



Hanaru



Hanaru Women's Health Fundraising Inc
Annual Report 2023 - 2024



Acknowledgement of Land

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work, and we pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the culture and dreams of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continual relationship with the land and we recognise the importance of the young people, who are the future leaders.

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Welcome

By Mic Julien

This has been a year of consolidation for the Hanaru Project. The Project Ambassadors continued to visit underprivileged areas and to distribute our reusable, environmentally friendly sanitary napkins to school girls.

New workshops have been set up in West Bengal, in and near Kolkata, where the napkins are made.

Fund raising tours took Australians to India and Japan. In India we visited some of the slum areas and met some of the Ambassadors. Many thanks to our generous donors.

Our website has been revamped and looks great. Many thanks to Lizzie and Richard. There is lots of information about The Hanaru Project and it is very easy to navigate. Have a look at hanaru.org.au.

Kayoko gave talks and lectures to students in High Schools and universities in India and in Japan to raise awareness of the plight of many young women in India when they enter their menstrual cycle. Often toilet facilities are not available at schools, and during their period many women are culturally ostracized. All of this leads to many young women dropping out of school, and so the poverty cycle continues. Educating young people may help change attitudes and help end the educational poverty cycle that follows puberty for some girls.

By providing reusable, highly absorbent, environmentally friendly sanitary napkin to underprivileged girls, and through education of both girls and boys, we hope to encourage some of the girls, that would otherwise drop out of school, to continue their education. This will increase their chances of improving their social and economic future status.



Charity Founder in India

Kayoko's time in India
September 2023
February/March 2024



Priyanka and Kayoko getting the napkin packs ready for distribution.



Meeting Ambassadors in Delhi

Kayoko returned to Delhi, Kolkata and Himachal Pradesh, and went to new places where she could introduce Hanaru's charity work.

In Delhi, she spent time with ambassadors Priyanka, Pooja, and Pooja G and accompanied them to slums where they continued distributing the napkin packs.

They returned to the Lal Bangh and met with girls in the community centre run by a local non-governmental organisation. The girls had been using the napkins for a while and gave very positive feedback about the softness of the material and lack of leaking.

The other distributions Kayoko did with the Ambassadors in Delhi are featured on our Ambassador pages.



Delhi slums



Some homes can only be accessed up narrow ladders (pictured left).



Conditions in Delhi's slums

In this annual report, we wanted to take a more in-depth look at the living conditions of families in the slums where we are distributing the packs of napkins.

Overall conditions are very cramped and many residents cook outside their homes. Many homes are just one room with families of up to 8 living there, Many homes don't have windows, toilets or water taps.



Charity Founder in India

Kayoko's time in India

Delhi slums

Slum visit

Kayoko wanted to learn more about life in the slums so Priyanka organised for them to meet with families of girls who had received napkins. In fact, they were overrun with invitations from families, happy to share their way of life. They invited Kayoko into their homes and were happy for her to take photos of where they lived.

In many homes, the living conditions were too cramped for photos to show the living conditions.



Bawana Colony



"The garbage gives them an income to buy food for their family. No one in Delhi wants the garbage but them. Just one word to describe it – Unreal!"



Bawana is a resettlement colony located northwest of the national capital of Delhi. It houses more than 9,000 families in five main blocks. Most of the colony's original inhabitants are families whose slums were forcibly evicted by the government from the central area of the city over 10 years ago.

Kayoko, Priyanka, and Chika a visiting volunteer from Japan were stunned to see this slum, Even though Priyanka has been to many slums she was still taken aback by the conditions here.

Kayoko writes: *"Their houses are located on the lower land from a man-made channel. It is obvious that if it rained heavily, they would be underwater. The channel was full of rubbish but some water flowed through it."*

The girls who walked with us along the river bank (pictured right) astonished us when they proudly told us that the river was clean and that they swam there in the summer.

There was a large group ready to welcome us including the girls, their mothers, sisters, aunties and boys from the neighbourhood who were curious to discover what was happening in their colony. Two community lady helpers also welcomed us."



