



Theo Mosch and Monique op de Weegh-Mosch returned to Sri Lanka, from 25th April to 5th May, to further promote the work of the foundation. On this trip they were accompanied by four entrepreneur friends, Marc-Jan Hollenberg, Mirjam Gootjes, Klaas Keizer and Theo Dijkstra with his family. Monique's son Tom also joined the group to work on his profile project 'The impact of micro-credit for Tsunami victims in Sri Lanka'.

The specific aims of this 10 day trip were:

- Renovation of the Jayanthi boys' orphanage
- A visit to the Visaka girls' orphanage
- Training for students and young entrepreneurs
- The prison
- Micro-credits
- Students
- School children

We were able to accomplish much this trip which accounts for a longer than usual news letter and we have itemised the various elements. So, sit down for a good read.

Renovation of the Jayanthi boy's orphanage

Thanks to all your generous donations for the 'roof panels' for the orphanage we were able to get a good start on the renovation and thanks to the funds collected we will be able to create decent and functional accommodation for the orphans. The renovation is progressing well and it is hoped that by the end of June this will be finished. Once the project has been completed we will send you a news update.

Sleeping quarters before renovation





And currently:



Bezoek aan meisjesweeshuis Visaka



Last year we supported the orphanage with renovation work and a school trip for the girls. This time we returned and once again distributed the 'Girls4Girls' envelopes and purchased new underclothes for the girls. The girls were still talking about the 'once in a lifetime' trip last year and we were under pressure to repeat this. If you take into account that these girls never get outside the school and orphanage....Who could refuse?

It is heart-warming that two of our entrepreneurs agreed to finance a new trip and all 36 girls will soon be enjoying a two day visit to Sygeria and Pollonaruwa. This is dependent on receiving permission from the government but as this is an educational and exceptional opportunity for the girls, we do

not expect to be denied the necessary permission.

The girls were definitely happy to see us back again.

Training for students and young entrepreneurs

Our top-trainer duo Marc-Jan and Mirjam organised a two day training session in a local training centre which had an amazing and positive impact. The consensus of opinion... more please. Super.

40 students and 20 young entrepreneurs worked on their 'dream' (ambition) and how they were going to achieve this. It is our hope that next year we will be able to arrange a follow-up as the feedback was enormously encouraging.



Prison

As you are undoubtedly aware we have made a considerable effort over a number of years to give some support to the women with children who are confined in the prison at Kalutara. Children up to the age of 5 may remain with their mothers within the prison.

Over the last few months we have supplied sanitary equipment, tiles, cement and paint to make a 100% improvement to the sleeping/living accommodation for the mothers and also that the mothers and children, no longer have to sleep on the concrete floor but have their own beds. Three toilets and two showers have been put in. This to replace a hole in the ground and a bucket of rain water.

The high point of this trip was being granted permission to start English lessons for the female inmates who wish to improve their chances in life once they are released.

None of this would have been possible without the enthusiastic and humane cooperation of the prison governor and his staff.

Sleeping quarters before



Sleeping quarters after



Micro credits

Currently we have 67 micro-credits in operation. The sort of small business that we support range from a small shop, sewing machines, dried fish, nets to catch prawns and other fish to a beauty salon and many others. We have noted that the man employed to collect the monthly payments has not been firm enough in his efforts and the returns have been too little. There will always be special cases where, due to ill health of personal difficulties, repayment of the loan has proved difficult. In these cases we amend the terms of repayment to fit the situation.

Klaas and Monique gave extra focus to this problem during their visit. The spreadsheets were updated followed by house calls to those in arrears and ultimatums given with regard to reducing or ending the deficits. Being confronted with the Dutch business approach was culturally unnerving for many but in most cases the desired result was achieved. Only in one case was it necessary to enlist the help of the local authorities which will result in a term of imprisonment for the person in question.

This is not easily done but was our only course of action in this case. Thankfully there are many other success stories.

One of the first people we had helped was a man with a cinnamon business who came especially to visit us with his success story and expansion plans for the future. Inspiring.



A new project we have set up is a Pilot Project for Mini Micro-credits for 34 women. The local government had asked us to finance this project in which they would take on the task of making the contracts and the collection of repayments. Once the finances had been agreed with one of our entrepreneurs we were able to immediately give 33 women a great boost to their future business plans. All the contracts have been signed and these women have started their projects.

Students

We met and talked to all 23 students whom we are currently supporting. Most of these also took part in the training days given by Marc-Jan and Mirjam. It has been an emotional and touching experience to see how clever and motivated these young people are and their gratitude for the financial help given, enabling them to follow their educational dreams. We have received 15 new applications from very poor children who desperately wish to learn but whose parents are unable to support them financially. This will be looked at in detail next time we visit.

School children



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Thanks to the amazing success of the 'whats-app' action we have collected sufficient funds to get the 150 children back to school for a year by giving them the required uniform, school bag and the necessary stationery items. Happy faces.



Highlights of this trip



As you will have read, we have been able to achieve much this trip and this is thanks to YOU. For us this trip was one long series of intense and emotional moments.

Two aspects deserve special acknowledgement.

Firstly, the vitality of the group. We travelled with four entrepreneur friends and this was something very special. Complementing each other but also creating a positive sphere for discussion and development.

Great thanks to Marc-Jan, Mirjam, Klaas, Tom and valued family members Ageeth, Mirthe, Bern and Ferre.



The second highlight has to be the afternoon that was arranged for the boys from the orphanage.

Musical chairs, tug-of-war, music and dance and a meal on the beach and each going home with a suitably filled ‘Boys4Boys’ envelope. For most of the boys this was, unbelievably enough, their first encounter with the sea. Whilst only living two kilometres away; one boy thought the sea to be a big river. A simple concept to arrange but this afternoon was unbelievable fun. A point worth mentioning is that the Sinhalese won the ‘tug-of-war’ competition which pleased them immensely. ?

Special thanks

As in each case our very special thanks goes to Nilantha. He is our eyes and ears and the driving force for the Foundation at the location. His commitment and compassion are unbounded and he knows all the right addresses, the right people, and his negotiating skills on behalf of the Foundation saves us a lot of money.

Nilantha is not only an integral part of the Foundation's work in Sri Lanka but also the proud owner of the Hotel Coconut Bay (www.hotelcoconutbay.com)

If you ever contemplate a trip to Sri Lanka we can heartily recommend arranging your visit with Nilantha for amazing tours, hotels and Ayurvedic treatments. We will be delighted to put you in touch with him.



In November we will back in Sri Lanka. If you have any questions or would like to help us in any way please get in touch with us.

Grateful thanks

On behalf of the Foundation Kalapuwa

Theo and Monique