

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

SOVEREIGN WORLD TRUST

BIBLICAL TEACHING FOR
CHRISTIAN LEADERS IN
THE WORLD'S POOREST
NATIONS

✉ info@sovereignworldtrust.org.uk

🌐 www.sovereignworldtrust.org.uk

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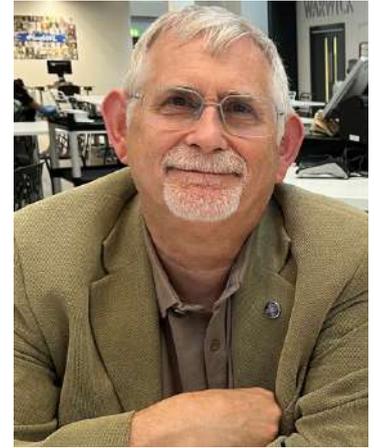
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Our 'Thank You' Gallery

Thanks to your support

THE GOOD IS THE ENEMY OF THE BEST



A Christian friend of mine who has recently retired, has been reflecting on how to best use his time, now that he no longer has to go out to work each day. He reminded me of the expression, '*the good is the enemy of the best,*' and went on to say that he was thinking a great deal about how this should apply in his new situation.

He didn't want to spend his time responding to worthwhile things that might get in the way of the best things. He's a gifted and experienced man, but where best to invest his talents and skills? We're all different, of course, with unique talents, skills, resources, and opportunities so he's working through his options.

His remarks set me thinking, because I realise that precisely the same issue applies to the work of Sovereign World Trust. There is so much need, so many opportunities and so many requests for Biblical teaching literature; more than we can respond to. Part of our responsibility is to assess these and decide how to apportion our resources and efforts. It's not always straightforward. We can't say, '*We'll just keep doing what we've done in the past,*' because we live in a world that's changing and we need to adapt. We want to place our books into hands where they will have most benefit.

So, what are our priorities and how do we choose?

Firstly, we seek to place books in the hands of people who will read and understand them. That means for people of limited education and for whom English is a second language, we make an informal assessment of their literacy. In response, we can send appropriate books on subjects that are relevant in accessible language.

Secondly, we ask for feedback on the impact of the books we send, and this informs future mailings. Feedback varies; one pastor may say that the books have '*changed his life*'; another may say more specifically that he has learned something he didn't understand before, and has adjusted his preaching. This happened recently when one leader wrote that he now sees that Christians have a responsibility to care for God's world as well as attend to spiritual and ethical matters. Specific feedback helps us to gauge impact.

Thirdly, we aim to reach people who are leading others, or involved in leadership training. Indeed, some of our books on leadership and marriage are used to run training events.

About half of our books go to colleges and libraries. We received feedback from a church in Ghana that one particular book had been used to develop a course. In response, we sent additional copies.

Sometimes there are other considerations that apply. Latterly we have been sending more books to India and fewer to Africa; this is for two reasons. India has had a smaller proportion of our resources in times past and we are getting more requests these days. Secondly, our experience is that freighting to India is *more reliable* than to African nations. God is working powerfully in some parts of India - we have sent specimen copies of books for evaluation and have been given specific responses on what would be most helpful.

It would be wrong to give the impression that we are neglecting Africa. Indeed, by working with our partner Richard Smart in Uganda, we have been able to send a container-load of books which he has personally distributed during his travels around the nation, handing them over to individuals and networks of churches. See the article on page 8.

Another approach to seeking *the best* is our Mark Project. Here we are targeting a specific constituency - leaders of the future. It's not quite so straightforward as mailing or handing over a book. Here we are helping readers to process the material – understand it and think about how to apply it. The idea of *best* here is maximising the impact of the book – spiritual digestion rather than just feeding.

With our Russian project, the translation of Michael Eaton's *Preaching through the Bible - Mark* has had a long gestation period. The idea of *best* here is realised in developing a good translation that is sensitive to the Russian context, where a very traditional Orthodox reading of scripture can be unhelpfully religious and lack a practical edge. The translation team has had to work really hard to find words that do justice to the thought of the book and the context in which it is being read. For that reason, progress has been slower than otherwise.

So, in many ways we work hard to *identify the best approaches and responses*.

