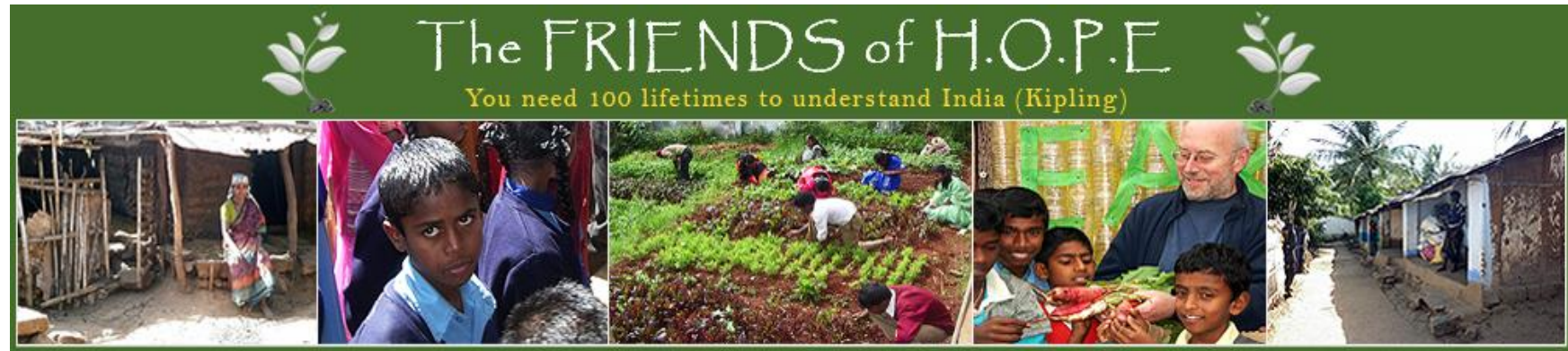


**THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.
(COMPANY NUMBER 3647389)**

**REPORTS AND UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2019**



Annual Report 2019

The Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu rise to 8,000 feet above sea level and are stunningly beautiful, with abundant wildlife, dramatic waterfalls and mountainside covered with shola forest.

Geographically The Nilgiris with the neighbouring Wayanad district are situated between Karnataka to the north and Kerala to the west. The territory is extraordinarily diverse, as indeed is the climate. All over the Nilgiris swathes of forest and ancient grasslands have been destroyed and the landscape is populated by degraded and polluted watersheds and farms. Soil erosion is very noticeable, but yet, there is a wealth of biological diversity corresponding to altitudes and geology. The communities living in the area are as diverse as the territory. Indigenous tribal communities survive alongside newcomers including refugees from Sri Lanka. Gudalur at the foot of the hills to the West has a large Muslim population as well as being a centre for the extensive Paniya community who until quite recently survived as bonded labourers.

This is the area, and these are the kinds of people which Friends of H.O.P.E focusses upon. We see the Earth and People as belonging together. The overarching aim is to encourage communities to look after their land and use it well, for the sake of the Earth as well as of themselves which is why this important biosphere is at the very heart of our work.

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

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER 3647389
(incorporated: 9 October 1998)

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David Pople

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Executive Summary

We were not impacted by COVID during the review period but we have included a section in the annual report summarising the impacts that confront us.

The Friends of H.O.P.E (FoH) has inspired many villages and rural communities of the Nilgiris to apply traditional self-help practical and sustainable knowledge that embraces traditional local foods, medicinal plants and their uses, organic and biodynamic methods of agriculture, animal husbandry, water conservation and environmental protection. We have also led the organic movement in The Nilgiris over the last 22 years with our support for biodynamic farming and supported the HIV community for 16 years.

FoH was formed in 1998 to support Vanya Orr's holistic vision for sustainable communities and which in economic parlance can be called the economics of permanence in restoring and protecting local traditions and cultures. FoH provides financial support, strategic guidance and practical advice where needed to our implementing partner agencies. All of our Trustees have Indian connections and experience in dealing with both tribal and non-tribal communities. - Mrs Rosaleen Mulji, David Pople and Prof Sheila Hillier are also trustees of The Nilgiris Adivasi Trust (NAT). Nicholas Grey (with his wife Mary) were the founder trustees of Wells for India which works in Rajasthan, Dr Mahesh Mathpati is a well-known and highly respected Ayurvedic doctor, and Michael Moore worked, and lived in India for some years. 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 Trustees of both FoH and NAT give their time and services entirely on a voluntary basis.**

FoH and NAT are now working ever more closely together – joint meetings are held, and joint consideration is given to funding the education and community based programmes described in the following pages.

In looking at the rural economy of the region we see that most of the land holdings are very small and this makes it very difficult for Growers and Farmers to eke out a sustainable living. Statistically in rural areas such as the Nilgiris over 31% of the scheduled castes and c20% of the backward classes come into the poverty category (source: socialjustice.nic.in). But we actually think these statistics are on the low side of reality. The rural poor in the Nilgiris include an indigenous tribal population of almost 28,000 – The Irullas, The Kotas, The Todas, The Paniya's (ex-bonded labourers) and The Kurumba's (forest dwellers) are the principal groups. The Badagas are also often referred to as indigenous peoples, and the Badagas population is c150,000 (agriculturalists).

