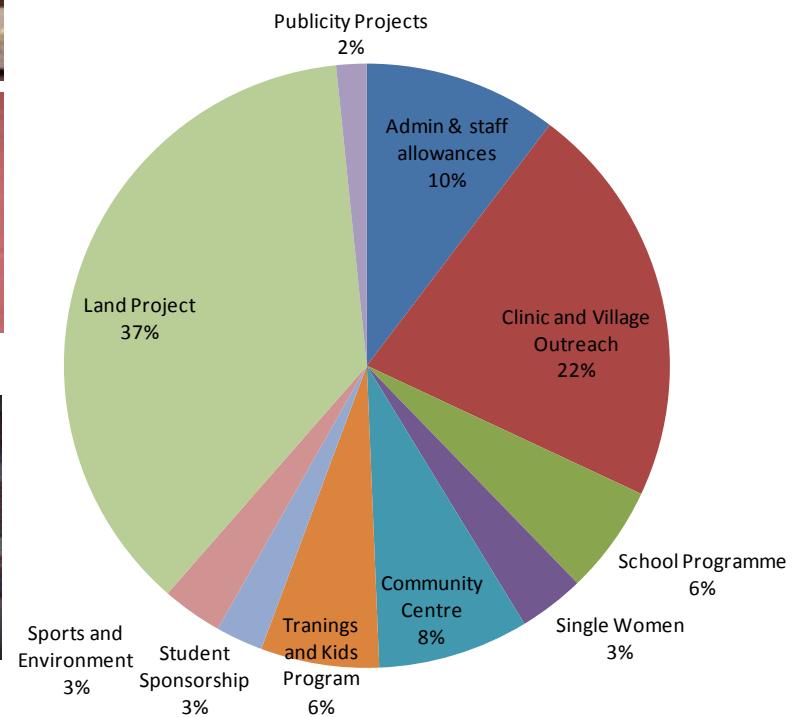
We also re-made the **Nishtha website**.
Please visit: www.nishtha-hp.org.



Income 2013-14



Expenses 2013-14



Nishtha Trust

Nishtha Trust was founded in 1998 to work for the benefit of the hill people in the Kangra Valley of Himachal Pradesh, in the fields of health, education and environment, particularly focusing on women, children and young people. Nishtha's founder and manager is Dr. Barbara Nath-Wiser who has been living and working with the local people since 1984. She employs homeopathy to augment her allopathic practice whilst her colleague, Dr. Kusum practices acupuncture and ayurveda along with conventional allopathic practice.

Together with a team of trained staff they run an active primary health clinic offering welcoming and affordable care for around 4,000 patients a year. Most are the very poor from local labouring

Nishtha Clinic Report



and farming families. Many are widows or elderly people who depend on us for medical care.

Our small in-patients facility provides beds for emergency cases, sick people who have come from far away to rest under observation and during water borne epidemics when first line treatment is crucial.



We can function as a hospice for seriously ill destitute patients, the terminally ill, and occasionally as a refuge for women in need. We take particular care of patients with long term illnesses and special requirements and enable those in need to access special medical facilities

