
The Dust Project

ANNUAL REVIEW 2022

Charity Registration No. 1155728



Annual Review

The Dust Project was established as a company limited by guarantee on 20th December 2013. Ultimate responsibility for the entity rests with the Trustees. Day-to-day management is undertaken by Sarah Chisnall and Tiffany Stokely, Trustees of the charity.

TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees meets a minimum of four times per year, with further ad-hoc meetings as required.

OBJECTIVES

Our vision is to help, support, and relieve those in desperate situations of poverty, crisis or hardship, in developing countries and communities suffering the after-effects of war, natural disaster and/or economic frailty. We focus especially on the stability of family units and the safety, nourishment and education of children and vulnerable young adults by providing shelter, food, healthcare, schooling, tuition, and other such charitable services as the trustees may from time to time think fit, as need demands. We are currently focusing on communities in Colombo and Jaffna, Sri Lanka, through the physical construction and refurbishment of a children's hostel, schools, and family homes, in addition to the support of community businesses, projects and sponsored children.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2022

Website and Social Media

We are very prominent on social media (especially Facebook), with over 600 supporters. Our videos have had approximately 12,000 views. We are also on Instagram, Twitter and

Linkedin, and have found a wider reach of international support and sponsorship through these. Our website continues to be successful both in gaining new followers as well as directly enabling more children to be sponsored. The Child Sponsorship page allows potential sponsors to read the bios of children living in need in our focal communities in Sri Lanka — who either attend a Paalam International School in Colombo or Jaffna, live in the Paalam Children’s Hostel in Jaffna, or are connected to a house build (or other project) which we have financed. Sponsors are given information about why the child needs support, along with details of his or her family and situation. We have found sponsorship to make a significant and lasting impact in a child’s life, having seen and heard firsthand from carers and the children themselves the difference it makes. The children’s basic needs of clothing, medical attention, primary education and nourishment are met, and they feel genuinely supported, encouraged and cared for. This can only make a positive impact on their futures.

The ‘Donate to a Build’ page speaks of those families in our communities who are currently living in completely sub-standard housing, or are currently or soon to be homeless. They are usually in serious need of a home, a well and a toilet.

Partnering with Paalam

Things are going well in our partnership with Paalam— a charity based in Sri Lanka. The charity has made a huge impact in Colombo, but even more significantly in Jaffna. Through our collaboration, they have been able to receive donations through The Dust Project’s website and co-ordinate, distribute and oversee the child sponsorship program. We have had over 180 children sponsored through this program.

Since our partnership, we have been able to build or help complete 23 houses for various families living in appalling conditions. We also continue to build wells (14 to date!) and toilets (26 to date!) as need demands. We are in the process of building a school in Jaffna, sponsored in part by Hiscox, London. Due to Covid as well as the conflict in Sri Lanka, this has taken a lot longer than expected; but we hope to have it completed by April 2023.

Fundraising

We had another quiet year in 2022 on the fundraising side, as we were unable to hold events due to Covid restrictions. However, this did not stop our amazing, generous supporters from donating to various needs through The Dust Project.

-
- Our child sponsors continued their support throughout the year, which was very much needed in Sri Lanka due to the Government fall and conflict that followed. Food prices went up dramatically and there was no fuel. This meant families were unable to work and earn money to pay for food. We were able to send funds to pay for food, schooling and medicine.
 - In January, we sent funds to pay for Sutharshini, a student looking to pursue higher studies in the medical field. We also, through our business fund, were able to purchase a Trishaw for Ramesh.
 - In March, we sent funds to build a house for Patricia as well as update stonework in our church/community centre.
 - In April we sent funds to paint and repair parts of the school in Wattala as well as a kitchen upgrade. We also sent funds to concrete the front of our community centre/church.
 - In June, we sent funds to build a home for Sivakumari.
 - In August, we sent funds to build a home for Kaliachelvam.
 - In September, through our business fund, we were able to help Kiri start up a brick making business. We also sent funds to build Mary a well.
- With our connection to a project in Kandy, we were able to send funds to buy food and build a much-needed toilet.
- In November, through our business fund, we were able to help Janitha set up a small business selling electrical products. In the same month, we started an online food drive for malnourished pregnant women. Through Paalam, we were alerted of the fact that many pregnant women were incredibly malnourished due to the enormous price increase of food in Sri Lanka. We managed to raise over £5,198.00.
 - With our Gift Aid, we sent £1700 to update the Paalam Orphanage in Jaffna. Funds were sent to continue building work on the Wattala school and buy a drum kit for drum lessons

Mission

Sadly, due to conflict in Sri Lanka, we were unable to visit for safety reasons. We are still very keen to take out teams to help build houses for those families in desperate need of a safe and secure home. We are looking to send a team out in September 2023.

Finance

As a charity, we continued to support Paalam International School, New Living Flame Church and the Paalam Project. All three organisations are under the Paalam Charity, and in total we donated over £144,000.

We had something unexpected and unprecedented happen in November when - suddenly and without warning or reason - our HSBC account was closed. Through no amount of calls, enquiries or chats were we provided with any further explanation or apology, and it remained closed as The Dust Project sought for a new bank to host our child sponsorship payments and the daily needs of the charity.

The Future

In 2023, we hope to complete the school build in Jaffna with a view to an official opening in the Autumn. We also hope to continue to provide funds for our sponsored children, raise funds to provide new homes for families in desperate need and hopefully take a volunteer team out to Sri Lanka, in September 2023, to see the amazing work we have done, as well as build and paint houses that have been funded by our generous donors.