



SAVE A FAMILY PLAN
IN INDIA SINCE 1965

Ektha-UNITY

THE SAVE A FAMILY PLAN NEWSLETTER

Helping
amazing
families
in INDIA



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY IN INDIA - THE POWER OF EDUCATION

Education is a powerful force for creating change in the lives of young people and their families.

Save A Family Plan works closely with impoverished families in India, helping them to identify their poverty-related issues and plan actions to address them. These issues are often complex and interconnected, creating systematic problems that can be passed on from generation to generation. SAFF's programs use a variety of strategies to break these cycles and give families hope for a brighter future.

Education has proven to be an extremely effective way of breaking the generational cycle of poverty. Access to a quality education opens doors to new possibilities for young people, allowing them the chance to participate more fully in the social and economic life of their communities and their country. While the poor in India are often excluded from the many benefits of India's recent economic growth and prosperity, a post-secondary education can offer opportunities to earn a substantial income that can dramatically increase a family's standard of living.

Although the Government of India has recognized education as a right for all, children across the country are routinely denied access to even basic education. Save A Family Plan has been committed to providing funding and support for a variety of education initiatives through the years, including schooling for children in tribal communities, basic education for child labourers, after-school tuition programs, and adult literacy,

The obstacles facing youth from poor families are even greater at the post-secondary level. College admission is highly competitive and cost of tuition is prohibitive for many students, especially the very poor, even if they are able to secure a spot.

With this understanding, Save A Family Plan has decided to launch a scholarship program to give deserving young people from poor families the chance to attend professional programs, such as medicine and engineering. We believe in supporting their efforts and talents, with the knowledge that they will in turn care for their families and use their skills to create further change in their communities. This is another way that SAFF is partnering with the poor for a just world.

**ARE YOU INTERESTED
IN SUPPORTING SAFF'S
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM?**

**CONTACT THE SAVE A FAMILY
PLAN OFFICE FOR MORE
INFORMATION.**

Stories from the Field

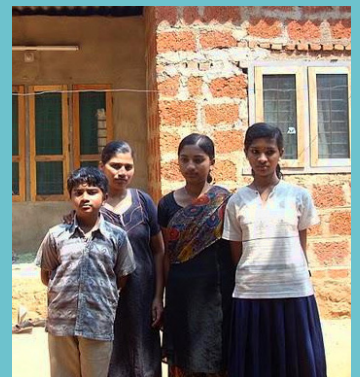


Sreelatha was living with her husband and their three children in the Wayanad District of Kerala when they were selected for the Family Development Program. Her husband, Vinod, was suffering from kidney disease and the family was struggling to meet their basic needs on Sreelatha's income alone. Joining the program gave them new hope and a chance to plan for a better future. However, Vinod's illness suddenly became worse and he died shortly after, leaving the family in shock.

The local animator and their neighbours offered support to Sreelatha during this difficult time. They encouraged her to be active in their local self-help group and other community activities. With their encouragement, she decided to use the support from SAFF to start a tailoring business and to provide a good education to her children.

The family pulled together and worked hard. All three children scored very high marks in their examinations and Sreelatha continued to build her business, eventually buying better tailoring machines, renting a shop, and hiring other women to help her. With support from SAFF and her own earnings, Sreelatha is supporting her children to complete their post-secondary studies. Her oldest daughter, Keerthana, completed her Bachelor Degree in Chemistry and is working on a Master's Degree in Technology. Anagha, her second daughter, is studying to become a Chartered Accountant, while working on her Bachelors of Commerce through Distance Studies at the same time. Her youngest son, Arjun, completed his grade 10 examinations with high marks and he too has many opportunities ahead.

With a strong education behind them, Sreelatha's children will have a bright future with financial security. The incomes that they are able to generate will ensure the well-being of their family now and for the generation that follows. By supporting the education of her children, Sreelatha has taken an incredible step in breaking the cycle of poverty for her family.



