



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 2019/20



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 over the years have 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 Telengana (formerly part of ANDHRA PRADESH) and Odisha (formerly 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 these regions 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. 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; the charity's work is targeted at children, young people and their families. The charity was founded in 1999 by the late Dr M Sounder Raj and its current Director is his younger son Vasanth who had worked with his father for some years. Projects supported are:

CHILD DEVELOPMENT/ DAY CARE CENTRES (*to further education of children and young people*)

These centres for children provide care before and after school with meals, activities and homework supervision. Clothes and school uniform are provided and the children 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, TELENGANA
Opened in 2000, currently 75 children attend this day care centre. It provides care from Monday - Friday throughout the school year with 2 nutritional meals a day. After children leave TDCC there is ongoing supervision of them and they are always welcome to drop in. Coaching is given to help children with their exams. A special medical fund is in place for 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, ODISHA is based on a 3.5 acre site purchased and developed through donations from Friends of TREAD. This centre which opened in 2002 and its two satellite centres were originally run in partnership with Compassion International's East India branch that paid for the running costs of the projects, whilst Friends of TREAD took responsibility for the trust management costs and for infrastructure. Sadly in March 2017 Compassion International had to withdraw from India so this centre and its **two satellite centres*** in nearby villages with a total of 675 children closed down their full projects in June 2017 and since then have been running reduced programmes.

***Hannah CDC**, Dubathota in an isolated, poverty-stricken forestry tribal village opened in 2004

***David CDC**, Girkinpalli opened in November 2005.

GRACE TAILORING CENTRE, Podia, ODISHA

(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, one of the TREAD trustees will take responsibility for him/her, whilst the child attends weekly boarding school/hostel nearby. There are currently 17 youngsters benefiting from this project.

FRIENDS OF TREAD ACTIVITIES

Friends of TREAD is now in its twentieth year. Five of its trustees are based in Hastings and Bristol so many regular donors come from these areas. One trustee lives in Nottingham, one in Devon and two trustees are based in Spain but all keep in touch regularly through phone and email and attend the trustee meetings.

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 through such website schemes as e-bay and easyfundraising and sometimes donations through Charity Aid Foundation and Virgin Money. The trustees and many supporters sometimes give presentations to clubs or groups, hold fundraising events or take 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

After the withdrawal of Compassion International from India in 2017, Friends of TREAD focused on emergency fundraising for Project 200+ but was aware that there was no longer onsite monitoring and evaluation of projects funded by Friends of TREAD. This raised some issues which we felt should be reported to the Charity Commission in the UK. They have been satisfied with the actions taken and explanations given. During their visit to TREAD in 2018, two of FOT trustees visited well established charity El Shaddai in Goa where they met its Co Founder Pastor Matthew Kurian who kindly volunteered his time and expertise to help set TREAD India Trust on firmer foundations. In March 2019, he invited the Director of TREAD India trust and two members of his staff to Goa to see how their charity works and spend time with him and his staff. A meeting in London then took place in September 2019 between Pastor Matthew and five of Friends of TREAD trustees plus two others by video conference. This meeting was very useful to us as it gave insight from the management perspective of a much larger well-run Indian charity. Matthew had sent a member of his own team to visit TREAD projects and based on his report recommended that its Director Vasanth should be allowed an opportunity to re-form and re-structure the charity with input and supervision from El Shaddai. A future regime with much higher levels of external scrutiny was needed, and the TREAD Board of Trustees enlarged and strengthened. Other recommended measures included an overhaul of salary scales, external audit visits, staff training to encourage an atmosphere of transparency between management, staff and children, applications for funding to be sought from within India and more detailed budgets created. Two new trustees for TREAD India Trust were selected by TREAD India Trust– one a female lawyer who is also a trustee of a major Indian charity and the other a male financial advisor. In November 2019, Matthew held meetings in Hyderabad with them and the remaining TREAD India Board of Trustees, Director, Projects managers and management staff. The staff of all projects then formed a WhatsApp group with Matthew and a member of FOT Board of Trustees and are giving daily updates on the activities at all projects and weekly reports which are sent to TREAD India trustees and Friends of TREAD.. A financial and performance audit of TREAD India is being arranged and will take place in the near future*. In March 2020, three FOT trustees made a short visit to Hyderabad where they met the new trustees and held intensive meetings for 3 days with Pastor Matthew, the Director and Board of TREAD India Trustees and TREAD project managers and key staff.