Charity Founder in India

Kayoko's time in India

Bawana Colony

A home in Delhi's slums

"After the distribution of Hanaru napkins, they invited us to their homes to have chai and talk with them. They were proud that they had their sweet homes. The home in the photos below was much larger than some I went in and the family was happy for me to take photos

It was getting dark when we decided to leave. So many girls with bright smiles followed us to the bridge and kept saying to us, "Bye-bye, come again." As we were leaving small trucks brought more garbage to add to the huge piles already there.

Such life! Such conditions! As an observer, I can only hope for their well-being and happiness. In times like this, we face the harsh reality, that our help can only improve a small portion of their lives."



Toilets

Many of the slum homes don't have a tap or a toilet and residents bring water into their homes in containers. The photo to the left shows where the girls of one family wash their napkins. Two of the homes which Kayoko went into did have toilets and a tap (pictured right).



Training

Murshidabad, West Bengal

In our last report, we wrote that Kayoko went to Murshidabad, a remote village, a six-hour drive north of Kolkata. She had been invited there to meet a group of women who were interested in making our sanitary napkins. Unfortunately, Rafi, the tailor who was going to manage the program, became ill. So, this area is temporarily on hold, and we will reevaluate making napkins there in 2024/5.



West Bengal

Hanaru has opened two in rural West Bengal where women have started making napkins. Kayoko was invited to present training workshops in Kolkata, Medinapur, and Diamond Harbour (originally known as Hajipur). The presentations started with an introduction to Hanaru's work, mission and objectives. Beautiful vegetarian lunches were provided, and Kayoko found that sharing food was an excellent way to get to know the women better. After lunch, the women were more relaxed about asking questions about the finer details of stitching.



Kolkata Workshop

Kayoko held a one-day workshop in Kolkata for women from different areas of West Bengal to learn how to make napkins. A friend provided space at his business and sewing machines.



Medinapur

Medinapur, on the Bay of Bengal is a 3-4 hour drive from Kolkata. Kayoko was invited there by Sumit (pictured right) and his daughter Megha who set up for eight women to learn to make napkins.

Sumit kindly organised 8 women who are skilled in stitching and interested in making Hanaru sanitary napkins.



Training



Diamond Harbour Workshop

Diamond Harbour, in the Ganges Delta, is a 2-3 drive from Kolkata. Tukai organised the workshop for Rajesh, his friends, and neighbours to learn how to make napkins.



Rajesh

Rajesh has studied everything involved with making the napkins from Kayoko, matching her very high quality in stitching and finishing. He now organises the fabric distribution to the women who make them, overseas quality control and ensures all the packs are ready for distribution. He can train more women in the future. He is pictured right with his wife Ambika and son Ishan.



We'd like to introduce you to a few of the women who have started making the napkins in West Bengal, and we've included their thoughts about starting work with Hanaru.

Kamala Das

Age: 40

Children: 2 sons 12 and 6 years old.

"It's fulfilling to know that my work is contributing to a solution that supports Eco-friendly practices and women's health."



Soma Das

Age: 44

Children: 2 Girl-22yrs Boy- 10yrs

"I feel encouraged and valued. Working here and receiving a salary has boosted my confidence and motivation to keep contributing my best."



Dipali Das

Age: 32

Children: 2 girls 14 years and 1 year old.

"I feel really positive about it. I am glad to work on a product that has a meaningful impact on both the environment and people's lives."



Celebrating Hanaru's first distribution in Southern West Bengal



The event was reported in one of the Hindi newspapers.

