

Issue 70 Nov 2023
SALT OF THE EARTH
Registered Charity 328328
www.sote.org.uk
Patron: Jeremy Irons



Saltseller

A year of development!

Our visit to India last January, after a three year enforced gap, brought home to us the huge impact your donations are having. We were able to see the developments of long-term projects, experience some new projects and revise our list of ethical gifts after talking to field staff.

Our long-standing health project has employed more staff this year and now funds specialised women's health camps as well as adult and child life skills training. Tree planting is now focusing on providing fruit trees for families, following requests from villagers.

Our new porridge project has taken off with great force, with life-changing impacts on

malnourished children within its first year of launch. The disability project is giving people, who were previously seen as outcasts in their community, the confidence to set up businesses and become self-reliant.

Next year, in early 2024, the management team will again be visiting India. This will be followed by a supporters' trip and a new sixth form student visit with a partner college in Northamptonshire. We are delighted that both groups will visit projects in action, meet with local people, and experience the wonderful sites South India has to offer.

We have re-launched our Instagram and Facebook pages so please follow and support us online if you can.



We remain a small team here in the UK, headed by Murray (Founding Trustee), Janet and Billie (Trustees), and Dave (Treasurer). Our development officer Lena is the only paid member of the team, working on a part-time freelance basis covering our marketing and administration.

With your help, we are able to fund projects that currently support over 400,000 living in rural poverty. This work is carried out in India by CRUSADE, WWI and CARE, our three dedicated partner organisations.

2024 will be our 36th year as a charity. We thank all of you who have donated this year and also our many long term supporters. Between us we are helping so many less fortunate people.

Lena Lang, Development Officer



@saltoftheearthcharity



@SOTEcharity



2023 At a Glance

WATER

CRUSADE has completed two water generation projects in the Non-Governmental Organisation's (NGOs) outreach area in and around Chennai in 2023. At the first site in Velur, Minjur block, a borewell was dug 90 feet deep, to avoid saline water below. The borewell will provide reliable and safe water to around 120 families. The second water project was completed in Alinjivakkam, Ellapuram Block. A borewell was dug to 120 feet with a 2000 litre tank situated in the heart of the village, directly benefiting 50 families. A third is in the process of being constructed.



ENVIRONMENTAL

WWI has planted 582 fruit trees this year! Several were planted as part of our new Ethical Gift - Fruit tree for a Family for £5. **Visit www.sote.org.uk/ethical-gifts to give a gift.** More trees will be planted as soon as the winter monsoons start.

CRUSADE has distributed 3400 packets of vegetable seeds between 748 Women's Self Help Group members (WSHG), and People with Disability group members (PwD). There are currently over 200 SOTE kitchen gardens in operation, providing low-cost, organic, and nutritious food to rural families.



DISABILITY PROJECT - CASE STUDY

M. Lalitha became orthopaedically handicapped after experiencing an accident at a company she worked for in Gummidipoondi town. She was left without a job and was seen as an outcast in her community. She formed the People with Disabilities (PwD) Self Help Group in her village which now has 10 members. She gained a Disability ID with the support of CRUSADE which grants her a state allowance of Rs 1500/ month (around £15).

CRUSADE and SOTE's disability project aims to provide people with disabilities with the tools and confidence to become self-reliant. M.Lalitha has received a prosthetic limb and has regular check-ups with CRUSADE doctors. She has set up a petty shop in her village which has boosted her morale and is earning her a regular income.

As well as this, she has undergone six months' tailoring training and has been provided with a sewing machine. She recently got married, and thanks SOTE for building her confidence and enabling her to be independent.



EMPOWERED WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE

WWI's EWC programme is holding monthly seminars for 50 rural women and staff, aimed at developing village leaders. In August, topics included sexual health and hygiene and water sanitation. An 'Is my village clean?' debate was held, with women discussing ideas on how to improve their community. Previous debates and discussions have included opportunities for young women, safer childbirth, sexual abuse and awareness, immunisation of children, and personal stories relating to abuse.

Discussions of this kind are taboo in rural communities, and there can be great fear of consequences. The team at WWI have felt themselves empowered holding such discussions and are seeing great changes in the women's confidence and self-belief. There is power in togetherness, and the response from the women involved has been overwhelmingly positive.

