



# One By One

Year 19 Issue 2 (Double Issue)

September 30 2019

***“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”***

**James Baldwin**

## **Positive Update to the ‘Terrible Situation’**

Last newsletter, we told you about three young girls—Ashwini, Aarti and Pooja.

The situation grew worse when their mother abandoned them. Their father ‘took care’ but when the neighbours had to rescue one of the girls who had fallen in a 3 foot hole, they forced him to change the situation.

And change he did. He has now been sober for 80 days. He reconnected with his estranged family who immediately welcomed him and the girls home.

The girls are currently staying with their aunt until their father can work hard and get a house for them.

## **Volunteer Corner—Raquel**

“When they asked me: but why India? I never knew how to answer right I think maybe it was a set of factors. The desire to do a volunteer work, with the curiosity to know the culture of the country, with the passion for yoga, with the desire to deepen more about Buddhist philosophy. The reality is that india calls you. She calls you, she makes you face everything deeper that exists in your inner self, she makes you pass perrengues but, at the same time, makes you overcome your weaknesses. India makes you feel hate and love at the same time. Makes you live with the chaos of cities, with the always raucous horn, with the crowd of people everywhere, but it also shows you a genuine look, pre-

sents you people with human and loving values difficult to find nowadays in the west. Makes you know foods you probably would never know, wear clothes you would never wear, watch and have fun with the bollywood movies you never took the trouble to watch in your life. India makes you leave your comfort zone. Think outside the box. Makes you create friends who message weekly wanting to know how you are. Makes you receive video calls in rush, work hours, to be reported that your Indian friend is getting married next year and makes a point of your presence. India makes you miss, even with all the problems and lack of comfort that

the country offers you. I would never turn to a person and say, "wow, you have to know india", as I said about Colombia, Cuba and other countries. But if someone tells me, " I want to know india ", I'm the first to encourage, " just go ", but go with open heart and mind, to enjoy the best that the country can offer you! Today is one of the days that I miss my children, my Indian friends, the colors of cities!"

**- Raquel (Brazil)**



## **Women Believing in Themselves**

Physical, emotional and sexual abuse is rampant in the communities that One! International works with; especially toward women and children.

Recently a 17 year old mother of a three year old son couldn't suffer any more and found the inner strength to leave. The situation was so bad that she was willing to risk never seeing her son again. She is scared as to how she will

find her way on her own and regain her confidence but has no regrets about her decision.

Another woman decided that after 10 years of marriage, she needed to take back control of her own life and be able to make her own decisions. She feels lighter, healthier and happier after only one month. She has no regrets and is looking forward with confidence.

With little to no social systems in place to help women

in trouble, making the decision to leave is not only emotionally difficult but practically difficult as well. The social stigma can be unbearable with daily comments and unsupportive family members. Luckily this is changing, but the change is slow.

We are extremely proud of our One! International women's community for helping each other and lifting each other up when the struggles seem insurmountable.

# The Future Generation of One!

## International Graduates



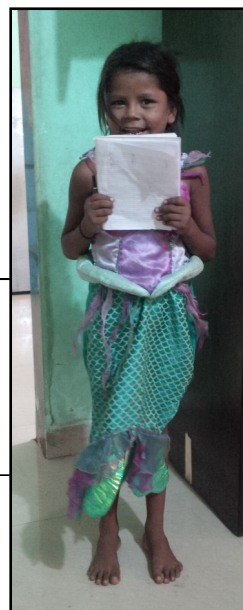
Laxmi (12): She is very creative and enjoys making things with Lego and anything else she can find. Her passion for learning how things work makes her dream of becoming an engineer make sense!

Sunny (9) : He loves to be a leader and gets along well with his team mates; two qualities which will help him reach his future goal of becoming a police officer. He has learned from his parents struggles and is determined to never drink alcohol.



Firoz (3): He loves giving everyone headaches with his morning cries. He wishes his mom could give him ALL of her attention.

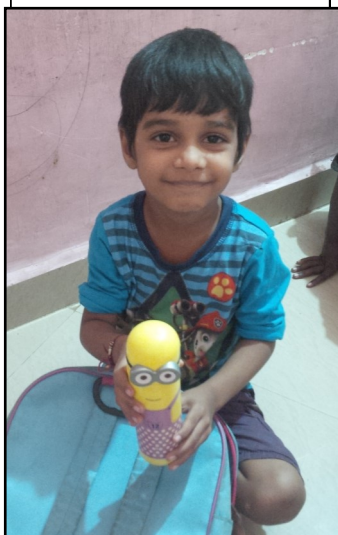
Suraj (7): He absolutely loves school and is enthusiastic about any task given to him. He loves any chance to make music and use his incredible vocabulary. He can already talk himself out of any situation. He hasn't decided what he wants to be yet when he grows up—he is keeping his options open!



