
The Dust Project

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023

Charity Registration No. 1155728



Annual Review

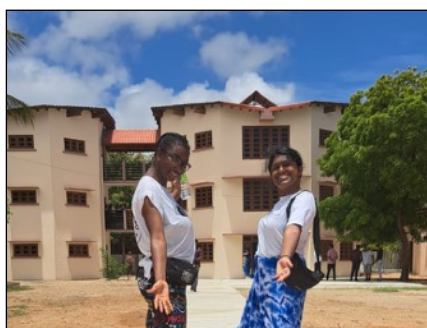
The Dust Project was established as a company limited by guarantee on 20th December 2013. Ultimate responsibility for the entity rests with the Trustees. Day-to-day management is undertaken by Sarah Chisnall and Tiffany Stokely, Trustees of the charity.

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 2023

Website and Social Media

We are very prominent on social media (especially Facebook), with over 600 supporters. Our videos have had approximately 15,000 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, are connected to a house build (or other project) which we have financed, or are part of our larger community outreach programs such as food parcels. 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 first hand 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/or 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 25 houses for various families living in appalling conditions. We also continue to build wells (16 to date) and toilets (28 to date) as need demands. Our new Paalam School in Jaffna, sponsored in part by Hiscox, London, was formally opened in September of 2023.

Fundraising

As always, we cannot thank our supporters enough for their generosity. Not only were we able to complete the school in Jaffna, but we were also able to raise funds for stationery packs for children in the Gampaha district. Before the new school term began in April ‘23, the students were issued a book list full of items costing more than 5,000 rupees (£15).

For many families, this cost is completely unaffordable. The funds we raised online went to cover the cost of their necessary school supplies.

We were able to continue our house builds as well as support over 180 children through school and food parcels.

We were also able to support teachers who were struggling to get to school because of fuel price increases and general inflation in Sri Lanka.

- In January, we were able to kit out the new school in Jaffna with furniture.
- In March, we held our School Stationery Drive, raising nearly £5,000.
- In April we sent the last of the funds for our school build, making it possible to get the important things like windows/ doors/ painting/ library/ computer room, etc.
- In May, we began the build of Mary Georgini's home. She had lived in the children's home.
- In July we were able to pay for the landscaping around the school as well as start the build of Daniel and Madusha's home.
- Through August and September, we received much needed funds to support our teachers' salaries.
- In September we received funds for Tharani's sewing machine.
- In December we received funds to continue the completion of the new school in Jaffna.

Mission

In September, we were able send a team from Hiscox to help work on the completion of the school and be there for the Grand Opening. It was a long wait for them as Covid and various other issues stopped the team getting out there any sooner. With sweet satisfaction, we were finally able to celebrate and commemorate their collective hard work and fundraising efforts in this grand culmination of a finished school. We also relish seeing the children keenly appreciating their new classrooms, grounds and the possibilities of an education with improved facilities.

Finance

As a charity, we continued to support Paalam International School, New Living Flame Church, Paalam Project and Paalam Children's Home. All four organisations are under the Paalam Charity, and in total we donated over £112,000.

The Future

In 2024, we look forward to continuing the landscaping around the new Jaffna school and are hoping to add a playground. We also have big plans to build a school in the Wattala, Colombo area of Sri Lanka. We will be looking for land close to the current school in Wattala, which is becoming too small to house our influx of children. We hope to eventually have a primary school building and a secondary school building. Our hope is to find a company or several who would like to partner with us in this new project.