किशोरियों के बीच रियूजेबल सैनिटरी पैड मुफ्त में वितरित

दबंग हिन्दू संवाददाता

धनबाद। हानारु नामक समाजिक संस्था की ओर से पुरुलिया जिले के अयोध्या पहाड़ के समीप सीतारामपुर गांव में समारोह का आयोजन किया गया, जिसमें 82 किशोरियों के बीच मुफ्त में रियूजेबल सैनिटरी पैड का वितरण किया गया। कार्यक्रम की सहयोगी संस्था आमरा प्रेरणा की ओर से स्कूल में यह कार्यक्रम किया गया। छऊ एवं आदिवासी नृत्य प्रस्तुत कर अतिथियों का स्वागत किया गया। हानारु के प्रतिनिधि कायाको गोविंदस्वामी ने बताया कि यह

ऑस्ट्रेलिया की चैरिटेबल संस्था है। इसका मूल उद्देश्य भारत में लड़कियों को मासिक संबंधी भेदभाव को दूर करने, मासिक शिक्षा और पुनः प्रयोज्य सैनिटरी नैपकिन मुफ्त में प्रदान कर उनके जीवन को बेहतर बनाने में मदद करना, पर्यावरण हितैषी होना, स्थानीय महिलाओं को रोजगार उपलब्ध कराना आदि हैं। मौके पर सप्तर्षि साहा, दिव्या, स्वाति नंदी चक्रवर्ती, टिना, श्रावणी मंडल, चिंटू, रीता कोले, नित्यरंजन कोले, शुभेंद्र कोले आदि उपस्थित थे।

Hanaru made our visit to Purulia to celebrate International Women's Day. Rita Koley and her team organised our visit there, and the entire village welcomed Hanaru.

Rita (pictured right) is a school teacher who runs a non-governmental organisation to support villagers' livelihoods. She was enthusiastic about girls and women in the village receiving menstrual education with Hanaru's support.



Kayoko writes: "Thanks to Rita, more than 600 people gathered for a full-day event which included their traditional welcome rituals, talks, lunch and the presentation of napkin packs to the eligible girls."

School boys and girls at the venue's entrance welcomed us with garlands. Colourful dancers wearing traditional masks appeared for the rituals once we entered the ground.



10 volunteers from the Hanaru Kolkata team and I worked non-stop to do the registration records and distribute the napkin packs. We know in a rural village like Purulia, the girls will benefit so much from the packs and menstrual education.



After our happy distribution of napkins, the Sun was starting to set, and we hurried to leave the hills before it was dark. We were exhausted from our long trip and working without any breaks, but also very satisfied as we started the 7-hour drive back to Kolkata."



Charity Founder in India

Normalising menstrual education for boys and students

Kayoko gave each student a sanitary napkin to pass on to a female friend.



We would ideally like to teach boys and girls together when we distribute the napkins but all the culturally embedded taboos make this more challenging. We hope to start a conversation with male students and boys so that they will be a part of the new and positive social progress.

In March, Kayoko was invited to give lectures on menstruation and the Charity's work at two universities

Lovely Professional University

Kayoko gave a lecture to male Media and Performing Arts students at the prestigious Lovely Professional University in Punjab.

She travelled with Ambassador Priyanya on a local night-sleeping coach bus from Delhi.



After Kayoko's dynamic and engaging lecture many of the students were keen to be involved further. Some of them are keen to make videos using the information from Kayoko's lecture to help create change.

Others stayed behind afterwards to talk to Kayoko about how they could help girls and women in their home villages. Kayoko will be providing them with ongoing support.



Visva Bharati University

Kayoko returned the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Santiniketan, West Bengal to give a lecture to male and female students at the University she attended in her early 20's.

Kayoko is going to continue this area of the Charity's work later on in the year when she returns to India and is keen to speak to more male students and boys. We believe if boys are informed about menstruation and understand the pain that girls can experience when they have a period they might support them rather than shun them and think they are unclean.



The Ambassador Program

Distributing the Napkin Packs

Napkin pack distribution has continued in the slums in Delhi, and Hanaru admires the Ambassadors for their efforts in taking packs to challenging areas neglected by the authorities. Kayoko spent time with Priyanka, Pooja, and Pooja G. and went to the slums with them.

Pooja G visited the Lal Bagh slum with Kayoko and Priyanka in February. She is now prioritising her time for her new job and will be rejoining the team later in 2024. We wish her well with her latest work.

Pooja also took some leave when she moved to Rajasthan to start her Masters Degree. She is now settled into her course and surroundings and has just started to distribute packs there.



