



Our new CEO reports on our changes



It has been my first six months in post and it certainly has been full of exhilaration alongside all the bumps that come along during a transition period. I am extremely happy with the progress that we have made thanks to all of the support from Murray and the other Trustees. In this edition I wanted to give you a flavour of some of the new additions and positive changes at Salt of the Earth.



Reena meets with beneficiaries during her visit to Tamil Nadu in June 2016

Firstly, I am delighted to announce that our long-term partner in Tamil Nadu, SCAD, have come to a point where they can sustain the long-term existing projects supported by SOTE by themselves from January 2017. This is a very positive sign from a development perspective and is exactly what we should be striving for as a charity. Further congratulations to Cletus and his team at SCAD for achieving this. We will support SCAD projects until the end of 2016 and then look forward to hearing about SCAD's progress in the coming years. I am sure Cletus would join me in thanking all of you as many of the projects would not have been possible without your loyal support.

I am also proud and excited to say that SOTE will continue our work in rural India to help even more beneficiaries out of rural poverty. I have recently been out to Tamil Nadu to visit our two new partners whom I would like to formally introduce – Centre for Rural Systems

and Development (CRUSADE) and Centre for Action and Resource Foundation (CARE Foundation). We will be supporting these two exceptional organisations in the important rural development work they are carrying out and you can read much more about them on

pages 6 and 7. I am sure you will agree with me that they are a great fit for SOTE and share our ethos and values by tackling issues at the grassroots level. If you would like to visit them, we would love to welcome you on our annual tour in January 2017 where you would have the first opportunity to interact with our partners and beneficiaries directly.

My recent visit to India reinvigorated my passion for tackling issues in rural areas where not only is there poor access to water, shelter, food, education and healthcare but also many other issues such as domestic violence and alcohol abuse. There is still so much to be done and I am very much looking forward to the next phase where SOTE will continue to make a difference to people who need it most.

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Our new CEO reports on our changes

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Reena meets with a young girl and talks about her schooling and her aspirations



Jothi, founder of CRUSADE meets with Reena

Finally, I would like to welcome Jane and Simon Fielding on board as Managing Trustees. It should be more of a 'welcome back' to Jane as she was one of the first Trustees that Salt of the Earth had 27 years ago. Jane not only has a long association with the charity but also brings experience from running a successful business as well as having expertise in marketing and sales. Simon joins the board with a wealth of experience which he will talk about in his introductory piece and I can confidently say that Murray can be rest assured that all the work he started all those years ago will go from strength to strength.

I hope you enjoy this edition of SaltSeller and that the new developments excite you as much as they do us here at SOTE! If you have any questions, then please do not hesitate to get in contact at reena@sote.org.uk

REENA AGARWAL

New Trustees at SOTE

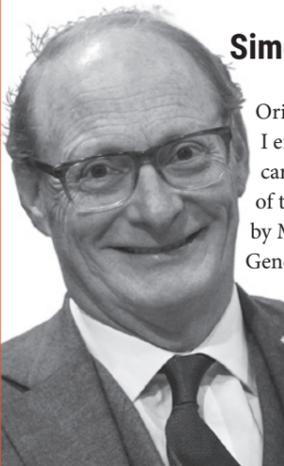
SOTE are delighted that Jane and Simon have joined the Trustees board. Their added experience will help SOTE develop and grow as the charity moves forward.



Jane Fielding

I am delighted to have been asked to become a Trustee of SOTE again having been one of the original Trustees back at SOTE's inception 27 years ago. Over the years I have been interested in the growth and changes due to the hard working and committed Trustees of SOTE on the lives of the rural poor in Tamil Nadu.

Murray's vision and ability to inspire others to join them and achieve the seemingly impossible is an inspiration. My visit to the SOTE funded projects in January was life changing and I saw just how much the work SOTE supports has transformed lives. I have recently retired after many years from my marketing business and hope now to bring this experience into SOTE and join the other Trustees in continuing to make a difference to the lives of others who deserve so much more.



