

# Progress Report

## Punarbali Plus

1<sup>st</sup> July to 31<sup>th</sup> Dec, 2015



Punarbali Plus

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## 1. General Information

Project Title	Punarbal Home
Project Location(s)	KarkhanaChowk, Swoyambu, Kathmandu
Dates of Reporting Period	1 <sup>st</sup> July to 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2015
Organization's Name	Punarbal Plus
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Website	<a href="http://www.Punarbalplus.org">www.Punarbalplus.org</a>
Donations Received (July 15 to Dec 31, 2015)	US\$20,000 (US\$ 10,000 Croisier Foundation and US\$ 10,000 Mrs. Sylvie Nahum)

## 2. Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of project activities for the Punarbal Home for the period of 1<sup>st</sup> Jan to 1<sup>st</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2015. This report is submitted to the **Stephane –Guy Croisier Foundation** and **Mrs. Sylvie Nahum** as part of the reporting compliance. Both the donors have been funding the Punarbal Home since January 2015 for a period of 12 months. This report demonstrates not only the activities that Punarbal has undertaken in order to support the children in the Home but how Punarbal has attempt to address the issue of discrimination facing infected/affected orphans in Nepal.

The organization was able to continue operations with the generous funding from the **Stephane –Guy Croisier Foundation**, Mrs. Nahum and other donors. This report demonstrates the range of activities undertaken in this reporting period.

## 3. Background

HIV infected people in Nepal still face discrimination every day due to stigmatization. Children are expelled from schools and are not given opportunities for education. Often they come from poor families; having lost one or both parents they don't have access to healthy food, medicine or proper clothing. Sensing the urgency of the issues and the need to act quickly, in May 2007 Punarbal Plus established a school "Punarbal Shikashya Sadan" to provide educational and nutritional support for the infected and affected and orphaned children.

The school started with 31 students. However, soon after opening the school, Punarbal Plus realized the importance integrating infected children as people started stigmatizing the school as the school for the infected children only. Therefore, in the following year, children from deprived families, orphans and conflict affected children were also admitted. This was the first step of the organization towards integration. The benefits of this process were numerous. The school started making its identity as a "normal" school again. Infected children who once lived in isolation now had the opportunity to play and interact with other children. This had positive impact on their behavior. It provided opportunities to children who were disadvantaged and had not been able to attend school previously. AT that stage, the school only supported children within the Kathmandu Valley.

The demand for admission for HIV affected and infected children/orphans started pouring in from remote parts of Nepal. Admission for any of those children also meant the need for a place to live. Hence, in November 25, 2009, Punarbal Plus initiated "Punarbal Home", a care and support center for those children who had nowhere else to go due to prevailing discrimination. "**Punarbal Home**" now houses 27 needy children who, without support, would probably live a life of extreme poverty and discrimination.

## 4. Project Activities

The reporting period has proved a challenging time for Punarbal Plus due to limited funding. The decision was made to close the school for this year and instead work with local schools to integrate the children. This had always been the goal for Punarbal – to close the school once the community was ready to overcome discrimination and allow infected children to study in

local schools. This was a real achievement brought about by a range of interaction awareness programs (please refer to see 4.2). The children at Punarbal School (not residents of the Home) have been assisted with nearby orphanage schools. Punarbal plans to recommence the school in March 2015.

#### 4.1 Overview of children

Currently there are 27 children in total at the Punarbal Home - 22 children are infected and 16 receive anti-retroviral treatment. Till date 27 children have been integrated into other schools. Apart from education and care, the children are receiving medical, nutritional support, yoga and counseling. Punarbal Plus ensures that its children receive a better education in a stigma free environment.

##### *New Admission*

Two Brothers (6 and 10years old) arrived on Jan 26<sup>th</sup> 2015 and both are HIV positive. Both Parents died one year ago. Both boys are currently in the Punarbal home. Deepak is 6 years old and Pranil is 10 years old. A new updated report will be sent out about their history, using ART. From time to time Grant's parents visit with them, and they meet with relatives only once a year due to poverty, stigma and discrimination that are with them. Both children are in nursery. One will be here for 12 years and the other will be here for 8 years with Punarbal home.



#### 4.2 Fund Raising program

There are two fund raising program for HIV AIDS infected kids which have been organized by orphan kids that were pass out from different orphanages. The names of the fun raising organizations are, Hope Dance School and Sisterhood Organization. Our target is to raise awareness with the public about HIV and AIDS through the cultural programs. Our slogan is “Zero Tolerance, Zero HIV” and the children have publicized this message through a dance recital they performed to our national show.

