



**SMEC**  
Foundation

Member of the Surbana Jurong Group

SMEC Foundation

# Annual Report

2023



Project: Nginyang Girls' Secondary School

**Connecting and  
uplifting communities.**

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Harivillu 2 Anganwadi Project, India



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# Chairman's Foreword

Welcome to the SMEC Foundation Annual Review for 2023. In the following pages, we share with you our ongoing efforts to tackle the complex challenges facing many communities worldwide, from climate change and resource disruption to poverty and water and food security. These challenges are vast and we recognise the limitations of our resources compared to the scale of need. Nevertheless, in line with the Foundation's philosophy that "a little money well spent can go a long way", we are encouraged by the impact we've achieved with the generous support of our partners and stakeholders.

Throughout 2023, the SMEC Foundation supported 11 projects across Africa, South Asia, and South-East Asia. These initiatives, spanning education, water accessibility, and infrastructure improvement, underscore our dedication to enhancing community wellbeing. We also contributed to habitat renewal for an orangutan sanctuary in Borneo (Kalimantan). We are grateful for the collaboration of our trusted charity partners, SMEC employees, alumni, and their families, without whom these projects would never be realised.

Our employees, particularly those engaged directly in project identification and implementation, deserve commendation for their unwavering dedication and enthusiastic engagement in the Foundation's cause. Additionally, we extend our appreciation to our charity partners for their invaluable resources and continued support to deliver projects professionally, which have been essential to the success of our endeavours.

The generosity of SMEC Alumni and their families has significantly amplified our impact, enabling us to extend our reach and support more communities in need. Their contributions, whether in the expansion of vocational learning centres or funding essential infrastructure projects, have made a meaningful difference in countless lives.

In Uganda, the SMEC Foundation engaged with the Busubi Foundation for the first time to expand their vocational learning centre. SMEC alumnus Ross Hitt commented recently: "When we started the Busubi project, we had nothing but a piece of land with some banana palms, trees and weeds - and a group of enthusiastic volunteers and donors. We have been able to build a substantial concrete and brick community building, now fitted with solar power and a large concrete water tank. Training programs are in place and more will be added on this next visit."

The Busbridge family have once again supported the Foundation, funding projects in Kenya and Malawi, focussing on vital school infrastructure as well as refurbishing water wells in a wildlife reserve to deliver a community-managed water supply facility.

Alumnus Ids Groenhout has funded a major Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) project in Timor-Leste which will directly benefit 2,000 people, while the McKendrick family have again generously supported disaster resilience in an earthquake-prone area in Eastern Nepal as well as pre-school education in India. We are grateful for the support of

families such as the Busbridges, McKendricks, and individuals like Ids Groenhout, whose contributions have enriched our programs and empowered communities across various regions.

We appreciate the commitment of all SMEC employees to supporting the Foundation, especially SMEC employees in Australia, who have become deeply engaged in our work, evidenced by their fundraising efforts and support for our Emergency Relief Assistance Fund, which has been invaluable. This fund serves as a critical lifeline for members of our SMEC family who suffer catastrophic loss due to natural disasters, highlighting SMEC's collective spirit of compassion and resilience.

In 2024, we remain steadfast in our mission to bring positive change in communities globally. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all our supporters for their unwavering trust and generosity, and we are optimistic about the opportunities that lie ahead.



**Roger Bayliss**

- Chairman, SMEC Foundation

# SMEC Foundation Board

The SMEC Foundation is a core part of SMEC's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program.

The Board is responsible for advancing the CSR program by setting the Foundation's strategic direction, establishing policies and procedures, and monitoring the Foundation's progress towards its goals. By fulfilling their roles and responsibilities effectively, the SMEC Foundation Board continues to make a positive impact in our communities and advance the common good.



**Roger Bayliss**

- Chairman

Roger joined SMEC in 2002. He was a Non-Executive Director of the SMEC Holdings Board and was elected Chairman of the SMEC Foundation Board in 2015. Roger's 40-year career has included policy development, marketing, international trade and investment. Roger held marketing positions with the Albright and Wilson chemicals group before joining the Australian Trade Commission (Austrade) where he was a member of the executive management team for over eight years.



**Karen Atkinson**

- Director

Karen is the Executive Director, Dams and Hydropower, Infrastructure & Energy. Karen holds a BEng (Hons) in Civil Engineering with Architecture and has more than 25 years of extensive management experience across the UK, New Zealand, Australia and Asia. She started working at SMEC in 2015 and joined the SMEC Foundation Board as a Director in 2021.



**Philip Wilcox**

- Director

Philip joined SMEC in July 2006 as Secretary to the SMEC Board, and was elected a Director of the SMEC Foundation Board in 2015. Philip is experienced in the areas of environmental, planning and local government law, and holds a BEconomics, a BLaw and a Diploma of Corporate Governance. Philip is a qualified Chartered Secretary, an associate of the Governance Institute of Australia (AGIA) and an associate of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ACIS).



**Suzanne Gibbs**

- Director

Suzanne is the Global Lead, Marketing & Communications, Infrastructure & Energy and holds a BA Psychology, BEconomics and a Masters in Media Practice. Suzanne has 20 years' experience in corporate affairs and marketing working within highly regulated industries including pharmaceutical, financial, industrial and medical gas, and engineering. She joined SMEC in 2021 and was appointed as a Director of the SMEC Foundation in 2022.



## Client Relationship Managers



**Jemma Norton**



**Virginia Anderson**



**Bianco Davis**

The SMEC Foundation board receives valuable support from a team of client relationship managers. Their primary focus is to ensure that the Foundation's inclusive business model operates seamlessly and effectively. We extend our gratitude to Jemma Norton and Virginia Anderson, who collaborate closely with donors and partners to provide guidance on project progress and outcomes. We also thank Bianco Davis who supported the Foundation during 2023.