Simon Fielding OBE DO

Originally qualifying as an Osteopath I embarked on a clinical and academic career. Being considered the architect of the Osteopaths Act I was appointed by Ministers as the first Chair of the General Osteopathic Council and later spent 11 years as a Specialist Adviser at the Department of Health. I was a long time Trustee on the boards of The Prince of Wales's Foundation for Integrated Health, Demelza House Children's Hospice, The Spinal Foundation and The International Osteopathic Alliance.

I currently Chair The Crossfields Institute and the Kairos Rehabilitation Trust and am Deputy Chair of Trustees of The College of Medicine.

During my career I have had the opportunity to work with NGOs operating in many developing countries and have a particular passion for India. I am truly delighted to have the opportunity of working with SOTE to help some of the poorest members of our global community towards a better, healthier and more sustainable future.

My visit to SCAD

I first visited SCAD between November and December 2013. It was a great opportunity for me to get involved and experience things I never have before! As a retired occupational therapist I had always been keen to do voluntary work in India. I knew about the various projects that SOTE supported at SCAD, but didn't expect to find myself working with children; an area that was very new to me. When I left SCAD in 2013 it was with a sense of sadness and a strong determination to follow their work and one day return.

My opportunity to return came in February this year when I spent five days back at SCAD. It felt like a homecoming for me and I was welcomed back warmly. I wanted to see my old friends, to be updated on developments and to identify work that I might be able to be involved in for future visits.



During my visit I spent time with the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) team at Anbu Illam where I delivered a short training session for the teachers.

During my day with the CBR workers we visited about 10 children; some at home and some at school. The children's disabilities varied from a 13-year-old boy with a deformed hand requiring surgery to a 17-year-old young man with profound learning and physical disabilities. We also visited a delightful 4-year-old boy with cerebral palsy who was physically very disabled, but although he had no verbal communication, I had the impression that intellectually he was not impaired. His mother carried him everywhere, and equipment that had been made for him in the past was no longer suitable because he had grown. I was struck by the love of the mother and her cheerfulness despite the hard work of caring for her son. We talked about what the CBR team could do to support this family and provide the child with the equipment he needs. I am hopeful that this child will be



enabled to make good progress with ongoing support from the CBR team. I was also able to present a document to the CBR team that will allow them to record progress in the children they support.

On visiting Anbu Illam School, I was impressed at the changes since my last visit. School attendance and the quality of the lessons have improved substantially; the classes I sat in on were lively and the children were well occupied and happy. One of the principal's aims is to make the school a place the children want to go to and he seems to be succeeding. During my visit in 2013 I worked with a 7-year-old autistic girl who was very withdrawn and reluctant to engage in any activities. Her drawings were like that of a 2-year-old and she was largely neglected and ignored by staff and students alike. Now, this child engages in activities, follows instructions from her teacher, has friends, shows a sense of humour and is learning to communicate using Makaton. I was deeply moved by these amazing changes.



In five short days I achieved what I had set out to achieve, and I really look forward to going back again one day.

JENNY WHITING

News from SCAD

Flood relief work



SCAD's flood relief work

Unprecedented heavy monsoon rains lashed Tamil Nadu in December 2015, bringing normal life to a standstill. Over 190 people died and 2,500 villages were badly affected. In Cuddalore district, over 50 villages were flooded and hundreds of families spent weeks in relief camps. Crops, cattle, buildings and facilities were badly damaged.

SCAD supported victims in Cuddalore, Kanchipuram, Tiruvallur and Tuticorin districts. They made door-to-door assessments of villagers' needs, particularly women and children's and provided relief kits of 23 items including clothes, oil, soap, food and bedding to 1,325 families.

24 villages in Tuticorin district were affected by floods and received visits from a team of mobile health personnel, including counsellors and doctors. Nilavembu herbal medication was administered to increase resistance to infectious diseases.

SCAD also gave assistance to those whose homes had been completely destroyed. 50 families were given help to build shelters to replace their lost homes.

