

Traidcraft awarded over £400k to build brighter futures for thousands of tsunami victims

Traidcraft, the UK's leading fair trade organisation, has been awarded £476,000 from the Big Lottery Fund to help rebuild livelihoods of thousands of people devastated by the 2004 tsunami. The project will improve the skills, employment prospects and business opportunities of more than 4,000 women and young people in the Tamil Nadu region of India.

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Working with SAFAL- Skills Academy For Appropriate Livelihoods, an Indian non-governmental organisation, the three-year project will provide training in new skills such as construction, retail, hospitality and repairs and maintenance, as well as help in setting up new businesses and building employment opportunities.

The project will work with 1,500 women and 2,500 young people and, with an average family size of five, some 20,000 people will benefit directly. Current monthly earnings of the target group of young people are approximately 15 and research suggests that once trained, the young people will have earning potential of up to 49.

The 2004 tsunami devastated the fishing and farming industries, destroying lives, land and equipment. Whilst there has been tremendous work in building homes and restoring livelihoods of fishermen and farmers, little focus has been put on working to improve the livelihoods of other vulnerable groups within these communities. Research has shown that rather than concentrating on replicating previous occupations, recovery and rehabilitation efforts should focus on creating opportunities for vulnerable groups.

Maveen Pereira, Traidcraft's India Programme Manager, said:

The coastal communities of Tamil Nadu were among those badly affected by the 2004 tsunami and, understandably, national and local agencies have concentrated resources on re-building infrastructure and primary economic activity. This has meant even fewer resources for the sort of help Traidcraft can provide. Thanks to the Big Lottery grant, we'll be able to improve the skills, employment prospects and business opportunities for thousands of women and young people.

Geoff Bockett, Traidcraft's International Development Director, said:

This project is another example of how Traidcraft fights poverty; by working with vulnerable women and young people to help them build brighter futures for themselves they will be free from a lifetime of poverty.



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