Gulshan



Gulshan

Gulshan lives and works in Rewalsar, in Mandi District in Himachal Pradesh.

Here is her account of distributing napkins to girls in the Government Senior Secondary School in the village of Kashmaila: *"It was good to distribute the napkins because it was giving some kind of satisfaction by knowing the fact that all the girls can use them without paying any money. The school teachers were also supporting me by seeing the quality of the napkins. And the girls were so shy ... they were laughing when they saw the napkins ... it was new to them. When I have talked to the Principal of GSSS Kashmaila he was ready to help all the girls through Hanaru. He was too supportive and when I went to distribute the napkins to there, some other teachers were willing to help me. I have talked to the parents of some girls. They were also happy by seeing the quality of the napkins."*



The people living in the village make a living by doing all kinds of work but most of the villagers are farmers. The water supply comes from wells/streams/piped to homes and there are some another sources of fresh water near village."

The Ambassador Program

Priyanka

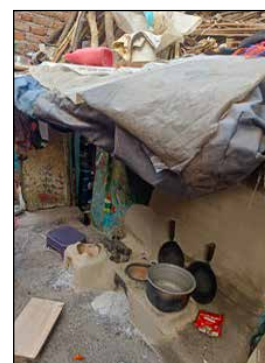


Priyanka

Priyanka has been distributing napkin packs in the following slums: Bawana Colony, Bhalswa Dairy, Golden Jaipur, Indra Vikas, Kusumpur Phadi Community, and Mubarak Bagh.

She shares some of her experiences: *"Initially, some girls were shy or hesitant to engage, but as sessions progressed, they became more open and curious. Many girls expressed relief at finally understanding their bodies and feeling empowered to manage their periods effectively."*

Some parents required more reassurance and information but ultimately agreed to their daughters participating in the programs. However, parents were generally supportive once they understood the importance of menstrual education in their daughters' lives. We faced issues with the approval of parents as most of the parents are working they won't be available on the spot they have called them to ask and it takes many steps because not all parents have personal cell phones. In this case they called their parent's boss and colleagues.



Some slum people are very good and they respect our initiative. They want to contribute to the environment. Some people were not comfortable talking about periods because of strong cultural beliefs. This made it harder to teach them about menstrual health. Some are very rude in the community and they won't listen to us.

One big challenge was getting napkins to faraway places. Most of the slums are very far from the metro, bus stands so we have to carry napkins a long way and slum streets are very unhygienic and have drainage system issues. We have to cross all these paths to distribute napkins.

Seeing girls grow more confident and proud as they learn to manage their periods with dignity and self-assurance. Many girls shared their experiences that Hanaru napkins help them to participate in sports activities without any issues as they feel comfortable and don't face any infection and itching problems."

The Ambassadors Program

Pooja



Pooja

Pooja moved to Ajmer, Rajasthan in 2024 to study for her Master's degree in Social Work. Ajmer is a city in the northwestern Indian state of Rajasthan. It serves as the administrative headquarters of the Ajmer district and Ajmer division. It lies at the centre of Rajasthan, earning it the nickname 'the Heart of Rajasthan'.



Pooja started distributing packs in three villages in the Ajmer district - Mundoti, Bandarsindri and Khera Karmsotan, once she had settled into her new surroundings and university course.

She met with small groups of girls and families, provided menstrual education and gave out ninety packs to the girls.

Pooja writes: *"The weather is very harsh here. Extremely hot and dry summer. I started the distribution early in the morning to avoid the peak hours of the hot afternoons. I visited schools, but students weren't there because the summer vacations are about to start the next week, I went to the homes of the young girls and also met their families for the distribution."*

She is looking forward to distributing packs in more villages next year.




New Website Design and Content

Hanaru has a completely new website!

If you haven't had a chance to check out our website for a while, do have a look at our new layout at hanaru.org.au. We have added lots of new content too.

Hanaru is extremely grateful to Richard Oakham for his guidance and expertise in redesigning our site. He was incredibly generous with his time and brought his decades of experience in Web design to the fore. His knowledge and professionalism proved invaluable.


