

DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

The directors present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2022.

Purposes and Aims

Our charity's purposes as set out in the objects contained in the company's memorandum of association were to:

1. Engage UK young people with issues of poverty through bringing cross-community teams to work with disadvantaged children in India
2. To provide educational support for disadvantaged Indian children through working with Non-Governmental Organisations
3. To develop adolescent health and AIDs awareness programmes for Indian context.
4. To further raise awareness of justice issues within the UK by bringing adult teams to India.

The aim of the charity is to open the eyes of young people in Northern Ireland and India to their unique potential to change the world for better through working together.

As reported in the annual accounts for the year ended 30th September 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic a major change in the practical outworking of how the aims of the charity were delivered and, during the year, members agreed to update the memorandum and articles of association to reflect the changed focus of the charity. The new objects of the company, which were formally adopted on 4th October 2022 are:

1. To engage young people in Northern Ireland with issues of poverty, inclusion and justice through working in cross-community teams with disadvantaged children, including Newcomer children.
2. To provide quality educational support for marginalised Indian children through working with Non-Governmental Organisations.
3. To equip marginalised Indian adolescent girls with the emotional resilience and menstrual health knowledge to resist abuse and exploitation.
4. To increase awareness within Northern Ireland of local and global justice issues.

The aim of the charity is to inspire and equip young people to create flourishing communities of justice and compassion, locally and globally, empowering them to Be the Change in the world.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Within Northern Ireland

Since 2009, Saphara teams have brought together Northern Irish young people from diverse religious, social and political backgrounds to learn together through workshops, training days, weekends and overseas experience, giving time for deep and lasting relationships to be formed based on mutual understanding and shared purpose. Over 1000 students and teachers have taken part in the Saphara Transformational Leadership programme until 2019, travelling to India to engage with and learn from marginalised children. This journey has inspired many to choose careers in medicine, teaching, international development, human rights law etc., thereby making a significant contribution as local and global citizens.

In 2021, in the midst of the pandemic, we launched the innovative Be the Change Schools programme for sixth-form students in NI secondary schools. As in previous programmes, Be the Change reaches across traditional social, economic, political, ethnic and religious boundaries to facilitate the growth,

development and inclusion of young people. We do this by creating shared spaces where they can engage in self-discovery, address fears, confront stereotypes and grow in understanding of others. Rather than travelling to India, as in the past, Be the Change focuses on those who have journeyed to N. Ireland as refugees and asylum seekers. These newcomer families are often housed in socially deprived areas and local primary schools face significant challenges in welcoming these children who do not have English as their first language and have often suffered from serious trauma.

Saphara has therefore reached out to primary schools with high percentage of newcomer children in areas of social deprivation who have been keen to let their children engage with Saphara sixth-form students. This led to the inaugural Newcomer Welcome Week in June 2022.

This year, 121 young people from 12 schools engaged in the year-long cross-community programme, meeting for workshops in each other's schools to identify the Change they want to see in the World. They explored the impact of poverty and social marginalisation, challenges faced by children arriving in NI as refugees and asylum seekers, and identified the value of curiosity, education and discovery in overcoming stereo-types and fear. This learning culminated in Newcomer Welcome Week, when the students welcomed 142 primary school children to Stranmillis College delivering craft and games to help the newcomers explore identity, community and self-worth.

Programme impact was assessed using the Saphara Cultures Questionnaire which measure attitudes towards others and response to diversity. A baseline measure was taken at the start of the programme and a final measure at the end. This showed a significant attitudinal change with 19 of the 20 questions demonstrating an increase in those strongly agreeing with a positive statement compared to start of programme.

For example:

If I meet someone of a different culture, I make a special effort to be friendly showed 77% increase in those who strongly agreed.

The presence of other cultural groups in Northern Ireland enriches our culture showed 29% increase in those who strongly agreed.

