

# Annual Report 2015

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**The Friends of H.O.P.E  
Charity directory**

**REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER** 3647389  
(incorporated: 9 October 1998)

**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER** 1083028  
(registered: 25 October 2000)

**COMPANY SECRETARY**  
D Pople

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## Introduction

The Friends of H.O.P.E (FoH) was formed in 1999 to support the work of Vanya Orr in India. Vanya retired in 2013 but her life's work continues. In this past year FoH has been working not only as it has in the past with The Earth Trust, but unlike in previous years, we have focused on encouraging a new start-up NGO, The Garden of HOPE Trust, and widened engagement with NAWA and ACCORD (see later in this report). Vanya's vision was to help create a sustainable livelihood for the people of the region today and future generations, in particular through protecting the environment, local tradition and cultures:

- Working with farmers to help them develop efficient biodynamic organic farming techniques to improve and enhance food production
- a healthcare programme; in particular working closely with the women of the communities to provide primary healthcare for their families and communities,
- an eco-club education programme, where children are taught how to care for the environment and learn how to grow organic vegetables,
- and helping village women to develop income generation projects for themselves and their village communities.

The Friends of H.O.P.E. provides financial support, strategic guidance and practical advice where needed. The relationship between FoH and implementing agencies are governed by Memoranda of Understanding and project agreements. All money raised by FoH, except for a very small amount needed to cover its administrative expenses, is remitted to the partnering NGO's. **The Friends of H.O.P.E. does not and has never paid fees to its trustees who provide their services entirely on a voluntary basis.**

Vanya Orr had family connection in the Nilgiris and her great grandfather was once the superintendent of the quinine estate near Doddabetta and which gave its name to Cinchona village. Some 20 years ago Vanya gave up everything in the UK and moved from The Friends Meeting House in Winchester, where she lived, to Cinchona to begin what was to become her life's work.

Vanya quickly established a deep spiritual connection with the rural tribes' people in the area and through her tireless and selfless efforts helped alleviate poverty afflicting thousands of lives. When Vanya retired in 2013 she was made Honorary Life President of The Friends of H.O.P.E in recognition of her achievements in helping the rural poor of India.

The Nilgiri Hills are approximately 7000 feet above sea level. Stunningly beautiful, the region is primarily agricultural. Nilgiri tea is particularly well known. To get there by road from Bangalore you travel through Mysore, onwards through the National Park of Bandipur, into the Mudamalai Tiger Reserve and then into the mountains, negotiating a series of hairpin bends which make your hair stand on end, particularly if you meet on-coming traffic in low cloud conditions! To Ooty by road from Coimbatore one passes dramatic waterfalls and mountainside covered with shola forest. Alternatively you could of course take the mountain railway, a world heritage site, featured recently in a short BBC television series about Indian mountain railways! This important biosphere is at the very heart of our work. In the Nilgiris, however, the landscape is populated by degraded and polluted watersheds and farms. Soil erosion is very noticeable. Behind the mask of beauty lies abject poverty. Farming in India is in crisis. There are numerous occurrences in the region of farmer suicides brought on by persistent hardship (see farming projects on page 5). Infanticide of girl children is prevalent. The base poverty line is assessed at Rs20,000 a year in the area, that's about Rs400 a week, which just under £1 a day for a 6 day working week. But if family support is required for a family of 4 children or more and who need further education (college or university) the poverty line can be re-drawn quite easily on income equating to Rs6,000 per month (£720 a year).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Typical home of rural poor in the area

Since we began we have helped over 180 villages. The rural poor in the Nilgiris also include indigenous tribal people – The Badegas, The Irullas, The Kotas, The Todas, and The Kurumbas (forest dwellers) are the principal groups. Each tribal community has its own culture and superstitions. We are helping them create sustainable livelihoods through a holistic programme achieved by training farmers, helping them to convert to biodynamic organic farming with ‘zero input cost’ other than their own time or employed labour. Another important element of this work is restoring goodness to the soil, encouraging the planting of shola tree saplings which combined mitigates the impact of climatic change on the land. By reducing fertilizer and pesticide residues (including weed killer that finds its way into river systems) we have shown that growers can improve yield, and (we believe) produce more nutritious crops. Our farming programme then integrates with our traditional health programmes as another goal is to improve health in these communities including programmes that support people living with HIV or Aids (PLWHIV). We also run income generation programmes such as dressmaking, knitting and craft training. Another important part of our work is the school eco-club programme where 10 schools around in the Coimbatore area are currently participating. Finally we have established a small fund to support students from poor family backgrounds who cannot afford for their offspring to attend institutes of further education, and a small

widows and single parent fund to assist poor families who approach us for support.