Below is a typical home of the rural poor in the area



Our community based traditional health programmes help to deliver a sustainable health service to tribal villages, and around 3000 people are helped each year by our health organisers and who in turn are supported by traditional healers. Education support is provided to tribal schools and students. Bursaries and sponsorship is available for students shifting to higher education. We also help single parent families and a young lad with Duchene who comes from a poor family.

Highlights, challenges and achievements over the past 12 months

- Organic Road map approved by newly created Organic farmers' Society, led by The Garden of HOPE Trust
- Organic road map adopted by Department of horticulture and The Collector. Recently reported high levels of pesticide and fertilizer found in Nilgiri Hill vegetables and fruits make organics the policy of choice. Drafting of organic policy for Nilgiris advancing. Amazing progress after 21 years of quietly promoting organics in Nilgiris. The challenge in the coming year is to encourage the formation of Farmer Producer Companies and, over the next 3-5 years train and support up to 85,000 farmer-growers - 72,900 of them 'farm' less than 2.5 acres (the marginal farmer)
- Despite damage from wild animals and injurious weather during the year, Thambatty model farm of 1.3 acres demonstrates 3- 4 harvests a year and can 'feed' a family of six whilst providing a liveable income. A target for 2020 is to measure what income can be achieved on 1 sq. metre.
- The Garden of HOPE Trust displayed organic produce at 10 exhibitions and conferences and which was attended by many hundreds of people, officers of the Dept. of Horticulture and The Collector.
- Farmers and Growers being supported through the organic certification process, with support from local joint director of Horticulture and his staff and the Local Collector who has just signalled that the growers should form themselves into an Organic Society, which she would support.
- Some 1000 growers, farmers including tribal women's groups expected to receive training via our model nurseries in 2020.
- Traditional healthcare project (RTTMP). The 15 women (VHO's) empowered to deliver a health service for 60 tribal villages rise to the challenge of making the project programme sustainable by 2021.

These villages are mostly in remote and often inaccessible parts of the Nilgiris, not served by mobile health outreach organisations.

- It is proposed that the VHO's and up to 60 traditional healer/practitioners will be tested under the auspices of Quality Council of India (QCI). Hopefully subject to funding, this can be done next year.
- At the end of the year Kalliammal, one of our VHO – healers, was nominated as a member of the Core Committee of the National Tribal Traditional Healers representing Tamil Nadu.
- The RTTMP project villages have a total population of c7,300. The VHO's now deal with over 3000 cases a year ranging from fever, cough, cold, snake bite, leg ulcers, diabetes, stroke, anaemia and many, many more illnesses and conditions. Some of the VHO's act as midwives for their communities. The VHO's are truly saving lives!
- The RTTMP takes on a new challenge in April 2019 (The Dr. Hari Challenge) of treating 160 severely anaemic patients. Data has been collected over the last year and now, from 1st April, 2020 the programme will form part of a formal research project undertaken by the Trans-Disciplinary University of Health Sciences and technology, Bangalore (on the FRLHT campus) and endorsed by the Tribal Research Centre directorate.
- Traditional knowledge is being documented, but more needs to be done..
- Links strengthened with FRLHT and the Trans Disciplinary University (TDU), both in Bangalore.
- Demand for supporting the HIV community has risen ten-fold in – some 110 people attend monthly HIV support group meetings in Ooty and Gudalor where they are given nutrition supplements.
- Data collected from HIV clients, as improvements to CD04 count quite exciting, to be sent to TDU in 2020.

- The HIV support programme with ASHWINI in the Gudalor valley continued to screen 1800 people for HIV and TB in the past year.
- The sustainable village programme has focused on mitigating the effects of serious drought but at the farm level, advising on percolation pits and “earthen bunding”. GoHT is now the recognised ‘vehicle’ which brings villager, farmer, Panchayat and Rural development offices, altogether. Several thousand trees saplings have been planted to improve shade (watering done by local village women and the local green brigade. Organic farmer training demonstrates how best to improve soil conditions. Links to organic vegetable marketing companies have been established. In 2020 GoHT will facilitate a logistics operation to assist the farmer-grower get his produce to market.

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

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.

Poverty in the region

Poverty amongst Tribal communities is prevalent. Almost all of indigenous population, c28,000 is in absolute poverty. These indigenous peoples rely on agriculture and the forest for their livelihoods and farming as we know is in

crisis. Local traditional healers are also telling us that climate change has reduced the number of plant species available and which have a medicinal use. The base poverty line in India is assessed at Rs221 per day average for a 6 day working week, approx. Rs72,000 a year or Rs6,000/month 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. Probably the poorest members of society though are the HIV community, many being unable to work due to ill-health, socially isolated and where annual income can be less than Rs30,000 (£330 a year)

The COVID lockdown has meant that day workers and they make up the backbone of the working population, have been laid off with massive reductions in family income. Some poor people are not in possession of food ration cards and so hunger/starvation, increasing malnutrition will be a focus of our attention during the latter half of 2020.

Sustainable Village Project – implementing partner The Garden of HOPE Trust

The sustainable village project we fund seeks to help 3 villages (7300 people) about an hour’s drive from Coimbatore, and where there had been severe drought conditions for the last 4-5 years. Despite the monsoons of last year which gave farmers some respite, water tables remain far below acceptable levels with many farmers losing their coconut and banana crops during the year - these trees take some time to recover, the dead ones (nearly 35% of coconut trees) need to be grubbed up and new saplings planted, so for poor marginal farmers and growers this is almost impossible, a herculean task indeed. Agriculture is the primary industry in the area and all related businesses and home incomes have been severely affected due to the continuous monsoon failure.