# Overview

Our initiatives help build communities worldwide. Through partnerships, collaborative projects, and shared knowledge, we have strengthened a global network committed to sustainable development.

Established in 2001, the SMEC Foundation is committed to community development and sustainable poverty reduction. Its core mission involves extending small-scale grant support to development projects within the communities in which we operate.

Collaborating closely with locally-based SMEC teams, the Foundation actively engages with charity partners and SMEC Alumni partners to implement projects that complement and reinforce the community's needs. This collaborative approach not only ensures the effective utilisation of resources but also consistently delivers outstanding outcomes that positively impact the communities served.

## The SMEC Foundation has three overarching objectives:

**Connect:** Connect communities with people and resources to help deliver projects in the areas of health, education, environment, emergency relief, and community development.

**Uplift:** Create partnerships with non-government organisations and local groups to uplift communities by addressing poverty, social disadvantage, and environmental protection.

**Contribute:** Provide small-scale grant assistance to community groups to carry out projects in countries in which SMEC has a presence.

In addition to our SMEC Foundation projects, our employees are active participants in delivering positive change through our Divisional CSR Committees across Africa, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, South and Central Asia, and Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Employees donate their resources and time toward initiatives and fundraising specific to the needs of the communities where they operate, supported by the Foundation.

As we celebrate the achievements of 2023, we recognise that our actions today shape the future. Our commitment extends beyond the present, aiming to empower future generations with the tools, knowledge, and sustainable practices needed to thrive in a world that cherishes its people, communities, and environment.

# 22

years

# 240+

projects completed

# \$1.71

\$AUD million donated

# 30+

countries



# Our Partners

## Thank You to our SMEC Alumni



 Ross Hitt  
 McKendrick Family

 Ids Groenhout  
 Busbridge Family

01

### Action on Poverty



AOP is the trusted partner for changemakers creating a better world. With over 50 years of international development experience combined with grassroots networks globally, AOP helps everyone take effective action on poverty.

They connect philanthropists, corporates, non-profits, and innovators with communities and projects to break the cycle of entrenched poverty. Believing that everyone has a role to play in creating a more just and equal world, their specialty is in creating networks, maximising resources, and upskilling people and organisations so that, together, they can create lasting change.



**SMEC Foundation's continued support and partnership have made a very real difference to vulnerable communities across Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Malawi, Vietnam, and Zambia."**

– **Brayden Howie**,  
CEO Action on Poverty (AOP)

03

### BridgIT Water Foundation



Water is the Foundation of all sustainable development and holds implications for every major area of life – health, education, economies and gender equality. BridgIT exists to combat the world's water crisis by increasing access to an improved water supply one rural village at a time.

BridgIT and our rural development partners have more than 10 years of achieving successful outcomes. Since 2010, BridgIT have impacted 1,060,000 people through the installation of water supplies in 560 facilities in Tanzania, Nepal, India, Ethiopia, Uganda and Malawi.



**BridgIT could not do our work without the support of organisations like the SMEC Foundation. Since 2019, SMEC have funded 36 water systems that have delivered a safe water supply to over 33,200 beneficiaries of BridgIT programs."**

02

### Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation



The Borneo Orangutan Survival (BOS) Foundation works together with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia, to protect the Bornean orangutan and its habitat. The BOS Foundation's works are based on its four core strategies, namely orangutan reintroduction, lifelong sanctuary, orangutan habitat conservation, and sustainable development of communities living around the forest.

To materialise the core strategies, the BOS Foundation works together with communities from 32 target villages over 5 regencies in 2 provinces: Central and East Kalimantan, covering a working area of more than 400,000 hectares which includes 2 orangutan rehabilitation centers, 1 national park, 1 protection forest, and 1 ecosystem restoration concession forest.



**The BOS Foundation has received generous support from various donors, such as SMEC. SMEC helps to fund a 5-year reforestation effort for 6 hectares, which began in 2017. Progress was on hold during the pandemic, restarting in 2023. This project aims to restore a part of the Samboja Lestari area that was previously damaged by fire in 2015. SMEC also helps by providing support for a habitat survey with the objective of identifying all the plant and animal species in the area.**

04

### Followings Foundation



Followings Foundation is a registered Australian charity. Since 2017, Followings Foundation has been responsible for building, resourcing, staffing and supporting a Community Learning Centre that offers free classes to all members of the community.



**Our partnership with SMEC in 2023 and 2024 has allowed us to refurbish the Learning Centre we built in rural Uganda and broaden many of its flagship programs. Thanks to SMEC Foundation the Learning Centre gained five brand new computers and a printer for the Computer Training Program, several new sewing machines including the allotment of the villages first electric sewing machines, and new instruments and costumes for the Centre's incredible Music, Dance and Drama program. Refurbishments and improvements included a complete repainting of the building, inside and out, floor repair, new furniture and new electrical wiring.**

05

**Habitat for  
Humanity**



Habitat for Humanity is a leading not-for-profit provider of housing for families in need. Driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live, worldwide Habitat has helped 59 million people obtain safe and decent housing, along with the strength, stability and independence to build better lives.

SMEC has partnered with Habitat for Humanity since 2015 around our shared value to connect and create sustainable communities and for SMEC employees to be involved in life-changing work to enrich the lives of the communities where SMEC operates.



