

COMMUNITY SHARES- Peter and Maureen

In 2001 I was invited by Maragret Conley and Mifey Hodson, two long term supporters of PRASAD in India to help set up an organisation in Australia to support PRASAD's work in the Tansa Valley. I had recently returned from a visit to Ganeshpuri and had seen some of the harsh living conditions many people in this rural villages endured. It did not take me long to say yes to this invite and this started what has been a wonderful and rewarding journey with PRASAD Chikitsa and PRASAD Australia.

My favourite definition of the word Prasad is "The gift that brings as many blessings to the giver as it does to the receiver". My experience with PRASAD is that this definition was so true. As I look back over the last couple of decades of my service,

what stands out for me is the people I had the privilege to interact with. The word gratitude comes to the forefront. I saw amazing gratitude from the people whose lives we helped. I would often hear about the gratitude the people felt not only for the medical help they received but the way it was delivered with such love and kindness. I saw this gratitude amongst the many people who supported the operation of PRASAD Australia and the many more who consistently donated. It was heart warming to be in their company.

I have seen PRASAD Chikitsa grow, with our help, to be recognised by the Indian government and the WHO for their excellent service and I am very grateful that I could be a small part this amazing journey.

Peter



Peter Raines



"Twenty years doesn't sound like much but when I look over the history and growth of PRASAD in that short time, I find it quite inspirational."

Maureen Brown

Inspirational. It's a perfect word to describe PRASAD.

When you examine the number and diversity of programs, it is amazing to see what is being done now to advance the people of the Tansa Valley around Ganeshpuri. The diversity is because of the mutual respect between the people and PRASAD. PRASAD asks what the priorities are in each village and the programs develop out of that. It is not a commitment to just one idea for everyone – toilets, for example, or market gardens. Because the idea comes from the community itself and because they commit themselves by paying for part of the cost or through their labour, the villagers are involved and it creates a great sense of pride and achievement.

Inspirational because it increases a sense of self-respect and pride and increases communication skills. This is especially true for the Self-Help Groups. Small

groups work together by saving money and financing the establishment of an idea that raises the standard of living of the group member – from sewing machines and flour grinders to hiring chairs and tents for special occasions.

The agricultural programs too are inspirational because of a commitment to foods from the local area, sustainability processes and enhancing the local area by the planting and care of local trees. So many programs – medical, educational, artistic, cultural and community-enhancing.

PRASAD itself is inspirational because the efforts, time and cost of travel is voluntary. This is the same from a volunteer for a short period of time or a specific project, to the Directors in each country that support PRASAD. To see the programs in action is inspirational and the growth quite profound. Well done PRASAD.

Maureen



Like Us On Facebook PRASAD® Australia