We are well connected with local Government and have been requested to participate in the organic movement in the Nilgiris in conjunction with government via the National Horticultural Mission and NABARD (National Agricultural Bank for Research and Development). Since the programme started, between 100 and 200 farmers each year are trained in bio-dynamic organic farming methods and many farmers continue to be supported by our outreach team as required. Field visits were made to over 40 villages last year as we sought to establish the organic awareness centres.

### **Relationship between The Friends of H.O.P.E and its partners**

As mentioned in the introductory remarks, the relationship between FoH and the partnering agencies is governed by Memoranda of Understanding (MoU's) or Project Agreement (the governing documents). These documents define the parameters as to how the charities work together, with FoH providing funding, advisory and practical help on an as-needed basis and with the Indian agencies being the implementing partners. The MoU's allow for FoH to be provided with reports on a regular basis, and also stipulate that each NGO will be fully accountable to FoH for the way in which funding from FoH is used. With written reports and other information supplied regularly those who give money can be assured that donations are used for the intended purpose and not wasted.

### **Widows, single parents and education funds**

We have established a hardship fund to support widows and single parents. We have also established an education fund to help aspirational children and students from poor, desperate backgrounds achieve their dreams and to help children from indigenous tribal groups with further educational and vocational support.

## Highlights and achievements during the past 12 months

- Tradition healthcare project – Rejuvenation of traditional Tribal medical Practices project (RTTMP) successfully launched and 15 women drawn from 3 tribal communities, together with 2 Interns, are now training as community health organisers to provide initial health care to 60 villages and document knowledge before it is lost to future generations.
- Following restructuring, all other elements of our past support programmes were also re-drawn as a Garden of HOPE project with NAWA. The farming outreach programme is back on track with a number of organic awareness centres having been agreed (see farming outreach project below).
- Over 100 growers, village women and farmers are regularly attending training programmes at Thambatty resource nursery.
- Agreement in principle to work with ACCORD NGO regarding establishing 4 area organic awareness centres in each of the 4 indigenous tribal village clusters that they principally help.
- Monthly HIV meetings continue and principles of revamped HIV initiative agreed with the PLWHIV. The revised programme is being/will be implemented by The Garden of Hope Trust, NAWA GoH umbrella, and ASHWINI.
- ASHWINI (the Adivasi hospital arm of ACCORD) commence HIV support programme for Gudalor district, including screening for TB.
- ASHWINI introduced to The Royal College of Radiology in London
- Eco clubs established in 10 new schools in the Coimbatore area
- In the UK, celebrity fundraising supper evenings continued with broadcaster and travel writer, John Pilkington giving 2 illustrated talks; Paul Bowler CEO of Winchester Distillery gave a talk and master class on making a good gin and tonic, linking the story to the Cinchona quinine bush and the quinine estate at Cinchona village in the Nilgiris.
- Further UK fundraising events are being organised for 2016
- Onaway Trust's representative visits projects during the year.

## Farming

Farming in India, despite accounting for 14% of India's GDP, is in crisis. Helping farmers and growers is mission critical for us. Many farmers and growers commit suicide each year and many widows do not receive compensation (often as high as 60% of widows in some states) and the surviving spouse is pressurised into repaying mountains of debt. In 2014, 5650 farmers in India killed themselves and more than 20,000 housewives took their lives, and the rate – more than 20 per 100,000 people average – is higher in Tamil Nadu where the cause of suicide is often farming related. **Most of our farmers and growers try to make a living on less than half an acre of land and so it is important that we continuously show them how to improve yield and quality to give them a chance of a sustainable living. Providing training to the village women in the current farming environment is essential.**



Kollimalai training nursery

We are grateful to The Onaway Trust in the UK for agreeing to support our farming outreach programme over a period of 3 years.

