

Around 500,000 people in 60 slum colonies of Delhi benefit from **Asha** work



Dr Kiran Martin, Founder and Director, Asha

Dr Kiran Martin studied at the University of Delhi's Maulana Azad Medical College, gaining a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree. She then specialised in Paediatrics at Lady Hardinge Medical College within the same university.

In 1988, Dr Martin heard about a cholera outbreak in a south Delhi slum. Her Christian faith inspired her to use her talents to help the poor and marginalised, so she went to the slum, set up a borrowed table under a tree and began working to save lives. As Dr Martin learned more about the hardships and deprivation faced by the people there, she started to devise ways to address their problems. After some time, and with growing cooperation from the grateful community and the Indian government, she acquired like-minded helpers and began to form Asha Society.

Now, more than 25 years later, Dr Martin is an influential figure in the field of slum development and Asha's programmes are benefiting more than 500,000 people in around 60 slum colonies of Delhi. Dr Martin's early model of urban health has developed to meet the changing needs of slum communities and achieves consistently impressive results. The slum housing model that Dr Martin developed in the 1990s has been widely praised, and accompanied innovative work in women's empowerment and primary and secondary education. That was followed by a highly successful financial inclusion scheme devised in partnership with the Ministry of Finance, Government of India, and most recently, Dr Martin's groundbreaking work to improve slum children's access to higher education has seen astonishing result



Dr Martin with children and Asha Team members at Seelampur slum colony



With President K R Narayanan, receiving the Padma Shri 2002

In addition to appearances before the US House of Representatives and the British House of Commons, Dr Martin has been an international speaker for many years. She has lectured at prestigious universities such as Harvard, MIT and Cambridge, and spoken at numerous international conferences as well as given talks at hospitals, churches, and **Friends of Asha** events in various locations around the globe.

Dr Martin lives in Delhi a short distance away from *Asha's* headquarters with her husband, Freddy Martin, *Asha's* Associate Director. The couple have two children, Perna and Madhuri, who are currently studying in the USA but remain involved in *Asha's* work.