

THE SAFFI FOUNDATION

Newsletter no.4: February 2019

SAMBHALI TRUST

Whilst in Jodhpur, we stumbled upon a terrific non-profit charitable organization, whose focus is the development and empowerment of women and girls in Rajasthan.

See their website:

www.sambhali-trust.org



Registered Charity in England and Wales No.
1172261

NOVEMBER 2018 VISIT TO INDIA

The purpose of our recent trip to India was to follow up the projects identified on my July 2018 trip, and to assess any potential new projects.

BHILWARA ROUND TABLE FREEDOM THROUGH EDUCATION

Situated between Jodhpur and Udaipur, Bhilwara is a textile industry city, away from the tourist trail. I noticed some signage on my July trip promoting their involvement in the Freedom through Education projects and so we arranged to meet the Round Table Club there who took us to see Deoli School in desperate need of five new classrooms. The Round Table Club are planning to create “container classrooms” to overcome the current Government sand prohibition. Details of the project costings have just been received: the total outlay is to be £21,000 of which £8,000 will be contributed by Saffi in due course.

JAIPUR ROUND TABLE FREEDOM FOR EDUCATION

Akerja School : Since the (Round Table) new classrooms were built, the Government are now also adding further classrooms.

Satya Bharti School (GUNAWATA): The construction of the second stage (four further classrooms) commenced shortly after we visited – photos were received at the beginning of January.

Sardar School : Four new classrooms and WCs completed to an excellent standard – such that the project was a finalist in the National Round Table Awards. The next plan is to improve the facilities in the old classrooms.

Radkiya Uccha Prathmika School, Badharana : We saw the construction of the 3 new classrooms and WCs mid-flow, and have since been made aware that they were completed in January. During our visit we also discussed the possibility of acquiring computers and new uniforms – this project we will continue to chase.

i-INDIA, JAIPUR

On this occasion we were taken to see two slum camps supported by i-India – the most shocking conditions you could ever imagine. I-India provide a hot meal 6 days per week, health care (a volunteer Doctor visits once per week, informal education, a daily shower, counselling and vocational training.

There are in total 27 such slums in Jaipur lived in by 3,000 children. A large percentage of the adults drink heavily and many are involved in criminal activity. Some children are removed and taken to shelter homes.

At the annual review of the Saffi donation to i-India, it was decided to increase the figure to \$20,000 which was sent in December 2018.

UDAIPUR ROUND TABLE FREEDOM THROUGH EDUCATION

Pahada School : During our November visit we attended the Inauguration Ceremony of the newly completed classrooms – to include cutting of the ribbon across each doorway! In January the internal decoration and installation of the furniture was completed too.

Varada School: The second option, as reviewed in our last Newsletter, was finally chosen as their new project, and, eventually (only in the last week), after much chasing from our end, a detailed proposal was submitted. The total outlay for three new classrooms will be approx. £28,000, of which Saffi have agreed to fund £16,000.

JODHPUR ROUND TABLE FREEDOM THROUGH EDUCATION

Jhalamand School :This school is still over-crowded. Jodhpur Round Table would like to build additional new classrooms. Full proposal details are still awaited.

Vishust Puru School, Shastri Nagar : This project (three new classrooms) was underway at the time of our visit, and was fully completed at the end of January.

JODHPUR – Other projects:

Bal Basera & Bachpan Home for HIV children : The land acquired for the new build is now under legal dispute but they appeared confident that it would be resolved. Since then ,another parcel of land has been offered by a donor. Saffi continues to pay the monthly running costs of the Girls Wing (Bachpan).

Miranda School : We visited Miranda School on the day of Children’s Day, a day of celebrations in honour of Nehru’s birthday. You will be proud to hear that we won the Teacher’s Race!!

Sambhali Trust : By chatting to the Manager of a hotel/restaurant, we came to know of this charity which appeared to be very well run and had a number of western volunteers assisting some of whom we met and their experiences further boosted our confidence in their work.

Sambhali Trust, established 10 years ago, is a non-profit charitable organisation based in Jodhpur, whose focus is the development and empowerment of women and girls in Rajasthan.

They provide underprivileged Rajasthani women and girls with an education in English, Hindi and Maths, as well as training in vocational and social skills, to support them in developing confidence and self-esteem, and help them work towards financial independence.

They work with women and children from all communities in Jodhpur and the rural Thar desert area surrounding Setrawa, who experience discrimination on a daily basis because of their low status in class, caste and gender. These women are greatly suppressed due to the patriarchal nature of their society and have little or no access to education. They are denied the right to choose their husband and often face a high level of verbal, physical and sexual abuse within their family circle and community.

We met Vivendra, one of the trustees (the founder Govind was away in Germany) and Marta, a Spanish volunteer.

The women spend a year training to use a sewing machine, after which time they are then offered a free sewing machine to start their own business. Their current campaign was to buy 50 sewing machines so far had collected €1600. The target was €3600. Saffi funded the balance plus a further €1722 (total €3600) towards other projects.

We visited:

Laadli, opened six months ago, has sewing classes and education classes for children,
Sheerni : a shelter home and sewing centre, opened six years ago, and
The Head Office at Durag Niwas Guesthouse which is inadequate in size for their needs – we were told of their proposed plans to buy the neighbouring property to create a sewing centre, counselling rooms, a boutique, cafe, offices and cookery school. Saffi have subsequently assisted the funding of this project by donating the sum of £12,500.

We plan to re-visit all of these projects in March and welcome any suggestions or comments in readiness for this trip.