## Our food – our environment, our future: a 3 year farming outreach initiative.

### Project Summary

Recent headlines describe India's farming as "fields of despair".

Agriculture is the primary source of income for the majority of families in the Nilgiris. But poor land management, over-use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides has led to contaminated soil and water courses, and vegetables and fruits have significant traces and residues of all of this. A few years back now I remember being told by the village elders in Kerada village that there has been a massive increase in the incidence of breast cancer which they had put down to the weedkiller 'Round-Up' getting into their local sources of water. There is clearly an urgent need for introducing alternative sustainable techniques in Nilgiris.

The Organic Awareness Centres (OAC's) of the Garden of Hope project of NAWA focus on organic and biodynamic farming, and environmental issues. This project helps communities, farmers and growers understand consequential food issues and challenges.

The communities have to help themselves and create sustainable environments by harnessing those who are convinced and utilizing them as positive agents for sustainable organic development. Our programme, which is replicable, establishes around 15-20 OAC's over the course of 3 years. During 2015, 9 OAC's had been established and or farmers selected. At the Resource nursery and on site at the OAC, training included slope management, raised bed techniques, crop rotation, provision of BD inputs, alternative waste management, recycling, soil restoration and community based alternative income streams such as growing medicinal herbs.

A detailed baseline survey of each village and area is completed when the farmer-growers have been 'signed up'. To help encourage co-operation of the selected growers, a stipend will be paid over the first year of the project - this

compensates the grower for any lost income whilst the piece of land is converted to organics.



Training at Thambatty: Ms Pushpa demonstrating how to make Jeevamritham to a group of 23 Kurumba tribal women from Manjoor who attended a Dept of Horticulture programme titled 'organic farming for beginners'. Pushpa had a terrific connection with this group and at the end of the day's training exchanged telephone numbers with many of the women.

The specific objectives of the project are to:-

- Improve knowledge, skill levels and methodologies among rural farming communities,
- Demonstrate use and value of panchagavya, CPP, BD preparations, jeevamritham, pest repellents, bio-dynamic and vermi-compost,
- Exchange of information and documentation of activities,
- Help farmers to optimize yield and net sales value from their smallholding,

- Facilitate the concept of environmental citizenship through shared knowledge and sense of responsibility.
- Each OAC farmer/grower to have delegated responsibility to help growers change to biodynamic production with a target of up to 20 organic smallholdings in his/her village.
- Each OAC farmer/grower has to encourage village women to establish kitchen nutritional gardens.
- Continuous training during initial 12 month period, and on-site support
- R&D... soil analysis, laboratory testing of nutrition content of vegetables and comparing yield, sales value and nutrition content to vegetables grown with fertilizers.
- Improved nutrition and well-being of village community
- maintain cultural traditions.
- involve the school eco-clubs.



BD compost making at the Thambatty resource nursery. Cow dung slurry is added together with BD507, Velerian



The photograph above is of Philomena's land at Gudalor. Philomena is a widow (see photo below) with a 1.5 acre small-holding. Philomena lost her husband some years ago and has been struggling to bring up her family ever since, faced with a burden of debt like so many widows in India. Because of her poor health she has been unable to cultivate her land for several years. We are helping her to restore her land as one of the OAC's and YAM will be one of the anchor crops to be grown. Her small-holding will be an ideal showcase for organic cultivation



Sunil Ranjith's OAC signage at Koderi village



day with him our project manager, Sivakumar, decided to cover the stems of the damaged cauliflower plant with a 'sleeve'. The plants recovered and Sunil managed to harvest a good crop as you can see from the photographs above and below



Below, Sunil Ranjith preparing Jeevamritham for his cauliflower and chow chow



Sunil is a progressive young grower with two acres of land and agreed to create an OAC last year on half an acre, planting chow chow as his primary crop and inter-cropping with cauliflower and celery. Sunil ran into problems when the cauliflower plants were damaged by black-cut worms. After spending a whole



The photograph above is of Sunil and Sivakumar our programme manager proudly showing off the fruits of labour!

Below – CPP preparation,



Below - collecting soil samples for laboratory testing



### Supply chain for marketing and selling vegetables

Growers repeatedly ask us for help in selling their produce. Our plan is to establish a supply chain so that the grower can sell directly to the buyer – both wholesaler and retailer. One of the trustees of the GoHT is looking at establishing the supply chain concept in the ensuing year.

