

# Shivia Winter Newsletter

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Two of the wonderful women farmers on our PDS programme

Nish, Ishna, Mike & Claire looking good after the half marathon

Dear Friend of Shivia,

I write this message whilst on maternity leave following the birth of George's and my son, Barney, on 28<sup>th</sup> September. Just a few days before Barney made his appearance the Shivia team was delighted to welcome the Chairman of Nirdhan (Shivia India), Vasant Subramanyan, to the UK. During Vasant's visit we focused on the need to employ a local fund-raiser in India and I am pleased to say we are now in the process of interviewing suitable candidates.

On the topic of fund-raising, I am most grateful for the efforts many of you have made recently: thanks to all those who ran in the Royal Parks Half Marathon; to Claire Stevens and Mike Harley for organising a Diwali boat party and to Barnaby Parker and his team from **Venquis** who are busy training for the Jurassic Coast Endurance Marathon on 3<sup>rd</sup> December (see link to fund-raising on page 4). As mentioned in the last newsletter, we are delighted to have secured a charity place in the 2017 London Marathon and that Stewart McAndie will be running and fundraising on our behalf. I would like to thank Shivia Ambassador Max Patel from **St James's Place Wealth Management** for hosting another great Aston Martin VIP day following the House of Commons dinner she hosted in April. Max is also arranging an informal pensions and tax planning event on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017 and will be extending an invitation to all Shivia supporters.

In terms of operations, our Poultry Development Service continues to produce excellent results and we have delivered nearly 5,000 poultry toolkits since the start of our financial year in April, in line with the budget. I had an interesting conversation with the **Gates Foundation** earlier this month and felt encouraged by their enthusiasm towards Shivia's poultry farming model as an effective route out of poverty.

Agri-Management Services is also going from strength to strength: we now have over 720 farmers in 43 Farmer Interest Groups, all benefitting from expert agricultural training and access to better-priced inputs and market linkages.

Our goatery pilot has recently suffered from an unusually severe outbreak of goat pox in the villages. Thankfully all our farmers' goats are safe due to our vaccination and medication programme, but these diseases can make farmers lose confidence. We are working hard to maintain enthusiasm for the project especially as our goats survived the pox, unlike others in the area. I am looking forward to feedback on all our operations from Eve Black (**Alquity**), who is visiting West Bengal in December and I am already excited about my visit early next year with the team from **Artemis**.

I continue to be grateful to the **Salesforce** pro-bono team who are making great progress in developing our database to capture our increasing volume of social impact and donor data. We see this as key for continually improving our effectiveness in service delivery and we'll be up and running with it very soon!

In the run up to Christmas, please remember that one life-changing poultry toolkit is £15 – if you would like to change a family's life over the festive period, please do contact Victoria ([Victoria@shivia.com](mailto:Victoria@shivia.com)) who can provide you with a stocking-filler gift certificate! It is quick and easy and will make a huge difference to some of the world's very poorest families as you will see from our report on page 2.

With my thanks as always for being part of our important work,

*Olly*

**Olly Donnelly, Chief Executive**

# News from West Bengal: a focus on women and children

## POULTRY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (PDS)

In the vast majority of cases it is the woman/mother in the household who takes up the poultry enterprise as she can do this while also caring for the family at home. She is also responsible for selling the produce within the community and at local markets.

We encourage our farmers to keep their hens for breeding and egg production as this is the most profitable use of the toolkit. Our research has shown that household income can increase by 30% per year from the sale of eggs alone. Assuming a minimum production rate of 120 eggs per hen per year (and our breeds often lay more than that), our farmer can earn £60 from just ten hens. By investing in another toolkit and breeding her hens she can quickly increase the size of her flock and see her income increase proportionally. Male birds can be sold for meat when they reach maturity. A 2kgs cockerel will sell for c. £2.20 in the local market and that's a significant amount in the rural villages of West Bengal.

Earning money from their enterprise and making the spending decisions gives our women farmers a huge sense of empowerment, invariably for the first time in their lives. They are well respected by their husbands, family members and peers. Their economic and social standing improves with this opportunity and this proves to be very significant too. Our women farmers are very positive role models for young girls and other women in their community.

A woman farmer will invariably spend the income from her poultry enterprise for the benefit of her family. If she has school age children her priority is to give them access to a good education. This often means buying the uniform, shoes and books they need to attend, paying for the bus fare to school or paying for private tuition to help children gain access to higher education. Money is often used to pay for medicines, as there is no free healthcare. She will also make sure that her children eat well, buying more nutritious food than before and regularly using some of the eggs for making a meal. And for a special occasion one of her cockerels may end up in the cooking pot too!

We have seen how the poultry enterprise makes our farmers very resourceful and entrepreneurial and have witnessed many examples of women who use some of their profits to start a new enterprise – a small café or a tailoring business for example as illustrated in our featured case study.

