

# Shivia Winter Newsletter

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Ollly and Chandrani with PDS farmer in West Bengal (Oct '15)



AMS farmer with his crop of organic margosa (Oct '15)

Dear Friend of Shivia,

I have just returned from a wonderful trip to West Bengal where we were joined by **Mrs Nan Brenninkmeyer**, **Damon de Laszlo**, **Garlinda Birkbeck** and **Phillis Sharpe**. We had a stimulating week interacting with the Shivia India (Nirdhan) team and visiting home-farmers engaged in our three programmes: Poultry Development Services, Agri Management Services and our goatery pilot. I continue to be in awe of how hard the team works to deliver effective services to the world's poorest and inspired by the enthusiasm and smiles of our home-farmers when they tell us their individual stories. As Phillis reported on return from the trip: *"It was heartening to see all the women whom we met, who are either new or relatively long-standing users of the Poultry Development Services, beaming with happiness and self-confidence as they were earning money, probably for the first time in their lives, which could upgrade their families' economic status"*.

I was particularly pleased with progress in our AMS programme where farmers proudly showed off their products and introduced us to their newly formed "Farmer Interest Groups" explaining all the benefits

they are now receiving. We have 466 farmers in 29 of these groups and look forward to transitioning to a larger "Farmer Producer Organisation" in the coming months. I am excited about the potential of this programme, not only for AMS itself, but for our other programmes which can link into the groups for benefits and as distribution channels. I am also glad that we can finally go ahead with our goatery pilot after months of research, tweaking our model and obtaining insurance. We have selected 20 families in our second location, Babnan; all who we met on our trip and are eager to get going with the project.

I am delighted that Shivia was short-listed for this year's **Charity Times** "Charity of the Year under £1million" and appeared on the **Financial News Extra Mile list**, in recognition of our flagship programme, backyard poultry farming. Since we started PDS in 2011, we have sold 19,250 toolkits to 6,628 farmers and trained nearly 39,000 people in backyard poultry farming. We are now operating in over 690 villages of West Bengal and gaining a reputation for the excellent service we provide. Another organisation will be replicating our model in Bali Island of the Sundarbans, in the Bay of Bengal, a further endorsement of our work and a new income stream for Shivia.

We would in turn like to thank supporters who have gone the extra mile for us this quarter: **Will Belcher** and his **Taylor Wessing** "New Street Sprinters" ran the Royal Parks Half Marathon'; **Aba Ansah** did a 50km sponsored bike ride in Scotland; Shivia's ambassador **Max Patel** from **St James's Place Wealth Management** hosted another exclusive VIP event at Aston Martin's HQ, generously supported by **Shailendra** and **Hemant Patel** from **Project Sophia**, and **Vin Murria** who has offered us three boxes at the Royal Albert Hall over the festive period. Thank you also to **Garlinda Birkbeck** who generously gave up her time to come out to West Bengal and take photos for us on a pro-bono basis.

Enjoy reading our newsletter and if you have any questions, please always ask us! Meanwhile, I hope that all of you who celebrated the Durga Pujas, Diwali and Thanksgiving had a joyful time and that the build up to Christmas is fun but also a time of generosity for those less fortunate than ourselves.

Thank you for your continued support which means the world.

Ollly

**Ollly Donnelly, Chief Executive**

**AKINA BIBI (50)** is married and has seven daughters. She and her husband Hajrat Mondal used to both work as agricultural labourers, earning Rs 100 (£1) each per day. Hajrat also owns a pedal van that he was using to take vegetables to the local market. In total, their monthly income amounted to about Rs.3,600 (£36). In 2013, the pedal van broke and they could not afford to fix it. They were already in debt to the local moneylender for money needed to buy basic food for the family.

In October 2013, Akina heard about Shivia through our local Livelihood Service Provider in the area, Saumen Biswas. Akina registered for the PDS programme and started her training in poultry rearing and received her first 10 chicks. Since then she has built her farm to over 100 adult birds and is earning a regular income from the sale of eggs and chickens at the local markets. She has been able to provide a dowry for three of her daughters and has also paid for the repairs to Hajrat's pedal van. He is now earning over Rs 400 a day using the van for deliveries again. Akina has high hopes of paying for their grandson's educational expenses and will soon pay off all the debts they previously accrued before she became a poultry farmer.