**We are very grateful for the support of the SMEC Foundation. Not only have the financial contributions improved the lives of countless families in the Asia-Pacific region but connecting with SMEC volunteers on the ground has enabled us to also provide practical support to the communities that we serve. We value SMEC's adaptability and expertise and look forward to partnering on project delivery for years to come."**

– Nicole Stanmore,  
CEO, Habitat for Humanity Australia

06

**So They Can**

**so they can**

So They Can was founded in 2009 on the vision to change the future of children and communities living in poverty through education. The organisation provides quality education for 32,000 children living in poverty, across 51 government primary and secondary schools in Kenya and Tanzania. Our partnership with the SMEC Foundation since 2014 has provided critical infrastructure in many under-resourced schools: classrooms, toilets, girls' changing rooms, clean water and accommodation facilities.



**I am very happy at school. I have freedom, peace and confidence in my school environment which enables me to get well educated. As a girl child the obstacles that were stopping me are gone, and I can see that my dreams will happen. Thank you for caring for us girls."**

– Grace, a Grade 6 student at Gijedabung Primary School where the SMEC Foundation constructed a girls' changing room.

07

**The Anganwadi  
Project**



The Anganwadi Project (TAP) is a non-profit organisation committed to creating safe, dignified, clean, and joyous preschools for children in disadvantaged areas of India. Australian volunteer architects work alongside the local community, to design and build low-cost preschools that go beyond day-to-day educational needs, utilising local labour, passive design, and largely recycled, local materials.

Instilling a sense of community ownership is fundamental to the TAP approach, with volunteers engaging with the community from before the seeds of the project are planted, throughout construction, and until the preschools' completion. This process focuses on empowering communities, particularly women, through collaboration.



**We extend our heartfelt gratitude to SMEC Foundation for their invaluable support, which has been pivotal in The Anganwadi Project's successful delivery of preschools. The enduring partnership developed over several years actively engages the SMEC team, fostering a deeper connection and shared impact in the communities we serve. Together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of countless individuals, fostering a brighter future.**

08

**WaterAid**



WaterAid Australia is a member of WaterAid, an international not-for-profit, determined to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone, everywhere within a generation. Only by tackling these three essentials in ways that last can people change their lives for good. Celebrating our 20th Anniversary in 2024, over 5.72 million people have been reached through our clean water, sanitation and hygiene programs.



**WaterAid has been proud to partner with the SMEC Foundation to deliver multiple projects across our region since 2013. WaterAid acknowledges SMEC's long-term commitment to sustainable community development and reduction in poverty in the regions in which it operates. WaterAid's mission is to provide these communities with the human right of access to clean water, improved sanitation and proper hygiene, meaning our purpose is strongly aligned."**

– Tom Muller,  
CEO, WaterAid Australia



# Projects



 **Charity Partner**  
So They Can

 **SMEC Alumni**  
Busbridge Family

 **Client Relationship Manager**  
Philip Wilcox

 **Location**  
Kenya

 **IN PROGRESS**

**The project will:**

- Construct 35 toilets
- Support 1,105 primary school students and 18 teachers
- Create dedicated toilet facilities for special needs students
- Increase access to key infrastructure to marginalised communities.

**Toilet Construction Project**

## Supporting childhood development through vital sanitation upgrades.

Partnering with So They Can, the SMEC Foundation is supporting the construction of toilet facilities for early childhood and special needs students in Kenya. Within the Nakuru and Baringo regions, two schools were identified by the Nakuru County Ministry of Education State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education as requiring urgent support.

Muririgua Primary School is one of these schools, with a ratio of one toilet per 63 students. The construction of additional toilet facilities is a crucial upgrade for the students at this school. While there is a dedicated classroom, currently there are no toilet facilities for the special needs education student cohort. This project aims to rectify this deficiency and provide improved access to sanitation. In late 2023, major infrastructure works were completed at this school, including

construction of a girls' toilet block of 12 toilets, renovation of the boys' toilet block with eight toilets and a urinal, and construction of a teachers' toilet block with four toilets and a urinal.

Additionally, SMEC Foundation is supporting Akuisi Primary School. The school has a cohort of 48 early childhood education students, but they are without a dedicated toilet block. Rectifying this would ensure the youngest students have access to their own facilities.

We are proud to improve the educational journey of these students through this crucial sanitation project.



**Charity Partner**  
Followings Foundation

**SMEC Alumni**  
Ross Hitt

**Client Relationship Manager**  
Jemma Norton

**Location**  
Uganda

**IN PROGRESS**

**The project will:**

- Provide ten sewing and specialty machines for income generation and training
- Extend the computer lab to include five additional computers and a printer
- Supply new musical instruments in support of the performing arts troupe.

**Busubi Empowered Communities Learning Centre Renovation Project**

**Increasing future employment opportunities through training and upskilling.**

In Uganda, the SMEC Foundation is working together with the Followings Foundation and SMEC Alumni partner Ross Hitt to expand and improve the purpose-built Busubi Empowered Communities (BEC) Learning Centre. The BEC Learning Centre shares resources across the community. It makes available free training and online digital library access through a supplied 4G network. The available learning opportunities include vocational trades, economic financial literacy, and family planning.

Part of the funding was used to purchase ten new sewing and specialty machines, a mix of both electric and manual, which will be used for income-generating projects,

such as a recent business contract of 361 uniforms to two local primary schools, and tailoring training programs.

The popular computer lab is being extended to include five additional desktop computers and a printer, with the room being fitted out. A selection of new instruments, both traditional and modern, will be provided to support the local troupe which performs for hire at community events.

The centre provides a pathway to career opportunities and is committed to becoming self-sustainable by 2030.