Sheetal (7): She hopes she never has to take off her Little Mermaid costume that she wears to school every day, She struggles in school but still thinks that it is the best place in the world.



Armaan (12) : He loves that he was born in the digital world. He loves computers, cellphones and any other gadget that he can play games on. He has grown out of his love for WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment) and is now focused on comic book heroes and not doing his homework!.



Chandini (8) : She hopes that the situation at home will get better soon so that she can concentrate better on her studies that she loves. She also loves joking with all her friends and being a leader in the games of make-believe (usually acting as the teachers in the school!).



Isha (13): She finds school super easy and because of that gets in trouble for being a chatterbox in class. She hopes to be a scientist when she is older.



Shivani (13): She loves to come to school to escape the troubles at home. She sings and dances her way to happiness. She hopes to become a police officer and help women like her mom.



Arjun (3): He is almost always happy and likes to play with everyone. He gives the best hugs. He is struggling to get his words out, but once he starts we know that he will never stop.

Rani (5) : Enjoys playing with her classmates and loves to play group games. She loves her mom for taking such amazing care of her after her dad died.



Aakash (4): He loves colouring and can do it for hours. He hopes that his dad stops doing bad things so that his mom isn't so scared. He worries about her a lot.

Sanaiya (3): She had a difficult start to life but is growing stronger and stronger and hopes that one day she will be able to run around like her friends. She is stubborn and there is no doubt that she will reach whatever goal she sets her mind to.



Kesar (15): She is determined to become the first graduate in her family and to prove to her parents that studying is worth while. She wants to be a doctor one day and help people as much as she can. She is gentle with an inner confidence. Her smile lightens up rooms and her laughter is contagious.

Written by Tania unless otherwise mentioned.

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## Uncertain Times

A change of government in Alberta has resulted in a lack of confidence about our receiving the Grant that has assisted us in the last several years. At more than 13% of our annual revenue, it has been crucial to enable us program sustainability. We will not know until the end of October. We have cut back on expenditures but are incredibly lucky to have a family of donors who support the work in India. Volunteer Yash (South Africa) is working hard to find us other grant opportunities. We are hopeful that her efforts will bear fruit.

## Volunteer Extra—Chloe Returns!

“One! International is really where my heart lies. I loved this recent trip (my second) because I got to build stronger friendships with all of the staff members and kids. As well, teaching my own classes was a valuable lesson for me personally and it gave me the freedom to get to know the children on a one-to-one level. I am already planning my next trip!”  
- *Chloe (Canada, 17)*



## Chetna—10 Years of Growth

There is no better person that exemplifies our upcoming gala theme than Chetna—Change Adds Up.

With every year, month and day, Chetna absorbed all of what was around her to become the incredible woman that she is today.

Her incredible work ethic, superb organizational skills and fantastic accounting have made her irreplaceable. Luckily, she has made her lifelong commitment and dedication to One! International clear and so we will never have to replace her!

Through every struggle in her personal and professional life, she has taken them as opportunities to grow. Through this honesty of her weaknesses and determination to make them strengths, she has been an incredible role model for all of our students—especially the girls.

Her hard-work, open mind and universal acceptance crosses all barriers—wealth, caste, religion, gender. She treats all children, staff and volunteers like family members—true to the One! International environment. We are extremely lucky to have Chetna as part of our team and look forward to all the change that she will be a catalyst for in the future.



## A Tribute to Lisbeth

In this throwback photo from 2004, Lisbeth (from Australia) volunteered for the first time. Within days, her hard-working and loving nature shone through and is still—even though we



had had more than 300 volunteers—the best volunteer One! International has ever had.

Lisbeth has volunteered 7 times for more than 20 months in all. She takes on the

full gamut of tasks from administration to teaching to, sometimes the most important, playing with the children. Her dedication and love and commitment to being on the ground in Mumbai always boosts our strength to continue fighting the day-to-day challenges.

In 2010, Lisbeth joined the One! International Board of Directors. Her meticulous nature was a boon and a needed asset and we were lucky to have her on the board for 9 years. She could always be counted on to ask the best and most difficult questions—the ones that needed careful consideration and answering. She ensured we were following the intended path.

Lisbeth has resigned from the board and will be sorely missed. She will be an instrumental member of the One! International family forever and we hope to see her on the ground in Mumbai soon!

ONE! INTERNATIONAL PRESENTS

**CHANGE ADDS UP!**

2020 Gala Celebration

FIRDAY JANUARY 31ST 2020  
5PM COCKTAILS & SILENT AUCTION  
6PM DINNER & PROGRAM  
MIRAGE BANQUET HALL