## Health and hope

### HIV/Aids

The tribal communities we deal with are principally made up of 9-10 indigenous tribes all steeped in tradition and culture and taboo. A society where the world seems to pass by, for we see only few benefits from the economic growth that is obvious in the major cities of India. HIV/Aids in many regions of India is swept under the carpet, and we find this to be the case in our area, making it difficult to obtain reliable overall statistics as to the number of infected persons. We have been working with the rural poor now for over 15 years and have established confidentiality and trust with the tribal groups, as we are respecting of culture and traditions at all times.

Our programme of support continued throughout the year. Monthly meetings were attended by an average of around 18 people living with HIV (PLWHIV) including children. Towards the end of the year, discussions were commenced with local agencies, including NAWA and ACCORD, to piece together an intervention programme that the PLWHIV and Aids wanted to see.



The photograph above, shows some of the 32 PLWHIV who attended a meeting to discuss how this might be achieved

It was agreed that ACCORD would implement (via ASHWINI their Adivasi (tribal) hospital) a new programme in the Gudalor bloc area which would include home visits, counselling and screening, for both HIV and TB. Currently there are 23 PLWHIV participating, and approximately 160 people from tribal communities in the Gudalor district are screened each month for both TB and HIV. During the last five months ASHWINI have identified significant mental health issues among the PLWHA and their care givers. Their report on this is awaited.

We discussed with NAWA about providing support programmes to cover the Kothagiri bloc and it was agreed that a young woman, Shanti, would look to involve the PLWHIV to provide a sustainable and holistic programme of intervention to cover the Kothagiri, Coonoor and Ooty blocs where we know that approximately 400 PLWHIV do not attend government hospitals and don't take ART. There are also 20 children and young people up to the age of 19 in the Ooty/Coonoor blocs who need support. These young people have either been orphaned or they are from single parent family situations which are desperate, and where little or no income support is provided by government.

Over the past year or two we are led to understand that the local day care centres have closed and so PLWHIV in the Coonoor and Ooty blocs have no choice but to join the queues at the local government hospital. Because of stigma however the PLWHIV are reluctant to do this and so it was decided that we would support the initiative proposed by the people themselves as follows:

- To secure the services of a trusted doctor and nursing support
- To find a suitable place in which to establish a day clinic where the PLWHIV could obtain help.
- To review counselling support, perhaps with a view to providing community and specialist support to restore individual confidence.
- Through the GoH Trust and NAWA, training and support would be provided to help PLWHIV secure a sustainable livelihood. Ideas promoted followed the strengths of The Garden of HOPE Trust and included organic kitchen gardens, traditional healthcare and income

support, possibly income generation such as tailoring, or income that might arise from providing training programmes such as blacksmithing which NAWA had introduced in the past.

We will also make available nutritional supplements to help boost the immune systems of PLWHIV and whilst good nutritious vegetables and pulses help, we are finding that other plants used in traditional healthcare and Siddha can help provide a significant boost, such as the leaf from the bush below.



Providing nutritional supplements and organic vegetables certainly does help PLWHIV overcome tiredness, feelings of nausea etc. and it also helps balancing ART side effects.

You may have heard negative reports about money being sent by large charities to India to help with HIV. We don't have details of any of those programmes to hand but what we can say is that our programme is helpful with patients being really appreciative - **"it's good to know somebody really cares"**.

We are appreciative of the support provided by The Mercury Phoenix Trust and the Church of Ireland Bishop's Appeal committee who have been co-funding our HIV programme now for the last few years.



Above, Health education and screening for HIV and TB at Koomamoola village, Pandalur. This session was conducted by ASHWINI's health outreach team

### Royal College of Radiology

During the year we were invited to introduce the principals running the ACCORD/ASHWINI NGO based in Gudalur to the Royal College of Radiology in London. ASHWINI have a modern maternity unit for ADIVASI's (tribals) which was primarily funded by The Tata Trust. They have X-ray and ultrasound equipment but are in need of continuous staff training Through RCR International there are a variety of radiologists interested in spending time abroad teaching radiology and are working on setting up long term partnership projects. This is attractive to ASHWINI as being an ADIVASI hospital they employ staff drawn from the tribal community in their area and so they have an urgent need for on-going training. The meeting with Dr Ruth Williamson in London was an introductory meeting. We await a formal response from RCR.