Water lifeline extended



Renovated ooranie in Kalugasalapuram village

Many parts of India experience water shortage. Villagers rely on rainwater stored in 'ooranies' (village common ponds). Years ago villagers de-silted the ponds themselves, moving silt with their bullock carts to fertilize cultivated land. With tractors replacing carts and ready-made fertilizers available, this practice has declined. Ooranies can silt up and reduce capacity.

The 300 households in Kalugasalapuram village relied on one well near their village pond to supply water for agriculture and drinking. When it stopped meeting their needs villagers had to walk several kilometres a day to collect water.

In 2016, SCAD de-silted and deepened the village pond, also creating a baby pond inside it. The nearby well was also restored. This all increased water storage capacity. Despite little heavy rainfall, continuous lighter rainfall improved the ground water table and seepage water filled the pond. Water was available throughout the summer until the next rains arrived.

'Ten trees for each household'



Beneficiaries and their produce

Fruit trees provide nutrition and income, aid pollution control and biodiversity and help reduce malnourishment in remote villages. Hence SCAD's promotion of "Ten trees for each household".

Women with spare ground near their home were selected and provided with training, ten different fruit saplings and biofertilizers. Mrs. K. Rajammal, an agricultural labourer from Kakkarampatti village, Tuticorin was one beneficiary. She learnt how to care for the trees and now grows mango, papaya, guava, gooseberry, pomegranate, sapota, acid lime, coconut, drumstick and curry leaf. She and her family enjoy fresh fruits and sell the surplus to neighbours. She earns around 2000 Indian Rupees (£20.78) each fruiting season and expenditure on market fruit and vegetables is considerably reduced.

Her success inspired her neighbours, who also planted trees. Almost 80% of households in her area have at least seven fruit trees. Everyone is pleased with their fruit trees from SCAD.

Helping adolescent girls



Health Co-Ordinator in discussion with an adolescent girl

The transition from child to adult can be difficult, particularly for girls. Bodily changes producing increased nutritional needs, combined with changes in relationships can result in physical illness or depression. Girls are rarely able to share personal problems with a female relative so many need advice and support. SCAD helps with its training programme for adolescent girls.

Training was run for 15 girls in Vedanatham. Initially reluctant to share details, they eventually discussed their concerns.

Varathalakshmi, for example, was depressed and spoke of irregular periods and weight gain. SCAD staff thought she might have a thyroid problem and referred her for a medical check-up. Thyroid deficiency was confirmed and treatment began. Her periods became more regular and her weight reduced. Now she can concentrate on preparing for exams. Her education could have been affected if she had continued to keep her problems to herself.

School garden nutrition



Maintenance of school garden

Malnutrition and stunting can irreversibly affect a child's education and later working life. Many children's diets contain few vegetables and then only of poor quality. School gardening is a way of tackling this.

SCAD animators identify schools with potential to take part. They then supply seeds and fruit saplings, bio fertilizers, earthworms for compost units and train the students and their teachers.

School gardens can provide fresh, good quality vegetables for school meals. Students will learn about gardening and nutrition and their food choices and attitudes improve. They may also feel proud of their gardening achievements which in turn can enhance attitudes towards school. Teachers' new gardening skills can be used at home.

A case study in Manakarai village, where 30 children attend the primary school, found that their school garden yielded a total of 194 kg of vegetables and provided vegetables for 75 days.

World Disability Day



World Disability Day

World Disability Day 2015 was celebrated on 3rd December in Tirunelveli. The Mayor was among those who attended this key event for people with disabilities, along with 500 children, parents and SCAD staff.

SCAD gave appliances and economic assistance to various individuals and presented prizes and certificates to 84 sports competition winners.

The Mayor praised SCAD's work with children with disabilities and encouraged parents to make use of SCAD's services.

The District Collector of Tirunelveli recalled SCAD's work for those with special needs, which led to them receiving in August 2015 an award for best NGO, for serving differently abled people in a unique manner. This award had been presented by the Chief Minister during an Independence Day function.

Each participant celebrating World Disability Day was made aware of SCAD's services to people with disabilities and encouraged to use them.