Welcome About us Our People Our Stories Support Us Contact

In the community – stories from our Ambassadors


Our Ambassadors in Delhi distribute napkins in the slums. They firstly approach the community leaders in a slum, explain about Hanaru's work and see if there is the possibility of distributing napkins to girls there. The community leaders help with the initial organisation and putting the Ambassadors in touch with the girls and their parents. The Ambassadors return at a later date to teach the girls about menstruation and distribute the napkins.

The Ambassadors have timed some of their distribution events to coincide with internationally recognised days which highlights the issues around menstruation.


Red Dot Challenge Day

The 'Red Dot Challenge' in India is a collaboration between UNICEF, adolescent girls, women, and advocates which seeks to dispel period stigma. UNICEF wants a world where no girl or woman is held back because of the natural menstrual cycle, and where period poverty and persisting taboos are history.

Hanaru took part in the Challenge, with Ambassador Pooja G distributing Packs in the Jhangirpuri Slum. All the girls had a red dot painted on their palm to take a stand with girls around the world to no longer feel ashamed about their menstrual cycle.



Some of the girls in India who took part in the Red Dot day.




Red dots on their palms in worldwide support of removing menstrual stigma.


International Women's Day

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating women's equality.

In 2023 Hanaru took part in International Women's Day. Kayoko and the Delhi Ambassadors distributed Packs in the Shahbad Dairy Slum. They were joined by Professor Principal Manta Sharma and Assistant Professor Dr Mali Devi Sawariya, both of Aditi College, University of Delhi. Students and teachers from Aomori Akenohoshi, a Japanese high school joined via Zoom.



International Women's Day with Hanaru at the Shahbad Dairy Slum.



International Women's Day at Shahbad (2).

In 2024 Kayoko and Priyanka distributed napkins in the Bawana slum for the first time and revisited the Vasant Vihari Slum.

The Board members are also very grateful to Lizzie Bowen for her work updating the information on the website and doing Hanaru's annual reports.

Fundraising Report

By Marie Morrin



Hanaru Women's Fundraising Inc has enjoyed an all inspiring 2024. In total the charity has raised \$21,629.98. Our major fundraising for the year has included:

- Individual Donations
- Donations from those who travelled with Hanaru Small Group Tours to India.
- Proceeds leading up to Hanaru Golf Charity Day.
- Container Exchange Proceeds within NSW and QLD
- Sanitiser Sales

Hanaru Women's Health Fundraising Inc has continued to hold satisfactory bank funds to support its endeavors in India. As of June 30th, 2024 Hanaru has funds totalling \$21,802.26.

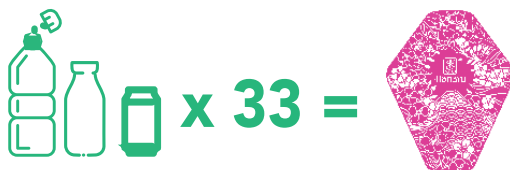
These funds combined with future fundraising planned for 2025 gives a positive outlook for the continuation of its goal – to support the education of school girls in Indian with the constant supply of sanitary napkin kits.

Hanaru would like to thank everyone who has donated for their wonderful support and generosity in providing napkin packs for Indian schoolgirls.

Return and Earn



**HANARU'S
scheme barcode:**



The money from 33 containers will buy one napkin.

Container Recycling

Last year Hanaru registered with the 'Containers for Change' scheme which operates in Queensland and Western Australia.

Return and Earn

This year we have registered with a similar scheme in NSW - Return and Earn. They also have depots, collection points and reverse vending machines and recycle 100% of everything collected.

When they are identified as the recipient charity, Hanaru receives 10c for every container recycled through this scheme.



Donate it

Most glass, plastic, aluminum, steel and paper-based cartons between 150mL and 3L can be recycled.



Fundraising Report

The Hanaru India Tour February 2024

By Ros Julien



The group arriving at Delhi Airport, at the start of their tour.



Our thanks to Divya for her hard work in making all the arrangements.