The District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) is the government body that implements water conservation schemes through village administration offices.

We find ourselves in the position of bringing together all stakeholders, including the Sub-Collector (Rural) and the Director of Horticulture, Panchayat officials and village elders. An update on the agreed strategy to prevent future droughts is awaited but at farm level the work done during the year includes planting over 7200 trees, including 1200 neem which has valuable medicinal properties and helping farmers to construct 'earthen bunding' to help retain and save water for their crops (41 different farms had completed this work by the end of 2019).



Farming is so important to the economic sustainability of the villages and in the coming year it has been agreed that we will help put in place a logistics system, bringing transport, farmer and market place together. The first route will be a logistics run along the main Pollachi Coimbatore highway. The objective is to save on transport costs and ensure fresh organic produce gets to market on a regular basis. Farmer will agree price with the 'shop' and with the transport group(s) whether it be Auto or Pick-up truck. COVID will have disrupted planning and implementation of this particular pilot scheme.

Farming

Farming in India, despite accounting for 14% of India's GDP, continues in crisis. Helping farmers and growers is mission critical for us. We believe that organic/biodynamic farming can improve yield by 3 times, enrich the soil and enhance the environment. This we feel, is the only sustainable solution for the 84,125 farmer/growers in Nilgiris. Our work, in quietly getting on with this message has resulted in an approved Organic Road map and the GoHT, the department of horticulture and The Collector are now drafting an organic policy document for submission to the Tamil Nadu state government. 27 pesticides/chemicals will be banned in the coming months, confirmed by Government Order. This is a good start but we would like to see all chemical based products banned as I am sure they would be if the region embraces Organic Policy.

Our food – our environment, our future: a 5 year organic farming outreach initiative to help small and marginalised growers and farmers.

Slowly (and I feel sure we have influenced the farming community over the years), growers are changing to organic production and now the Indian government is providing incentives to growers to accelerate this change. Of the 84,000 farmer growers 71,900 farm less than 2.5 acres and 65,000 of them farm less than 1 acre with many farmers and growers in the Nilgiris trying to make a living on less than half an acre of land. It is important that we continuously show them how to improve both quality and yield and to demonstrate and teach them the various techniques of mulching, BD composting, vermicomposting and the value of BD inputs to improve soil conditions, reduce pests etc.

Our 1.2 acre Thambatty nursery provides a unique model to showcase the quality of produce that can be grown organically and attempts to evidence that smallholdings can provide enough food for a family of six and for the farmer to receive a sustainable living income to support his family and his business.

GoHT follows the BD calendar which shows growers when to sow and plant, how and when to apply biodynamic inputs. By restoring goodness to the land moisture is retained for much longer, so necessary in drought situations.

Press reports show evidence of significant contamination of hill vegetables (The Hindu, Times of India) and The Collector has agreed with Tamil Nadu University to conduct rigorous soil analysis and testing over the coming months and into next year.

Progress

The Collector (Ms Innocent Divya) is very keen to see Nilgiris being declared an organic district and has encouraged the farmers and growers to form themselves into an Organic Society, which she would support with government funding and it is this momentum that has been reflected on the ground, and taken up much time



Above: Organic Rally in Ooty led by The Collector, JD Horticulture and Sivakumar

Sivakumar (GoHT project coordinator) was voted in as the first elected president of the Society - further testament to his knowledge. The Nilgiris Organic Horticulture Farmers' Association – TOHFA was finally registered in April 2019.

Discussions next year with all stakeholders are expected to embrace the road map and lead to the drafting and submission of the Organic Policy document

which The Collector will then submit to The State Government. We shall also be focusing on encouraging the formation of farmer/producer companies for which we understand Government grants may be available.

The Collector subsidized a farmer visit to SIKKIM Province (February 2019) which is the first declared organic state in the country. About 50 smallholders went. The farming model there is different but nonetheless there were some interesting ideas that could be adopted by way of income support and grants which could be available to farmer/growers to help accelerate the change. The PR gained from the visit was also positive. Suddenly we see a lot of enthusiasm at high level for organics which has to be good news! FoH has been encouraging biodynamic/organic horticulture and farming for 22 years now and we are delighted that this perseverance and belief is now being embraced by The Dept. of Horticulture and The Collector and those we are all working now towards the organic objective for the Nilgiris, all 2500 sq. km.

Following meetings with the JD Horticulture, some 22 training programmes will be held over course of the next twelve months. We think as many as 1000 people – growers, farmers, and women's groups will come for training and a number will need continuous technical help. Training includes slope management, raised bed techniques, mulching and composting, how to prepare BD inputs and how and what to apply and when, alternative waste management, recycling, soil restoration and community based alternative income streams such as growing medicinal herbs.



Above, native cows at Thambatty and nursery, training sessions



Produce from Thambatty being displayed at a conference attended by The Collector.

Challenges

There are many challenges facing the farming and horticultural industry in the Nilgiris. Damage to crops by wildlife – bison, wild pig, elephant and reports of livestock often being attacked by tiger, panther and leopard regularly get into the press. Fencing is easily smashed by bison which are really athletic in their endeavours to access a ready meal of fresh carrot leaf! Generally, we are pleased to see Nilgiris Wildlife increasing; however, these attacks show that the farmer needs to adapt to meet the challenge of animal conflict.