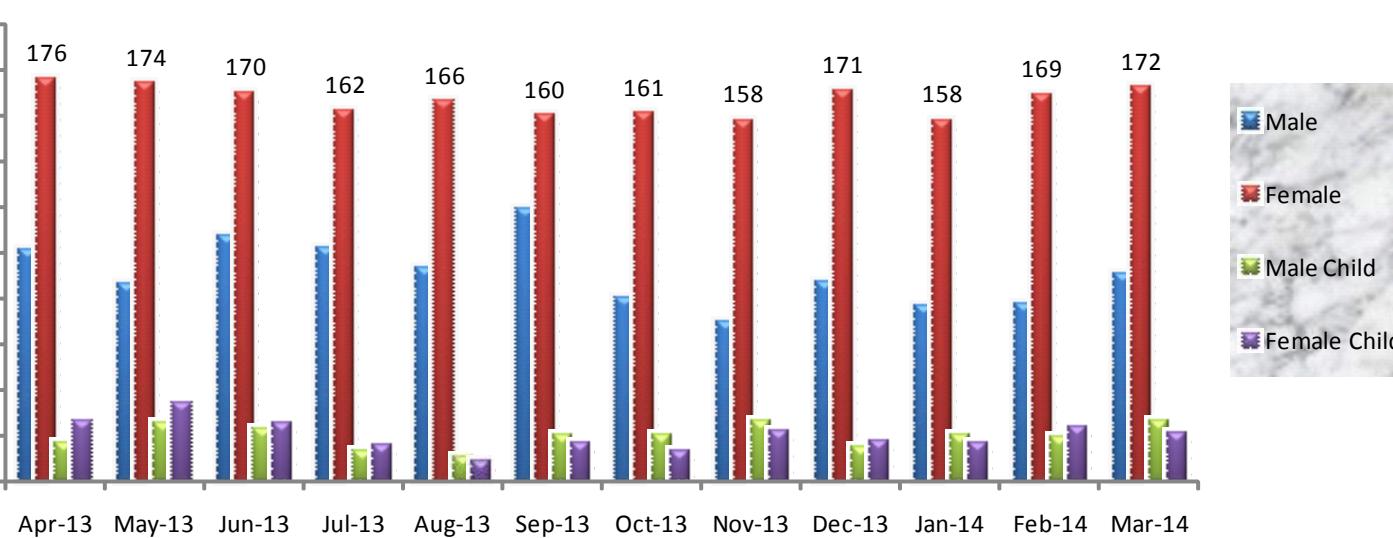
Destitute Patients

Nishtha clinic regularly cares for a number of very poor patients who need long term or emergency medical help by means of our 'destitute fund' This fund also provides 'special services in the form of transport and assistance to attend Tanda Government medical college for treatment and provision of basic nutrition.

Some of the patients who have been helped this year include regular patients such as a 45 year old woman suffering from epilepsy and a poor villager who suffers from diabetes receives some of his medicines from the clinic and also presents bills for other prescribed medicines which we pay for him each month. We help a 27 year old local girl from a very poor family who suffers from a thyroid problem. There are also several local patients suffering from mental illnesses who receive regular medication from our clinic.

Some are single women such as a 43 year old woman who is suffering from osteomalacia and has broken both legs so cannot work. Nishtha has taken her to the hospital for diagnosis and treatment and now provides food so that she can regain her strength and heal. We also provide food for a young woman who is HIV+.

Help is provided in emergencies such as for a very weak 31 year old labourer living in Rakkar village, In order for him to get an emergency appendectomy,



Our Work with Children with Special Needs.



As in any population there is a small percentage of children in our village who are born with birth defects including sensory impairment and cerebral palsy. The problems faced by their parents are enormous, the sense of shame and personal responsibility for the child's defects, the often unsupportive response of the family, neighbours and doctors, and the physical and emotional stress of looking after such a child are huge burdens for people to bear. Very often parents conceal or deny their baby's disability until it becomes too problematic



to handle in the home when it is very often late to be able to work effectively with the child to improve her development potential.

Nishtha currently helps 5 children with the provision of free transport to go for daily physiotherapy at Tapowan along with their carers. Nishtha driver Subash Chand drops them at 9:30 am and brings them back at 3:30pm daily.

Nishtha has provided wheel chairs and artificial limbs to Sanjoli and Arushi, who both suffer from cerebral palsy, and pampers for Arushi to enable her to go to school and join in outside activities. We also pay for carers for both Arushi and Sanjoli to enable their mothers to cope with their complicated lives.



Herbal Remedies



As a trained Ayurvedic doctor, Dr Kusum supervises the clinic staff, Suresh and Goodie in preparing locally grown herbs into useful medicines. Our most famous preparation is calendula ointment which is a wonderful treatment for burns and sores. Our simple cough syrup is excellent and people rely on us for the age old preparation of trifla made from amla, bera and hara, famous local medicinal trees which makes an excellent stomach cure. Our khan oil for pain and massage oil, both made with a pure linseed oil base are very popular, especially amongst the elderly .



Acupuncture

Dr. Kusum has been working as a doctor (BAMS) in Nishtha clinic for the past 23 years. During her time here she has been able to take extensive training in acupuncture from a number of qualified acupuncture practitioners. She says: 'We have a lot of migraine patients who come here after seeing many different doctors and visiting various hospitals without getting much relief from their headaches. Acupuncture is remarkably successful in giving lasting relief from the pain of chronic headache, such as migraine.'

'They receive 10 half hour sittings, either once or twice a week at the end of which most have gained considerable relief.

The patient's first reaction to the idea of acupuncture is not usually very enthusiastic. They wonder how it can be that inserting needles in parts of the body can do any good, but when they experience the relief it gives they are very happy and regret how much time and money they wasted before trying acupuncture.



