



A Stitch in Time

My Wife and I are both Sponsors for a child in the Village of Malkainia, through the Charity Wings for Little Minds.

We have just heard a heart warming story about one of the families a Mother and her three children who lived in the village, which we would like to share with you.

This story started when Lall Singh visited Malkainia in May 2013. He went to a typical rural village in the region of Utter Pradesh, India.

To help visualise the situation of the families living there, I would like to start with a brief description of the village.

As you can see from the picture, the village consists of huts constructed with mud mixed with cow dung and roofed with long jute grass. The streets are just flattened soil and are extremely dusty in the dry season and running with water in the wet season turning them into a quagmire.



The pictures show a brick constructed house that has the wet cow pats shaped by hand and slapped on the neighbouring brick house to dry in the sun, and a dry pile ready for use.



On the outside of this house can be seen piles of dried cow dung. These are used as fuel on the fires for cooking

. The cooking is done on an open fire in the centre of the hut on the earth floor. The smoke from the fire filters up through the roof making it hot and smelly inside with temperatures in the dry season reaching approximately 50 Degrees C.

In the Winter Season this is the only form of heat in the house. The meals are typically all vegetarian consisting of rice, vegetable curry and chapati made from home grown wheat flour, with usually one main meal in the evening.

One of the families that had been suggested as needy candidates for financial assistance from Wings For Little Minds, was Santa (pronounced Shanta) Singh and her three children, Unfortunately Santa's husband left her to cope with the family on her own and only occasionally visited them



Mother –Santa



Paro age 16



Aman age 15



Chandan age 13

The Family were approached by the Charity to establish the mother's financial situation and found that she was providing as best she could for her family, with little or no money being contributed by their Father, who had left them alone in order to find work, leaving them to cope on their own.

Paro clearly wanted to get a good education and had an ambition to become a Police Officer.

Aman wanted to have a good enough education to join the Army.

Chandan the youngest also wanted a good education and hoped to become a teacher.

It was decided that all three children should receive Funding for their schooling. There was however concern over Santa and her ability to support her children.

The following year we heard that Santa had been agonising over using the funding, as intended, to pay the fees for her three children's education to attend a private school, or to invest it in a sewing machine. She had eventually decided to use the money for the sewing machine and then set up a small business making clothes for the village. This gave sufficient money to support her and the children, whilst they continued with their free education at the Government school.

What an extremely resourceful mother Santa is, as she has achieved a long term benefit for the entire family.

This year we established that Santa and the three children had moved to another village, where they were reunited with their father, who had just got a new job and house. Hopefully this means that the family will be self sufficient and that the children will finish their education and all have the careers they desired. The funding from Wings for Little Minds is no longer needed.

This story had a completely different outcome to that expected. As stated earlier the charity had provided the funding for the children to go to a better private school however Santa had been very astute and used the money to buy a sewing machine to provide for her family.

The moral of this story is that not all plans come to fruition the way they were intended, but with the right attitude from the recipient a good outcome happens and in this case **your** donations were available just at the right time (A Stitch in Time) and with the use of money to buy a sewing machine to sew clothing for the village (A Stitch in Time), the outcome was better than could have been hoped for.

Compiled by Roy and Brenda.

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