Unseasonably heavy rains (extended monsoon season and early arrival of heavy rains in March/April 2020) have basically ruined the first cropping of the year..

This situation has been made much worse by the COVID 19 lockdown which has meant that the farmer cannot market his produce having to leave crops rotting in the field.

Loss of income increases mental health pressures which then affect the entire family, consequently we expect suicide rates amongst farmers and households to increase.

The most significant challenge over the next 5 years is to train and support the massive number of farmer growers changing to organics whilst at the same time providing capacity building to the Dept. of Horticulture. Funding this over the next few years is a further challenge. As we know some 71,900 farmer growers eke out a living on less than 2.5 acres, classed as the marginal holding.



Above: BD compost making at the Thambatty resource nursery.

Below: demonstrating how to make CPP (cow pat pit manure) at a Paniya tribal village



One Health

This programme commenced on 1st April, 2018. FRLHT -TDU (www.frlht.org and www.tdu.edu.in) in Bangalore and The Friends of H.O.P.E agreed to be the initial co-sponsors of a PhD action research programme looking at the

significance of the interconnection of organic farming, traditional health, air, water and the environment in determining the self-reliance on primary healthcare among families and communities using traditional medicine. Members of the doctorate advisory committee include Prof John Porter from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Dr Unnikrishnan from the United Nations University.

The study will have two parts; firstly, it will develop a self-reliance framework for primary healthcare using traditional medicine through a case study approach and in the second part, its application in a community health project utilizing traditional medicine. To test the self-reliance framework Mr Shivanand plans to include NGOs working in collaboration with Friends of Hope (FOH) in Nilgiris district. We are very excited about this as we think the recommendations will help us strengthen and promote our community based models.

The TDU research fellow, Mr Shivanand, is also observing our farming programmes. TDU are researching the impact of traditional health in dealing with anaemia, a major health issue in the Nilgiris and this will be one of the models that Shivanand looks at. Progress reports on the PhD and on the RTTMP/TDU anaemia research programme are available upon request.

Health – traditional healthcare and HIV support programmes

Our traditional health programme (RTTMP and HIV) is very much now a jointly supported initiative between FoH and NAT (The Nilgiris Adivasi Trust). In the of the COVID pandemic the RTTMP model is ever more important to the health and well-being of tribal communities.

HIV/Aids

We have assessed that there are some 700,000 people living with HIV in Tamil Nadu (base estimate of 500,000 in 2002 rolled up at 10-11,000 a year). In the Nilgiris, stigma, poverty, malnutrition and mental health are the main

issues facing the HIV community. The demands for a structured intervention to deal with stigma, nutrition support and help for 125 children affected by HIV are such that we are faced with trying to fund a much bigger budget over the next three years. – a huge challenge in the face of what has happened post COVID.

Attendance at our monthly HIV support group meetings has increased again in the last year, with people willing travel long distances and up to 3 hours in time, to attend. Current attendance levels are more a testament to the calibre of counselling service provided by Sathiya Seelan rather than any increase in the incidence of HIV. Out of 440 registered people with HIV in Nilgiris some 100 attend our monthly support groups. We are sure there are many more unregistered people with HIV, evidenced when we hear case studies and the reported devastation that comes when a person is told they are HIV positive, whether it is following screening or following hospital admission necessitating blood tests. We believe that the HIV community is amongst the poorest of society in India – most are out of work, socially isolated and severely malnourished. Someone told us a few years ago now, but it applies today as much as then...‘it is good to know that someone really cares’.

Nutrition programme meeting agenda-(27-03-2019) Ooty		
Time	Topic	Facilitator
10.30-10.45	Welcome	Sathiya
10.45-11.00	Self-introduction	Sathiya/ Shanthi
11.00-11.15	Programme feedback-Beneficiary groups	Sathiya (Sharala,Gokila and Sartha- beneficiary groups)
11.15-11.30	Tea break	
11.30-12.00	ART Medication important	ART Medical officer-Dr. Sumathi
12.00-12.30	Why is important ICTC counselling Services	Sathiya
12.30-1.30	How to overcome depression	Sathiya
1.30- 2.30	Group discussion	Sathiya
	Self-stigma, Family stigma and social stigma	
After 2.30	Nutrition supplements distribution	

If we can improve the health and well-being of the HIV community they can at least get back into work to support their families.

Indications are that there is a massive void when it comes to the HIV community being accepted in society, little empathy is shown only blame, whether the innocent party or not, and obviously this includes children.



Photo above: Over 75 PWHIV attended this monthly meeting in Ooty in October

The stigma label associated with having a member of the family who is HIV or lost a member knowingly with HIV is huge... many family members will not be informed or aware of an HIV positive sibling or parent. Schools are reluctant to discuss sex education or consider health or HIV awareness as an essential to family and community well-being alike. This needs to change and we propose a new stigma and awareness initiative for 2019-20 subject to funding.

“At the end of 2019 I received a cry for help from an HIV client who had been denied treatment in hospital because of his HIV status. He had sought help in a number of hospitals, and as a last resort we tried a Mysore hospital, but they did not reply - by then it was too late anyway. The day before he died our HIV co-ordinator was there by his side providing palliative support. During that visit Sathiya called me via a WhatsApp video link. The client, severely jaundiced looking, had managed to prop himself up to wave and smile to me. He knew he was dying and had been told. All of his internal organs were shutting down.

