

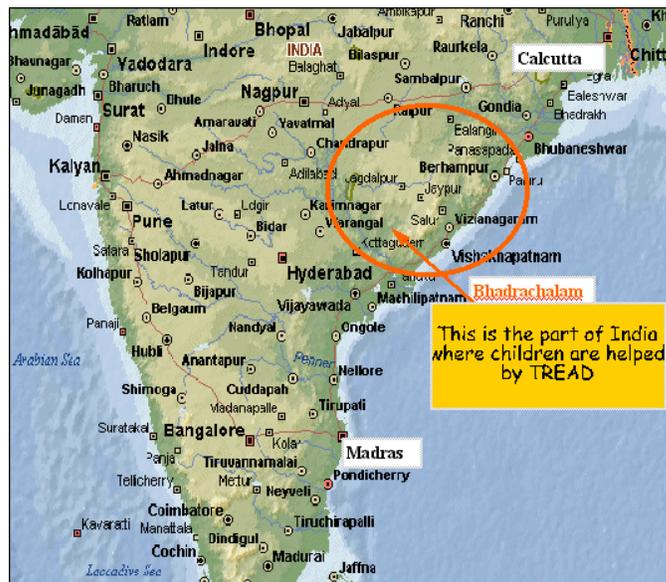


# Friends of TREAD

in partnership with TREAD India Trust  
Trinity Rural Educational Association for Development

....giving hope and a new future to needy Indian children

## Annual Report 2013/14



**Charity Registration Number:** 1081400    **Inland Revenue Number:** XR 41597

**Trustees:** Amanda Burling, Colin Burling, Janet Crawford, Clive Daniels, Jerry Dart, Timothy Overton, David Owen (Chair), Patricia Owen, Doug Robertson

**Hon. Treasurer:** Janet Crawford

**Examiner of Accounts:** Martin Fletcher

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## **STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE**

Friends of TREAD (*Trinity Rural Educational Association for Development*) was registered as a trust in July 2000 with five trustees who have since appointed a further four trustees. Charity overheads are minimal as all work is carried out by the trustees and other supporters on a voluntary basis. Expenses incurred are costs of governance and generating funds including administration of the charity and the basic expenses for two trustees to visit TREAD India Trust each year.

## **OBJECTS AND AIMS**

Friends of TREAD exists to further the work of TREAD India Trust by supporting various projects and has the following objects and aims:

- To relieve need, hardship and distress for people of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, S India
- To further the education of children and young people and to found new establishments for that purpose
- To found and maintain technical training and vocational institutes
- To provide financial assistance for children and young people upon leaving their place of study to prepare them for the workplace so that they are able to live independent lives
- To preserve and safeguard the health of persons of any age in AP and Orissa providing necessary medical aid and to found and maintain medical institutions.

## **PARTNER ORGANISATION AND PROJECTS**

TREAD India Trust is a charity whose headquarters is based in Bhadrachalam, Telangana (formerly Andhra Pradesh) in South India. Its founder and director was Dr M Sounder Raj who with his wife Ranjita had devoted his life to childcare; the charity's work is targeted at children, young people and their families. Since the untimely death of Sounder in December 2007, his wife has taken on the role of Director and continues the work of TREAD with support from their adult children and trustees. Although TREAD is based firmly on Christian foundations it seeks to help children of any religion, caste or creed and indeed two of its trustees are Hindu and Jain. Projects supported are:

### **CHILD DEVELOPMENT/ DAY CARE CENTRES**

*(to further education of children and young people)*

These centres provide care before and after school for children with meals, activities and homework supervision. The children are given clothes and school uniform and are taught self-discipline, personal hygiene and a work ethic which they pass on to family and peers. The children have vaccinations against common diseases and receive additional medical care when necessary. The local primary schools have been transformed with improved attendance rates and extra teachers provided by government.

- **Trinity Day Care Centre (TDCC), Kudunure, ANDHRA PRADESH**

Opened in 2000, around 100 children attend this day care centre that is supported solely by funds raised by Friends of TREAD. It provides 6-day week care throughout the school year, 2 sets of new clothes a year and 2 nutritional meals a day. After children leave TDCC there is ongoing supervision of them. Coaching is given to help children with their exams and there are also holiday Bible schools. A special medical fund is in place to provide appropriate medical care when needed. Funds are largely provided by regular monthly/annual donations from supporters of Friends of TREAD and are topped up by one-off donations or fundraising events.