Community Outreach Programme

Nishtha clinic team has been visiting remote villages every Tuesday and Thursday for the past year to promote awareness of health issues particularly amongst women. We have been targeting 47 of the 90 villages in the three blocks: Rait, Kangra and Nagrota in which our single women activists are working, visiting them turn by turn. The single women activists organize the place for the clinic and inform the local villages that our team will be coming on a particular date.

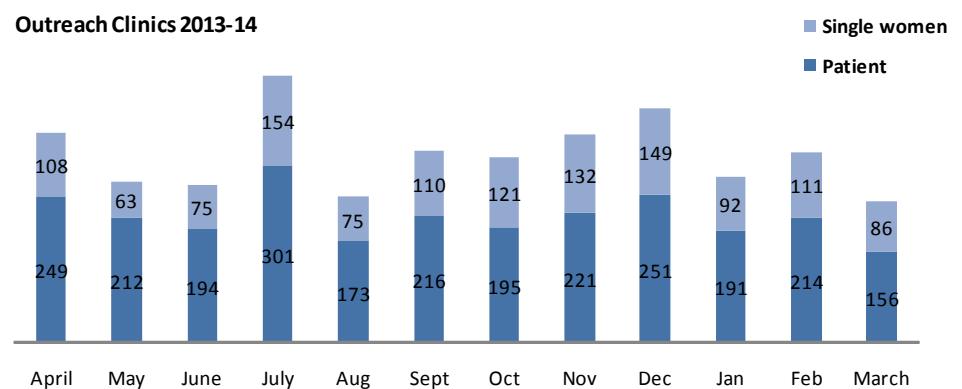
Dr. Kusum teaches them how to take control over their own health, recognizing that diet, hygiene and exercise are key contributors to good health. She discusses home remedies which are useful and those which are not and advises when and when not to use strong allopathic medicines. She also teaches practical topics such as dental hygiene.



Dr. Kusum informs the women about how the female reproductive organ's work, about infertility, family planning operation, and that the sex of a child is determined by the male sperm, not by the woman. The village women are usually very shy about talking about such things so suffer a great deal from wrong information, so are very happy to learn.



Outreach Clinics 2013-14



School Nutrition Programme

Nishtha's school nutrition program now covers four schools and six kindergartens. We aim to supplement the Government provided mid-day meal of very basic rice and dal with fresh fruit and vegetables. In Samlekharnaaag and RakkarSchools which are quite close to our centre we give supplies for the whole week, whereas in Chakwan School which is a long way up the mountain we are giving only for 3 days.

Every Monday morning Subhash and Ravi go to the local wholesale market to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. The fruit and vegetables are checked under the



supervision of Dr. Kusum and allocated to the schools and kindergartens according to the number of children. Salochana or any volunteer of Nishtha walks down to the Rakkar school each day to hand out the fruits to the children after their assembly and at the same time delivers the vegetables for the lunch.

As the kindergartens only get porridge or sweet rice from the government, they don't have the facilities to cook vegetables, therefore Nishtha only gives them daily fruit for the children.

The response from every school and kindergarten has been very enthusiastic towards this and the health of the children has definitely improved.

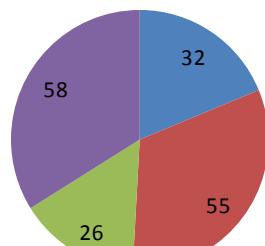


Water Filtration

Our 5 water filters are regularly maintained to keep them in the best working order. Twice a year we get a new supply of filters for all the systems. The village systems continue to be serviced regularly by Suresh from the clinic and the upper school systems are serviced weekly by our activists when the schools are supplied with their fruits and vegetables. This year we are also doing regular chlorine flushing of the tanks and pipes to make sure bacteria is not breeding there to maintain the good health of the kids.

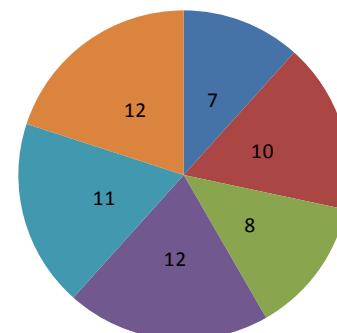


Number of children in schools



- Govt. RakkarPrimary school
- Govt. Rakkar High School
- Govt. Samlekharnaaag School
- Govt. Chakwan School

Number of children in kindergartens



- Rakkar
- NaagMandir
- Samlekharnaaag
- SaletGodam
- Chakwan
- Lunta

Shoes and Sweaters



More Indian children are in school than ever before, but the children in the government schools come from the poorest of families – those who cannot afford to send away their young to private schools elsewhere, as do most families who have the means. Despite provision on paper for students who come from poor families to receive help to buy clothes, they do not get them and most come to school in slippers or torn shoes and in winter have inadequate sweaters.

