

TWINNAGE COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER No 138

May 2015

Visit to India

A routine visit to India is scheduled for January 2016 and applications are invited to be one of the four people to travel. For most of the trip this is likely to be two teams of two.



As well as enabling us to learn about their work and to make our members in England & Wales fully aware of the needs that our Indian Brothers and Sisters are addressing we have been told that our visits give them a real boost in their work.

Travel within India is likely to be by train and could sometimes include sleeper trains.

On their return visitors will be expected to prepare and submit to the Twinnage Committee a full report of the visit, concentrating on the work of the SVP in India, preferably with photographic illustrations. Ideally the report should include recommendations for the development of Twinnage activities and/or improvements to existing practice.

Those who make the visits will also be expected to give a number of talks to Conferences and Councils (and maybe to other organisations) about their visit over a period following their return and to be active in finding meetings to address.

If you are interested in making the trip please contact me for an application form. I will be away from 17th to 28th May and so forms may not be sent out until June.

Financial Update

Our year-end figures for 2014/15 show that we have sent a total of £838,755 to support the work of the Society in our twin countries. Some £135,000 of this was money from legacies but the remainder of over £700,000 was due in great part to the wonderful efforts of our Twinnage Officers and our members, grateful thanks to you all on behalf of those we serve.

Just for the record our expenses, including Helen's modest salary and our contribution to National Core Costs, were less than 3% of the money sent.

Out of office notice

Just to let you know that I will be away from 17th to 28th May and so if I do not reply to e-mails it will not necessarily be because I am ignoring you. Terry

Sudan and South Sudan

In 2014/15 the money raised from the Sudan Appeal was £234,059. This was slightly below the £250,635 we sent but still a great effort by all concerned.

The situation in Sudan has been a little difficult and most of the non-SVP funders have switched some of their support to the SVP work in South Sudan. The Society's NGO status has still not been renewed but we now understand that we are one of 40 NGOs in this situation. We have been asking for some budgets for 2015/16 and I am pleased to say that we have received a comprehensive schedule showing that baby feeding, medical care and water distribution will continue. These projects and the work of the conferences will continue regardless of the NGO status. On the basis of these figures we have agreed to fund £140,000 spread over the coming year as well as the regular support for the twins.

In South Sudan our conference members are still making regular distributions of food and essentials to those living in internally displaced people camps; peace in the North of the country sadly does not really seem to be likely in the near future. We have agreed to regularise our funding for this essential work and have allocated £40,000 for the coming year. This will mean a cut, this year, to £60,000 of our support for the excellent work being carried out by the Lulugo Vocational Training Centre but they are getting support from some of the other agencies who had been supporting the work in Khartoum.

From the numbers you will see that we are relying on the efforts of all to keep the promotion of the Sudan Appeal for the coming year.

Encouraging news is that there are 4 new conferences in and around Juba, three still looking for twins

David writes: *We at the National Twinnage Committee refer to Indian Student Sponsorship as **SCH** for short.*

The last year has been successful and a great improvement over the last few years. VTS students are now fully subscribed. VJS (Vidya Jyothi Scheme) for schoolchildren has attracted over 650 sponsorships so far. However, the number of Higher Education and Technical Training students is down and I would specifically request all TO's to promote these in their CCs as much as possible please? A momentum has been built which I am keen to keep going but I do note that there is still a number of TO's who have not promoted the SCH scheme and this is very disappointing. It is recommended that all TO's send a SCH application form to each of their Conferences and if you require any leaflets please let David know.

*We have just heard from the new National President of India that in future the annual listings of new students will be sent to us in October each year so the start of each SCH year will be from then. He also specifically requested that the need for **Continuation** Certificates is discontinued with immediate effect and this has been agreed by our NTC. However, we still require **Completion** Certificates from India.*

I am very happy to receive SCH application forms by electronic scanning and e-mail