



Big Wet a Bit Dry

Last year's wet season yielded below average rainfall throughout India and as a result water is scarcer than usual for winter. River levels are already low and as they dry up many villagers without a bore well will suffer even further hardship as they are the only source of water.



Our Regional Development Officers (RDOs) report on the progress of our water projects and the impact of sinking a bore well. The villages where we are sinking wells are extremely remote, cannot be accessed by car, have no electricity and most are without any education facilities. The size of each village varies from 20 families (90 people) to 150 families (400 people) and can have up to five different castes.

In one of these villages where we have sunk a well, the people used to drink from a polluted water source (pictured above) but thanks to our sponsors they now have a clean water supply. It has been four weeks since this bore well was sunk and, never having had clean water before, they know its life-giving value. To *conserve* the well water, they continue to go down to the river to wash their pots and pans using grey ash as a cleaning agent, then walk back to the well for the final rinse with clean water. They do not yet understand the flow of clean water from the well is long-term and fear the water will run out.

We started another well in November and it is almost near completion, ready for the cement platform. The drilling rig will now be moved to the next village to start another well.

Our second rig is in another district and will have completed that well within the next three weeks. After the drilling is finished in each village the villagers are taught basic hygiene practices. Our RDOs report the villagers are very cooperative, pay attention to the lessons and are keen to implement the practices to improve their quality of life.



We are looking to employ two additional RDOs to train and operate the rigs as well as introducing a literacy program into a third village once we find the sponsors to finance this expansion.

Our literacy classes continue – one is conducted under a tree and the other under a frame-like shed. Our teachers report that the children are progressing well with seven children being able to easily read the textbook, while the rest of the children are learning letters and numbers in preparation for the next level. The District Inspector of Education has provided our teachers with the government syllabus and in teaching the children use various methods including song, dance, stories and visual aids.



Back on the Farm

We have received a few days of solid rain, greatly assisting the farm harvest. During this time the vegetable garden produce has provided almost all of Rejoice's vegetable needs with a steady supply of cabbages, cauliflower, tomatoes, carrots, beans and spinach.

Jogesh's (one of our Mahlis) *miracle baby* is now walking and dancing, providing great joy to all. We have employed a new Mahli who has fitted-in well with our Rejoice family and is working hard helping tend the land.

Our chooks are regularly laying eggs. 100 broiler chooks have been added to our poultry farm and our native chickens have been busy – we have little chicks running around causing great amusement.



Our children's creativity is flourishing and making an impression on the local community, with one of our sponsored children

winning the district competition for drawing. Our children love their pottery classes and the teacher is making a potters wheel for Rejoice. This week they made moneyboxes and are starting to develop their skills with regular lessons. The District Inspector of Education has arranged for our three oldest boys to attend the district high school, which provides the highest standard of education than other schools within the area.

The children have also adopted a little puppy and named her Bulu. She is a welcome addition to the farm and will be a good friend for our *wonder dog* Poppy.



Jacob's Well



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A registered not-for-profit charity. ABN 65 340 113 571. Donations to approved aid development activities are tax deductible.
*If a tax receipt is required this incurs a 5% processing fee. Credit card transactions incur up to 2.7% bank fee.

Bollywood



On March 26th we are having a Bollywood Extravaganza Fundraising Dinner (please put it in your diary) and as part of the excitement we will have a Servant Auction! We already have someone who will cook a dinner for six people stepping up to the auction block. Come and join in the fun and offer yourself and your services to be auctioned on the night. Call Jan on 0410 484 090 if you are able to help and watch this space for more details.

Special Need

Abed is in need of a sponsor. One day his mother went out to collect *white soil* (material used in whitewash) and never came back. As she was scraping the *white soil*, it collapsed and buried her alive. Since then Abed's grandmother has tried to care for him. She is now too frail to work as a day labourer and unable to provide adequately for him. Please share his story with your family and friends.

To sponsor Abed please go to: http://www.jacobswell.org.au/child_sponsorship.html and click the relevant 'Sponsor a Child' button. Alternatively you can make a direct deposit into our bank account Westpac 033 112 209002 or download and complete the child sponsorship donation form http://www.jacobswell.org.au/pdfs/child_sponsorship.pdf fill in your details and send together with your payment to PO Box 680, Glen Waverley, Australia 3150. Please make cheques made payable to 'Jacob's Well India'.

Secure Online Donations

You can now make a donation, sponsor a child or sponsor a project securely – and free of bank fees – through PayPal on our website with just a few clicks. You can also use your credit card, however this will incur bank fees. Go to www.jacobswell.org.au

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