But returning to the expression, '*the good is the enemy of the best*,' it is not, in fact a Biblical expression, although perhaps our motto text, "*Commit these things to faithful men who will be able to teach others...*" implies a similar sentiment. I became curious to know where '*the good is the enemy of the best*' originated.

“

Commit these things to faithful men who will be able to teach others...

2 Timothy 2:2



Well, there is a book by Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't*, in the genre of aids to success in business. But much earlier, it seems that the philosopher Voltaire had come up with an expression on *best* and *good*. What he said was, '*the best is the enemy of the good*' – which is precisely the opposite! He was counselling against the obsessive quest for perfection which hinders a person from doing good rather than the dissipation of energy on worthy but not excellent things.

Both thoughts have merit. Together they suggest the need to strike a balance. A combination of both excellent and good. To achieve such a balance, we need to be dependent on God and led by His Holy Spirit, one step at a time and sensitive to His nudges, as was Paul when he declined to visit Bithynia in Acts 16 verse 7. That would have been *good*, had God not prepared something *better*. This underlines the importance of prayer and of faithful intercession, and brings me to a final point which is to say that we are very grateful for those who pray for the work of the Trust. Perhaps, for example, there is someone reading this who is not as mobile as they were in times gone by, and not as able to get out and about so much? But you are spending more time praying for God's work across the globe and for the work of this ministry as part of that. Thank you for your prayers. Please keep going! We hope that this year's Annual Report will be an encouragement to you; please do read on...

NEWS FROM THE NATIONS

Stories from our recipients globally continue to hearten and inspire us. We are truly humbled by the efforts of Christian leaders, libraries and Bible schools as they continue to overcome many challenges to bring Biblical understanding and teaching to their people. We are privileged to be able to continue to support them with books and teaching relevant to their ministries and local needs.



A BUSY START TO THE YEAR, GHANA

- Long-time Trust recipient, Pastor Abraham began 2023 with a series of river baptisms.
- The pastor continued his busy January with a well-attended leadership conference, which included participants from various denominations.
- The theme of the symposium was *Back to the Upper Room*.
- For both events, books from the Trust helped with teaching and preaching.

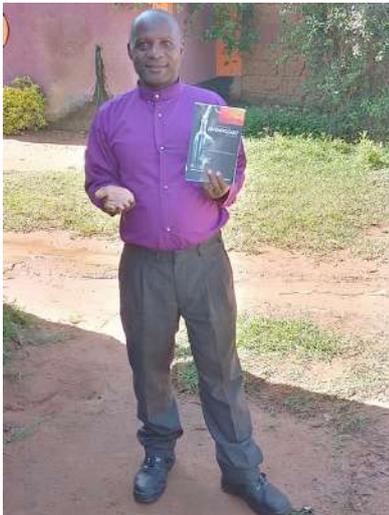
OVERCOMING ADVERSITY, MALAWI

- Pastor Enock and his team were again on an evangelical outreach expedition to North Malawi at the beginning of the year, taking with them Christian teaching materials and supplies.
- The team's trip took in around 11 remote villages, but early rains made for a perilous and arduous journey.
- The mission work carried out by Pastor Enock and his supporters throughout each year shows just how hard so many of our recipient pastors work to bring God's word to very isolated areas of the world.



SPIRITUAL GROWTH, INDIA

- Pastor Paul in India wrote to us in March as he received his latest mailing from the Trust; this included books by David Pawson and Michael Eaton.
- *"Greetings to you from India. Thank you so much for continuing to help me with these wonderful books which are helping me a lot in my spiritual growth. I am getting a deeper understanding of the word of God...They are also helping me to teach our church groups. I am continuously sharing from the books I have received from you over many years."*



BREAKING BOTTLENECKS, KENYA & GHANA

- *Breaking the Leadership Bottleneck* by Paul Weaver, formerly a senior leader in the Elim movement, explains the importance of planning intentionally to raise up the next generation of leaders. It's a book that encourages reflective and strategic thinking.
- In 2023 the Principal of a Bible training college in Ghana, wrote to us to tell us that they had used this book as a core text for a course. With the help of the author, we were able to raise the funds to send them a box of 56 copies.
- The same year, Pastor Samuel in Kenya received a copy from us and wrote to tell us that it is helping him to think about planning for the sustainability of his Sunday School work.

