

# Tamwed

## Annual Report 2013/14



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**"In a gentle way, you can shake the world." Mahatma Gandhi**

### REVIEW OF THE YEAR

We have continued to fund our three partners and their projects over the last year. The [Centre for Rural Systems and Development](#) (CRUSADE) has been with us since our launch in 2005 working in a rural area north of Chennai. CRUSADE and [GAWDESY](#), the other partner on our [Improving Diets](#) project, have found that health issues caused by a poor diet remains one of the main issues affecting their communities. GAWDESY, located in what used to be described as the bread basket of South India, finds that agriculture is increasingly affected by climate change with the resulting loss of labour for the majority who do not have access to land.



Our Project Coordinator Jothi Ramalingam (left) with Mavadiyan (right) and staff from GAWDESY conducting a project review.

The [ISLAND Trust](#) in the Nilgiri Hills continues to work on [Climate Futures](#), a project to raise awareness about climate change and help tribal communities adjust to its impact. Project staff, with assistance from local experts and grants towards fruit and vegetable seedlings, are cultivating new weather-resistant, income-earning crops. As well as working with tribal farmers the Island Trust continues to arrange events involving the many schools and colleges in the area. Their climate change stall has become a feature of flower shows and other events held in the towns of the Nilgiris where they can reach tourists as well as local people.

### MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR – JANE WEATHERBY

We will continue to respond to the most urgent needs identified by our partners using funds generously donated by our supporters. It is encouraging when the value of our assistance is added to by government departments and organisations such as the Lions in India. Each year we reassess our programme and work with our partners to make sure that every rupee is spent wisely to benefit those that need support the most. Our partners operate to very high standards of accountability and we are grateful to Jothi Ramalingam, Mavadiyan and Alphonse Raj for ensuring that our projects are well managed usually surpassing agreed targets.

Colin and Maria Terry (right) have been fund-raising by doing jobs such as garden clearance throughout the year. They will be undertaking a sponsored walk between 10 tribal villages in the Nilgiris to raise funds for a new project to tackle health issues among tribal groups (see later).

I am very grateful to our active committee who help to arrange fund-raising and other events and our kind supporters with their donations.



## ABOUT TAMWED

**Tamwed** (Tamil Nadu/West Devon) was set up in 2005 soon after the tsunami which affected communities which the founders had come to know over many years. The aim was to find ways of our different communities getting to know and learn from each other as well as offering support for those who most needed it. Initially Tamwed helped irrigation, housing and health projects managed by some of the smaller, poorly-resourced NGOs working in remote areas affected by the disaster. In time, having assisted these communities towards self-reliance, Tamwed directed its support towards three NGOs and their communities in very different areas of Tamil Nadu where the need was greatest.

Almost all funds raised by Indian meals (right) and other events go directly towards the running of projects which are reviewed each year and respond to needs that are defined by research. Our partners are able to add to our contributions by accessing government and other local support and finance for projects.

Our **committee members** are: Jane Weatherby (Chair), Oz Osborne (Secretary), Ian Richards (Treasurer), Diana Lee, Claire Heatley, Vicky Jackson, Duncan Harvey, Andrew Dawson, Jacky Brennan, Sonia Chapple, Angela Evans, John Evans, Rosie Brennan, Maria Terry, Roger Croxson.

We are grateful to **Osborne Samuel Ltd** which supports work by the ISLAND Trust on climate change and **Nomads Clothing** which helps to finance the Improving Diets project. **Roger Croxson** kindly maintains our website and **Nicholas Biggs** checks our annual accounts which are available on request.



## IMPROVING DIETS

This was the third year of a programme with our partners **CRUSADE** and **GAWDESY**. Poor diets had become a major cause of concern in the villages where these organisations work due to factors such as lack of knowledge about diet in relation to health; loss of crops due to climate change; little variation in food consumed; and increasing dependence on poor quality, subsidised or free food from a government scheme for the poor. This leads to poor health across age-groups, with loss of work or education and increased expenditure on treatment. Trained Community Health Workers raise awareness about the importance of diets while trained gardeners help set up home and community organic gardens for medicinal herbs, fruit and vegetables from nursery gardens. The project also helps to tackle issues such as pollution and dealing with the effects of climate change.

During the first 6 months of the programme which started on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 **CRUSADE** contacted 1,597 people with health problems - 300 of whom being referred to health institutions for further treatment.