PUBLICITY/FUNDRAISING

Our website www.friendsoftread.org is kept up to date and includes our policies for privacy along with forms for gift aid and data protection. It is a tool to highlight news on fundraising as well as to provide information on all the

TREAD projects. It links to our blog *Postcards from India* which gives a snapshot of life in the areas where TREAD works whilst our Facebook page and Twitter account continue to bring news snippets and photos of TREAD projects.

STOP PRESS

*A few days after FOT trustees returned from India in March, the full impact of Covid19 became apparent and lockdown was declared in India as well as elsewhere in the world. Many plans made during that visit have had to be put on hold. TREAD projects have had to close but staff are still working in the centres, keeping in touch by whatsapp and phone and arranging for food and necessary supplies to be available to the children and their families. Friends of TREAD will keep in close contact with TREAD India trust and endeavour to meet the financial needs of the children and their families during these difficult times.

FRIENDS OF TREAD FINANCIAL REPORT 2019/20

Once again we are very grateful to our loyal supporters for all their generosity and faithfulness during another challenging year. We are humbled by the generosity of our donors.

1. Voluntary Income

We would like to send our heartfelt thanks to all our regular donors. We would also like to thank the churches and schools:- Bishopston and St Andrews, Bristol; St Leonard and St Ethelburga, St Leonards on Sea; St Michael's Piglets, Bristol; and Reach Little Church, Bristol.

As in previous years we have placed all donations to Project 200+ into a designated fund. As mentioned in the Annual Report we have partnered with El Shaddai for advice and support for our friends in India. We have had a generous donation towards the cost of this for which we have opened a consultancy fund in the accounts.

2. Fundraising

Again we have had wonderful support for our various fundraising events. We were delighted that Alex Grant and his friends finished the TREAD2India challenge. We also received the balance of the donations for Megan Vowles and Liz Gaulton's Tread4Tread.

The annual afternoon tea at Mandy and Colin Burling's was a great success and enjoyed by all. We raised £2,765 plus gift aid giving a total of £3,182. We also enjoyed the scones, cakes and sunshine.

The Hastings Half Marathon for 2020 was cancelled as a result of the Covid-19 lockdown, but in the financial year we received the donation from last year's race.

The ChapAid group from the Aquitaine Chaplaincy in France again gave a very generous donation towards the Grace Tailoring project.

We continue to receive donations through the Easyfundraising website.

3. Grants to TIT India.

During the year there was some re-assessment and Sumanth (general administrator) and Annie (manager Grace) stood down from their positions at TIT. This meant we were able to reduce the management costs of the projects. The number of orphans is now 17 as a further 3 youngsters have left the project. We are grateful to their sponsors over the years and are pleased that they have agreed to continue supporting FOT in general funds.

We were able to use some restricted money from a previous grant towards the cost of the sewing machines for the Grace leavers. This alongside Annie's resignation eased the shortfall on the project and has meant that a small surplus can be taken forward to 20/21.

The shortfall for Project 200+ is still being provided through general funds.

During the year it became apparent that there was a sum of money held by TREAD India that they couldn't currently spend so this was re-allocated back to the original funds in the UK. These funds will be used in future to purchase motorbikes and make repairs to TDCC. The money provided in a previous year from general funds to upgrade the internet facility is no longer needed for that purpose. There was also a sum of money left from the sale of the land which had been reserved for the upgrade of the Project 200+ buildings. This will be sent at a future date. The medicines fund also had a surplus so money will be sent to top this up when needed.

Vasanth and two of the managers travelled to Goa to spend some time with Pastor Matthew and El Shaddai for training and encouragement. The cost of this trip was met from the development fund.

The expenses of the two trips by Pastor Matthew and his staff to meet the trustees and managers of TIT were met from the consultancy fund. Three FOT trustees also attended one of the meetings in Hyderabad.

4. Governance Costs.

The FOT trustees decided during the year that they should purchase insurance to cover trustee indemnity and employee liability (including volunteers).

Tricia and David Owen and Jerry Dart made the trustees visit this year. It was a little different in that they attended a meeting in Hyderabad with the TIT trustees (including two new members); the director and managers of TIT and Pastor Matthew. The costs of two of the trustees were met by FOT.

A number of trustees also attended a meeting in London with Pastor Matthew.

We had a problem with the transfer and receipt of one of the drafts to India which resulted in the funds being returned to the FOT bank account in the UK. This resulted in costs of £80 in bank charges and exchange rate adjustment.

We are so grateful to Martin Fletcher for giving his time to independently examine the accounts.