But despite the pain and anguish he was feeling he wanted to thank me for supporting him (we had funded a tailoring machine some 5-6 years ago so that he could earn a living). It was one of the most, and will remain a very touching moment.

Distribution of nutrition supplements is organised after our monthly support group meetings with approximately 100 beneficiaries. During COVID this has not been possible but the benefits measured in terms of improvements to CD04 are almost without exception, extremely encouraging. Full patient data is recorded and a summary is to be sent to TDU as research data capturing traditional health elements benefitting PWHIV. Screening for HIV takes place automatically when village people are screened for TB.

During the past year approximately 1800 people were screened by the outreach team from the ASHWINI Adivasi hospital.

Sathiya, who leads on HIV support programmes, is also providing much needed capacity building for the staff at the government ART centre in Ooty.

We have many stories about the plight of PLWHIV and here's another:-

"Last week I joined a meeting of about fifty men and women affected by the condition. Sathiya, a gently spoken and very kind young man who works as a mental health counsellor alongside David, led the session. It was harrowing. Each person was asked to say a few words about their background, which was translated for our benefit. There were more women than men, and many were widows, the hapless innocent party in a terrible drama. One woman sobbed as she told of her husband, desperate to discover he was affected by Aids, resorted to alcohol and one evening returned home in a drunken rage, picked a fight and murdered their child.... With her husband in prison, her son dead, and the profound stigma of HIV here in India, her life is irreparably broken. I cried"

During the year we received an offer from a group of dentists to provide dentistry to the HIV community, and which needs to be followed up in 2020/21. The Ooty Lions club has agreed to sponsor support group lunches until June 2020.

HIV support during initial COVID lockdown

Group therapy sessions cannot take place. We have adapted by providing telephone support. We desperately need to add human resource and find ways of getting nutritional supplements and organic vegetables to them. All PWHIV have expressed difficulties in getting medication, being unable to attend ART centres, but happily the situation is improving with about 50% receiving their medications regularly through distribution locations. Sathiya is on the phone daily to try and help alleviate this pressure but the lockdown has imposed severe travel restrictions and we are struggling.

Traditional Healthcare

Locally, Ayurveda and Siddha (in The Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu), have guided Indian communities in their healthcare practices. The meaning of Swasthya: swa – self +sthya – rooted within form the foundation for the self-help health projects that FoH have funded over the years. The term means being in equilibrium with oneself and can be achieved at several levels viz physiological, tissues, metabolism, excretion, sensory, mental and spiritual, and influenced by relationships with biological rhythms of nature, the sun, moon, seasons, quality of water, air food, stress, social relationship, work environment and so on.

Ayurveda's and Yoga's approach to health, together with Siddha can thus guide homes to live a life that is in tune with nature.

Rejuvenation of Traditional Tribal Medical Practices project (RTTMP)

This essential programme delivers front line healthcare in tribal villages (60 villages feature in the RTTMP project, some 1700 families and over 7200 very poor people). This is an initiative facilitated by our implementing partner agencies NAWA, and The Garden of HOPE Trust. These village people rely on traditional health remedies for their health – they cannot afford to take a day off work to go to their nearest township hospital. Also, many of the villages featuring in the programme cannot be accessed by the locally available allopathic mobile outreach vehicles of NAWA, so in those villages there has been no medical cover until now. It is a project encouraging self-reliance. The

lockdown caused by the COVID 19 pandemic illustrates how important the RTTMP is to tribal health.

This is a story of one of the cases of hardship identified in a visit to Kundapatti village in February 2019:-

“A few days later David and I joined several members of the charity’s health team who were visiting another village – this one being home to the Irulla tribal people. Again, very much off the beaten track, we had to leave the Land Rover some distance away, and complete our journey on foot. Sitting with some of the locals, the very real need for medical education and assistance is emphasised as a tragic tale unfurls, as told by an elderly woman.

Ponni was obviously still grieving as she told us why she was solely responsible for looking after her four year old granddaughter, a wide-eyed child who stared hard, almost mesmerised by the sight of the white interlopers, the first, it seems, she has seen. The girl’s mother had died without appropriate medical care as a result of tetanus complications following childbirth. A month later Ponni’s husband had died following an undiagnosed stomach ulcer which had perforated. Ponni’s elder granddaughter, having watched her mother die and thinking perhaps that she did not want to be a burden, took a can of kerosene and a box of matches, went off into the forest and set fire to herself. She was just nine years old.....the following day her father committed suicide. With appropriate basic health care, including psychiatric support, both of which the charity is now providing, all these deaths within this one tragic family might have been prevented”.



During the past 3 years up to 15 women from tribal communities and who we currently describe as village health organisers [VHO’s] have been trained in traditional health systems. What is traditional health you may ask? Well, The Nilgiris biosphere contains many valuable medicinal plants which have been used for thousands of years in treating people and this is the basis of the traditional Indian health system. So whereas today in the West, we would turn to our GP or hospital for some antibiotic or allopathic remedy, we are empowering these ladies to harvest this traditional knowledge, to train them also in massage and yoga and provide them with a holistic solution to community health problems. Indeed, some of the women have also formed a self-help group to make and sell basic Ayurvedic and Siddha medicines and oils (The Mullai Group).