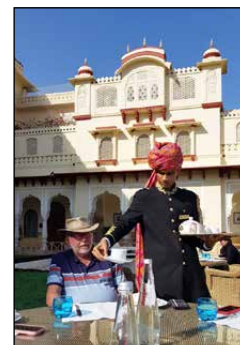
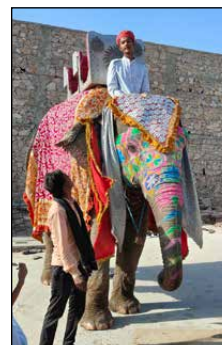
Hanaru's amazing tour started in Delhi, with a few days in Jaipur and finishing off in Kolkata.

In Delhi, the tour group took part in what was, for them, a truly inspiring event that deeply affected them. They visited the Gurudwara Bangla Sahib, a prominent Sikh temple that provides free meals to thousands of people daily as a service to mankind. The temple's kitchen, run by volunteers, serves an unlimited buffet to everyone who walks in, regardless of caste, creed, or religion.

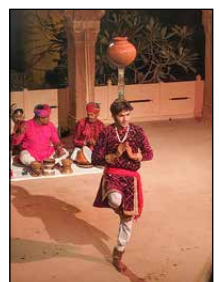
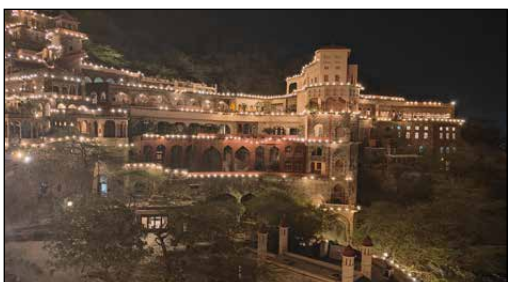
In Jaipur, we went to the Jantar Mantar, an ancient astronomical site with a collection of stone-built instruments that accurately predict the time and seasons. It was completed in 1734 and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The photo opposite is of the tour leader Mic and his sister at the site. We had a Maharajah's garden tea where we saw the elephants decorated and displayed for the guests.

Then on to Kolkata, where our excursions centered around the Ganges, 'the mother river'.

Throughout the tour, Divya organised great excursions where we could enjoy different cultural experiences.



One of our special highlights was staying in an incredible hotel set in an ancient hill fort between Delhi and Jaipur (pictured below). We walked miles between the rooms and were treated to an evening of dance.



Fundraising Report

The Hanaru Japan Tour October 2023

By Kayoko Govindasamy



Kayoko (pictures far left) with the group in Kyoto, where they visited the historic Kiyomizu temple and saw girls wearing traditional kimonos.



Throughout the tour the group experience beautiful, traditional Japanese cuisine.



Kayoko led Hanaru's 14-day tour of Japan. The tour traveled to Tokyo, Kawagoe, Kinugawa, Aomori, Osaka, Hiroshima, Kyoto, Nara, and back to Tokyo.

In Oirase, they walked for an hour on the National Park trail to Lake Towada, enjoying fresh air and beautiful waterfalls.



In Kawagoe, they were lucky to witness traditional floats during the Kawagoe festival, and they joined thousands of people enjoying street foods (Okonomiyaki and Yakisoba) and traditional music played on Taiko drums and flutes.



In Kinugawa, the group warmed up their hands in the 'Onsen', natural hot springs heated by the Earth that are open to the public free of charge. At the hotel, the ladies tried on a yukata (informal kimono).



In Nara, they went to the magnificent Todaiji Temple which is famous for housing the largest indoor Buddha. They also enjoyed walking in the deer park.



EDUCATION & FUNDRAISING

International Women's Day Lecture from India Charity Founder in Japan

School Visits

Kayoko returned to give lectures to two schools in Northern Japan – Aomori Akenohoshi and Misawa SHS. She talked more about the Charity's work in India and updated the students on more recent events.

As we wrote in our last report - Kayoko helped raise awareness about social issues, poverty, discrimination against girls and women, and the urgent call for environmental sustainability in India.