**Akina and her family feature in our new 5 minute video which we have produced for TVE's Global Sustainability Film Awards. You can watch it on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/J5Czq2pMkiA>**



**Minar Hussain Mondal showing the results of the AMS programme ....noticeably bigger fruits from his crop of bitter gourd in his left hand.**

**Agri-Management Services (AMS)**

Launched in April 2014, our second livelihood enterprise is now very well established and producing excellent results for our farmers, as illustrated in the photo above. This enterprise is offered to our farmers who have access to small but unproductive plots of land. We start with soil testing and advice on crop selection. Then we train farmers in the use of bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides, some of which can be sourced locally at no cost, for example cow urine. We have witnessed stunning results in productivity for our farmers following this training, seeing their yield increase by 20-30%, directly translating to a 15-20% increase in household income. We are now working with 466 members on AMS and have worked hard to organise them into Farmer Interest Groups (FIGs) so that they can benefit from better and cheaper supplies and banking facilities. The next stage is the transition to Farmer's Producer Organisation (FPO), which affords them even greater benefits with market linkages and access to bank loans. AMS is proving to be a fully sustainable enterprise for farmers and one where there is a clear exit strategy for Shivia – once our farmers are trained and a FIG member they are no longer dependent on us.

**Poultry Development Services (PDS)**

Our 'flagship' livelihood enterprise goes from strength to strength in all our four locations surrounding Kolkata and we are well underway with research into a fifth location for launch in 2016. We are increasingly finding that PDS is being used by farmers as a stepping stone to start a new enterprise that will provide a sustainable income and have come across many examples of entrepreneurial endeavor. Take Kalyani Mondal, for example, who used money earned from PDS to mend her loom and buy materials to make rugs, which she is selling at the local market. Her story is just one of many encouraging examples of how PDS is transforming people's lives in a positive and permanent way.



**Goateries**

We have just started the pilot phase of our third enterprise, 'goateries'. We have chosen to work with 20 families at our second, Muslim-dominated location, Babnan, where goats are deemed 'the asset of the poor'. We look forward to reporting on our progress in 2016.

**Charity Times Awards 2015:** Olly and Victoria attended the Charity Times award ceremony in London when Shivia was shortlisted for **Charity of the Year with income less than £1m**. Although we didn't win, we are delighted to have been shortlisted and will definitely make a submission to be considered for an award in 2016.



**TVE Global Sustainability Film Awards 2015:** We were invited to submit an entry for this year's film awards to showcase Shivia's livelihood development programme. With very little time on our side and the monsoons in India making life difficult for our cameraman, we put together this short video, which we hope you will enjoy watching: <https://youtu.be/J5Czg2pMkiA>

**FN Extra Mile 40:** Shivia features in this year's list celebrating those from the financial sector who are now going the extra mile for good causes: <http://thetally.efinancialnews.com/2015/11/fn-extra-mile-list-full/>

**Christmas & New Year: Royal Albert Hall Events:** Once again, **Vin Muria** has kindly donated a box at the Royal Albert Hall for three exciting performances over Christmas and the New Year. After offering the tickets to all our **Friends of Shivia** in exchange for a donation, we are delighted to report that most of the tickets have gone for **Christmas Classics, Nutcracker on Ice and Cirque du Soleil Amaluna**, raising £2,462.



Tickets are still available for **Christmas Classics** on 15<sup>th</sup> December (4 at £52 each) and **Cirque du Soleil** on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016 (2 at £85 each). Email [victoria@shivia.com](mailto:victoria@shivia.com) to book.

**Sporting Fundraising Events:** A running team from international law firm Taylor Wessing undertook the challenge of a half marathon to raise funds for both Shivia and The British Heart Foundation. Our thanks go to **Will Belcher, Russell Holden, James Homan, Rebecca Lyne, Ed Waldron** and **Melissa Wilkins** (aka The New Street Sprinters) for raising over £500 in sponsorship for Shivia and to Taylor Wessing for matching this amount. Thanks also to **Aba Anseh** who cycled 50km in Scotland, donating £515 in sponsorship to Shivia.



**Aston Martin VIP Test Drive & Factory Tour:** Following on from the success of this event in June, we were delighted to welcome more Shivia supporters to Aston Martin's HQ in November courtesy of St James's Place Wealth Management and hosted by Shivia's ambassador **Max Patel**. The day included a delicious buffet lunch, test drives of two of the newest **Vanquish** and **Vantage** models and a tour of the Aston Martin museum and production factory. It was a unique and exhilarating day enjoyed by all who took part. Thank you to all our guests and SJP Wealth management in helping us raise over £5,000 for our Livelihood Programme in West Bengal. **We will be offering another VIP day at Aston Martin in 2016 – to register your interest please get in touch: [victoria@shivia.com](mailto:victoria@shivia.com)**



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### HOW TO SUPPORT SHIVIA

There are many ways of doing this - from making a one-off donation for a £15 Poultry Toolkit or setting up a regular monthly donation, to organising a fundraising event, undertaking a sponsored challenge or championing Shivia where you work.

To find out more please visit our website page:

[www.shivia.com/donate](http://www.shivia.com/donate)



*"A truly remarkable and fascinating trip so see the incredible work that Shivia is doing. It was hugely pleasing to see the reception for the Shivia Livelihood Service Providers by the poorest of poor farmers, and to understand the improvements to their wellbeing and livelihood that the Shivia team is able to make." **Damon de Laszlo, Friend of Shivia***