*“When I visit poor communities and speak with women about their lives, they tell me about the daily struggle to give their children a chance at a better life than they had. And a lot of times, one of the most powerful weapons in that struggle is a small flock of chickens.”* **Melinda Gates, Co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**

## CASE STUDY

*Saheda registered with Shivia in October 2014 after she attended a community meeting in her village hosted by our **Livelihood Service Provider, Arup Mondal**. At the meeting, Saheda learned about our poultry enterprise programme (PDS) and how she would be able to earn an extra income for the family by raising chickens and selling their produce.*

*As a woman in a Muslim community Saheda was not encouraged to work but our **Poultry Development Services** programme gave her the ideal opportunity to work from home whilst also caring for the extended family and her own three young children.*

*Her husband works as an agricultural labourer, earning as little as 100 rupees (£1) a day for about 240 days a year....an annual income of just £240. Even by standards in rural India this is an extremely low income and barely enough to cover even basic household expenses.*

*Saheda is delighted with her small poultry farming enterprise and she now contributes to the family income by paying for more nutritious food for her children and also for some extra tuition for them so they will pass the exams needed to progress to secondary education.*

*She has also been able to buy a secondhand sewing machine and takes on some local tailoring jobs, adding to her income. She feels empowered by the opportunity Shivia has given her and says, ‘**Long live Shivia!**’*



## News from West Bengal: a story about FIGS

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### AGRI-MANAGEMENT SERVICES (AMS)

Although our farmers are growing a variety of different fruits and vegetables from aubergine to zucchini, we are yet to witness a field of fig trees. In this case a FIG is a **Farmer Interest Group** – a collection of farmers who, with our intervention, have joined together to form a co-operative group with increased bargaining powers at the markets. As a group, our farmers can benefit from economies of scale, negotiating cheaper prices from suppliers for their inputs (seeds, fertilisers and pesticides) and commanding higher prices as they sell their produce further afield. Another important benefit of the FIG is that the farmers are able to open a bank account and take advantage of financial services previously denied to them as individual farmers. So all in all FIGs are proving to be very popular with our farmers in West Bengal!

We have a total of 722 farmers registered with us on AMS and have formed 43 FIGs, over half of which have opened a business bank account to help manage their income and expenditure. Two of our FIGs have recently been able to join a **Central Government crop insurance scheme**, protecting their business from the financial loss caused by natural calamities. Previous to this, single farmers were likely to suffer catastrophic losses from floods or drought. As a group, their liabilities are significantly reduced and they are delighted. We are trying to connect more of the FIGs to the crop insurance scheme as soon as possible.

Our plan is to register another 400 new farmers with our AMS programme in 2016/17, taking the total to over 1,000 AMS farmers. At this point we will be able to help them form a Farmer Producer Group (FPG), an altogether bigger and more formal organisation that will be eligible to apply for government schemes, subsidies and significant bank loans.



*“Since I started with Shivia’s AMS programme my farming business is in profit after so many years of almost no profit at all. Now I can afford better food for the family as well as save money and my wife and children are very happy with this!”* **Shivia AMS farmer, West Bengal.**

## The Goatery pilot at Babnan

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In January 2016 we launched a pilot programme for a new goat farming enterprise with 20 families from our Babnan location. Each family has been given two female goat on loan, with a male goat shared between a group of families.

The programme operates over a 27 month cycle during which time the goats typically produce 10 kids. The farmer keeps five of the kids and gives the other five to Shivia as repayment for the loan of the original pair of breeding goats. Our goat farming model is proving to be a success and our farmers are pleased with the enterprise. A recent challenge has been an outbreak of goat pox in the villages but our Livelihood Service Providers are well trained to help farmers combat the effects of the pox, backed up by local veterinary expertise, and the adult goats are fully vaccinated to help protect them. We are pleased to report that none of the Shivia goats have died but, should the worst happen, our farmers are further protected by an insurance policy to cover any losses suffered.





## How to support Shivia

### There are many ways to support Shivia....

- Make a donation for one or more £15 Poultry Toolkits
- Set up a regular monthly donation
- Introduce Shivia to a corporate or family foundation
- Organise a fundraising event
- Undertake a sponsored challenge
- Champion Shivia where you work
- Give As You Earn

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

And why not put a **Shivia Poultry Toolkit Gift Certificate** in a Christmas stocking this year - email us for more details: [victoria@shivia.com](mailto:victoria@shivia.com)



### **Giving Tuesday** **29th November 2016**

*Donations to Shivia via Global Giving will be worth 50% more with matched funding from The Gates Foundation.*

*Look out for an email from us on Monday 28th November with all the details.*

**#GivingTuesday**

### **Endurance Marathon** **3rd December 2016**

*Please help the marathon team from Venquis reach their goal of raising £2,000 for Shivia.*

*They are running an endurance marathon along the Jurassic coast in Dorset. It's the full 26.2 miles but it's also very hilly!*

*To sponsor the team and give their fundraising a boost **just click here***

### **London Marathon** **23rd April 2017**

*We are thrilled to have been awarded a place in the charity ballot for next year's London Marathon. This is a first for Shivia and we hope lots of our loyal supporters will get involved with our fundraising efforts.*

*Stewart McAndie will be running for Shivia - we'll introduce you to him very soon and let you know how you can sponsor him.*

#### **CONTACT US**

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