Teachers affirmed this impact with comments such as:

My students have realised that these issues are not only across the world, but on their own doorstep so have increased awareness to challenge bias within their own community and seek ways to support others both near home and globally. I was surprised at how much of an impact this programme had on students despite no trip to India.

The Newcomer event was excellent - really great to see our pupils engaging with primary school children and working together with the partner schools. It opened their eyes to challenges currently being experienced by our increasingly diverse society.

One primary teacher commented:

It is wonderful to see our children, especially the boys, connecting with the Saphara young people - having role models who can inspire them to stay engaged in school and to aspire to a better future. I hope this will just be the start of a great collaboration with Saphara.

Students also made highly positive comments such as:

Be the Change Award has helped me to appreciate how difficult it can be for children who come from different backgrounds to integrate with those who do not share their culture. It has also opened my eyes to how many children there are from different countries in my local area. I have discovered that

human connection is important to every young person regardless of their ethnicity and that friendships can extend beyond language barriers.

Much of the success of Be the Change Schools was built on experience of Be the Change Colleges when twenty students from St Mary's and Stranmillis University Colleges piloted the Newcomer Welcome Week in April 2022. We are grateful to the Colleges for their support of the programme and to Dr Sharon Jones and Dr Maria Stewart for their expertise in programme design and student facilitation.

Within India

The impact of the pandemic on the work of Saphara in India continued to be significant, with Indian schools remaining closed until January 2022. In fact, in tribal areas of Jharkhand, primary schools were closed for almost two full years leaving children, especially girls, vulnerable to trafficking and child marriage as young as 12 years old.

Saphara's close partnership with grassroots NGOs has enabled us to give strategic help with maximum impact in the midst of the crisis, with funding being allocated in response to the needs of local communities. Tuition centres continued to remain open until end of January 2022, keeping thousands of vulnerable children, especially girls, safe.

The long-term impact of the pandemic was the significant debt into which many families had gone resulting in many children being unable to return to school. We have therefore continued the **Saphara Back to School programme** which, for £100, ensures that a child can attend school for a full year, including provision of books and uniform. We are delighted that the Be the Change Schools and Colleges programmes have raised over £37,000 for this worthwhile cause.

In May 2022, Saphara CEO Dr Christine Burnett made her first visit to India for over 2 years, visiting each of our seven main partners NGOs in Uttarakhand and in Jharkhand. This visit enabled her to meet with NGO leaders to discuss their priorities in the current challenging situation and to together create strategies for the future.

At SNEHA School in Dehradun, Saphara continues to fund the salaries of 8 teachers and 6 teaching assistants. We pay for books, uniforms and school fees for 110 children from homes that are below the poverty line to enable them to attend school. The Girl Champions Programme continues to be delivered in the school and skills training is provided to girls who have dropped out of education. Online refresher training for this was provided in July 2022 was delivered to SNEHA and MGVS staff by CorStone India Foundation, funded by Saphara.

Saphara has continued to fund MGVS' tuition centres in order to bring education to these marginalised rural children until schools reopened. The Girl Champions programme was delivered by facilitators going to many villages to run the programme, funded totally by Saphara. We continued to give scholarships to Indian young people so they can continue their education by attending sixth-form college and university.

The Saphara Girl Champions programme in tribal areas of Jharkhand was suspended for most of the year with funds being reallocated to village programmes and tuition centres with the same focus of:

- Working with the most vulnerable girls helping them build their self-esteem and resilience.
- Keeping girls safe from child marriage and trafficking.

Meetings held between Christine and the NGO leaders in May 2022 resulted in the resumption of the Girl Champions programme, beginning with the training of 16 teachers in Ranchi, Jharkhand in September 2022. This was delivered by CorStone India Foundation, led by Gracy Andrew and Christine.

We continue our partnership with Eco Femme, in Auroville, Tamil Nadu, which works with girls and women from economically disadvantaged backgrounds in the area of menstrual health. This year we

continued funding the Pad for Pad programme and menstrual hygiene workshops for adolescent girls, with washable pads being provided along with relief food and supplies.