The VHO’s and Interns are now well established in their villages. The principle is that they work alongside the long established local healers and encouraged to interact closely with them. One senior member of the VHO team is regarded very much as a healer in her own right (Kaliammal) and she was voted on to the Core Committee of the National Tribal Traditional Healers representing Tamil Nadu. Over 3,000 villagers have been treated by the VHO’s in the past year, the VHO’s successfully treating for example, post stroke recovery, colds and coughs, joint pain, snake bite, ulcerated/gangrenous leg conditions, diabetes and anaemia to name but a few conditions.



There are 7 healers actively working with ‘the team’. Knowledge sharing and capacity building between healer and VHO has begun and there are a further 18 healers who have come forward to allow their knowledge to be documented (out of a total of 64 healers, so 25/64 in total). The project seeks to work with these practitioners so that not only is their knowledge documented but available to hand down to future generations. It is essential that traditional knowledge is not lost.



Above: Five traditional healers meet at Kadosolai village where they have converted a building into a health clinic

During the year The Foundation for the Revitalisation of Local health Traditions (FRLHT) and The Trans-Disciplinary University (TDU) provided capacity building on two occasions and this will continue next year.

This includes ‘knowledge harvesting’ exercises which seeks to fully understand existing VHO knowledge levels and build upon it.



Above: Dr Unni (FRLHT/TDU) “knowledge harvesting”

Blood tests taken by NAWA at the end of 2018 revealed very low haemoglobin levels amongst 6 tribal villages. Out of 289 people coming forward 160 of them were found to be severely anaemic, one with hg levels of 3.5, but all under 8, and of which 42 were children under the age of 15yrs. The VHO’s were challenged and have accepted the challenge to produce a diet and treatment plan using traditional medicines and foods. This programme is now known as the “Dr. Hari challenge” and the initial 12 month’s data has been collated and forwarded to TDU. TDU have agreed to adopt the anaemia programme as a formal research programme commencing on 1st July 2020 (postponed from 1st April because of the COVID lockdown).

Plans for making sure the RTTMP project sustainable will also be introduced in 2020. FoH and FRLHT/TDU visits are planned for 2020/21 to help the VHO’s manage this process.

Recognising the competency of our VHO’s is essential and during 2020 we plan to start funding a certification process under the auspices of Quality Care India (QCI). This is a nationally recognised accreditation scheme with a formal test of competency. All of our VHO’s would be tested along with those healers who are engaging with us under the RTTMP.

We also hope, subject to funding, that FRLHT/TDU will help us instigate a full botanical survey in and around each of the 60 villages in the RTTMP project. The idea proposed is that over a 12 month period the FRLHT team would meet both healers and VHO's, photograph, identify and document plants that are currently used for medicinal purposes, creating audio visual records, a herbarium, and a reference book. From what we are told by trekking to some of these villages we know there has been a reduction in the quantity and availability of traditional used plants, and which the healers say is down to the effect of climate change. Some of the plants are endangered. Subject to funding FoH and NAT hope the full botanical survey can be started in 2020 or in the following year. This would build a peoples' register and with it the plants would be protected. This is seen as being a crucially important element in protecting the eco system in the Nilgiris Biosphere.

Knowledgeable parents are also informing children attending the Garikyur School about the medicinal plants found in the forest surrounding their village and the children attending Pudur and Kesalada schools have established school medicinal and vegetable gardens and proudly identify plants and their medicinal uses.

Mullai

Mullai is a self-help group of women who we have encouraged to develop an enterprise for making and selling traditional medicines and oils. Started during Vanya's time the group have a new name and is a properly registered as a social enterprise being recognised as part of the RTTMP project. As we look to help the RTTMP achieve sustainable by 2020-21, we must also look to help the Mullai ladies develop this business.

Kitchen gardens

33 village nutritional gardens have been established under the RTTMP programme.



Above: Our VHO's are showing these women in Sundapatty how to prepare traditional essential oils

Documenting local health traditions

During the early part of 2019 a grant of Rs150,000 was made to ACCORD in Gudalor for the work involved in putting together a reference book (in English and Tamil) on local health traditions in the Gudalor valley tribal area. Publication has been delayed but we are told it should be completed in 2020.

Eco-Clubs

This programme has been put on hold from March 2020 as a consequence of COVID but planning for its restart is in our minds as it is seen as an important way to nurture 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. By learning the techniques of food production and how to grow organic vegetables they learn life skills that are particular to their communities – the vegetables grown and harvested and either sold for the benefit of the students or the school, or as is usually the case, are included in their school meals thus helping to provide a balanced

diet. Last year we began introducing community medicinal plant nurseries to a few of the tribal village schools.

In this way we can bring studies to life as they can more readily relate to the value of their immediate environment. It also helps ensure existing knowledge is handed down to future generations. In Pudur, which is a small tribal school, the head teacher and his staff have established a newly planted vegetable garden and where the kids have great fun irrigating with buckets of water!



Above students at Pudur school



Above: students at Gariyur village school telling us about the medicinal plants to be found around their village.

The school garden acts as a realistic laboratory of learning for biology and environmental studies, where facts learned in the classroom can be applied

practically. Gardening also enhances cooperation among peer groups and the students acquire social skills. Not only do the children learn the names of plants, but they also learn about pests and predators in the ecosystem, thus gaining a holistic sense of biological thinking. In today's educational system at village level parental involvement is of utmost importance.