In response to this need, In August 2013 Nishtha distributed good quality shoes to all 180 children in the 3 schools we work with and in October a school uniform sweater.



New Play Equipment



Some years ago Nishtha established a small jungle gym with slides on the lower playground which has been much used and enjoyed by the children. This December with specially donated funds we were able to purchase and fix three new pieces of equipment: a triple swing, a double see saw and a merry go-round. In addition we fixed old tractor tyres on the jungle gym bars as additional swings. The children are delighted and rush to the ground after school each day. It has become a centre for mothers and children in the evening, getting them out of the house and giving the children a chance to energetically enjoy themselves.



Anganwari Programme

Nishtha has been working with 4 kindergartens for the past two years and this year, since October, with the help of the UK Trust we have been able to add two more kindergartens: SaletGodam and NaagMandir.

SaletGodam is up on the hillside, far from the town. Most of the people there depend on mine related work which is hard and poorly paid. Consequently the kids are quite poorly nourished and never get to see any fresh fruit. The Kindergarten is established in a panchayat building which is not in good condition. More than 15 kids attend the kindergarten every day and are looked after by one teacher and one helper who had requested Nishtha to take them on and help them provide better for the children.

Naagmandir kindergarten is in Upper Rakkar and they have 10 children from labouring families attending regularly.

We have provided play materials, cook-



ing equipment, bowls and spoons, sitting mats, storage boxes and so on to both of these new anganwaris and in November we whitewashed all 6 rooms to make them brighter. We also now include the anganwari children in our school nutrition programme and provide them with a piece of fruit at least 3 times a week.

In the Anganwaris there is a lack of 'real activity' for the kids, therefore Nishtha staff have been visiting each anganwari regularly taking with them a variety of creative activities and learning materials with them to assist the teachers in playing with the children. Our book "Fun Learning" is distributed in every kindergarten. This book is based on a variety of teaching methods which help the teach-



ers with ideas for more enriching activities with the kids.

Sometimes our activities are health related, for example, in February we did a dental program with the kids in each anganwari in which we taught them how to brush properly and regularly and to gargle after eating. We distributed one brush and paste to each child.



The teachers and parents of kids are very happy with this program. They say that their kids are learning lots more than they used to and are much more active than other kids. Earlier the kids were absent often or if they came then it would just be for half an hour. Now they are doing lots of activities the children find it fun and interesting.



Nishtha Single Women's Programme

Nishtha Programme for Single Women continued this year working in a total of 92 panchayats in three blocks: Kangra, Rait and Nagrota. We now have a total of 4,506 members most of whom are widows. Some are divorced, though it is very hard for women to achieve a divorce if the husband does not agree. Others are separated or abandoned.

Our 8 single women activists hold a meeting at Nishtha each month to discuss their programmes and actions and any issues that arise. One meeting in every village is held each month by the concerned single women activist with all single women members, to discuss their problems and to encourage them to participate in Nishtha programmes such as wenlido self defence training.

They hold village level meetings in every village every month. These meetings are time for women to present their problems, for the activists to encourage and inform the women and for women to be enrolled to join events and activities outside the village.



Block, state and National level meetings are opportunities to engage in events and workshops to learn about wider issues related to single women are held throughout the year. Radha plays an important role in the National level organisation, helping to extend the work of giving single women a voice to other states. She attended foundation meetings in Punjab where the women are in real need of this chance to discover their rights and improve their position in society.



We celebrate International Widow's Day on 23rd June by taking out a rally.

This year we again organized a rally in Dharamshala, taking permission from the SP and DC. Our rally was attended by 223 women.

Special efforts have been made during the year to address domestic violence and legal cases that single women have to deal with in very difficult circumstances. Our Programme provides pro-bono legal help and advocacy through meetings with the local police and government authorities.

In April Advocate Roji Singh and the secretary of lions club RC Katoch participated in a meeting with 40 elderly women at Nishtha who have the problem of not getting a pension for reasons such as that they have more than 3 sons, that a son has a government job or that the Patwari wrongfully records that they have more income or land than they actually do. Advocate Roji Singh explained that the law at present does not help in this. This is why we are appealing to the government to allow every single woman to get a pension. The Lions Club



kindly gives a pension of Rs.200 a month to some needy women.

