

Grassroots Empowerment in Rural India

Annual Report 2013

The GEN Initiative Ltd (GEN)

Aims

GEN, a UK-based charity, is a Grassroots Empowerment Network. It works with an Indian partner organisation 'End Poverty', supported by Village Development Groups (VDGs) in most of the villages where it is active, to contribute to the elimination of poverty in rural villages in the Alwar District of Rajasthan State, India. The underpinning principle of its work is to empower villagers to take charge of improving life in their communities. The GEN/End Poverty programme is currently focusing on a group of villages in the Tijara area of Alwar District. Supported by VDGs, the GEN/End Poverty programme in these villages has three main strands: (i) education for girls; (ii) livelihood - craftwork; and (iii) village development and rural tourism.

Education for girls

The main focus of the GEN/EP education programme is on teenage girls, many of whom have not previously received any formal education and will shortly get married. Since the programme was launched in 2009, nearly 1,000 unschooled teenage girls from 13 villages have attended EP's 6 month literacy and general education programme and gained basic skills in reading, writing, numeracy, health and nutrition, horticulture and sewing. Of these over 130 have attended the newly instituted follow-on one year programme, and are asking for more.



A class in the village of Khidarpur, which joined the education programme in 2013



Craftwork training in action

Livelihood – craftwork programme

The Tijara villages have a tradition of craft work (in particular the production of quilts). In 2010 GEN launched a pilot handicrafts project by giving End Poverty £250 to buy sewing machines and materials for women and girls from Tijara villages where EP was actively engaged. The craft work project has grown significantly since then. Three handicrafts centres have been established, involving 62 women, and more are planned. The range of products produced by the women includes quilts, large and small pouches, shoulder bags, shopping bags, table cloths and cushion covers. Plans are in hand for helping the women to set themselves up as a producer company.

Village development and rural tourism

In March 2013 GEN arranged for an ecological survey of the Tijara villages, to identify the main ecological resources of the area. Two Indian experts in birds and ecology and a UK ecologist, with supporting teams from GEN and EP, spent three days collecting information on birdlife, local vegetation and land use, and historic buildings in EP's area of activity. The ecosurvey resulted in mapping of two walking trails for visitors to the area – these will be used for 'led walks' by the EP team and local volunteers. The team has also produced an informative note for visitors on historic buildings in the area, and a preliminary list of over 50 species of bird identified during the survey. A provisional start up plan for the development of rural tourism was prepared. This includes suggestions for developing village-based accommodation for visitors interested in experiencing life in a rural village in Rajasthan. One household has piloted this, and can act as a model for future visitors.



Surveying the ecology of the Tijara villages

Does our work make a difference? See what has happened to Arifan and Daslima.....



Arifan attended the pilot adult literacy class held in Ramlal ki Dhani in 2012. He was not able to get a driver's licence because he was illiterate and could not read the road signs. He finished the course and now has a driver's licence and a job as a driver!



Daslima was a fan of the girls' literacy classes from a young age. In her home village of Bhalesar she sat in on classes whenever she could, although she was also attending primary school. She has now been recruited and trained as a teacher for the latest round of classes which include Bhalesar once more. A happy young woman as you can see!

GEN's activities in the UK

Raising funds to support the work of End Poverty is one of the main activities of GEN in the UK. The two major fund-raising activities are: (i) 10 for GEN fund raising walks; and (ii) a Diwali party. During 2013 there was a series of walks which raised well over £1,000. The locations ranged from the Chilterns to Saffron Walden. The weather varied from snow to rain to bright sunshine. On 7 December GEN held a Diwali party near Cambridge. The event raised over £1,500. GEN is also supported by a number of individual donors.

THE GEN INITIATIVE LTD STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Total Funds 2013 £	Total Funds 2012 £
INCOMING RESOURCES		
Incoming resources from generating funds	22977	19091
Investment income	5	5
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TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	22982	19096
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RESOURCES EXPENDED		
Costs of generating voluntary income	290	216
Support to End Poverty	24203	24117
Governance costs	1153	2798
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TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	25646	27131
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NET INCOMING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR	-2664	-8035
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	7630	15665
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TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	4966	7630
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All movements are in Unrestricted Funds.

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the results for the year as set out above.

All of the activities of the charity are classed as continuing.

Further information about GEN and End Poverty

Further information about GEN is available on its website: www.gen-initiative.org

Further information about End Poverty (India) is available on its website: <http://www.endpovertyindia.org/>

GEN Trustees: Sue Burke (Chair), Tony Charlwood, Andrew Picken, Sunetra Puri and Shailendra Vyakarnam

Company Secretary: Colin Marsh. **Accountants:** Radbourne Management Services, Radbourne House, Butchers Lane, Pattishall, Northamptonshire.

Charity Registration No. 1101193. Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered Office: Radbourne House, Butchers Lane, Pattishall, Northamptonshire. **Registration No. 4620446.**