RESOURCES OF HOPE, NEPAL

- Pastor Singh from Hope Foundation Trust, Nepal epitomises the resilience of so many of our pastors .
- The pastor is endeavouring to bring God's word to some 12,000 people in his far-flung district.
- He additionally runs a small library of Christian titles for local people to borrow and share.
- Sermon and teaching resources are particularly difficult to come by in Nepal.
- In addition to hard-copy books, we have also been able to help Pastor Singh with our digital resources in the Nepali language from our resource website.



SAFE ARRIVAL, TANZANIA

- Early in 2023, the safe arrival of books for diploma students at St John's Bible College, Tanzania was a real answer to prayer.
- We had dispatched a number of copies of Patrick Whitworth's *The Bible Inside Out* specifically for the students, but were concerned about customs duties being levied. This has been an ongoing issue in some African countries despite the books being a 'donation'.
- Thankfully this was not the case here, and we were able to follow up with some Swahili copies of *The Bible Student* (edited by Peter Sammons).



3,311
Recipients

Did you know we currently have 3,311 recipients (pastors and libraries) on our database.

PARTNERSHIPS

The key to partnerships is finding trustworthy people to work with who share the Trust's objectives and vision. Below, we give updates on two longstanding partnerships which proved particularly fruitful in 2023.

CHRISTIAN LIBRARIES, KENYA & RWANDA

One of our long-established collaborations is with Brian and Sheila Keel of Leadership Development Partnership. In 2023, they came to our warehouse to collect a large number of titles for delivery to Rwanda, where they are setting up Christian libraries.

Over the years, as part of their teaching mission, Brian and Sheila have delivered hundreds of SWT books to pastor libraries in Kenya and beyond. Brian takes up the story...

"We have had an ongoing relationship with Sovereign World for the past 12 years and, apart from during the Covid period, we have been able to supply a significant amount of books to Kenya, in particular, and some to Rwanda.

It was back in 2010 when we were first given the idea of supplementing our teaching visits with pastors' learning libraries. We encouraged the pastors to visit a local location where they could take time out to study and prepare for their teaching ministry in their churches.

Since this time, we have been able to establish 180 libraries, predominately in rural locations in Kenya (and Rwanda). Much of our work in the past ten years has been in partnership with Nairobi Pentecostal Bible College, which began a distance learning programme for pastors who wanted to study for a diploma or degree in line with government requirements. They have informed us that in the past eight years, 10,000 pastors have graduated from this programme which is continuing to expand.



*In the past eight years,
10,000 pastors have
graduated from a diploma or
degree distance-learning
programme.*

*Study groups within
churches are flourishing*

One of the biggest changes since Covid amongst believers (both leaders and members) is their increased desire to study the Word and learn more about Biblical truths. In a large church we recently visited, the early Sunday morning Bible study was no longer front-led, but people gathered in the main building in small groups to study. In some rural locations, a number of home churches (as part of a local church scene) now exist. Studies can be held several times a week, such is the desire to become acquainted with the Word of God. We are currently working with a network of churches in rural Kenya where one of the church

buildings is being used as a campus for learning when not in use for church meetings. They have plans to begin another campus shortly and a third in April (2024) in other church buildings, reaching out into other locations. Each of these churches has a library which is accessible to those wanting to study, and this became a much more accepted practice during the lockdown period. To further assist with this growing hunger for Biblical truth, we are also making short teaching recordings which are sent to them every two weeks."

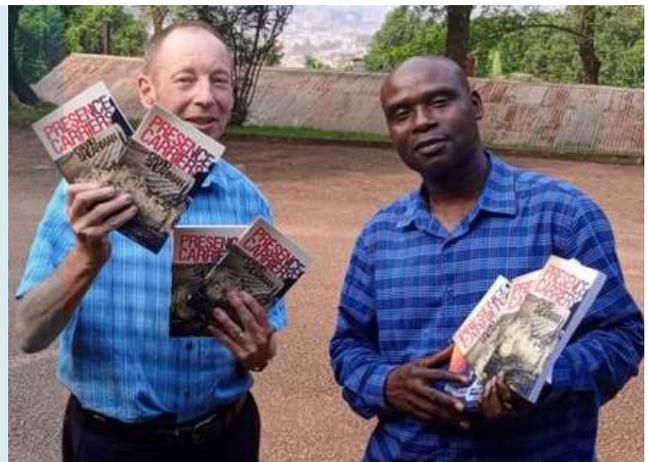
As you will have read in Chris Moffett's introduction, the importance of helping to nurture the leaders of the future cannot be overstressed, so trusted partnerships which help facilitate this and put books in the hands of those who need them most provide an important solution.