**Charity Partner**  
Habitat for Humanity

**SMEC Alumni**  
McKendrick Family

**Client Relationship Manager**  
Jemma Norton

**Location**  
Nepal

**IN PROGRESS**

**The project will:**

- Renovate 40 houses to increase accessibility and disaster resilience for people with disabilities
- Grow community and government knowledge and capacity
- Integrate gender and disability outcomes in plans and policies
- Assist with disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation activities
- Overall help improve the lives of 5,075 people within the focus communities.

**Disaster Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Eastern Nepal (RISEN)**

**Enhancing community resilience against natural disasters through the power of knowledge.**

The SMEC Foundation and Habitat for Humanity aim to bolster the disaster resilience of communities in the Jhapa, Saptari and Dhanusha Districts of Nepal through the Resilient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Eastern Nepal (RISEN) project.

The 2016 Annual Disaster Statistical Review recorded Nepal within the top ten countries with the highest disaster mortality rates globally. Disaster resilience remains critical in the target areas of Eastern Nepal, with flooding the most frequent and damaging threat. Families that are the most marginalised due to caste discrimination and with little ability to recover from natural disasters are prioritised by RISEN, prioritising the

needs of the most vulnerable. In the focus communities of this project, nearly half the population lack basic nutrition, housing, sanitation, and healthcare compared to other provinces.

The disaster resilience of communities in eastern Nepal will be enhanced by empowering them with knowledge and action plans. Additionally, the project aims to improve government policies and practices concerning disaster preparedness and safe house construction, while focusing on providing disaster-resilient housing interventions to the most vulnerable members of these communities.





Charity Partner  
WaterAid



SMEC Alumni  
Ids Groenhout



Client Relationship  
Manager  
Philip Wilcox



Location  
Timor-Leste



IN PROGRESS

**The project will:**

- Improve water, sanitation, and hygiene services for rural health in Manufahi
- Provide re-education on essential cleaning and hand hygiene behaviours
- Create a safer workplace for staff
- Benefit approximately 2,000 rural community members.

**Access to WASH at Healthcare Facilities**

## Enhancing rural healthcare through water, sanitation, and hygiene services.

Together with the SMEC Foundation, our charity partner WaterAid and SMEC Alumni partner Ids Groenhout will improve the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services at a specific Healthcare Facility (HFC) in Manufahi, Timor Leste.

HFCs play a pivotal role in maintaining public health, particularly through the provision of high-quality, safe care services for pregnant women, infants, children, and individuals with disabilities. Collaborating with district health staff, the project aims to address the

facility's current challenges, such as unreliable water supply for cleaning and hygiene tasks, the need for toilet upgrades, and improvements to handwashing stations. Additionally, staff will receive training and support on essential cleaning processes and healthcare waste management.

The project is expected to benefit approximately 2,000 rural community members who utilise the facility, while also ensuring a safer work environment and empowering healthcare staff to adopt essential cleaning and hygiene practices.



**Charity Partner**  
BridgIT Water Foundation

**SMEC Alumni**  
Busbridge Family

**Client Relationship Manager**  
Philip Wilcox

**Location**  
Malawi

**COMPLETED**

**Refurbished Wells Project**

**Improving community health through safe drinking water.**

Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve covers 180,000 hectares and is the largest wildlife reserve in Malawi supporting most of the regions wildlife species, including elephants. In the communities surrounding the reserve, there are severe limitations to accessing safe drinking water, and water-borne diseases are common.

In many areas, women must travel as far as five kilometres to find potable water. It's not uncommon for these water sources to be shared with livestock. Moreover, the task of water collection often prevents them from getting their children ready for school, which leads to absenteeism among students.

To combat acute water shortages in the communities surrounding the Reserve, the SMEC Foundation worked alongside BridgIT Water Foundation and the McKendrick Family to restore and revitalise non-functional wells in the neighbouring

areas. BridgIT Water Foundation also partnered with the Wildlife & Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM), a group that support the wise use of natural resources in Nkhotakota District through practical projects or environmental education implementation. Work was carried out to refurbish 13 borewells, creating access to safe water to improve health, hygiene, and personal cleanliness.

This was the first conservation initiative at Nkhotakota Reserve, with a primary focus on engaging the local population. The project empowered communities to manage the reserve by promoting awareness and education about the area's wildlife and natural resources. A crucial part of this effort involved showcasing the social and economic benefits of peacefully coexisting with thriving animal populations, thereby cultivating a genuine appreciation for wildlife protection.

**The project has:**

- Provided access to life-saving drinking water for 4,549 people
- Refurbished 13 existing boreholes
- Trained water user committees on sustainability
- Reclaimed up to three hours per person per day spent on water collection.



**Charity Partner**  
So They Can

**SMEC Alumni**  
Busbridge Family

**Client Relationship Manager**  
Philip Wilcox

**Location**  
Kenya

**COMPLETED**

**Electricity Solution Project**

**Renewable energy solutions for safer access to health care.**

Nakoko Health Dispensary, a fundamental health facility under the Ministry of Health, is situated in the semi-arid area of Tiaty East within Baringo County. Although remotely located, it provides health services to a community of approximately 22,000 people.

The Dispensary faces a challenge of inadequate infrastructure, including an inconsistent electricity supply. Funded by our charity partner So They Can and SMEC Alumni the Busbridge Family, critical repairs to the electrical system were carried out, and malfunctioning fluorescent lights were replaced with solar lights with solar batteries.

With these improvements, the stable electricity supply assured safe operation of the Nakoko Dispensary, where staff can provide a consistent standard of care to around 4,500 community members per month, including safe live births during the night in the maternity unit.



**The project has:**

- Provided a stable power supply to support quality healthcare
- Supported treatment of on average 370 patients a month
- Supported availability of antenatal care for women
- Improved safety and wellbeing for staff and patients alike
- Reduced operating costs by using renewable energy.