**GAWDESY**, the other partner on the programme, also conducts health camps and outreach work supervised by trained health workers. TB and AIDS are among the issues they help to deal with and refer patients to specialists if needed. As part of their work on diets, **GAWDESY** supplies vegetables seeds such as tomatoes, chillies, ladies fingers, beans, bitter gourds and pumpkins at a low price. Around 350 families started growing organic vegetables in their back yards during the first six months of the programme. According to **GAWDESY**'s Secretary Mavadiyan, they report that home-grown vegetables are very tasty compared to those they get in the market



Sumathi of Ramanathapuram village with her crop of Brinjal.



Velvizhi of Sevanthinathapuram village in her garden.



TB Awareness Training at Bhoodalur village.

This 12-month programme began in September 2013 with a budget of £7,000, shared by both partners, with £5,000 being donated by Nomads Clothing and £2,000 from Tamwed’s supporters.

**CLIMATE FUTURES**

This is the second of a two-year programme with our partners the ISLAND Trust and their tribal communities in the Nilgiri Hills. Climate change is a major issue in the Nilgiris resulting in long periods of drought and severe, short storms which are having a devastating impact on the indigenous population and their fragile natural environment. Surveys in 25 tribal villages showed ignorance about the cause of climate change and about methods that could be used to deal with its impact. Project staff are working directly with 500 members of tribal groups who are taking part in practical actions such as growing and marketing climate resistant crops, tree planting, improving irrigation and setting up alternative energy systems.



Project Field Officer Mr Palani at a meeting in the Nilgiris.



Surveys, here with tea pickers, establish what people know about the cause and effect of climate change.

Project staff work closely with farmers from tribal villages who have a serious problem with a loss of crops due to the extreme weather. Lemon trees need less water with fruit that can command a good price at the market so 2,800 seedlings were provided at a reduced cost by the Nilgiris Horticultural Department. Irrigation is another issue with project staff negotiating new systems of harnessing and distributing water where it is needed most.

A climate change documentary was produced featuring students from a local teacher training college who performed a musical drama to illustrate the extent of the effect of climate change on the Nilgiris. This is shown in schools and at seminars and meetings to precede discussions about actions that can be taken.

The two-year programme was launched in January 2013 with a budget of £8,381. Artists Project Earth contribute £3,000, Osborne Samuel Ltd £2,000 with the remainder donated by Tamwed supporters.

Our partners, like other NGOs in India, have found that positive aspects of India's rapid economic development is having a slower impact in rural areas where most Indians still live. Mahatma Gandhi said that the future of the country lay in its villages which runs counter to the modern vision of urban economic prosperity and GDP acting as measures of a nation's quality of life. The ISLAND Trust has identified health problems among remote tribal communities, particularly women and children, as a major concern. Recently, social work students were shocked by the results of a survey they conducted in 30 villages among Irula and Kurumba tribes. Nearly 70% of lactating and productive age group women were suffering from severe anaemia. 80% of the tribal children in at least ten villages were classed as malnourished or undernourished with growth below normal health standards and suffering from problems with eyes, teeth and bones. They also found that each tribal village had around ten destitute widows with two to three children suffering hunger and starvation and without proper clothing.

### FUND-RAISING AND EVENTS

Tamwed's Committee and supporters arrange events such as guided walks and Indian meals throughout the year. We sell cards made by women from our project areas using the traditional kalamkari method of painting patterns using vegetable dyes on to cloth. We plan to sell tea and coffee from tribal farms in the Nilgiris with profits being returned to them to support projects.

Tamar Travellers brings people together to tell interesting stories and show photographs from their travels overseas and in the UK. A meal is shared based on the cuisine of the country concerned and money is raised for Tamwed.

### SUMMARY ACCOUNT

Income: £10,706, Expenditure: £14,198 – the difference being a grant given in advance of the two-year climate change programme. Income is raised through donations, standing orders, sales, membership and grants. Most personal donations are subject to tax relief. Our accounts are independently examined by a suitably qualified Associate Member of the Association of Charity Independent Examiners.

**Thanks to all those who supported us by attending or sponsoring events, buying goods, making one-off donations or arranging standing orders, over the last year.**



Volunteers testing the route for a sponsored walk across Dartmoor which raised £150 towards our projects.



Women at an anti-pollution rally organised by CRUSADE. Shops are banned from using plastic bags in an increasing number of districts.