### 60 tribal villages to benefit from new healthcare initiative! Rejuvenation of Traditional Tribal Medical Practices project

An MOU between FoH and NAWA was signed early in 2015 and launched with a formal inauguration ceremony.



The RTTMP (rejuvenation of traditional tribal medical practices) project is hugely important. It's important because not only is it delivering front line healthcare in tribal villages (60 villages feature in the project, some 1400 families and over 7200 very poor people are benefitting) but as a joint initiative with NAWA, it serves as a very important base for establishing a link of Tribal Medicinal practices with that of Ayurvedic and Siddha medical practices mainstreamed as alternative medicine in the Indian medical system.

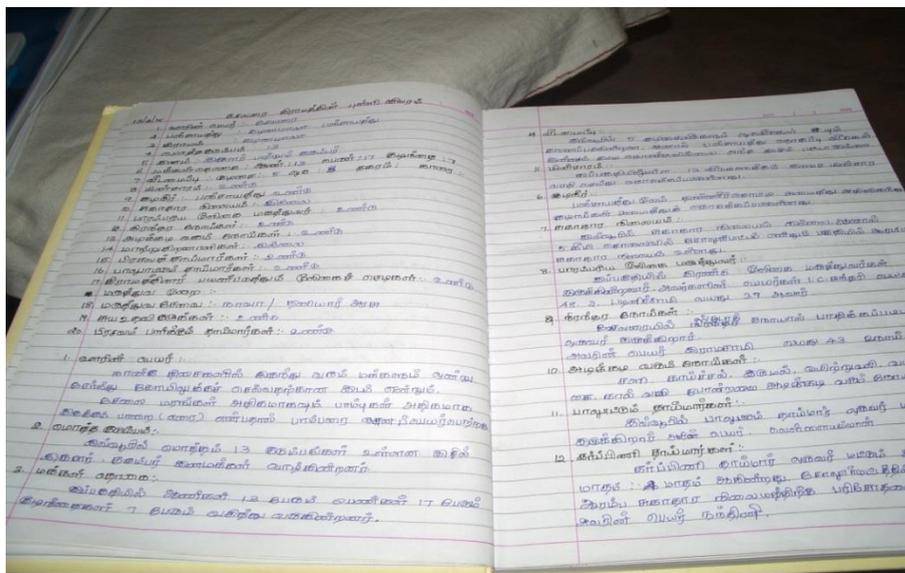
During the year basic training was completed for the 15 health organisers (VHO's) and the 2 Interns (Priyanka and Rajalakhsmi), drawn from the Kurumba, Kota and Toda tribes. Following which we then began advanced training and support programmes by integrating the VHO's with traditional practitioners and healers – such workshops have taken place for the first time ever, together with the involvement of Siddha gazetted practitioners. As we have been informed, there are 67 known practitioners in the NAWA geographical area all of whom

historically have tended to keep their knowledge a secret. The project seeks to work with these practitioners so that not only is their knowledge documented but available to hand down to future generations. We are now continuing to support the women with workshops and seminars. It is essential that traditional knowledge is not lost. In the five months since training was completed some 50-60 consultations per month have taken occurred and a range of complaints and illnesses have been satisfactorily dealt with, and referrals taken place where necessary. We expect this to reach an average of 300 or so consultations per month and have set this as a target for the project as FOH believe that close to 4000 people could be treated each year by this group – an amazing achievement given the geography of the region.

awareness programmes, food and nutrition and traditional remedies for common ailments and specifically for some chronic ailments.



The health organisers, Interns and Traditional healers hold a workshop on traditional medicine. In attendance: Rajkumar (Project manager), GoHT personnel, and NAWA personnel.



Copy of site diary with training notes -

The joint efforts of the parties enable the traditional medicine knowledge gap to be bridged. The project is organised in two village clusters and focuses on health



Indira being treated by Veeran for joint pain and ankle sprain using Helichrysum oil.