**“THE MOST LOVING
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SAFP CONTRIBUTORS,
DOUG AND CAROL WHITESIDE,
REFLECT ON THEIR EXPERIENCES
IN INDIA



A trip to India is not a holiday but rather an experience; a cultural and religious experience, a study of contrasts, and an opportunity to observe all aspects of humanity.

Life in India for many is hard and while it would be wrong to overlook these challenges, it would be equally wrong to ignore the beauty and joy that exists here, sometimes amidst the most thought-provoking of human conditions. Traveling India requires an open mind, an open heart, patience and a strong stomach. With the right attitude, given enough time, travel in India morphs from a trip to a pilgrimage.

One of our most meaningful experiences was a visit to our partner family that we had sponsored through SAFP until they became self-sufficient in 2015. The family was waiting for us when we drove up the lane and even before we could get out, they were crowded around the car. The father, a labourer, standing in bare feet, had a big beautiful smile on his face and immediately grasped our hands in his rough and gnarled hands. Looking into each other's eyes we both could not contain ourselves and we hugged each other. There were tears in my eyes and I am sure in his as well.



The parents, a man and his wife both in their fifties, have a daughter and two sons. The parents spoke no English but they did understand some of what we were saying. Words weren't really necessary to express our feelings as there was an almost immediate connection of two knowing sets of parents who above all else want their children to be healthy, successful and happy. The smile never left his or his wife's face as their beautiful young daughter told us how honoured her father and mother were to have us visit their home and how through our help, they were able to not only survive but be successful. The daughter was the only one of the three children at home. In addition to three children they also have one grandson who is one month old. Clement Thomas is a beautiful child and as Carol and I held him there were a few more tears. Both grandparents beamed with pride. The daughter, who speaks excellent English, told us that as a result of our help her family has been able to buy a bit of land and build the house in which we were now sitting. They had neither before. Through our help, she explained, each of the children was able to get a good education, she as a nurse, the second oldest a degree and job in hotel management and the youngest has just finished his fourth form and is now looking for work. She thanked us over and over and over again and repeatedly told us how proud she and her family were to have us in their house.

The house that they built is very simple, surprisingly large by Indian standards 20 by 25 feet. The furnishings were all used, slightly broken and even the plate and two forks that our coconut was served on looked well used. The room was clean, however, the paint on the concrete walls was worn thin. The father had that morning secured four fresh, young coconuts from the one coconut tree on their land. He sliced the tops off and with a straw we drank the juice while the family looked on. Once we had drunk the juice they served just us the sweet, fresh coconut flesh which we gladly ate while we shared pictures of our own family with them. They knew we had six children from our correspondence

and they wanted to know a little bit about each of our children and what they were doing. They also were very interested in our grandchildren.

What do you say in response to what the daughter is saying to us? When we looked about the simple house and looked at the smiling faces knowing how much we have and seeing what they have and how grateful they are, we were extremely moved. The coordinator who was traveling with us told us that the father had stayed home from work and forfeited a day's wages to be with us. She told us that this was no small thing. As our guides took pictures, the man put his hand in mine as a gesture of appreciation. Carol and I told them that we were very honoured to be in their home. We told them that they should be proud of what they have accomplished; three educated, grown children and a beautiful grandson. In each of their letters that they sent they told us they would pray for us and we thanked them very much for their prayers that they said for us over the years. More tears. We told them that the tears we had were not because we were sad but were out of joy. I wish I would have known what I know now; those faithfully sent letters and those prayers would have meant so much more when we first read them.

Prior to leaving, we toured the small plot of land they own. On the land, they have several rubber trees, a coconut palm, and a few other tropical fruit trees. Our backyard is about the same size as their whole property. The family was very proud of their property and from what we have seen through our travels they have every right to be proud. How much difference a few dollars can make in India.

For at least one family the cycle of poverty has been broken.

After several more handshakes and hugs, we finally climbed into the car and waved as we drove off. There are few days in our lives where we have felt so humble, so honoured as we have on this day. This day will be imprinted on our souls for a long time to come.



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PARTNERING WITH THE POOR FOR A JUST WORLD

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