 **Charity Partner**  
The Anganwadi Foundation

 **Client Relationship Manager**  
Roger Bayliss

 **Location**  
India

 **IN PROGRESS**

**The project will:**

- Assist with construction of a community hub to improve access to support
- Help overcome malnutrition in pregnant mothers and children
- Improve access to education, health and hygiene resources.

**Harivillu 3 Project**

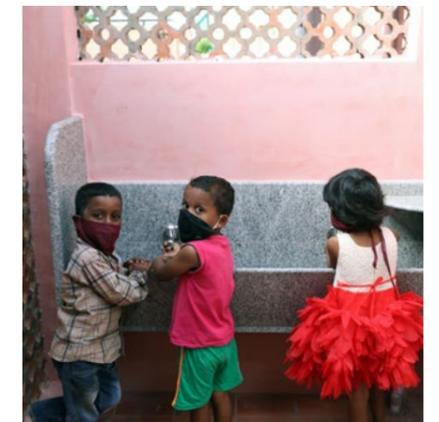
**Providing food, hygiene, and education opportunities for the underprivileged.**

The SMEC Foundation has been providing ongoing support to The Anganwadi Project to build anganwadis in disadvantaged communities in India. Anganwadis provide meals each day to children under six years old. They also provide lessons in health, hygiene, and literacy in a nurturing preschool environment.

The buildings serve a dual purpose in the community. When not in session, they transform into community centres, supporting various programs for adolescent girls. Additionally, these buildings function as food distribution centres and nutrition education centres for pregnant mothers. As a result, the schools have a positive impact that ripples through the entire community.

In 2020, SMEC Foundation supported the construction of Harivillu 2 which is now successfully operating, serving many disadvantaged children and pregnant mothers in the community of Ammavaripeta Village.

Building on this success, a new site has now been allocated for Harivillu 3. This project will benefit children aged two to six years old in the district surrounding Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh, and in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, in dense informal settlement slums. The SMEC Foundation is proud to support the continued improvement in child nutrition and education in these communities through our support of Harivillu 3.



 **Charity Partner**  
So They Can

 **SMEC Alumni**  
Busbridge Family

 **Client Relationship Manager**  
Philip Wilcox

 **Location**  
Kenya

 **IN PROGRESS**

**The project will:**

- Support the renovation of 21 classrooms
- Improve the learning environment across two schools
- Positively impact the education journey of 1,500 students, teachers, and staff.

**Classroom Renovation Project**

**Nurturing young minds through an improved learning environment.**

The SMEC Foundation and So They Can are continuing to partner together to improve school infrastructure. The classroom renovation project will improve access to education for students across Muriricua Primary and Akuisi Primary schools in Kenya.

These two schools serve as vital hubs for education. They play a crucial role in shaping young minds, providing a foundation for knowledge, growth, and community development. However, like many educational institutions, they faced challenges related to infrastructure.

Upon conducting a comprehensive infrastructure needs assessment, it became evident that improvements

were necessary. A total of 21 classrooms across both schools require attention. These spaces, where structured learning unfolds, require renovations and repairs to create an optimal environment for students and educators.

In late 2023, the renovation of nine classrooms was completed for the Muriricua school community. Once completed the project will provide a safer learning and teaching environment for over 1,500 students and their teachers.



 **Charity Partner**  
Action on Poverty

 **Client Relationship Manager**  
Jemma Norton

 **Location**  
Bangladesh

 **IN PROGRESS**

**The project will:**

- Improve access to modern health and rehabilitation facilities
- Enhance diagnostic accuracy and services
- Increase understanding of disability inclusivity.

**Renovation and Advancement of Healthcare Facilities**

**Modernising accessibility for crucial healthcare and rehabilitation support.**

In Bangladesh, the SMEC Foundation and charity partner Action on Poverty are supporting the renovation and advancement of Sancred Hospital in the Sunamgonj District.

Currently, there is only one government hospital in the area. It is required to meet the health and medical needs of approximately 400,000 people. In 2008, the community health centre and hospital was established to deliver healthcare to the underprivileged rural population by health professionals.

This project aims to make the hospital building and facilities more accessible, friendly, and inclusive to

be suitable for patients such as the elderly, children, people living with a disability, or expecting mothers. This will be achieved through enhanced facilities, upgraded treatment rooms, improved wayfinding through signage, and constructed ramps for universal healthcare access.

By improving the quality of services provided at the hospital, this initiative will facilitate affordable healthcare access for individuals within the Haor area.

 **Charity Partner**  
Borneo Orangutan  
Survival (BOS)  
Foundation

 **Location**  
Indonesia

 **Client Relationship  
Manager**  
Philip Wilcox

 **IN PROGRESS**

**The project will:**

- Assist with the rehabilitation of Island 6 at Samboja Lestari
- Provide technical expertise through professional assessments
- Provide evaluations to support further government and community discussions.

**Habitat Assessment of Orangutan Sanctuary**

**Using technical expertise to strengthen the future of Bornean orangutans.**

The SMEC Foundation's long-standing partnership with the Borneo Orangutan Survival (BOS) Foundation supports conserving Bornean orangutans and their natural habitats while working alongside the local communities and government agencies.

The BOS Foundation runs two of the largest orangutan rehabilitation centres in the world, accommodating about 400 orangutans, however, the Samboja Lestari centre is now identified as being located within the development area of a new capital city.

Drawing upon SMEC's expertise, habitat and biodiversity survey assessments are being conducted to present convincing proof of the successful reforestation endeavours and enhanced biodiversity at the site, underscoring their notably positive environmental influence in comparison to other land use options.