In previous years we have reported on the high incidence of *sickle cell anaemia* in the region, some 1000 cases are thought to exist. *Sickle cell anaemia* is a serious inherited blood disorder where the red blood cells, which carry oxygen around the body, develop abnormally and result in reduced life expectancy. The women at the Kollikarai herbal medicine unit have in the past produced a tablet that gave some encouraging results. Vanya supported by similar thoughts from NAWA, have often thought that a properly monitored treatment programme would be worthwhile and the problem was always credibility and finding a partner willing to undertake a properly structured research programme. Now, following the successful launch of the RTTMP project, we understand that SRM University in Chennai have agreed to undertake a scientific analysis we believe as part of a research project on rural healthcare, in collaboration with Queen's University, Canada.

We are further informed that the College of Tropical Medicine in London are also looking at research programme in the area of traditional medicine and the impact it may have on healthcare provision – all potentially very exciting stuff!

Let's not forget though, that another objective of our healthcare project is to improve nutrition, particularly amongst children in the tribal communities. Incidences of diabetes have dramatically increased too as a consequence of poor diet so it is not just a UK problem. This is why organic farming/horticulture is a fundamental link to the whole health issue and which together with traditional healthcare provides a really powerful healthy sustainable environment for the rural poor in India – a vision that Vanya had some 20 years ago when she set out on her life's work!



This photograph, shows key nutritional foods being prepared

As with all projects the agencies we work with in India submit monthly and quarterly reports. Expenditures are closely monitored and controlled. Monthly cash flow statements with actuals and forecasted expenditures are then reconciled to bank accounts and the reconciliation sent to FoH with summary bank statement. Thus the implementing agencies are fully accountable for the projects.

### **Kitchen gardens**

33 nutritional gardens in 18 of the villages have been or are in the course of being established under the RTTMP programme.

## Kollikarai nursery for medicinal plants

The Kollikarai unit acts as a resource centre for medicinal herbs. During the year the women based there have made Centella Asiatica oil, Peacock feather oil, Helicrysum oil, and syrups for coughs and colds. A gene pool nursery is being discussed as part of the RTTMP project and is likely to be established in the other village cluster



Aloe Vera (Indian Aloe) being grown at Kollikarai and is used for a variety of skin conditions from acne and eczema to psoriasis. Burns are also treated effectively with the pulp from the leaf.

## A story to tell

We always ask for one or two case studies as these real life stories are always interesting. In this story one of our Interns, Rajalakshmi (Raji), was travelling on a bus when she fell into conversation with a man on his way to hospital to have a leg amputated. His leg had become ulcerated, and the ulcers were spreading. The hospital doctors had told him amputation was the only solution. Persuading him to come to her village, Raji introduced him to the traditional healer, Shri

Ranganather. By applying Helicrysum oil regularly, the man's wounds cleared completely within 3 months.

## Eco-Clubs

The eco club programme relaunched during 2015 in the surrounding villages of Coimbatore. There are 10 participating schools covering 500 students under an innovative and experimental organic school garden programme. The aim is to provide practical life organic gardening skills to the students and for them to learn about nutrition, and sustainable ways to improve the environment.

## Need for school garden program

Gardening in school provides the opportunity to attain systematic knowledge and skill in the production of plants for human use. The initiative will impart gardening knowledge to future generations. Educators have long recognized that outdoor experiences encourage a child's social, physical, emotional as well as intellectual development. Gardening is an inspiring subject in the learning process because it is effortless, and requires involuntary attention from the children. With the massive increase in population in India there is an urgent need to improve crop productivity to achieve self-sufficiency and eradicate malnutrition. Children learn the techniques of food production and grow vegetables that can also be included in their school meals, thus helping to provide a balanced diet.

Additionally, the school garden acts as a realistic laboratory of learning, where facts learned in the classroom can be applied practically. For example, while growing crops students study the weather pattern of the region, and so engage in climate studies with the help of a rain gauge, hygrometer, thermometer and anemometer (measures wind speed). Children's artistic activities improve while designing the garden, sowing the seeds, selecting the seed varieties based on colour, size, and shape and so on. Children also gain mathematical knowledge by demarking the plot area, deciding the amount of seeds and manure, first

ascertaining the length and breadth of rows, and the size of the master beds. Further they learn how to calculate the cost of production and learn basic budget finance skills. Gardening also enhances cooperation among peer groups and the students acquire social skills. In addition they learn the names of plants, all about pests and predators in the ecosystem and gain a holistic sense of biological thinking. In today's educational system parental involvement is of utmost importance. The steering committee established in each school ensures the eco-club is integrated into the school syllabus as an optional subject. School management will review progress and be given the opportunity to strengthen the gardening programme.