At the Kesalada School clearly both the school and the students benefit from a supportive and committed parent association and subjects that come under the eco club umbrella can be successfully integrated into the school syllabus as an optional subject. The school is a great example of community engagement and the primary school children have been learning about medicinal herbs and the head teacher plans to extend the garden so that it is maintained for the benefit of the entire village community.

Plans are in hand to consolidate the eco clubs in approximately 15 poor government schools whilst encouraging Nilgiri colleges to also establish the model on their respective campus sites, such as the Tribal Research Centre's school and college being built near Ooty. However, COVID has meant that realistically we shall not be able to restart the eco clubs until 2021



Kesalada school medicinal plant garden



Above: the classroom environment at Kesalada school.

Our Education Fund

FoH together with NAT are supporting young people from tribal community and/or backward class family backgrounds. Students currently attending the Victoria Armstrong School in Kothagiri, the Tribal school and drop-out school in Gudalor, and the NWTWS school hostel all receive grants from NAT. Based on information provided by NAWA's director of education; bursaries are also provided to students from tribal communities progressing to higher secondary and college education.

The FoH fund provided support to Emima, Kowsalya, Nisha and her sister, and Edwin during 2019.

Emima is now in her third year at the Atreya Ayurveda College in Bangalore. Starting in November 2017 she is studying for her BAMS over 5 years. Nisha and her sister are still at Glenmorgan Toda village school. Kowsalya lives with her aunt in Thenali village: her dad died some years ago and her mum has severe mental health issues. Kowsalya is doing well at the higher sec school in Ooty. Edwin is in his second year of study doing the same course. All students being supported are from orphaned and very poor single parent backgrounds.

The FoH fund is available also to support cases such as Sanjay, who has Duchene. Last year Sanjay attended a clinic near Chennai, being discharged in August.

Fundraising

Fundraising events continued in 2019. These events raise a small amount of money each year. At the time of preparing this report the COVID lockdown prevents us from continuing in 2020.

Income and finance report

The FoH accounts are published separately and available upon request. They are also found via our web site or on the Charity Commission's web site. Grants and donations over £500 were received from the following organizations and individuals:- The Hadley Trust; The Onaway Trust; Nilgiris Adivasi Trust; The Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust; Audrey's fund; The Souter Charitable Trust; The St Clare and St Francis Charitable Trust; The Oakdale Trust, The W. F. Southall Trust, The Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust, The CB and HH Taylor Charitable Trust; N Smith Charitable Settlement, The Cumber Family Trust.

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. We are also indebted to our local Barclays bank staff who generously match funded our events.

Financial review

Income in the year received and committed, including grants processed on behalf of NAT, amounted to £ 63,556 (*previous year £68,546*). *The Trustees policy is that all funds (except for nominal administrative costs) 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. Total funds expended during the year amounted to £71,709.



Irulla mother and child



The Collector visiting the GoHT stand at an Organic conference in Ooty and below she is speaking at the end of the Organic rally in Ooty during the year.

THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2019

The directors, who are also trustees of the charity, present their report and the accounts for the year ended 31 October 2019.

The governing document of the charity is the Memorandum and Articles of Association incorporated on 9 October 1998. The Friends of H.O.P.E. is a company limited by guarantee. The liability of the members is limited by their guarantee. In the event of the company being wound up during the period of their membership (or within a year following), members undertake to contribute such amounts as may be required, up to a maximum of £10.

The annual general meeting deals with the appointment of trustees and other matters such as approval of the report and accounts and the appointment of auditors.

The objectives of the charity are:

- a) the relief of poverty and sickness and to advance education among the inhabitants of the Nilgiri region of India; and
- b) the encouragement and promotion of the protection and preservation of the environment in the Nilgiri region of India.

RESERVES POLICY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

It is the objective of the directors to hold whenever possible approximately six month's expenditure in reserves, but it is also our policy to take advantage of a good exchange rate whenever possible. We therefore monitor the combined reserves of our NGO partners and The Friends of H.O.P.E on a monthly basis to preserve a sound reserves policy.

The risks to which the charity is exposed are frequently reviewed and procedures have been established to manage those risks.

DIRECTORS / TRUSTEES

Dr Nicholas Grey
Prof Sheila Hillier
Michael Moore
Dr Mahesh Mathpati
Rosaleen Mulji
David Pople

THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2019 (CONTINUED)**DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare accounts for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company at the end of the period and of its income or expenditure for the period. In preparing those accounts, the directors are required to:-

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts;
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies regime under section 419(2) of the Companies Act 2006, and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Statement of Recommended Practice: applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

By order of the board on
and signed on its behalf by

D Pople
Company Secretary

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 October 2019, which are set out on pages 22 to 27.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND BASIS OF REPORT

As the trustees of the charitable company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the charitable company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charitable company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the '2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

- 1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charitable company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- 2) the accounts do not accord with those accounting records; or
- 3) the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- 4) the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

CJ GOODHEAD FCA
KNIGHT GOODHEAD LIMITED
Chartered Accountants
7 Bournemouth Road
Chandler's Ford
Eastleigh
Hampshire SO53 3DA

THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2019

(Including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2019 £	Total funds 2018 £
Income					
Donations and legacies	3	14,433	49,123	63,556	68,447
TOTAL INCOME		14,433	49,123	63,556	68,447
Expenditure					
Charitable activities					
H.O.P.E. projects	4	14,221	53,501	67,722	69,994
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	5	14,221	53,501	67,722	69,994
Net income / (expenditure) for the year		212	(4,378)	(4,166)	(1,547)
FUNDS AT 31 OCTOBER 2018	8, 9	2,066	7,571	9,637	11,184
FUNDS AT 31 OCTOBER 2019		2,278	3,193	5,471	9,637

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2018

(Including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2018 £
Income			
Donations and legacies	12,482	55,965	68,447
TOTAL INCOME	12,482	55,965	68,447
Expenditure			
Charitable activities			
H.O.P.E. projects	12,143	57,851	69,994
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	12,143	57,851	69,994
Net (expenditure) / income for the year	339	(1,886)	(1,547)
FUNDS AT 31 OCTOBER 2018	1,727	9,457	11,184
FUNDS AT 31 OCTOBER 2019	2,066	7,571	9,637

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.**(COMPANY NUMBER 3647389)**

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 OCTOBER 2019

	Notes	2019 £	2018 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	6	4,573	343
Cash at bank and in hand		1,944	9,757
		<u>6,517</u>	<u>10,100</u>
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year	7	<u>(1,046)</u>	<u>(463)</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		5,471	9,637
NET ASSETS		<u><u>5,471</u></u>	<u><u>9,637</u></u>
FUNDS			
General Fund	8	2,278	2,066
Restricted Fund	9	3,193	7,571
	10	<u><u>5,471</u></u>	<u><u>9,637</u></u>

For the financial year ended 31 October 2019, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 Companies Act 2006. No member of the company has deposited a notice, pursuant to section 476, requiring an audit of these accounts.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the company keeps accounting records, which comply with section 386, and for preparing accounts, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its income and expenditure for the financial year, in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to accounts, so far as applicable to the company.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the board of directors on
and signed on its behalf by

Director

THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2019

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Statement of Recommended Practice: applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Income

Income is recognised when received, together with any associated tax refund, except for income given for specific purposes where it is matched against the related expenditure.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised in the period to which it relates and is allocated to the appropriate cost heading. No material items of expenditure require apportionment across more than one category. Support costs are allocated between funds based on the corresponding income split in the period.

Fund accounting

- Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.
- Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.
- Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

2 LEGAL STATUS

The charitable company was incorporated on 9 October 1998 in England and Wales and was registered on 25 October 2000 with the Charity Commission in England and Wales. The registered number is 03647389 and the charity number is 1083028. The charity is a public benefit entity.

The registered office of the charity is 7 Bournemouth Road, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO53 3DA.

THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2019 (continued)

3 TOTAL INCOME	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2019 £	Total funds 2018 £
Grants	10,500	49,123	59,623	65,065
Donations	1,995	-	1,995	1,550
Gift aid reclaimed	720	-	720	623
Other income	1,218	-	1,218	1,209
	<u>14,433</u>	<u>49,123</u>	<u>63,556</u>	<u>68,447</u>

4 HOPE PROJECTS	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2019 £	Total funds 2018 £
Grant funded activities	13,554	52,088	65,642	68,125
Support costs	525	972	1,497	1,406
Accountancy and independent examination	142	441	583	463
	<u>14,221</u>	<u>53,501</u>	<u>67,722</u>	<u>69,994</u>

5 TOTAL EXPENDITURE

No director received any remuneration during this or the previous year. During the year reimbursed expenses relating to project costs of £5,035 (2018: £939) were paid to one trustee.

6 DEBTORS	2019 £	2018 £
Gift aid recoverable	573	343
Prepayments	<u>4,000</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>4,573</u>	<u>343</u>

7 CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year	2019 £	2018 £
Trade Creditors	583	-
Accruals	<u>463</u>	<u>463</u>
	<u>1,046</u>	<u>463</u>

THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2019 (continued)

8 UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	Funds brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Funds carried forward £
General funds	2,066	14,433	(14,221)	2,278
9 RESTRICTED FUNDS	Funds brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Funds carried forward £
Education fund	-	26,873	(26,873)	-
RTTMP fund	-	10,000	(7,600)	2,400
HIV/Health	-	5,000	(4,323)	677
Farming and sustainable villages	7,571	7,250	(14,705)	116
	7,571	49,123	(53,501)	3,193

Education fund: The Nilgiris Adivasi Trust (NAT) and Friends of HOPE contribute to tribal school running costs and bursary support for students attending higher secondary schools. The above includes £21,944 of funding processed on behalf of NAT projects.

RTTMP fund: The Rejuvenation of Traditional Tribal Medicinal Practices fund supports traditional health projects and is encouraging the setting up of a self help health service in 60 villages.

HIV/Health fund: The funding for people living with HIV covers screening for both HIV and TB, counselling, vocational support and nutritional supplements.

Farming and sustainable villages: Encourages farmers to convert to organic farming practices and to restore goodness to the soil, thus helping to protect the natural environment.

10 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
<i>As at 31 October 2019</i>			
Debtors	4,573	-	4,573
Bank and cash	(1,249)	3,193	1,944
Creditors	(1,046)	-	(1,046)
	2,278	3,193	5,471
<i>As at 31 October 2018</i>			
Debtors	343	-	343
Bank and cash	2,186	7,571	9,757
Creditors	(463)	-	(463)
	2,066	7,571	9,637