- **Sarah Child Development Centre**, Podia, ORISSA is based on a 3.5 acre site purchased and developed through donations from Friends of TREAD. This centre is run in partnership with Compassion International's East India branch that pays for the running costs of the project, whilst Friends of TREAD takes responsibility for the costs of management and infrastructure. It opened in 2002, 256 children now attend daily during school terms and it acts as the base for two more satellite centres in nearby villages run in partnership with Compassion:
  - ❖ **Hannah CDC**, Dubathota which is in an isolated, poverty-stricken forestry tribal village. The centre opened in 2004 and it now cares for 260 children
  - ❖ **David CDC**, Girkinpalli opened in November 2005 and currently 250 children attend.

### **GRACE TAILORING CENTRE, Podia, ORISSA**

*(To found and maintain technical training and vocational institutes)*

Opened in 2002, this project is mainly funded by Friends of TREAD although it does now generate a little income itself. It operates in a purpose built workshop on the Sarah site and runs 12-month courses for up to 20 needy tribal girls a year to give them a skill for life and independence. At the end of the course each girl receives the gift of a sewing machine. Friends of TREAD raises some of the costs through individuals sponsoring girls and the remainder from its general funds.

### **ORPHANED ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME**

*(To relieve need, hardship and distress and further education)*

This project provides care for orphans and semi-orphans and includes an educational assistance programme for education of promising students from poor families. It is funded exclusively by Friends of TREAD on a sponsorship basis. The youngsters live with a carer (who could be a relative or neighbour) or sometimes one surviving parent. If there is nobody to care for the child, he or she will be absorbed into the family of Ranji or one of the other trustees, whilst attending weekly boarding school/hostel nearby. There are currently 34 youngsters benefiting from this project, two of whom are severely disabled.

## **FRIENDS OF TREAD ACTIVITIES**

Friends of TREAD is now in its fourteenth year. Six of its trustees are based in Hastings and Bristol so many regular donors come from these areas. One trustee this year moved to Nottingham and two trustees are now based in France but keep in touch regularly through phone and email and attend the trustee meetings. The number of supporters has increased steadily each year; often people are attracted by word of mouth or through the website and get in touch with the trustees. Without the regular standing orders given so faithfully by many of its supporters, Friends of TREAD would be hard-pressed to continue its work. One-off donations are regularly received and are invaluable to "top-up" the projects or pay for some of the regular management and infrastructure costs incurred in India. These donations come from both individuals and organisations such as churches or schools. Many of these donations are eligible for Gift Aid to be reclaimed and this additional income has been very beneficial. We also receive donations from such website schemes as e-bay and easyfundraising and sometimes donations through Charity Aid Foundation and Virgin Money. The trustees and many supporters are regularly involved in giving presentations to clubs or groups, holding fundraising events or taking part in sponsored activities. Some people prefer donations to be made to Friends of TREAD rather than receive gifts to mark special occasions, or to replace tributes of flowers at funerals of loved ones.

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEWS

### GOVERNANCE OF TREAD INDIA TRUST AND FOT

In March 2014, two trustees from Friends of TREAD made the annual visit to TREAD India Trust. Whilst there, they attended the ceremony to mark the retirement of Director Ranjitha Mentam Raj and the new appointment of her successor, younger son Vasanth Mentam Raj. Vasanth has worked for TREAD India trust for some years coordinating TREAD's work in Orissa and surrounding areas with partner Compassion International so has the necessary experience and understanding to take on this new role. His wife Annie was formerly employed by Compassion as Manager of the Sarah Centre and currently helps her husband in his work as well as overseeing the Grace Tailoring Centre. The ceremony was attended by representatives of local communities, centre staff and youngsters as well as all the TREAD India trustees and family members and everyone expressed their support for Vasanth in his new role. The remaining trustees and management members will continue to meet regularly with Vasanth to discuss progress and new plans.

### TRINITY DAY CARE CENTRE (TDCC)

- During this year, 99 children have been attending daily with all costs met by Friends of TREAD (FOT).
- In October 2012, FOT trustees inspected the building which was in a poor state due to a longterm problem with the roof. Following their recommendations, a local surveyor and builder carried out comprehensive and successful repairs to the roof. The building has since been rewired and redecorated to a high standard. This was funded entirely by Friends of TREAD and during their March visit, FOT trustees visited the building and were delighted with the results. The children and staff are extremely happy with this work, as the roof is now watertight in the rainy season.
- The outside play equipment has been repaired and repainted by professionals who came from Bhadrachalam and stayed onsite for a week. This equipment is much used by the children each day.
- Troupes of monkeys have become a real problem in this village and regularly invade TDCC. Doors and windows have to be kept shut to prevent them stealing and damaging contents.
- The additional land which has now been properly fenced off is to be used by the children during summer holidays for football and cricket until crops are planted by local farmers. This site will eventually be used for further building.
- Former TDCC students frequently return to the centre during their college holidays as they enjoy being part of the TREAD family
- A few pre-school children attend TDCC each day before going to one of the two newly set-up government pre-schools in the village. This is a compulsory new scheme recently introduced by the Indian government for children aged 3 and upwards.
- During their visit, FOT trustees spent a couple of days in the centre and were impressed by the happy atmosphere, the cleanliness, the neatly turned out children (many of whom still live in primitive mud huts) the high standards of dancing and singing and the relaxed ambience created by manager Jayraj and his loyal team of staff. Mention must also be made of the cook Drachma who has been at the centre for many years and who produces excellent and nutritious meals each day for the children.