This all-encompassing evaluation will play a pivotal role as a reference point in the development discussions with both government and community stakeholders.



# 2022 Projects: Carrying Momentum into 2023



-  **Charity Partner**  
Action on Poverty
-  **Client Relationship Manager**  
Jemma Norton
-  **Location**  
Zambia
-  **COMPLETED**

**The project will provide:**

- Four large storerooms
- Improved functionality of the school feeding program
- Positive impacts on the retention and learning outcomes of more than 5,000 students
- Enhanced nutrition education and school kitchen management
- Improved hygiene, and food handling practices.

**School Kitchen Storeroom Project**

## Modernising accessibly for crucial healthcare and rehabilitation support.

The SMEC Foundation has been an invaluable supporter of Action on Poverty since 2020. Action on Poverty has programs that target the root cause of poverty and works with organisations to increase access to food, water, healthcare, and education and provide long-term socio-economic solutions for communities.

The School Kitchen Storeroom Project was funded by the SMEC Foundation, facilitated by Action on Poverty (AOP), and implemented by Self Help Africa (SHA). The project is part of the Home-Grown School Meals Project, supported by the World Food Programme and the Government of the Republic of Zambia aiming to reduce hunger and improve nutrition among school students by providing more diverse and nutritious food.

Four schools across Central Zambia were identified to receive the construction of kitchen storerooms to enhance nutrition education, school

kitchen management, and improve hygiene and food handling practices.

The storerooms were constructed adjacent to existing kitchens to address the critical lack of storage space. These facilities are necessary for the storage of cooking utensils as well as non-perishable foods such as maize meal, pulses, and to some extent vegetables. Because of the space shortage previously experienced, most of these items were stored either in classrooms or the head teachers' offices.

The four schools that participated in the project were Kansangwa and Mwambanzovu primary schools in central Mumbwa, Nsangano and Sala primary schools.

With the Foundation's support, these upgrades significantly improved the functionality of school kitchens and feeding programs at these locations and are expected to positively impact the retention and learning outcomes of over 5,000 students.



 **Charity Partner**  
So They Can

 **SMEC Alumni**  
Busbridge Family

 **Client Relationship Manager**  
Philip Wilcox

 **Location**  
Tanzania

 **COMPLETED**

**The project has:**

- Built and renovated nine classrooms and two offices
- Improved educational infrastructure at three primary schools
- Allow over 548 students to learn in safe and inclusive school environments.

## School Infrastructure Project – Classroom Construction

So They Can (STC) is focused on changing the future of children and communities living in poverty through education, believing it's one of the best routes to sustainable change for children.

The education program STC runs in Tanzania is situated in the Babati district, Manyara region. Many schools within this region face issues negatively impacting the quality of education provided to children including inadequate infrastructure and educational resources and limited access to water and poor sanitation.

With assistance from the SMEC Foundation and the Busbridge Family, STC has improved the quality of education for children in Tanzania living in poverty, through upgraded learning conditions for safe and engaging school environments.

The School Infrastructure Project has constructed and renovated learning and teaching rooms in three program-supported primary schools. Renovation of two classrooms and an office at Gijedabung Primary School, three classrooms at Hallu Primary School, and construction of two new classrooms and one teacher's office at Ayamango Primary School are now complete.

**“**  
Our students are attentive and eager to learn. They are **proud to be** in their **new classrooms**, the improved school environment **helps children to enjoy school.**  
**– Neema, Grade 1 & 2 Teacher, Gijedabung Primary School**



 **Charity Partner**  
So They Can

 **SMEC Alumni**  
Busbridge Family

 **Client Relationship Manager**  
Philip Wilcox

 **Location**  
Tanzania

 **IN PROGRESS**

**The project will:**

- Build five changing rooms at five primary schools
- Provide safe, and hygienic spaces for over 1,390 girls to change
- Focus on delivering an inclusive education among students
- Ensure girls at each primary school have access to showers, toilets, and sanitation.

## School Infrastructure Project – Girls Changing Room

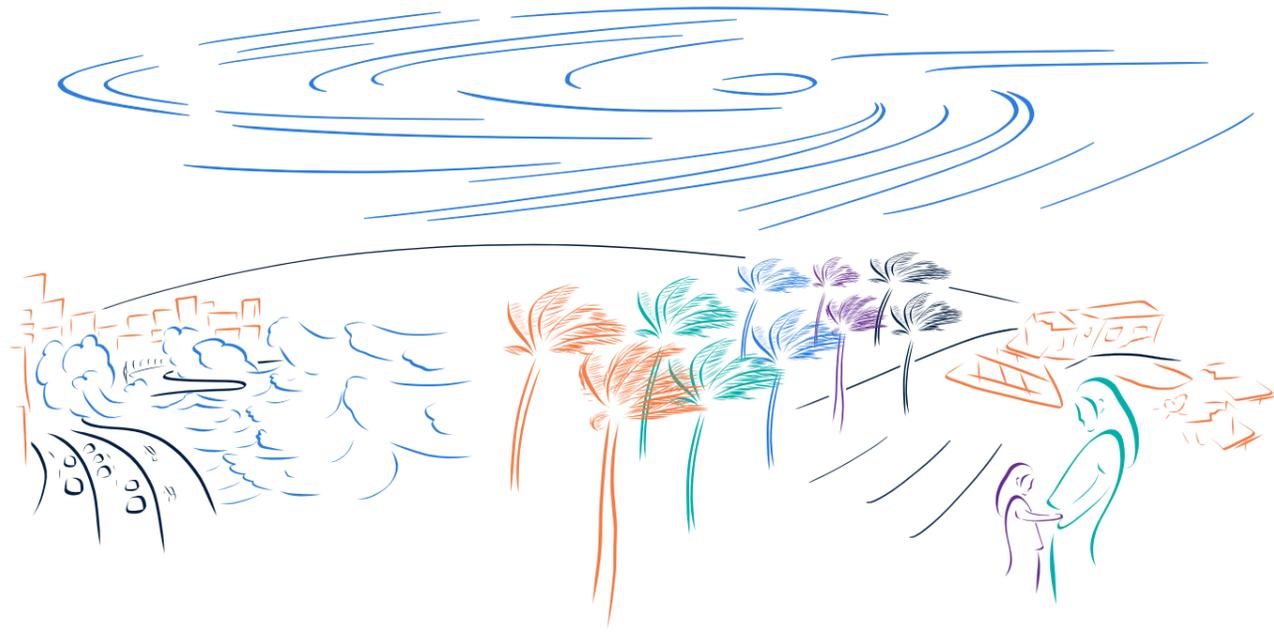
With continued support from the Busbridge Family Benevolent Fund, the SMEC Foundation, again partnered with So They Can to further improve the educational infrastructure in local government primary schools by adding new changing rooms for girls.