International Women's Day - 8th March 2024

As part of International Women's Day, some of the students listened to Kayoko giving an online lecture from India. She talked about Hanaru's work and serious social issues while showing a



PowerPoint presentation. The Japanese teachers, who organised the session during their after-school hours, appreciated that their students were exposed to the reality of India that they could never have imagined otherwise. We hope that the session has given the students some moments to reflect and appreciate their lives.

At Akenohoshi, 200 students and 5 teachers attended and at Misawa SHS, there were 40 students and 1 teacher. There is more information about the lecture in this article on the Akenohoshi school website: <https://www.aomoriakenohoshi.ed.jp/22866/>



Aomori Akenohoshi SHS

In June, Kayoko was invited by Aomori Akenohoshi Junior and Senior High Schools to speak about India and Hanaru's Project to around 600 students and teachers as part of their Global Studies class. The students have been studying the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the effects of menstrual poverty in the world. They discuss many topics relating to creating a better future for the world. They presented her with a donation, which they raised by selling napkins. Kayoko appreciates her long and warm association with them.



EDUCATION & FUNDRAISING

Charity Founder in Japan



Kayoko would like to share a couple of the written comments she received after one of her talks.

"I was impressed that you think of those who are vulnerable, and actually care for them with kindness. Your talk made me eager to find out what is really happening in the world. I also would like to become able to support others." 16 year old male student.

"I have never been concerned about the welfares of others. It inspired me to become one to act like you. I like that you are taking care of the environment and I would like to start using Hanaru washable napkins." 16 year old female student.



Misawa SHS

Kayoko returned to her old high school in Misawa City, Aomori Prefecture on several occasions.

On 17 April 2024, she met with year 12 students who attended the online celebration of the 2024 Hanaru International Women's Day. There were about 30 students (roughly 20 boys and 10 girls).

From May 8th to 22nd Kayoko was invited to talk to five classes of year 10 students, one class of year 12 students, students of the English club, and students of the Volunteer club in Misawa SHS. The school asked her to share her experiences in India, including languages, culture, social issues and the Charity's work.

Kayoko joined the Volunteer Club, led by Ms Akiko Tanaka and Ms Hiroko Kamijo, for its after-school activities. The students make and sell Misanga friendship bracelets to raise funds for their chosen causes - one of which is Hanaru. The students wished the Indian girls to understand that periods are normal and to stay happy at school during their periods as students in Japan do. The photos (right) were taken at Misawa SHS when Kayoko received generous donations from the club leaders.



Kayoko went to the Misawa Sunday Market where teachers and students held a stall. They started the day at 6 am to set up the tent and stayed all day to sell many items to raise funds. They displayed posters of Hanaru's Project in India to raise awareness of the Charity's work.

We express our sincere gratitude to Misawa SHS on behalf of all Indian girls who will benefit from their kindness.



We would like to express our appreciation and sincerely thank the principals and teachers for their ongoing support and organisation of these events, and the students who participated in them.

16.06.24	Aomori Akenohoshi J&SHS	600 students	Principal: Mr Sasaki and teaches Ms Takaki and Ms Toriyabe
17.04.24	Misawa SHS	30 students	Principal: Mr Chiba and English teacher Ms Tanaka
8-22.05.24		200+ students	
International Women's Day Students attended Kayoko's lecture from India			
08.03.24	Aomori Akenohoshi SHS	200 student	Principal: Mr Sasaki and teachers Ms Takaki and Ms Toriyabe
08.03.24	Misawa SHS	78 students	Principal: Mr Chiba and English teacher Ms Tanaka

Inspiring Others

Inspiring others to be part of the movement for social change

Kaori, right after giving her speech, and below with her English teacher and Kayoko.



Kaori Matsuyama

Kaori was inspired to do a talk about Hanaru when she entered the district English speech competition in Aomori prefecture. She was awarded a prestigious gold medal for her efforts. We'd like to share some of her talk here.