## COMPASSION AIDED PROJECTS

The Compassion International projects at Sarah, David and Hannah centres continue to go from strength to strength thanks to the input of the dedicated TREAD staff. All TREAD projects are highly thought of by Compassion officers. TREAD are always invited to attend regional conferences where their centres are used as examples of good working models. Compassion International continually monitor their own projects, responding to feedback and changing needs of the youngsters by introducing new programmes. The biggest problem in the TREAD projects in this area is lack of internet and phone, since rebels destroyed the communication system a few years ago. Vasanth is trying to get a new landline connected at the Sarah site now that the problem with rebels has died down.

### Sarah Child Development Centre

- Problems with activists have now abated but the roads leading there are in a very poor state, making local journeys very hazardous and making it hard to engage labour from outside of the village
- British doctors from Love the One had to vacate the medical clinic built by FOT due to the political unrest some time ago and have now relocated to the north of Orissa which is safer for foreigners. The vacated building suffered a lot of storm damage last winter but once the electrics are repaired will be used in the short-term for coaching some of the older Sarah youngsters. (It has taken some time to find an electrician willing to travel to this site.) The other two halls are in constant use, the original hall used by younger children and the newer hall by the older ones.
- A new, more powerful generator has been provided by FOT this year. During the hot season, electricity supplies are erratic and often unavailable which means that the water pumps don't work. Whilst it would be too expensive to run this generator all the time, it will provide a much needed source of electricity during the most extreme weather and the children and staff are very grateful. The smaller generator is still used daily for 4 hours, providing necessary power for lighting and fans. The waterpump motor which had burned out has now been replaced and is in good working order again.

### Hannah Child Development Centre

- The main reason why work has halted on building the new hall is that TREAD cannot get labourers to come to this village as they are afraid of the local activists. There aren't any skilled workers in the village but Vasanth is hopeful that he can get some workers from Podia, home to the Sarah Centre. The rebels themselves aren't forbidding construction work apart from refusing a boundary wall to be built which would inhibit their access across the land
- The kitchen was badly damaged during a storm and routinely loses its roof during bad weather. Vasanth is hoping to get a more substantial roof built once he can get hold of some labourers.
- Despite ongoing problems with political unrest and the poor infrastructure, the children in this centre continue to excel in sport, school exams and cultural activities.. FOT is grateful to the loyal staff who work under the most difficult and sometimes frightening conditions.

## David Child Development Centre

- The infrastructure here is fine but there are problems with water supplies. The borewell's pipe gauge is too small resulting in greasy water so a new borewell is required. A new larger generator is also needed and FOT will be sending money to fund this. 160 youngsters attend this centre daily with the remainder (who are weekly boarders in government run schools) joining them at weekends.

## GRACE TAILORING CENTRE

This project is now in its 13th year based in Daniel Cottage on the Sarah site and continues to deliver an excellent one year course. The girls are often able to marry out of the village and use their skills elsewhere. Not only are they trained as tailors, but the students are also encouraged by TREAD staff to further their general education and learn cooking and gardening skills as well.

## ORPHANED ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

During the trustees' visit, they met 24 of the 34 youngsters. March is the time for national exams so the other young people at college further afield were unable to take time off their studies. The trustees met the severely handicapped youngster who has now returned to a local school thanks to intervention from FOT who will pay the extra costs involved. He is full of life and thoroughly enjoys the company of other children in school. It was good to see how many of the children have turned into confident teenagers, mature and courteous with a willingness to do their best at school and college.

The Orphan Programme was FOT's first project and has helped 58 children past and present. One "Old Boy" aged 25 is now the accountant at the Sarah site and the trustees were delighted to meet him again and reminisced with him over their first meeting when he was just 12 years old! His widowed mother has worked as a cook for TREAD since then and 3 years ago formally adopted an orphaned girl. This young man is very proud of his sister and said that he and his mother wanted to give something back after all the help they have received from TREAD.