#### 4.3 Education

In July the children had their terminal exams. One of the children from class 1 got the prize for cleanliness and good behavior in class. And two children scored first position in the terminal exams. The two children were Bharat Tamata from class 6 and Jeevan Saud from class 10. The remaining children have done satisfactory in this terminal. They were unable to perform their best due to the recent



earthquake causing them to suffer severe mental trauma. At present

- Two boys are studying in grade Ten;
- Five children in grade Seven;
- Five children in grade six;
- Three boy in grade Four;
- Two children in grade two.
- Two children in grade one.
- Three in Nursery.
- One girl is going training

#### 4.4 Extracurricular activities

##### 4.4.1. Children´s Day

On National Children day, Central Child Welfare Board (CCWB) had organized the program for the children on the 11<sup>th</sup> of August. Children from different organizations had performed there and we also participated. By looking at the situation of the country, we chose the national anthem to perform the dance to.



##### 4.4.2 Celebrating Festivals (Dashain and Tihar)

This festival is a big festival for Hindus in which we share happiness with our family. We receive Tikka to obtain blessings from our elders. Before the earthquake in April, the children's relatives did not contact them. However because of the earthquake their relatives were concerned and therefore during this festival period, the children went to stay with their relatives for one month.

##### 4.4.3 Warm clothes for winter

During the winter seasons in Nepal, the temperatures get quite low. Due to this, we find it imperative that the children have warm blankets and beds for the cold nights, so as to prevent any weakening of their immune systems through illnesses such as the common cold.

For this to be possible, we buy some cotton and new covers, and as well as using the old materials, we make new blankets and pillows for the children.



## 5. Health and wellbeing

Punarbal Plus is committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing for all children at the Home. This means that in addition to general nutrition, a range of activities, access to medical facilities including medication and regular checkups, plays an important role in the program.



### 5.1 Overview of Health

According to our health chart ARV user LFT (Liver function test), one child has a liver problem and doctors suggested that we should change his ARV regime. He now has a second line medication.

The HIV test is done twice a year. The CD4 test was done in June 2015 and then again in Dec 2015. The CD4 report showed maximum 1600 and minimum 160. Among them we have 22 HIV positive children right now, with 16 children taking the ARV medication.

One of the boys had a pancreas infection and was admitted to hospital for three days, he has made full recovery.

Due to the CD4 being low at 392 (normal is 500), we could not do Bharat's throat operation. This is third time the operation has been postponed. In three months, we will again check his CD4, if it is higher, than we can arrange a new date for his operation.

### 5.2 Nutrition and Meal Plan

Below outlines the weekly meal planner and nutrition intake.

Day	Breakfast (7am)	Lunch (9:30am)	Snacks (2pm)	Dinner (6:30pm)
Sunday	Milk, roti, egg	Rice,dal,veg & salad	Fruits, Biscuit	Rice,dal,green veg & salad
Monday	Milk, bread, egg	Rice,dal,veg & salad	Gram, Beaten rice	Rice,dal,green veg & salad
Tuesday	Milk, biscuit, egg	Rice,dal,veg & salad	Gram, Beaten rice	Rice,dal,green veg & salad
Wednesday	Milk, bread, egg	Rice,dal,veg & salad	Noodles,	Rice,dal,meat & salad
Thursday	Milk, biscuit, egg	Rice,dal,veg & salad	Gruel(Jaulo),	Rice,dal,green veg & salad
Friday	Milk, biscuit, egg	Rice,dal,veg & salad	Fruits, Bread	Rice,dal,green veg & salad
Saturday	Milk, bread, egg	Rice,dal,veg & salad	noodles	Rice,dal,meat & salad

### 5.3 Counseling

Children at Punarbal have faced such challenging circumstances often after losing both their parents and facing serious illness themselves. This means that we come to Punarbal with deep emotional scars. Counseling is one of the best methods which can be used to reduce or remove these scars which can cause them to feel sad, isolated, maladjusted or mentally stressed.

Once a week, a counseling session is conducted especially for the HIV infected/affected and orphan children by a counselor from Punarbal. The first three months focused on the counselor building a rapport with the children to gain their trust and then commenced individual and group sessions.