"Have you ever heard the term 'menstrual poverty'?" The first time I heard the term was in a lecture given by Kayoko Hashimoto (Govindasamy), a Japanese woman who stood up for women's rights. She made a great impression on me because she was so powerful and full of energy. I was shocked by what she said. How can "menstruation" be associated with "poverty"? Girls in India face poverty and inequality, she explained. Many of them cannot go to school because they cannot afford sanitary products when menstruation begins. Menstruating women are considered unclean and are sometimes separated from others. As a result, they are forced to quit school, have no educational opportunities, and are trapped in a negative loop that keeps them in poverty. This is called "menstrual poverty".

There are many countries in the world where girls are subjected to restrictions simply because they are born girls. They have no freedom and cannot even dream of a future. When I learned about this, I began to think about what I could do to help. First, instead of paper napkins, I decided to buy and use the same napkins that Kayoko gives to the girls in India. I was told that if I bought one, one of the same napkins would be donated. If I use it and find it very good, I can recommend it to my family and friends."

Yuuki Koizumi

Kayoko met Yuuki Koizumi at the end of one of her talks. She told Kayoko that *"she resonated with the Hanaru project that identified the social issues and is making a difference. After listening to Kayoko's talk in 2023, she worked on her English speech to present in Aomori speech contest to discuss her future dreams to contribute to such social issues. Its title is 'Ways to change the world.'"*

Yuuki is in her final year of high school, and is studying hard to pass her entrance exams to university. She wishes to major in Global Study and International Law.

Looking to the Future

Hanaru is thrilled to expand the distribution of napkins into West Bengal. Over 1,000 packs are ready for Kayoko to distribute to schools. The women making napkins in West Bengal can easily scale up production, and Rajesh is confident about training more women. Many more packs are going to the Ambassadors, too.

Marie is organising a Golf Charity Day in Murwillumbah, NSW in July and a Fundraising Tour to India is being

organised for February, this time to explore the country's south.

Kayoko will spend August and September 2024 in India, and is determined to meet all the ambassadors who live in remote areas for the first time to express her gratitude for their effort. She will also be giving university lectures and plans to return in February and March.

Board Members

MIC JULIEN - President

Born in NSW in 1946, Mic studied agriculture, worked briefly in agriculture in Papua New Guinea, moved on to studying biological sciences and finally worked as a researcher in CSIRO in Brisbane from 1974 until retirement in 2009. He has worked in and travelled for pleasure in many countries. He has visited India on many occasions helping to lead small group tours for 21 day visits. Currently living in northern NSW.

MARIE MORRIN - Vice President

Born in Northern NSW in 1959, Marie has a Diploma of Teaching and Bachelor of Education, majoring in Geography and Economics. While teaching part time she held the position of financial manager of the family business of contract harvesting within the sugar industry. She has also held numerous treasury positions within the community on a voluntary basis.

ROS JULIEN - Secretary

Born in Sydney in 1948, Ros was raised in Northern NSW where she studied Arts / Education before pursuing an English teaching career. She has traveled often with the other board members to India in support of welfare initiatives, such as a medical centre and proposed orphanage.

KAYOKO GOVINDASAMY - Treasurer and Public Officer

Kayoko was born and raised in Japan. In 1986, after majoring in Textile Art, she received her Bachelor of Art from the Women's College of Art in Tokyo. In 1987 she completed her one year Scholarship, majoring in Textile Art, from the Indian Government and received her 'Certificate of Foreign Casual Course' from the Visva Bharathi University, Santiniketan, West Bengal. She is a qualified teacher in Australia and has been to India many times.

MOHAN GOVINDASAMY - Financial Advisor

Mohan (Michael) Govindasamy was born in Singapore of Indian heritage. He came to Australia in 1973 and married a Japanese girl, Kayoko. They have two grown-up kids. He ran his own business until he retired in 2019. He enjoys his countless visits to India and has also traveled extensively - as an assistant to his Spiritual Master - to many parts of the world. He believes passionately in the empowerment of women as a means to changing society for the better.

He appreciates the saying "Do good things and don't get caught" ... so far, he appears free and eager to assist in ensuring this project reaches its potential.

Charity Details

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