UGANDA - AN UNFOLDING PARTNERSHIP

Over the years we've had many people come to visit our offices and warehouse situated on a farm north-east of Tonbridge. This has included visiting pastors and church leaders from many nations; in such cases, we have been able to give them a selection of books to take back home with them. Sometimes these visitors have been able to negotiate special rates with airlines for their excess baggage. This arrangement has always been mutually beneficial because we have been able to discuss their literature needs in some depth and learn a great deal.

Other visitors have been those based in the UK who make regular trips overseas and wish to take resources with them to place in the hands of the people with whom they are working. One of these is Richard Smart whose visits on his way to Uganda, beginning in 2011, became increasingly frequent. His capacity to take books has increased steadily over this time. Typically, we would fill up his car with boxes of books. Eventually he got to the stage where he would arrange for a cargo company to collect boxes and ship them out to Kampala by container from Ipswich. Working in partnership with local churches, he would plan his trips to arrive in time to personally take delivery, and then take copies with him as he travelled around rural Uganda visiting churches to preach and teach.

In 2023 we sent a shipment of 16,500 books to Uganda. The container was met by Richard at the port, and subsequently books were distributed by hand to churches and pastors country-wide.



At a time when the traditional approach of mailing books had become particularly challenging, especially during the Covid season and its aftermath, it seemed a logical next step to scale this up by paying for container space ourselves, and shipping books in much larger quantities – some 16,500 copies in 2023. At the Uganda end Richard, who is well known and respected there, established a partnership with the Pentecostal Churches of Uganda, who agreed to provide a base for storage from which books could be distributed. Over a period of months, he and others have taken them personally to a wide range of churches country-wide and also established outposts on the borders of neighbouring countries. Not surprisingly, the length of Richard's visits became longer and longer.

Richard has now been given a visa to stay for an extended period and he feels called to commit to this nation long-term. So, both he and his wife hope eventually to settle permanently and take Ugandan citizenship.

Richard has a background in accountancy and has a particular vision to use his skills to help Christians develop income generating self-sustaining businesses to contribute to the economy, and at the same time model Biblical principles of finance. He has been involved in a number of projects – brick making, a fish farm, and is working on plans for a project raising chickens and pigs for local markets. In Uganda over half the population are subsistence farmers and three-quarters are involved in agriculture. There are many challenges and very often the people involved do not have the resources or business skills to develop things at scale. It is not just knowledge of business planning and strategy that is needed. In a country where resources are so scarce, there are sometimes very challenging ethical dilemmas. The temptation to divert funds provided for business purposes to urgent medical or educational needs is very great. In a culture which lives hand-to-mouth and funds go to the most immediate and pressing need, it takes a great deal of discipline and standing firm.

Richard has written that, “...transforming a nation begins by transforming people, and it is only the gospel of Jesus Christ that can bring about that transformation.” So, the challenge is to identify men and women of godly character who can resist the enticements to misuse money and to handle the prosperity should it come. One of his favourite verses is Deuteronomy 8:18:

‘And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth.’

Integral to this goal of personal transformation is teaching and training in practical areas of Christian marriage and Christian leadership. Two of the most helpful sources we have been able to provide are the Mission Possible manuals on marriage and leadership.



“
...transforming a nation begins by transforming people, and it is only the gospel of Jesus Christ that can bring about that transformation.”

Another key area is that of personal wholeness and healing. Here the Ellel Ministries' books such as *Hope and Healing for the Abused* and *The Importance of Forgiveness* have been especially useful and effective.

People who have experienced a measure of healing and understand what godly leadership and marriage look like are better placed to experience the transformed life that Jesus offers.

We, at Sovereign World Trust are very pleased indeed to have Richard as one of our partners because the books we provide find an important place in the overall picture.

Of course, Uganda is but one nation, however the influence and blessing does extend to the surrounding nations. Our God is a God who multiplies loaves and fishes!

RESOURCES

IN OTHER LANGUAGES



Although many of our recipients have a good command of English and are taught our language from an early age, there are many for whom Christian teaching in their native tongue can provide an invaluable resource for their spiritual growth and mentoring.