## MEDICAL MATTERS AND PARTNERSHIP WITH LOVE THE ONE

The partnership continues between LTO and TREAD, albeit at a distance. This year the time had come for a heart operation on one of the TDCC children who had previously been a patient of LTO doctors. Thanks to input from them by email and phone, the operation took place successfully in Hyderabad. There was much aftercare required which would have been almost impossible in the primitive mud hut which is her home, so she and her mother stayed for several weeks at TREAD's headquarters/family home where she received this care from Ranji, Saroja and the family with input at a distance from FOT trustees and the LTO doctors. Mother and daughter were still there during FOT trustee visit and the trustees were delighted to see her progress.

*Due to restrictions on travel brought about by local activists, FOT trustees were unable to visit the Compassion aided projects in the Orissa area but met many members of staff and several of the children from each project who attended and participated in the retirement ceremony.*

## FUTURE PLANS

Over the coming year, FOT anticipate the new Director along with the TREAD trustees and management team will start some short and long-term planning for TREAD India. Several ideas were raised with FOT trustees during their visit which will be considered in more depth at the next TREAD India Trust management meeting and then brought to FOT for consideration along with a 5- year plan. Some points that were raised:

- The new Director plans to run the Friends of TREAD funded projects ie TDCC, Grace Tailoring and Orphaned Assistance programme on the same lines and with similar standards to the Compassion International funded projects. He plans to visit TDCC regularly and its manager Jayraj is keen to spend a short time in Podia to observe the running of the Sarah Centre .
- Since TREAD's founder Dr M Sounder Raj died unexpectedly 6 years ago, TREAD has held firm its existing projects but now feel the time has come to plan for new projects.
- FOT want to allow the new Director time to settle into his new post and in fact Ranji will continue to play an active role with Compassion projects until the end of their financial year this July. There have been several suggestions put forward including the development of the land at TDCC, a possible new project in partnership with Compassion at a nearby village, the possibility of using the medical clinic for one of Compassion's projects for antenatal care, outreach to other villages.
- Additionally there are maintenance and building works on the wishlist, including provision of more boarding accommodation for Grace Tailoring students with an inbuilt kitchen where they can practise their cookery skills.

To summarise, Friends of TREAD wish Ranji a happy and fulfilling retirement and thank her and the family for holding TREAD together since Sounder died 6 years ago. FOT are also delighted to welcome Vasanth as the new Director of TREAD India Trust and look forward to the start of a new era under his leadership. We know that he will receive continued support from his mother Ranji and will benefit from her wisdom and knowledge of 40 years of childcare that she has brought to TREAD over the years. We are also confident that the other family members, trustees and staff will encourage and support him as Director.

*Finally, Friends of TREAD would like to thank the many individuals who faithfully support the work of TREAD financially, practically and prayerfully – without your help this work could not continue.*

# FOT FINANCIAL REPORT 2013/2014

## 1. Voluntary Income

Excluding exceptional items the income and Gift Aid for the year was very similar to the previous year. The regular individual donations remain consistent, which is very encouraging considering the current financial climate. Bank interest was again decreased following the reductions in the interest rates. As a result of the reduction in interest we have moved some reserves to a Virgin Charity account.

## 2. Grants To Tread India.

During the year we made a recommendation to the TIT Board of Trustees that the director's salary should be included in the general draft and this was actioned in January 2014.

The exceptional expenditure during the year was for the new generator, an additional sum for roof repairs at TDCC and the cost of electrical work and re-decoration at TDCC. We also replaced all the sewing machines at the Grace Tailoring Centre.

## 3. Governance Costs.

These were as expected this year and amount to 4.9% of income. Some of the increase is as a result of the increased cost of postage.

## 4. Fundraising Events

The afternoon tea at St Leonard's was very successful, despite the weather, raising £1,095 plus some individual gift - aided donations. Easyfunding continues to be a good source of income, and we have had some generous gifts which we were able to sell on e-bay. We are grateful to a number of individuals and organisations:-

Hastings Lions for a donation from the Hastings Half Marathon, with thanks for Colin Burling for organising the local park and ride scheme, Caroline Ludlow Jones for making a wonderful quilt which raised over £1,000.

We had a very generous grant from the Fulmer Trust towards the cost of replacing the sewing machines.

Thanks too to Alpha State Website Services; Association Les Mains Ouvertes, France; Hooe Baptist Church; Martin Fletcher; St Bart's, Bristol; St Bonaventure's Rainbows; St Leonard and St Ethelburga, St Leonards on Sea; St Michael's Church, Bristol; St Michael's Piglets; and Doug Robertson for the donation of his leaving gift.

## 5. Reserved Funds and Bank Accounts

There are now three reserve funds - TDCC where money has been given in advance for use in future years; a reserve for medical needs and an orphans fund where some sponsors donate extra each month but TIT would prefer we keep it in the UK and send it when a need arises. We have reserve funds in the Scottish Widows Bank, the NatWest and in Virgin Money.