ADOLESCENT GIRLS ANAEMIA PROJECT - CASE STUDY

Keerthi, aged 16, was excited to attend college but was experiencing low energy levels. She attended a health assessment as a part of CRUSADE's incentive to boost haemoglobin levels in young women. Doctor Hari Priya, who specialises in women's health at CRUSADE, confirmed that Keerthi's haemoglobin levels were very low at 9.5gm/dl. The news worried her mother, who has keenly supported her daughter since learning of her condition.

Keerthi attended regular training sessions on diet and health practices. She incorporated iron rich food into her diet and consumed a nourishing health mix every day for 18 months. Her levels steadily rose – 10.9gm/dl, 11.5gm/dl, 11.8gm/dl, and 12.6gm/dl in the latest assessment. Moreover, Keerthi's menstrual cycle has now regularised, and she is full of life and dreams of college.



CHILD SPONSORSHIP CASE STUDY

Bindhu, aged 11, lives with her parents and older sister. Her parents have no regular work and can only afford the cheapest of meals to feed her and her sister.

Bindhu has been sponsored since starting school. Each year she receives school materials and uniform through sponsorship. She attends yearly educational trips and is supported with her homework at extra-curricular classes. At her school, hundreds of trees have been planted and the school playground has been renovated.

With the encouragement of WWI, Bindhu's mother has joined a local WSHG. Her mother has also set up a kitchen garden outside their home which will provide nutritious low cost food. In Bindhu's village there is a mobile clinic once every 15 days providing free medical check-ups and free medicines. Her performance at school is good and her teachers are very appreciative of her. She has grown to be quite self-confident. **Sponsor a child for £18 a month - www.sote.org.uk/child-sponsorship**



Fundraisers and diary dates!



Fundraising kicked off this year with long-term supporter Edward Bray walking Offa's Dyke's 177 miles, across 15 days. The challenge was a long-held ambition of his and he raised over £1,000 completing it. Well done Edward.

Fundraising £50 could pay for 10 fruit trees for poor families, £100 could go towards a women's skills training course, and £500 could pay for eight wellness camps for women.

Please do come along to an event in aid of our charity, or donate to a supporter completing a challenge. Even if you can't make it, donations are welcome in aid of their efforts. If you have an idea for fundraising, please do get in touch! - email lena@sote.org.uk



Father and son duo Vince and Mark spurred each other on in their first ever 10k run in October. A truly memorable experience to share together. Even more memorable for raising over £600! Thank you for your efforts.

The wonderful Leicester fundraising ladies are heading up the SOTE sale this year. Vicki and Jane from the team will also be running a second event, featuring fantastic live music.

A huge thank you to anyone who has helped to organise or taken part this year. We wouldn't be the charity we are without you.

SOTE Sale - Sat November 18th, 2023

With great demand, the SOTE Christmas sale is back! Join us as we showcase local talent and raise money for our projects in India. You can expect an array of beautiful gifts and creations, as well as the popular cake stall.

Entry is free! 10am-4pm, with chocolate tombola and SOTE hamper winners drawn towards the end. **Christchurch Hall, 105a Clarendon Park Road Leicester LE2 3AH**

Live Music 70's / 80's Night! - Friday 1st December, 2023

Building on the success of last year, Glam Rock legends 'The Platforms' are back performing songs to get you grooving all night long. Join us for a fun night of laughter and hits from the 70's / 80's - Dressing up encouraged! All profits to SOTE!

Tickets are £15! 8pm-1am - 2Funky Music Cafe, 23A New Park St, Leicester LE3 5NH
Tickets available on eventbrite.

Give a gift that makes a difference this Christmas

Medical check for an elder - £15

Newborn Baby and Mother Package - £22.50

Fruit tree for a family - £5

Crisis food kit for a family - £17.50

3-month supply of nutritious porridge - £20

Kitchen garden starter kit - £25.00

Please visit sote.org.uk/ethical-gifts

Support our projects

Please send your donation via bank transfer to:

Salt of the Earth
CAF Cash account number:
00007729
Sort code: 40-52-40



Cheques can be sent directly to our Treasurer, Dave Bradly, at 54 Ashley Road, Leicester, LE3 0FB

Donate online - scan with your phone camera!

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