Almost 30 years ago a number of popular Christian teaching books were translated into one or more languages, printed by Sovereign World Trust and distributed to relevant audiences in the developing world. At the time, there was no facility to digitise these translations but the titles have had enduring relevance and demand. Given this ongoing need, we arranged to have around 100 of these books scanned and we are currently working towards adding these to our burgeoning collection of accessible materials on our resource website.

Making these scans fit for purpose is an enormously time-consuming job, but one which we feel is important if we are to ensure that such valuable materials remain accessible. We also need to make sure that each file is small enough to be downloadable in a third world setting.

Books have been chosen for their relevance to the third world, with plenty of emphasis on physical and mental healing, discipleship, repairing relationships in church life, marriage and bringing up children, as well as spiritual healing.

We still have some way to go, but you can already see the fruits of our project via the foreign language section of our resource site: www.ibtr.org.uk.

In the past, given the cost of mobile phones, tablets and pcs and the poor internet access particularly in many areas of Asia, South America and Africa, our focus was on supplying Biblical teaching and preaching resources in hard copy – sending regular mailings of books and other resources to our global recipients. More recently, however, with better internet access and the widespread reconditioning of smart phones and IT equipment from more affluent countries, the developing world has seen a digital revolution. This, coupled with vastly improved internet access and speeds, has given us an opportunity to harness the power of the internet and to create and extend our resource website and regular digital teaching.

In addition, post-pandemic, we have found the cost and reliability of courioring books to some countries to be prohibitive. Prices for sending even the lightest parcels have soared and all too often unaffordable customs charges are levied at the destination countries (despite their being marked 'no commercial value').

The future is digital and we must continue to take advantage of this to maximise our opportunities to reach those most in need. Whilst we appreciate that there are still some recipients who are not in a position to benefit directly from online

resources, we hope that those who do have internet access will be able to share resources locally. As the use of smart phones increases it is not necessary to have an expensive computer and printer to access these teaching materials.

RUSSIAN TRANSLATION

On the subject of resources in other languages, we are delighted to report that our translation team, headed-up by Olga Moffett, are very close to completing a translation of the ever-popular *Preaching Through the Bible - Mark* by Michael Eaton, as Chris Moffett touched on in his introduction.



Against the background of the conflict in Ukraine this has become something of a priority for us. The translation, we believe, will provide such a useful resource for those in Ukraine (and indeed generally in the Russian-speaking world), particularly when the conflict comes to an end and we are able to help the Ukrainian people to rebuild their lives.

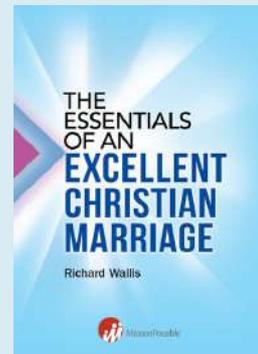
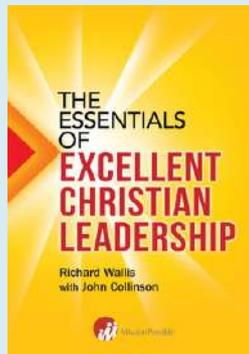
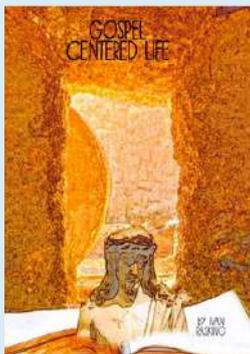
NEW RESOURCES IN ENGLISH

In addition to new titles in a variety of foreign languages , we have recently been given permission to share the following popular titles via our resource website. These titles have particular resonance with developing world culture:

Gospel Centred Life

by Ivan Raskino

This book of popular sermons provides deep Biblical insight and encouragement. It seeks to help both individuals and groups in their daily walk with Christ. We have split the book into 12 sections for ease of reading and download.



The Essentials Series

Excellent Christian Leadership & Excellent Christian Marriage

by Richard Wallis

The leadership book explores and encourages as it looks at how to overcome the challenges and pitfalls that all leaders can inevitably face. Meanwhile, the marriage handbook takes course participants through the key areas of marriage, touching on the potential causes of problems and disagreement, and offering advice to ensure that these do not become insurmountable.