Nishtha Health outreach programme particularly focuses on single women and is run by the single women activists. These camps are attended by all the women of the village and were initiated by them out of concern for the health of the village women. We also organized a successful eye camp at the Dharamsala zonal hospital and gain help for destitute emergency cases through the Nishtha destitute fund.



Nishtha celebrated Women's Day on 8th March in Rakkar along with 50 single women from different villages. All the members of Nishtha celebrated this day enthusiastically. After long hours of preparation, they were excited to do their performance, some cultural, some with a message and others just entertaining. Radha introduced the event and warmed up the crowd with some special slogans and chants on the subject of women's day. The single women's group performed a drama on environment and sang on the unity of single women.

Nishtha library

Nishtha Community Library now has a stock of about 1,000 books on different topics as well as local newspapers in Hindi and English, weekly magazines and Government produced periodicals which are a source for young people to get information about jobs. In order to encourage our local girls to read more we ordered several magazines and books about fashion, cooking, and so on.

More than 20 children from nearby villages come to the library everyday to read and borrow books. All the children have their own borrowing cards. Older people also visit our library to reading novels, magazines and story books. We have more than 40 adult's cards from different villages.

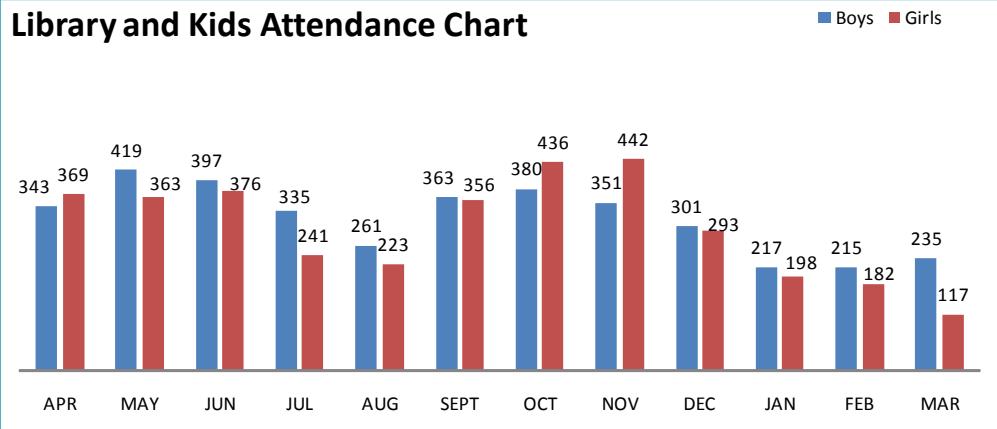
Attendance is lowest during the school holidays in July and August and in January and February and in March the children are occupied with exams.



In the library, as well as regular story telling sessions, we organize craft, drawing and art programs to offer the children opportunities to develop their creativity. This lively kids club programme fills the



Library and Kids Attendance Chart



School children's tuition

Nishtha has been providing tuition classes every year for government school kids. This year Nishtha had given tuition 1st to 10th class students. For this we appointed two well-educated teachers, Rohit and Varun. They both have tuition experience.

More than 30 students from different standards have attended our tuition programme this year. Their parents are poor, achieved very little education themselves and cannot afford private tuition. Students come from nearby villages like Rakkar, Tillu, Mohli and so on.

The Teachers help them with the basic subjects: English, maths and science. Last year seven of our students stood first in their class.

The students engage in other activities every Saturday, like craft work, drawing or playing games which helps them to focus which helps them in their studies. This year the teachers did a very good job and hopefully their result will come even better than last year.



community centre after school each day. Many of the children just want to play so we provide puzzles, board games, balls and badminton rackets as well as skipping ropes and hula hoops.

We are facing some difficulties because the children are not used to reading books and are therefore not familiar with the proper way of handling a book, which is why they often damage books accidentally. We are presently undertaking a review of our book stock, repairing those that need it and making a list of those that need replacing. While Ravindra has been on extended maternity part time we have been helped in the library and with the children's programme by a series of very helpful volunteers.