The Counselor found adjustment problem and some behavioral problems such as teasing, cruelty, timidity, aggressiveness, lying, fighting with siblings, creating disturbance, complaining to others, bragging, bed wetting. After counseling sessions, positive changes have been noted in some children. It has helped the children to share their feelings, loneliness, hatred, interest, pain, and sorrows. This has created positive/favorable atmosphere for the Punarbal family to understand children psychology. Children are slowly adapting to the new environment and developing pro-social tendencies.

- **Key Objectives of counseling:** To provide psychosocial support; enable the children to feel good about them; to enable the child to change behaviors that has negative consequences.
- **Key Strategy:** psychosocial support to the vulnerable children to reduce their psychological issues using a child centered approach; involve children in a range of fun activities and health education; help the children learn and practice new behaviors.
- **Key Impacts:** the children will be more able to access education in a stigma free environment; improved self-confidence and the ability to share their problems without hesitation.

#### 5.4 Yoga classes

From June 2013, Patanjali Ayurveda Kendra Pvt Ltd has been providing Punarbal Home one yoga teacher every day for one hour. Yoga is known to be good for increasing the immune system. Before starting the yoga classes, we could frequently see around five children getting sick every week. After doing yoga every day there are less children getting sick.



#### 6. Staff

Punarbal's kitchen staff Ms. Mina has left, so now we have new staff member, Ms. Anita. In December, the nursing staff also left, and from January onwards, a new staff, Ms. Sujata Karki, will join Punarbal Home. She has done her Bachelors in Nursing.

#### 7. Finances

Punarbal received US\$10,000 each from **Stephane –Guy Croisier Foundation** and **Mrs. Sylvie Nahum** each. These funds ensured that the Home could continue to support the 27 children by undertaking the activities as described above. A detailed expenditure of the six month will be sent separately by mid-February 2016.

In addition to the finances provided by **Stephane –Guy Croisier Foundation and Mrs. Nahum**, Punarbal relies on individual donors that sponsor a child or the Home for a day. This was launched in 2013 and Punarbal is still working hard with the local community to secure sufficient sponsorship.

The individual supporters are:

- Olivia
- Garry & Sydne Bargh
- Mortiz Matteus
- Julia & Dominik
- Renata Lepok

Resources are also supplied through international volunteers who provide assistance through work experience. The Home also assists volunteers with a home stay arrangement. During this period, Punarbal had eight volunteers from three different countries: America, Australia and Germany.

**Networking:** Coordination with government, hospital, stakeholder, CBOs organization and Child care home network (CNET) and SOS BAL Gram.

## 8. Key challenges

Punarbal Plus faces a number of challenges to the project. These include the following:

- Due to India's unclaimed economic blockade, it has been very difficult to manage fuel for cooking as well as for transportation. Life of people living in Nepal is becoming miserable. Punarbal has to use fire wood to cook meals rather than with gas stove. Also, due to lack of electricity (every day 10 to 15 hours of load shedding) has made it even more difficult.
- Though Punarbal is taking care of the children till they reach the age of 18. However, for those children who don't even have relatives are requesting to let them stay till they reach the age of 21. This will help the children to build the confidence and face the world outside.
- Difficult to find suitable work after the basic skills training. Therefore, effort is being made to raise fund so that the children can have few months of advance training as well.
- Hospitals & Stakeholder organizations are requesting Punarbal to open **transit home** for the Children infected/affected by HIV/ AIDS (CABA). Major cases of HIV from district hospitals are transferred to Kathmandu for further treatment. This will help them with a place to stay in Kathmandu when they come for medication. For follow up cases the infected children and their guardians do not have place to stay during the period. Besides, majority of the people are from the poor family background and therefore cannot afford to stay in guest house.

## 9. Future plans

Despite the above challenges, Punarbal is deeply committed to addressing the discrimination and injustice faced by infected/affected orphans and people in general in Nepal.

- To make a separate home girls and boys from 2016 January
- Transit home run for HIV/AIDS children
- Interaction with health person (doctor and nurse)
- Public awareness about stigma and discrimination
- Integrate the grown up children in skills training and link them to employment

## Conclusion

Though there are many obstacles during this period such as economic blockade imposed by India and earthquake, Punarbal was able to provide service to the children efficiently. Punarbal is grateful to the donors for providing funding so that Punarbal could continue its work in taking care of the vulnerable children and ensuring these children remains healthy and happy. We look forward to continuing the work we are doing and hopefully expanding to meet the demands necessary to provide greater assistance to women and children facing discrimination in Nepal.