

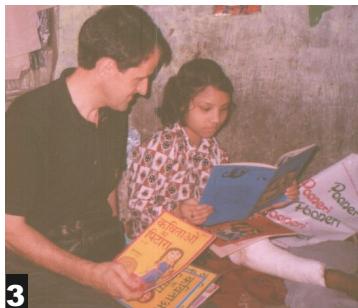
# Zenabi - starting a new life at age 16



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2. Zenabi before her treatment could neither stand nor walk.  
2. Dr. Desai of Shraddha Hospital in Mumbai, dedicated his life to help thousands of polio children.



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3. Josef doing reading practice with Zenabi in Hindi.  
4. David is helping with her exercises. 5. Halfway through her treatment, she is beginning to stand up.



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6. Josef with the special caliper, which was made for Zenabi to assist her in her walking.  
7. Happy parents with their daughter on the day, when the caliper was fitted on.



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Zenabi is the second oldest child of a poor family of 4 children. Her father is a carpenter. We met her in 1999, while surveying a big slum area with over 20,000 residents in a western suburb of Mumbai.

We suggested that she undergo the **Free Correctional Treatment** for polio children, organized by **Polio Child Relief Mumbai** with **Dr. Desai's Shraddha Hospital** in Mumbai. Zenabi had had severe Post-Polio deformities in both legs with stiffened knee joints and paralysed lower limbs since her very early childhood. She was confined to her hutment's small quarters, where a family of 6 live in one room upstairs. Due to her handicap she was not able to go to school. Under difficult living conditions there was a lot of hardship for her and her family. For every outdoor activity Zenabi had to be carried down a narrow, steep metal staircase by her father. She saw very little sunlight and fell ill with Tuberculosis.

After an initial check-up her treatment had to be postponed for 7 months until her tuberculosis was cured. Then she had 2 operations to straighten out her backward stiffened legs. These 2 operations were extremely difficult but successful. We spent a lot of individual time with Zenabi and her family to support them morally during these difficult stages. She often had severe pain after the operations and needed to be attended to. She also required special physiotherapy and lots of exercises, which needed to be directly supervised. We also supplied her with educational materials to enable her to learn to read and write with the help of her sister and our assistance.

By the end of 2001, Zenabi had completed her treatment of 4 operations with great success and we were all thrilled to see her stand up for the first time in her life. We knew the attention and investment for her was worth it all. Her overall health has improved tremendously though her muscles are still quite weak. However with a special caliper which was made for her, she can now walk and move around and will soon start working as an operator in a telephone booth.

Zenabi is excited to start a new life and is very thankful for all the help given. Thanks to the **Free Correctional Treatment** project of **Polio Child Relief Mumbai** and **Dr. Desai's** skill, Zenabi faces a much brighter future and will soon be able to lead an independent life.