Our new partners in India

During June 2016 I visited Tamil Nadu to visit our new partners Centre for Rural Systems and Development (CRUSADE) and Centre for Action and Resource Foundation (CARE). During my two-week trip I had the chance to sit down and talk to both founders to get a deeper understanding of them, their organisation and why it is so vital SOTE supports the projects they implement.

CRUSADE



So how did CRUSADE start?

I was working in state government and then in Gujarat in the National Dairy Development Board. After a few years, I became disillusioned. While I was in Gujarat, I had the opportunity to visit other voluntary groups, I then realised that my place is within the voluntary field. So I resigned and joined a voluntary organisation in Madurai. After working there for more than six years I decided to quit and set up my own organisation in June 1991 in my native place of Minjur.

Tell me a bit more about your background and experience

As a development professional, I have been involved in monitoring and evaluation of NGOs on behalf of both government and funding agencies. This experience has given me the chance to see how to run, and not to run an NGO in India. My experience within the development sector has considerably helped me in running CRUSADE effectively.

What was your motivation to start CRUSADE?

I have always felt that we should not get carried away by what we have in life. I feel that the community has helped me so much in my life, I feel indebted to society and for that I wanted to give back by way of working with the people. That's the reason I started CRUSADE.

Many of our supporters are reading about CRUSADE for the first time. How would you explain what CRUSADE does?

CRUSADE performs in the following areas: women's empowerment, poverty alleviation, rehabilitation of differently abled, healthcare and protecting the environment. Initially, CRUSADE started with organising poor women into Women's Self Help Groups which was

then a new concept and I saw its potential in building the capacity of people. CRUSADE is very focused on power delegation and giving importance to targeted excluded groups. Secondly, CRUSADE works with panchayats, which is the local government at village level. CRUSADE gives orientation and training to elected representatives in preparation of village development plans so village panchayats know how to work with state and national government.

What is life like for people here?

25% of people here are from the Dalit community, which is historically marginalized and oppressed. These people have very little assets, low literacy rates and a poor health status.

Do you have a specific inspiring story or a moment you remember from your work?

On several occasions, how can I pick one? There are so many moments.

How do you feel about CRUSADE's partnership with Salt of the Earth?

CRUSADE is happy to partner with SOTE so we can share our work, mobilise more resources and ultimately help even more people.

Do you have a message for all the SOTE supporters in the UK?

CRUSADE is happy to collaborate with SOTE. We hope that with the support of SOTE, CRUSADE will be able to expand and help more people. Thank you.

“...with the support of SOTE, we will be able to expand and help more people. (CRUSADE)
...SOTE's support really will make a difference to the lives of the children. (CARE)”

CARE



How did the CARE Foundation start?

CARE Foundation started in December 2012. We started with a group of graduates who CARE had been supporting before we were registered. These graduates joined together and started CARE Foundation. We were registered in 2012 with the aim of working to help the Londer begging community.

What is your background and experience?

I studied engineering, but then moved into social work and became a social worker. I joined a social organisation called Action Wing for Rural Development as a programme co-ordinator of rural development, working with rural youths. After eight years and with this experience I set up the CARE Foundation.

What does the CARE Foundation do?

The CARE Foundation work on community development of the Londer community with a focus on child education, health, rights and soon alternative income programmes for adults.

What is life like for the people of the Londer community?

The Londer community follow their tradition of begging on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday. They live off this money for the week in extremely poor conditions. There is a problem of alcohol abuse that is damaging to everyone in the community. A lack of child education is a major problem and something that contributes to the continuation of poverty faced. The people of the Londer community are also not recognised by the government; that causes further problems.

How has life changed since CARE's involvement?

Now children's lives have changed because they are going to school

and receiving an education. By working with members of the Londer community, people come to us and ask for our support. We are about to start working with the Londer community in skills training so they can seek alternative employment and end their begging culture.

What was your motivation to start the CARE Foundation?

My experience of being in rural areas and the pure number of children who weren't receiving education. I wanted to mobilise the CARE Foundation as I understand the importance of education for children.

