

# The East Sheen Chengannur Trust

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NEWSLETTER No. 97

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Welcome to our latest newsletter which will also be available to view on our website.

## KERALA FLOODS

As most of our supporters will know there was serious flooding in and around Chengannur in August. For a few days we were out of touch with our Project Manager Jacob his family and friends. However they were quickly moving to assess and aid our many sponsored families and other local people. They've since been working to help as many people as possible to recover from the damage. Fortunately none of our sponsored families lost their lives but most were badly affected by the water, many losing their possessions or suffering damage to their homes.

Details of our initial response to the floods were given in our special flood newsletter (number 96) and if you didn't see this it is available on our website or by post on request.

**We have an emergency fund which was available to Jacob straight away and we also opened a Flood Appeal and we're delighted to say that this has reached a total of nearly £10,000.**

What Jacob has done, after initial emergency sanitary and food distribution, is concentrate on giving out necessary items to as many people as possible, concentrating on our sponsored families but also helping others where possible. He has supplied numerous wooden beds, mattresses, food processors (called mixis), single plate electric induction cookers, water pumps, saucepans, food containers, cutlery, crockery, clothes and other small household items. The medium term help may go more to repairing homes, wells and facilities.



A typical scene is shown in this photo of household items set out to dry in the sun after being washed. This is the house of one of our sponsored families, Aksha Mol (No 205)

**One of our sponsored families (No 142) wrote the following letter to their sponsor and it gives a good idea of the experience of so many people:**

*"By now you must have heard and be aware that almost the whole of Kerala was affected by devastating flood. We are yet to recover from that shock. On the midnight of Aug. 15<sup>th</sup> which was also our Independence day at 2.30 AM we had to flee for our lives due to rising waters gushing past everything. The house of ours that you visited was flooded with 3 to 4 feet of gushing water. We were almost neck deep in water and practically had to swim for safety. We stayed in a relative's house for almost 13*

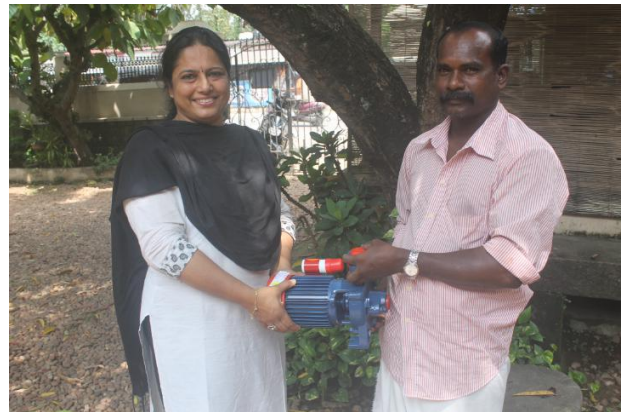
days. When we returned on the 27<sup>th</sup> August, we had practically lost everything. Every Penny that my mother had saved ever since our father left us, the money that you help us with and all the little savings she had from doing catering work with a women's team, she used to buy new house equipments every Onam. Seeing all those little luxuries loose in front of our very own eyes and the sight of my mother's helpless and heart breaking crying almost tore us apart. It was beyond what we could bear. We possibly cannot buy back everything. We had collected all these over a period of 14 years almost.

We had to wash using Detol all the furniture and sofa sets and dried them in the sun for reuse, things that we cannot afford to buy again. We lost TV, fridge and the water pump. We managed to repair the TV and fridge under a free service scheme. From various kits received through churches, organizations and others we got provisions and some clothes. So there was no dearth for food.

Our relatives thought we were lost or so and posted pictures of us in their Facebook pages and searched a lot for us in the rising waters then. They were relieved to find us alive!"

### **We're continuing to help but here are just a three examples of what we've done so far:**

Stonemason Madhu was given a small half horse power water pump when his house was submerged in the floods. He is the one who helped us build Aparna's (155) house



We also helped Usha and Udhaya, two ladies from a nearby village affected by floods, with two food processors (mixis) costing about £40 each. This is a common feature in all Indian kitchens used to grind rice, vegetables etc.



Ayana (Sponsored No. 151) currently doing a degree course in engineering in Chengnnur was given a wooden bed (they call them cots) and foam mattress. About four aunts of hers who are



neighbours whose houses also got submerged were given mattresses (£16 each). We managed to give all of them pillows too.

### **DONATIONS**

**If you feel you can help with a donation for one of our projects please send any amount to us however big or small;**

- Cheques can be sent to the address above.
- You can send by bank transfer direct to our Lloyds Bank account number 61385660 Sort Code 77-91-48
- or you can pay by Paypal and debit or credit card by clicking on the Donations tab on our website.

**You're welcome to specify where you would like the money spent. We have Flood, Building, Education, Hungry (food aid) funds and a General & Emergency Fund. If you don't specify we'll put it in the latter.**

**Thank you very much to everyone who has generously contributed to our Flood Appeal and other causes during the year. We wish you all a very Happy Christmas.**