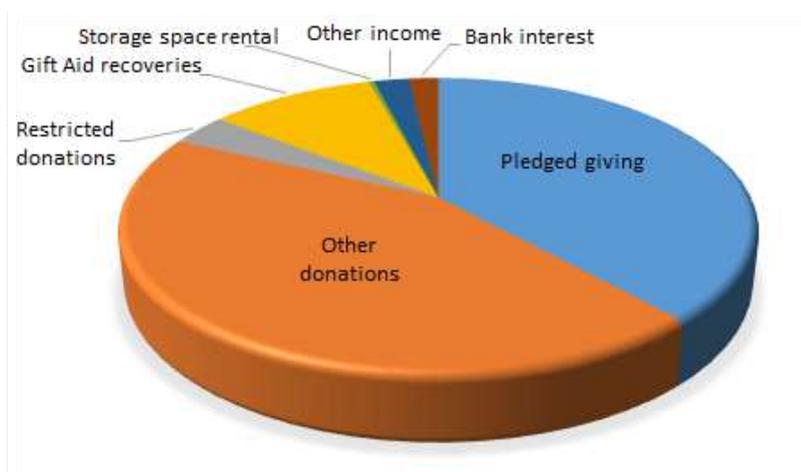
Please do share details of our resource website with anyone you feel might benefit:
www.sovereignworldtrust.org.uk/resources

FINANCIALS

The information below is based on our draft accounts. Our fully examined accounts, which include a Trustees' Report, will be posted on the Charity Commission website for those who wish to see them. The figures below show that our income was £37,138, whilst our expenditure was £38,028. To meet our commitments, we drew on our reserves. At the end of this financial year, our reserves were £31,440 (restricted) and £13,311 (unrestricted).

INCOME SOURCES

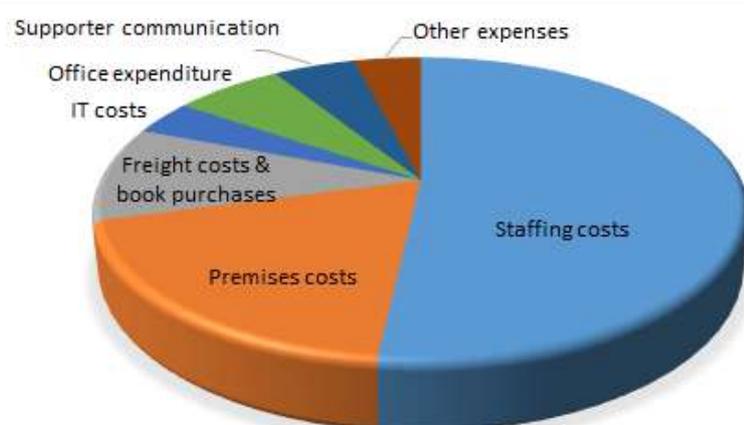
We are hugely grateful for the financial support we receive from a variety of sources. The table below gives a breakdown of our income.



Income 2022 - 2023	
Category	£
Pledged giving	14,238
Other donations	16,233
Restricted donations	1,290
Gift Aid recoveries	3,790
Sales income	0
Storage space rental	120
Other income	789
Bank interest	678
Total	37,138

EXPENDITURE

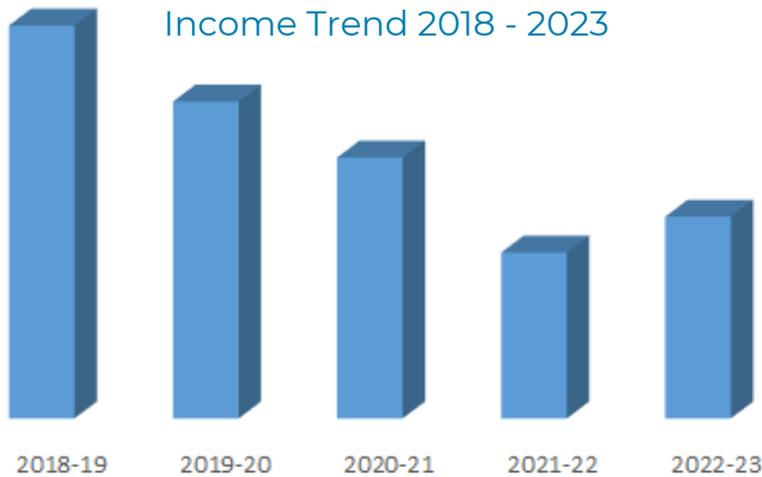
How do we spend the money you give us? A breakdown of our spending is set out below with a pie chart to show the relative proportions. You will see that our expenditure slightly exceeded our income. The shortfall was made up from our reserve funds.