Do you have a moment that you will always remember from your work?

Yes, one girl called Nandhi. She was 6 when we came across her. Her mother had committed suicide and her father had left her. The community was looking after her. She was in a very bad way and had a brain injury so we took her to the hospital. If CARE hadn't intervened she would have died. She now attends the special school and her life is on track.

What is the CARE Foundation's future plans?

We want to fully eradicate the culture of begging within the Londer community.

How do you feel about the partnership with SOTE?

It is very helpful for the community. It's a challenging community and we are very happy that SOTE are going to support us as we work in increasing child education within the Londer community. SOTE's support really will make a difference to the lives of the children.

I hope that these interviews give you a good understanding of our new partners. However, if you have any questions for me then please get in touch at tom@sote.org.uk and I will be more than happy to answer them.

TOM EDWARDS

2017 tour to India from £800 per person

Be the first to see Salt of the Earth's new partners in the north of Tamil Nadu from Sunday 8th to Saturday 21st January 2017



This new tour starts at Chennai, Tamil Nadu's state capital. Formerly known as Madras, this is a fascinating city with historical sights dating back to the early British rule set amongst Tamil culture, temples and markets. We also spend two days with CRUSADE north of Chennai.

For our next destination we travel south to Puducherry, also known as Pondicherry. The centuries of French rule gave this town a unique Indo-Franco atmosphere, preserved in the architecture and relaxed lifestyle.



Moving back up the coast to Mahabalipuram, we see some of the oldest Hindu temples in Southern India, dating back to the 6th century. From our base at Mahabalipuram we visit the CARE Foundation.



This tour has a limited number of spaces. We recommend early booking to ensure you are the first to see our new partners in India

For full information please contact

Tom: tom@sote.org.uk

or Eddie: eddie@sote.org.uk

Questions and answers

1. Why do SCAD not need SOTE's support anymore?

We are delighted that, after 28 years of supporting SCAD, they now feel that from 2017 onwards they will be able to self-finance the work that previously this charity has funded. We shall continue to fund these projects for the rest of this year and we have been assured by SCAD that the projects will continue in 2017 and beyond.

2. How did you find the CARE Foundation & CRUSADE?

Both organisations have been highly recommended to us and Reena visited both these reputable organisations in January and June 2016. She was impressed with their transparency and accountability and is confident that they match SOTE's values and ethos.

3. Has SOTE's philosophy changed in any way?

SOTE's philosophy still remains the same. As a charity we are looking to support rural development projects that have a positive impact and make a difference to those in need.

4. Why are we going to support more than one NGO?

We are not restricted to the number of partners we work with and will support projects that fit with the vision and mission of SOTE.

5. What will happen to all the SCAD projects that SOTE have supported?

From 2017 onwards SCAD have assured us that they will continue to run the projects that we have been funding.

6. What will happen to the children and villages I have sponsored at SCAD?

SCAD will continue to work with the children and villages that have been sponsored by SOTE supporters using their own funds from 2017.

7. Will the tree-planting scheme be continued at SCAD?

SCAD are going to continue with the tree-planting project using their own funds from 2017.

8. What will happen to child, village and tree sponsorship donations from 2017 onwards?

We intend to offer comparable child, village and tree-planting schemes from 2017 onwards. Once final plans have been agreed with our new partner organisations you will be sent full details. You can rest assured that our previous high standards will be maintained.

9. As a sponsor will I get the same service and reports as before?

Yes of course and SOTE will ensure that sponsors will receive the same high quality and informative reports as they have historically.

10. As a supporter what, if anything, will change as a result of these changes? (i.e. newsletters etc.)

Please rest assured that nothing will change due to SOTE working with new partners. You will still receive bi-annual newsletters, social media updates and reports on the work you support.

11. Will the annual tour continue?

Yes! SOTE's annual tour is a great chance to meet the people that you support and learn more about the projects. Our annual tour is planned for January 2017 and we hope you can join us to be the first to see our new partners.