# MiriamDeanFund

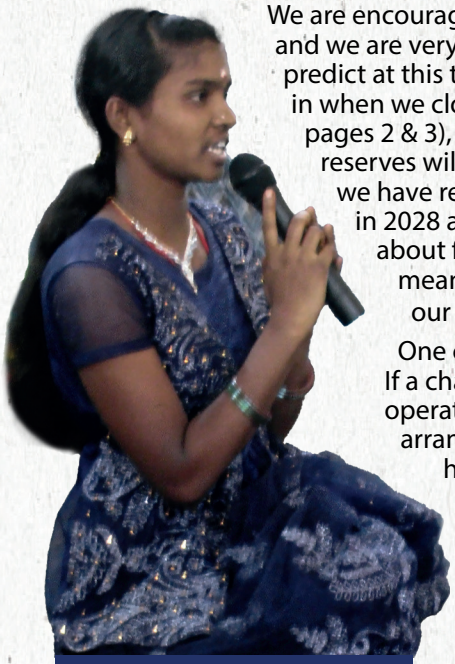
Summer Newsletter 2026

## Dear Friends,

## Towards Wind Up

**We would like to start by thanking those of our readers who got in touch following the announcement of our plan to wind up the Fund. As you may have gathered from the last Newsletter, it was not an easy decision to make with an awareness of the impact it would have on our partners and their work.**

There is a good deal of sadness, which of course, we share, but we are heartened by the general recognition of the inevitability of the step. This was in conversation, for example when we visited our friends at West End URC (Newcastle), and amongst supporters whom we meet in other contexts. We also received letters and e-mails with the same message, some of which went on to mention connections with Miriam and Trevor & Val (about which more inside).



*Recitation from memory by RUADT pupil (Feb25)*

We are encouraged by pledges to continue regular donations, and we are very grateful for this intent. One thing we cannot predict at this time is what state the Fund's finances will be in when we close in 2028. In making grants to partners (see pages 2 & 3), we have tried to give them an indication. Our reserves will enable us to send similar sums next year, but we have removed guarantees that would have applied in 2028 and accompanied that with a note of caution about final grants. So, continuing donations may mean that we can be more positive; both we and our partners would be delighted about that.

One consideration has been about legacies. If a charity nominated in a Will has ceased to operate, executors are obliged to make alternative arrangements. You may wish to consider this if you have been kind enough to make the Fund a beneficiary. Could we make a suggestion? Would you consider making a donation while we are still in being, replacing the legacy?

We are making plans for how to disburse any excess funds when we close, and we will return to that next time.

**An audio version of this Newsletter is on our website.**

## Video Calls and Grants

**Video calls have become a good way of keeping up with partners; in the spring, we indicate what grants they may expect and get ideas for "one-off" items. When budgeting, we found that movements in exchange rates gave us the opportunity to supplement funds for running costs. Here is a brief summary of calls in February and the outcome on grants sent in April.**

## AHM Trust (Bodinyakanur, Tamil Nadu)

Babu was joined on the call by Renata Desai who had co-founded AHM with her late husband. Their wide range of activities (clinic, hostels, training courses etc.) were thriving. We know that the leaders of their departments are never at a loss for items they need, and we were delighted this year to be able to send nearly £5k for medical equipment, computers, cooking vessels, a farm trailer and other items. Running costs will be funded to the tune of ~£20k.

## CODI (Nairobi, Kenya)

We had seen Nicholas & Agnes in November (report last time), so we knew how things were and what the requests might be. We have sent funds to meet set-up costs for three pairs of barbers across the Kawangware area. A motorcycle that Nicholas had used for supporting the barbers had been stolen, and after challenging him about how a repeat could be prevented, we agreed to fund a replacement. Adding minor items, the total was £2.6k, and running costs totalled £14.5k.

## Loaves & Fishes Network (East London, South Africa)

Pateka had been in touch in December with a plea for an early transfer to overcome a cash-flow crisis. We were happy to oblige, but concerned to learn that Pateka remained anxious about the outcome of other grant applications. We had seen the great work L&FN is doing during our visit in November, and so we decided to supplement the supplement! We have sent £19k in total this year.

## DEEPAM (Vathalagundu, Tamil Nadu)

Sr Arul Sudha who is now running DEEPAM was joined on the call by Sr Hilaria and others. The proposal for this year's after-school classes, aimed at fostering leadership skills, had been sent to us in January, so we were quickly able to reassure them that we would cover those costs which included computer and CCTV equipment. Nearly £24k will provide for over 1700 pupils in some 80 centres around Vathalagundu.



*After-school class run by DEEPAM*

## Jeevan Jyothi Hospice (Theni, Tamil Nadu)

Sr Stella told us of plans to celebrate their 25th anniversary next year, and with Sr Anastasia alongside her, declared that she has become known as the Mother Teresa of Theni! Sadly, Anastasia has subsequently been very poorly. All was well at the hospice. They had sent an account of expenditure last year (which we had been unable to fund fully), but this time, with supplements, we have been able to cover the nearly £23k requested.