In summary, while many challenges were faced during the year, Saphara believes that its work has been very significant both in India and Northern Ireland, highlighting our creativity, innovation and flexibility in responding to the actual needs of young people.

Financial Review

The total income for the year ended 30th September 2022 was £187,723 compared to £152,533 in the previous year. Fundraising by young people taking part in the Be the Change programme increased as the number of participating students increased, with the students engaging enthusiastically with the opportunity to support the work of Saphara.

We were delighted to be awarded generous grants from Ardbarron Trust, TBF Thompson Trust, Ulster Garden Villages and Summerhill Trust totalling £45,400 and a grant from the Department of Communities of £50,000. As a result of this funding and continued and increased generosity of individual donors, Saphara ended the year with a surplus of £3,738, after providing total direct funding of £82,198 to support the continued education and well-being of young people in India during and in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic. The direct costs of running the Be the Change Programme in Northern Ireland were £51,918, but the Directors would like to acknowledge the contributions of the NI Teaching colleges in providing accommodation, meals and transport for the Newcomer Welcome weeks.

Principle source of funding

The table below shows the source of funding in 2021-22

Fundraising by schools	18%
Fundraising by colleges	3%
Donations from trusts and legacies	24%
Grant awarded by Dept of Communities	27%
Gift aid received	2%
Voluntary donations	23%
College funding	3%

Spend on charitable activities

Our accounts show how we have spent our resources across our four main activities – Northern Ireland cross-community and justice awareness programmes, and education and Adolescent Girls Resilience and Health programmes in India. During the year ended 30 September 2022, funding was also raised to provide Back to School funding to enable Indian children to return to school after the pandemic. We worked with our NGO partners in India to support children who would not otherwise have been able to attend school and to restart the Girl Champions programme. Our combined governance costs and marketing spend was approximately 5% of our total spend. This is higher than in previous years due to one-off expenditure to redesign the website to reflect the changed focus of the company. We are thankful to volunteers who ensure that all overhead costs are kept to a minimum and ensure that a high proportion of our resources are spent directly on our charitable activities.

Reserves Policy

The directors have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation.

The balance of our general reserves of £133,594 (2021 £128,856) is equivalent to approximately 7 months' running costs in more normal times. Expenditure is expected to increase in 22/23 as programmes are fully re-started.

Plans for Future Periods

Saphara has engaged a consultant to work with the CEO and Board to create the Saphara Strategy Document 2022-24. This major endeavour will serve as a significant focus for Saphara's future work. We have also begun the process of rebranding and working on a new website.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Saphara is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 9 July 2008 and governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 4 July 2008. The memorandum and articles were updated on 4th October 2022.

In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity.

Recruitment and Appointment of Directors

New directors of the company are appointed by recommendation of the existing directors by ordinary resolution. The company may also by ordinary resolution determine the rotation in which any additional directors are to retire.

Unless otherwise determined by ordinary resolution the number of directors shall not be subject to any maximum but shall not be less than one.

Director Induction and Training

New directors are given a briefing of the organisation as a whole. This will include an explanation as to their duties and responsibilities. They are encouraged to understand fully their role as directors.

Risk Management

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. Saphara's register of risks is updated annually as part of its business plan review and is available for public distribution on request. Our risk assessments and child protection policies have been evaluated and our procedures and policies have been deemed to be of the highest standard.

Organisational Structure

The Board of Directors administer the charity by way of quarterly meetings and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. During the year the Board had seven directors from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

Approved by the Board on 26 April 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Mr Dominic Breen, Chair of Saphara Board

Independent examiner's report to the charity trustees of Saphara Limited

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 30 September 2022 on pages 8 to 12.

Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner

As the charity trustees (and also the directors of the company 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. Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law, and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

Examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act
Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Commission under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act
State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act.

The examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.



David Neil Robinson
Retired Chartered Accountant
17 Grays Hill, Bangor, Co Down

26 April 2023