Throughout Africa, girls are less likely than boys to be enrolled in school, and these differences are particularly large after puberty. One in ten schoolgirls in Africa miss classes or drop out completely due to menstruation. In Tanzania, young girls often miss on average five learning days every month due to limited access to sanitary products and inadequate school infrastructure such as a lack of toilets and changing rooms and limited or no water supply.

Five changing rooms are being built across five different primary schools, with a focus on creating an inclusive education among students. These change rooms will provide safe, hygienic spaces for girls to change so they no longer miss out on days of school. These reserved spaces will further support girls with health education and raise community awareness on the importance of girls' education.

Construction of the changing rooms at each school commenced in 2022 and each project is being carried out with community engagement and participation - including the contribution of local materials such as gravel, sand, and stone for use in construction.





# Emergency Relief Assistance

The SMEC Emergency Relief Assistance program is a helping hand for our employees when things get tough. Whether it be an earthquake, typhoon or flood, natural disasters can cause catastrophic damage and loss to people and communities.

We strive to foster and unite communities and positively impact people's lives, including those of our dedicated employees. Through the SMEC Foundation, we take pride in extending vital financial and on-the-ground assistance to our team members during emergencies and crisis situations.

The boundless generosity of our people and their proactive spirit have proven invaluable to families, communities, and villages facing urgent challenges during times of upheaval and adversity. Their unwavering support of colleagues during critical moments is crucial to recovery in the aftermath of natural disasters.

The 2023 SMEC Australia and New Zealand (ANZ) Senior Leadership Conference took place in February at the Gold Coast, Australia. Attendees successfully raised over \$2,300 for the SMEC Foundation through a raffle and silent auction, with proceeds to be used for the Emergency Relief Assistance program.

In the same month, offices across Australia held morning tea fundraising events to support employees and their families affected by the devastating Türkiye and Syria earthquakes. The incredible generosity of the ANZ employees raised over \$12,500, which was matched dollar for dollar by the SMEC Foundation. A vital partnership with CARE Australia was formed to ensure proceeds from the fundraiser went towards supporting impacted families.

In December, colleagues across the Australian business participated in Baubles for a Cause, a campaign that encouraged people to get creative by decorating a bauble for their local office Christmas tree, accompanied by a gold coin donation. The competitive spirit was strong with the completed decorations contending for the title of Most Festive Office. Whilst the Brisbane team took first place, all offices came together to raise over \$530 for the SMEC Foundation.



# Corporate Social Responsibility



The Divisional CSR Committees (DCCs) operate alongside the SMEC Foundation, overseeing charitable activities and fulfilling the company's CSR commitments. These committees focus on ensuring impactful programs within operating divisions, encouraging ownership and engagement by SMEC employees. Additionally, SMEC CSR projects receive support from the SMEC Foundation, which collaborates with trusted charity partners with a local presence.



# Divisional CSR Committees



## Africa

Representatives from SMEC in Africa donated a 20-foot storage container to Hope for Human Nature Generation. The container will assist the organisation in securely storing donated items before being distributed to those in need.

Hope for Human Nature Generation is a Zambian youth-based charitable organisation that seeks to improve people's livelihoods. It was formed to help the most vulnerable in society, including patients referred to hospitals and health centres within Lusaka.

These patients and their caregivers often travel from remote areas for

medical attention, but do not have means of meeting their basic needs while in the hospital. The organisation donates food, clothes, blankets, and other health care items to support them.

Additionally, the SMEC Ghana office renovated dilapidated toilet facilities and installed new fixtures and fittings for the smooth operation of the school and the benefit of the disadvantaged children at the Tetteh Ocloo Boarding School for the Deaf.

Dr Seth Tetteh-Ocloo founded the Tetteh Ocloo Boarding School for the Deaf in 1966, which was the first of its kind. The school received minimal

funding, so SMEC in Ghana was pleased to recently help in updating sanitation facilities for the 320 students attending the school.





## South Africa

SMEC South Africa is committed to community development and youth outreach and is actively supporting a myriad of projects and initiatives that aim to create lasting positive change.

Letcee (Little Elephant Training Centre) is dedicated to continually enhancing the quality of Early Childhood Development (ECD) services in the communities it serves. The recent funding contribution from SMEC will be directed towards Letcee's Play-Able Project, an initiative facilitating inclusive play sessions for 25 children with special needs. The mobile toy library, a key component of the project, is equipped with toys, educational materials, and therapy resources, fostering a supportive environment for learning and growth.