Schools are also be encouraged to organize outreach programmes such as seed fairs, horticultural shows, and soil day celebrations to involve the local community. Competition amongst selected schools will also provide a platform for students to showcase their talents and building awareness of their role in contributing to the nation's food security.

### Objectives

- Giving pupils knowledge and skills for better agricultural productivity and sustainable agricultural and horticultural practices; giving environmental education a sustainable and practical dimension, and helps change attitudes towards agriculture and rural life.
- Improving food diversity to combat micro-nutrient deficiencies among school children and improve overall food security.
- Provide a holistic sense of biological thinking including the environment
- Provide life skills in finance and economics

### Project timescale

The proposed project shall be implemented in 30 rural government schools within the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve over a 3- 5 year period, using organic gardening technologies such as biodynamics.

### Stakeholders

The various stakeholders involved in these projects are the Headmaster/Headmistress of the school, the District Education Officer, Parent Teachers Association members, parents, and also farming groups.

The year in pictures:

Here, students of Ettimadai school create awareness among the NSS students of Nehru college on the topic "Impact of pesticides on the health of future generation."



This was followed up by GoHT's education manager speaking as chief guest at the valedictory function of Nehru College, addressing the gathering about the role of youth in achieving India's Millennium development goal.



At the Government High school in Vazhukuparai the newly formed eco-club students under GoHT guidance converted a waste tip or 'dump yard' into an organic garden. More than 8 beds were prepared to build top soil.



Here, in the following photograph, Ettimadai school children exhibit their traditional varieties of millets and grains to show the richness of agro botanical nutrient strength in traditional varieties.



Below, Irula Tribal children preparing Jeevamirtham



Chavadi children enriching their soil with cow dung slurry



And collecting biomass from the school surroundings

## Education Fund

Students currently benefitting are Emima, Kowsalya, Nisha, Harish, Rohan and Meena. Harish from Thenali village has a severe speech impediment but despite this is at University studying telecoms engineering. Emima takes her public exam in April 2016 and hopes to become a doctor. At our suggestion she has registered an interest with 3-4 medical colleges and universities and will formally apply after her exams. Kowsalya and Nisha are still at school. We are making a contribution to Rohan's college costs. All students being supported are from orphaned and very poor single parent backgrounds. Meena has just finished top of her class at Emerald Heights College in Ooty and is interested in studying advocacy.

## Fundraising

In UK fundraising supper evenings with guest speakers were held during the year. John Pilkington spoke about his travels in Patagonia in the footsteps of, in

part at least, Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid, no less, and to Paul Bowler, MD of the Winchester distillery Company who provided a gin master class and talked about his 'Twisted Nose Gin'! Our thanks also to Roger Maslin at Wembley for donating a Wembley hospitality package which we managed to successfully auction. Altogether, with match funding from Barclays Bank locally in Winchester, fundraising contributed nearly £5,000 net of costs, in the financial year.

## Income and finance report

The FoH accounts are published separately and available upon request. The accounts can also be found via our web site or via the Charities Commission web site. Grants and donations over £500 were received from the following organizations and individuals:- The Hadley Trust; The Onaway Trust; Paget Trust; Church of Ireland Bishop's Appeal Committee; Mercury Phoenix Charitable Trust; Tony Mortlock; Big Tours SRL; The Souter Charitable Trust ; The Rainford Trust; Miss KM Harbinson Charitable Trust, The Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust and The Oakdale Charitable Trust

Fundraising events were held throughout the year and contributed, net of costs just over £4,900.

We are also grateful to other charities and individuals who have contributed to our income by way of grants, donations and gift aid. Your support is so very much appreciated. We are also grateful to British Airways for baggage waiver and their past support.

## Financial review

Income in the year received and committed was £45,415 (previous year £54,648). The Trustees policy is that all funds should be sent to India, and particularly at times when we can take advantage of preferential exchange rates. In this way we can optimize our funding to the project.