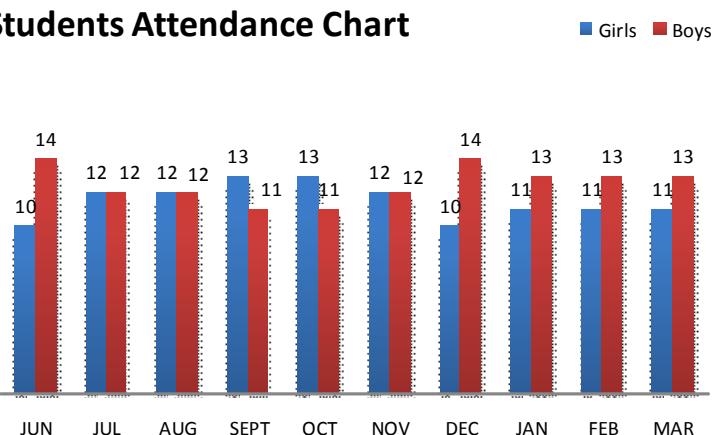




Nishtha runs computer proficiency training for Government school children as well as for college going boys and girls. At this time it is essential that young people should be able to use a computer to further their advancement whether in education or in the job market. Without such skills, it is very hard these days to advance in life. Private schools have equipment and provide their pupils with computer classes but in government schools they don't have access to computers.

Therefore we are running two after-school classes every day from 3:00-4:00

Students Attendance Chart



Computer Training:

pm and from 4:00- 5:00 pm. There are 6 students in each class and we are running 4 classes at a time so each class gets 3 sessions a week - every alternate day. Last year we ran 6 classes at a time but then got less time each on the computer. We find this schedule to be better for both the students and the teachers who are encouraged by the more visible progress of the students.

The students are taught all of the necessary Microsoft programs, including PowerPoint, Excel and Word. In addition, students practice typing daily and the typing speed and accuracy is monitored with a specific program to reflect the students daily improvement. Moreover, students are taught basic graphic arts skills with programs that enable them to paint on the computer. Each week, students are tested on the knowledge they

have gained from the class to ensure that students are making strong progress.

To keep the students engaged and interested, ten minutes at the end of the class is allotted to free time for the students to play games on the computer and have

some fun while becoming familiar with the operation of a computer.

Those students who attend the Nishtha computer program regularly have become very proficient and are good role models for new students. Hindi speaking students who are not good in English don't have a lot of confidence that it is really possible to learn so successful students set a good example. They and their parents are very happy with our training program.

During the holidays Nishtha organized a crash course for 7 village girls, who belong to families who can't afford to pay for them to have private computer education. These are college going girls, who will benefit from learning how to use a computer so we are happy to spend extra time and energy teaching them. They came from 1:00-2:00 PM, each day for 6 weeks.

We also hold a special training every other Sunday for our sponsored students for which Vijay comes in specially. They make quite slow progress because they have never sat in front of a computer before

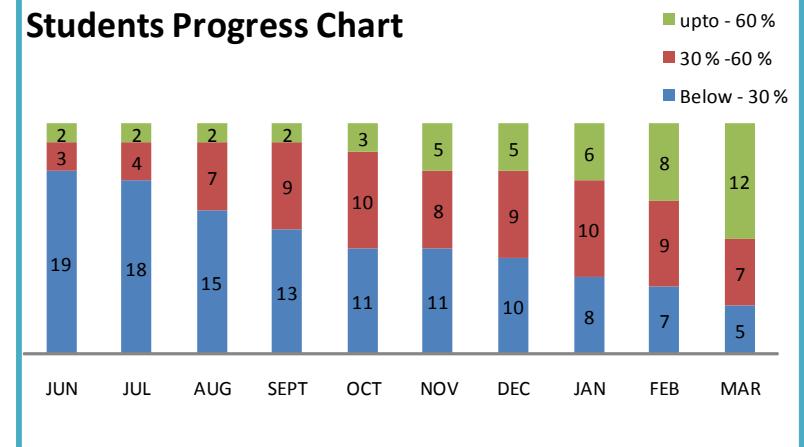


and they get rather few classes. We will encourage them to come more frequently during the holidays.

Nishtha provides training programmes for their teachers whenever possible. These are designed both to upgrade the teachers own computer skills and to give them more ideas and inspiration about how to teach effectively.

In December 2013 Mr. Frank from Alaska visited over a period of 2 months and really helped us as well as providing software, songs and listening materials for the children and reviewing our hardware set up in our computer room.

Students Progress Chart



Cultural Awareness

Vijay and Vandana teach local Gaddi and Kangri dances and songs to a group of our sponsored students each week. In the beginning some students were not very good, but with the help of teacher they are improving and were able to display their skill to perform



On March 8th, during our women's day program, our team showed their impressive dance skills. All the local people appreciated their dance.