Expenditure 2022 - 2023	
Category	£
Staffing costs	21,194
Premises costs	5,837
Freight / book purchases	5,783
Book publishing costs	396
IT costs	730
Office expenditure	1,428
Supporter comms	994
Other expenses	1,666
Total	38,028

INCOME TREND

This summary is based on the draft accounts which, at the time of printing, are being prepared for our independent examiner. A full copy of the final financial report for the year ended September 2023 will be available on request or may be downloaded from the Charity Commission Website.



Income 5 Year History	
Year	£
2018-19	72,308
2019-20	58,321
2020-21	48,004
2021-22	30,546
2022-23	37,138

Sovereign World Trust's accounts are independently examined by Trevor Lane, as a director of M N Jenks & Co, 72 Commercial Road, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 6DP.

Our bank account details are:

CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

Sort Code: 40-52-40 Account Number: 00036031

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS AS AT DECEMBER 2023

The original charity No. 32784 was constituted by a Declaration of Trust dated 3rd October 1986. The objective of the Charity is to promote the advancement of the Christian Faith, which we do primarily by distributing Christian literature. The current charity (with CIO status) No. 1198177 was constituted on 8th March 2022.

TRUSTEES AS AT DECEMBER 2023

Tony Miles-Prouten (Chair), Paul Caneparo, Calvin Eaton and Mike Fawcett.

GIFT-AID DONORS

Sovereign World Trust is very grateful for the Gift Aid scheme. Those who give under this scheme have completed a declaration which we hold on file. Every 6 years we ask donors to update their declaration. If your position has changed and your giving no longer qualifies for Gift Aid, please let us know. Similarly, if you now pay tax and wish Sovereign World Trust to benefit, please do tell us so we can send you a Gift Aid Declaration form and begin claiming.

Income is up
21.6%

For the period 2022/23 our income is up over 20% against 2021/22 thanks to the generosity of some grant-making trusts for specific projects.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

There are many ways to get involved in our work and to make a real difference to the lives of church leaders, pastors and their communities in poor and remote areas across the globe. Some of our supporters give a regular donation to the work of the Trust, while others are generous with their time or in prayer.

DONATE via online banking

You can make a one-off or regular direct bank transfer via online banking:

Account Name: Sovereign World Trust

Sort Code: 40-52-40

Account Number: 00036031

Please give your name as the reference. If your donation is Gift Aidable please do contact us for a Gift Aid form.

DONATE via PayPal

You can donate to the work of the Trust using your Credit or Debit Card now.

Alternatively you can use your PayPal account if you have one:

www.sovereignworldtrust.org.uk/donate

If you would like to make a regular donation, please do get in touch.

LEAVE A LEGACY

Leaving a gift in your will or giving in a loved one's memory ensures a longlasting impact. Such gifts are much appreciated. They often come unexpectedly out of the blue and can be the key to unlocking projects that we cannot fund from regular giving.

PRAYER

We would be grateful for your, your church or your home group's prayers.

Prayer underpins our ministry and we regularly send out prayer requests to our prayer partners:

www.sovereignworldtrust.org.uk/prayer

EASYFUNDRAISING

Join EasyFundraising and you can collect free donations to us every time you buy something online. It won't cost you a penny extra. Depending on the store this can be as much as 15%. Simply visit:

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/sovereignworldtrust

SPREAD THE WORD

Telling friends, colleagues or church groups about our work and encouraging them to get involved can really make a difference.

And by joining our mailing list, you can keep up to date with the progress of our work and see the impact of your support.

For further details on any of the above, please contact our Director, Chris Moffett at: chrism@sovereignworldtrust.org.uk



For Information

Our Annual Reports are written for the benefit of our partners and supporters to say thank you and to give an account of our activities during the previous year.

But they are also written for those encountering the Trust for the first time and who are interested to know more about us and what we do.

We hope you'll enjoy (or indeed have enjoyed) reading all about Sovereign World Trust and our work in this report. And when you've finished with it, please do pass it on for someone else to read.

Thank you.

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