In Cape Town, the team is committed to catalysing positive change in the impoverished Cape Flats of Vrygrond. SMEC will support the Sozo Foundation, an organisation that strives to empower the community through education, skills development, and entrepreneurship, with a particular emphasis on breaking the cycle of poverty for youth through tailored programs.

A pressing inter-generational cycle of poverty is intensified by poor education standards and high youth unemployment, reaching 46.5% for those aged 15 to 34. Furthering commitment to community development and education, SMEC will support the Entrust Foundation. Entrust Foundation focuses on early child development, education, and innovation programs in underprivileged schools, alongside

youth and women empowerment initiatives within communities.

SMEC in the KwaZulu-Natal region pledged funds for the purchase of 20 calculators, which were distributed to underprivileged schools in and around Durban. The CSR initiative was part of South African Institute of Civil Engineering's (SAICE) Durban national campaign to raise funds to purchase scientific calculators for schools in need. SMEC South Africa's pledge added to the total of 355 calculators donated by companies and individuals affiliated with SAICE.

By fostering initiatives that prioritise community development, our local offices aspire to build resilient communities and nurture the potential of youth, striving to empower them to take an active role in shaping their futures.



## Australia and New Zealand

SMEC in Australia and New Zealand has continued to uphold a dedication to making a positive difference in the communities where employees live and work throughout 2023. Aligning business objectives with four fundamental pillars of people, community, sustainability and environment, SMEC supported four charity partners by providing donations and involving employees in initiatives over the course of the year.

A total of \$60,000 was donated across SMEC's four long-standing charity partners; the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, the Community Spirit Foundation, Engineering Aid Australia and First Foundation NZ.

In the lead up to International Women's Day, SMEC participated in four Habitat for Humanity 'Brush with Kindness' volunteer days in major cities across the country, to support women and families who have been victims of domestic violence.

The Brush with Kindness one-day program involved conducting renovations, painting, landscaping, gardening, and minor building repairs to the homes of people who may be disadvantaged, escaping domestic violence, or experiencing homelessness. The group activity was an opportunity for each SMEC team to come together and spend time out of the office and make a life-changing impact in the community for people who are less fortunate.

Later in the year 'Team SMEC' took on the challenge of fundraising for WaterAid's vital work as part of Winnovators. Winnovators is a program that encourages teams from various companies to collaborate and work together on real-world challenges faced in the communities where WaterAid operates.

Employees from Darwin, Adelaide, Brisbane and Gold Coast offices enthusiastically took part in several activities including trivia, a silent auction and a terrarium building workshop. Through their collective efforts and many generous employee donations, 'Team SMEC' surpassed their goal and raised \$7,400.



## South and Central Asia

The CSR team in Bangladesh partnered with Friendship NGO to fund and complete the Friendship-SMEC Solar Irrigation Project, an important economic development project for over 1,000 residents and 120 farmers of Bangalia village. The new 10kW irrigation pump with a capacity of 13 horsepower, will derive energy from a 16kW solar panel. Through this pump, water is supplied to 90-120 bigha paddy or vegetable fields in a single day, reducing irrigation costs by half. This project sought an alternative way to increase the production of crops without creating extra pressure on grid power or diesel fuel, while also being environmentally friendly.

Additionally, 70 dedicated volunteers from SMEC India collaborated with Bhumi NGO to embark on a

mission to plant over 100 trees in Bangalore. Their collective effort not only contributes to the city's green cover but also fosters a healthier environment for all. This initiative exemplifies the power of community engagement and environmental stewardship.



## Southeast Asia and Pacific

In the Southeast Asia (SEA) and Pacific region, the SMEC team continued their commitment to various CSR activities and initiatives that extend across multiple countries. In June, SMEC Malaysia organised a beach clean-up at Morib Beach, involving 20 volunteers. The team successfully removed 35kg of non-biodegradable waste and 10kg of recyclables, showcasing SMEC's dedication to environmental preservation.

The team also supported cancer awareness programs in schools in Papua New Guinea, contributing to the Papua New Guinea Cancer Foundation's efforts to educate communities in Lae city and Madang town. This initiative, delayed from 2022, emphasised SMEC's ongoing commitment to health and community wellbeing.

In Indonesia, team members supported the SMEC Foundation's initiative in providing technical assistance to the Borneo Orangutan Survival (BOS) Foundation after floods threatened an orangutan sanctuary. Support was also provided for the SMEC Foundation's collaboration with WaterAid in Timor-

Leste for a water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) project, ensuring improved water, sanitation, and hygiene services at a rural healthcare facility.

We extended assistance to various community projects, including a school farming initiative in the Philippines with AFFLIP and a kitchen facility donation in Vietnam with the Blue Dragon Children's Foundation. These efforts demonstrated SMEC's dedication to community empowerment.

Tree-planting initiatives were carried out in the Manila, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, and Hanoi. Collaborating with local tree planting partners, SMEC contributed to reforestation efforts and demonstrated its dedication to enhancing the environment and promoting ecological balance.

Additionally, SMEC collaborated with the Grass Skirt Project in Papua New Guinea by sponsoring four rugby league teams, underscoring its commitment to promoting community wellbeing through sports and women's health initiatives.

In total, twelve CSR initiatives (including two SMEC Foundation-funded projects) were carried out in Southeast Asia and Pacific in 2023 with a cumulative donation of AUD \$99,860, reflecting a holistic approach to social and environmental responsibility, making a positive impact across the region.



**Connecting and  
uplifting communities.**

[smecfoundation.org](https://smecfoundation.org)