Vijay and Vandhana also work with the children preparing them to perform dances on special occasions. Above right they perform with the children during the September childrens sports programme and Here (right) girls from Chatwan School performed a beautiful dance to the accompaniment of Vijay on the dolak along with singing during the children's winter festival.

Right, Tri Lok teaches classical harmonium, tabla and singing to interested local young people.



Sports Programmes

Nishtha sports and environment club has been very active in maintaining the sports ground, cutting back the over-growth , repairing the lower boundary wall and laying a new cricket pitch in preparation for the sports programmes.



In September a full day children's sports day was held with the local children to celebrate the end of a very long monsoon. Races, badminton, skipping and all kinds of board games and talent shows were held on the ground in front of the middle school. The kids had a wonderful day!



On 11th and 12th January 2014 Nishtha staff organized a two day children's sports and cultural event program aiming to give the children from the different social and geographical areas of the locality a chance to get together and enjoy healthy games and activities, encouraging their self confidence and physical strength.

Despite the cold weather more than 150 students from 5 local schools flocked to our village ground. On the first day the children played outdoor games, cricket, football and badminton and running, jumping and skipping events. Some children prefer to play chess or carom on the school verandahs or to use the newly installed swings, slides, see saws and roundabout in the children's park at the lower end of the ground. Nishtha Scholarship students and 6 members of staff including our tuition and computer teachers joined in as helpers to make the event fun and safe for the children.

The games continued on the second day up to 3:00 when our event was honoured by the visit of Dharmashala ADM, Mr. Rakesh Sharma. Nishtha Trustees Dr Barbara, Mrs Soniya Sebastian and Mrs



Radhika Saunik, as well as Dr Kusum were there to welcome him as Chief Guest. Refreshments were handed out and Dr Kusum gave a presentation to the children about the importance of brushing teeth in a correct way. Finally our chief guest distributed one toothpaste and brush to every student. Our trustees then showed him around our Clinic and Community Centre and explained the work we are doing in the villages. Mr. Sharma expressed his pleasure and interest in our programmes and said he would be willing to help us in the future.



On 17th February 2014, Nishtha kids club hosted the visit of 8 students and 2 staff from the International School of Bangkok. They enjoyed playing on the ground together very much.

Cricket Tournament

This year 24 teams enthusiastically participated in the Nishtha annual cricket tournament. As every match had to be played on Sunday or school holidays they were very well attended by the villagers who enjoyed the action, perching on rocks to watch the play.



The opening match was between the local Rakkar and Sidhbari cricket teams. The final match was played between the Dharamshala team vs. Mcleodgang IX. The Dharamshala team won the trophy by 5 wickets.

On the final day Nishtha Director Dr. Barbara distributed the prizes to the winning and runner up teams.



Community Centre Workshops

Regular workshops and special programmes including staff and single women's meetings, the bag making project, children's workshops, Wenlido trainings and many more are held in Nishtha Community Centre. In order to make it more attractive and functional, this year we replaced the grass matting on the floor with a wood flooring which will require less long term maintenance and will be easier for our programmes.



Below a visiting group of single women activists held a 5 day training in our community centre in order to train the participants in making a survey of the single women in the country. We were proud to be able to host this event.



The women's bag making team regularly use the community centre workshop room for their stitching programme



A first aid training took place with the St John's ambulance team in November. Our sponsored students, some single women and community centre staff took part in this refresher course. This training is very good for building confidence in case of an emergency. Everyone received a certificate at the end of the course. We are very grateful to the St John's Ambulance trainers who pay all the expenses of the training themselves.



Public Health & Environment

Dogs Clinic:

Nishtha completed a dog sterilization programme funded by the UK trust which went on from October 2012 to October 2013. During this time 47 dogs were sterilized and anti rabies vaccine given to all the local dogs.

In October 2013 Nishtha actively participated in a second major anti-rabies drive undertaken by the Tibet Charity vets who vaccinated every dog in the village. Sterilizations are now being carried out by the Animal Rescue Centre which has set up locally.



Nishtha stall at Rakkar Mela offered games encouraging awareness of garbage re-cycling and other environmental issues. It was a very popular stall!



Clean and Green Rakkar Project

Nishtha's clean village project was started in May 2012 in Rakkar village with the Nishtha Clean Green Rakkar Project aims to make people aware of how to manage their household waste.