## Holy Cross Special School (Mannackanad, Kerala)

We had two calls with Sr Bobby Paul and others in quick succession. Firstly, we joined in the celebration of 25 years since the School had been founded and supported by the Fund. Huge numbers had gathered, and we were able to "tour" the party. In the second call, we got down to business. The requests were similar to last year: materials to enable older handicapped pupils to make umbrellas and decorations and a cow to add to the livestock. Those came to nearly £5k, to be added to £12k for running costs.

## RUADT (Bodinyakanur, Tamil Nadu)

Murugan and his daughter Bahrani joined us and gave an encouraging account of work at the five schools for the mentally handicapped now run by RUADT. They were still seeking to replace the elderly bus which fetches the pupils, and we have made a further contribution to that. A total of £24.4k has been sent.

## Others

A snippet in the last newsletter reported a one-off gift for a bus to the Special School in Maski, Karnataka where Sr Rani Joe (previously at Mannackanad) is now leading. Here is the promised picture.

We continue to send forward sponsorship money received from three supporters to the Tibetan Homes Foundation in northern India.




*Sr Rani and others with the Maski bus*

## Memories of Miriam and the Past

On the front cover we mention the messages we received after the announcement of closure. There was a lovely letter from Margaret Pearson, and we asked if we could use extracts.

"I first heard about Miriam's refugee work when I was in the sixth form of school in 1963 … I went with my parents to visit Miriam at her home … and saw her packing room filled with the 22lb sacks of clothing (always including some chocolate) and baby layettes waiting to be posted to East Africa, Algeria, India etc. at a cost of approximately £7. I was inspired to enlist, studied German at evening class, and Miriam arranged for me to volunteer at the children's home in southern Austria during my gap year between school and university. This was a valuable experience for me, and I kept up correspondence with one of the ladies there right up to her death in 2020. From then I received Miriam's "Thanksgiving Reports" (which I was prompted to re-read) learning about Mrs Siksek and her four Homes of Mercy in Bethlehem, about Brother James Kimpton, RTU and the Miriam Children's Village, about Mary Taring, who had once been a Tibetan Princess, but fled with the Dalai Lama and founded the Tibetan Homes Foundation in northern India".

Others wrote: "one of my earliest childhood memories was packing outgrown clothes into boxes in the late 1950s to send to Miriam at Watcombe". "My mother supported the Fund in the early days and we have continued the tradition".

Each message expresses sadness but understanding and thanks for what has been achieved.

Do you have memories of earlier involvement with Miriam, Trevor & Val or the Fund which we could share in our remaining newsletters? We would love to hear from you.



*Parcels and team at Miriam's home - Watcombe*

## Snippets

**We have mentioned in previous Newsletters the connection with Reaching the Unreached (RTU), the creation of Bro James Kimpton, in Tamil Nadu. RTU in the UK (www.rtu.org.uk) is the primary fundraiser for RTU(I) and also supports our partners Jeevan Jyothi and RUADT. Following Trevor's lead, Andy has been a board-member of RTU(UK) for some years. This helps information to flow between the two charities on items of mutual interest, and of course, RTU(UK) has been briefed on our wind up plans.**

One thing we are investigating as we approach wind up is archiving the information (in both paper and electronic form) that has accumulated. It doesn't appear that there is a specific national archive for charities, and at the moment the Berkshire Records Office looks most likely. If anyone has experience of this or a suggestion to make, we would be glad to hear from you.

Advance notice, especially for those local to Newbury, that we will be engaging in a Coffee Morning at St Nicolas Church on 8 October between 1000 and noon. It would be great to see you there, and if you can offer to help or provide some cakes that would be a real bonus. We will send out reminders by e-mail to local supporters nearer the time.

Small print: We are sending you this newsletter because you have indicated your consent, or you have previously donated to us. You can change your consent by contacting us. We promise to keep your details securely and will never pass them to a third party.

MiriamDeanFund

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## About the Fund

**We are a small charity, founded in the late 1940s, when it operated out of Miriam Dean's home.**

We reach overseas to some of the world's poorest people in partnership with established local groups, providing financial resources to turn their ideas into a positive reality. Our partners work in: physical & mental disability; education & training; health and the elderly. We are in touch with them regularly.

At home, we aim to maintain personal contact with our supporters, hoping to make the Fund feel like an extended family.

We do all this voluntarily. We have no staff or premises and minimal expenses (covered by income from funds awaiting allocation), so that we can send overseas every penny given to us in donations. This year that will be around £150k.

Miriam wrote in the early days of her recognition that she could "lift only tiny corners of human suffering". We accept that today but still feel motivated to follow where she led.

## Postscript

We truly feel humbled by your wonderful response to our announcement of the Fund's closure in 2028. We are warmed by your words and encouraged that there is still much to play for and many lives that may be changed by the love and care of the Miriam Dean Family. The question "What would Miriam have done now?" rings in our ears and of course the answer is quite clear: "Trust and act with the confidence that what you aim for can be achieved". And so this is our aim.

Our trusting desire is that each partner will be well funded up to the time of our closure and will be enabled to continue beyond that time, providing the life-saving, life-changing roles that have already made such a difference to so many. Beyond that we hope that you, our supporters and our friends, will be there with us on this journey!

With love,

Sheila, Andy, Jenny and Robert