Over the years, Nishtha has set up garbage collection bins in the village in an effort to keep the village clean. However, people were putting their waste into the bins without segregating it which made it a challenge to manage them. It became clear that a new approach focusing on educating the community about how to manage their waste was needed.



With the help of our second hand scooter, and a number of dedicated volunteers, we have now mobilised over 400 households who segregate their waste into wet and dry. The plastic waste is collected by our dedicated team, further sorted and sent for re-cycling.

This, along with regular monsoon tree planting is working steadily towards making Rakkar a truly clean green village.



Visiting each house to collect clean dry plastic waste.



Further segregating the plastic for re-cycling.



Organic Agriculture



We have been practicing and encouraging organic farming methods, vermiculture and herb cultivation for many years now. We also spread awareness about non-conducive agricultural practices such as the over use of chemical fertilizers and insecticides and the introduction of genetically modified seed. We encourage people to grow local varieties and to make compost.

In order to further this approach we have recently purchased a 4 karnal piece of land behind the clinic on which to experiment with different modes of farming and to hold trainings especially for single women who need to develop their livelihood options.



Wenlido Training

Wenlido is a valuable self defense for women training which effectively gives women and girls the confidence to protect themselves and to understand their innate strength to withstand emotional and physical abuse. At Nishtha we have 2 certified wenlido trainers, Deepa and Ravindra who are both required to hold full 3 days wenlido trainings. As both of our trainers are now mothers it has been difficult to organize as many trainings as we would like. However we have held 4



full three day residential trainings and 6 one day practice sessions which can be run by a single trainer.

The two trainings in May were held with the help of Preeti, an experienced trainer who came from Bangalore to assist Ravindra and to explore the possibility of sending some of our women for further training. Unfortunately, although we have a group of women interested to do this, other organizations in India do not seem to be taking this up and so there is a lack of available trainers.

We are however pleased that we have been able to give this valuable training to a total of 83 women and girls this year



Wenlido Trainings 2013-14

Date	single	Married	Unmarried	Total	Training Type
03/05/2013	10	3	6	19	Girls 1 day practice
07/05/2013	2	1	9	12	Girls 1 day practice
24-26 May	1	0	13	14	Womens 3 day training
28-30 May	6	1	2	9	Girls 3 day training
23/11/2013	7	0	0	7	Girls 1 day practice
30/11/2013	6	0	0	6	girl's 1 day practice
14-15 Dec	7	0	0	7	Girls 3 day training
28-30 March	9	0	0	9	Girls 3 day training
Total	48	5	30	83	

Sponsorship Programme



Nishtha sponsored the college education of 10 students, for the academic year 2013-14. All the students are selected from applicants who are from particularly depressed families, many of them the children of single women. Although we favour sponsoring girls, some boys are unable to go to college for lack of parental help and so we assist needy cases by paying their fees, books and stationary expenses, travel expenses and a little pocket money. We budgeted and spent an average of Rs. 14,000 per student.

We are very pleased that our investment seems to have paid off as all the students we sponsored passed their exams and took admission in the next year course with the exception of one girl who completed her graduation and is now applying and taking the entrance tests for jobs.

As part of the Nishtha student's sponsorship scheme the students have to commit themselves to joining in the programme of meetings, activities and train-

ings set up for them. Every Sunday they learn cultural folk dance and music followed by a computer class. The student dance group performed very successfully on International Women's Day.

Every month on 3rd Saturday we hold a meeting with the students to plan new programmes and discuss important issues and to be encouraged to join in Nishtha programmes. The students have all become members of Nishtha's library, regularly borrowing books and periodicals for pleasure and for their course work.

They have been motivated to become involved in our clean village programme, first by managing their own waste and then educating the surrounding families about how to segregate their waste.

With their help about 150 village families outside Rakkar are actively participating in best practice household waste management.

The students have also been very helpful with our children's sports programmes, organizing the games and snacks and playing with the children. It is a great boost to our community centre activities to have their energy and enthusiasm.





Nishtha depends on individual donors to continue our health and community work. We are very grateful to all those who provide support through Aktion Regen and Nishtha UK Trust as well as to those who contribute directly and to our local supporters.

United Kingdom



Nishtha UK Trust

Charities Commission
Registration No: 1118248
IR charity status ref No: XT2400

Cheques can be made out to
Nishtha UK Trust and sent to:

Nishtha UK Trust
P O Box 203 Totnes,
Devon TQ9 9BS

or paid directly to:

Nishtha UK Trust
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a/c No: 00118802
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Republic of India



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