

Newsletter November 2018

The November 2018 trip to Kalutara was a great success for Theo, Tineke, Paul, Nancy and Monique and we were able to experience some amazing moments and have some interesting meetings. The feed-back we got confirmed our belief that our endeavours are having a deep impact in many areas.

The following were some of the main agenda points during our visit:

- Training for young people (15 – 21 years)
- Visit to the prison
- Meetings in Colombo
- Workshop for the girls' orphanage
- Update micro-credits
- Update boys' orphanage
- School children

Training for young people



On Sunday the 11th November we gave a training session entitled 'Design for your Future', for young people between 15 and 21 years old living on the peninsular. The aim here was to escape from the day-to-day focus and look into the future. What is your dream (or hoped-for profession)? What problems are you likely to encounter on your journey? What assets in your life might help you and how can you plan to achieve this?

The children were enthusiastic and we enjoyed seeing all their 'dreams' graphically illustrated on the wall. So much potential, ambition and talent.

Visit to the prison in Kalutara



Following an initial assessment of requirements made on our first day, we assembled a delivery of items desperately needed by the ten children and their mothers currently in the prison. For each child a bag with nappies, clothing, shampoo, shoes etc., as well as extra ? items of clothing, toys, cleaning materials and cushions brought from Holland.

We are delighted that official permission has now been given to start English lessons for the forty women currently serving a sentence in the prison.



Meetings in Colombo



From the Netherlands we had previously made contact with the Berendina Foundation, originally a Dutch initiative, whose roots were in a legacy made by Berendina Borst and which currently supports 110,000 micro-credits in various parts of Sri Lanka. Our hour and a half meeting with the director of this organisation offered an interesting insight

and gave us the opportunity to discuss our dilemmas and problems. A great learning experience for us. A further meeting was arranged with the Director of Operations for the company handling incoming containers and who was in Febuary of this year instrumental in clearing the container we had sent and for which many delays and problems had arisen. We now understand the requirements better and we are hoping to obtain an Exemption Certificate from the minister to allow



unimpeded clearance for our our Foundation. A very valuable meeting.

Girls' Orphanage – workshop



The news that we had organised a workshop for the boys' orphanage spread quickly around the peninsular and we were also asked to organise a workshop for the girls' orphanage. These girls are not allowed to go outside without permission but it was not a problem for us to make arrangements to have an exclusive workshop within the orphanage. A variation of the 'Design for your future' theme emphasised the focus on educational abilities. It was great fun to see how Tineke and Tharanga, both qualified teachers in daily life, stimulated and motivated the group.



At the completion of the workshop a group of people attached to the Foundation prepared a dinner and we all sat down to enjoy the meal together. A truly remarkable day.

Update micro credits



During the previous trip we had made a concerted effort to visit and meet with those people who were not fulfilling their financial commitments. Working in a different culture with differing values around responsibilities, often influenced by poverty and the inability to discuss this, is complicated and sometimes creates difficult situations. We have to learn to understand their world.

Our direct intervention has had a considerable and positive effect and has reduced the monthly deficit on interest-free loans that we were experiencing. During this visit we had to make a hard decision to take one sewing machine back. This action, as so often in Sri Lanka, has quickly become common knowledge and the message that repayment is obligatory has been taken on board by all concerned.

Update Boys' orphanage

Following on from the extensive reconstruction of the boys' orphanage we are now waiting for official permission from the local government to re-open the building. The result of the building work is fantastic and we cannot wait for full occupation. In the interim period we have had conversations with Gumara, the director of the orphanage, regarding our search for local sponsors to supply meals for the boys. The in-put from local authorities is minimal and there is a great need to find a sustainable solution. To this end we have had meetings with some of our more successful micro-credit customers and with a number of top luxury hotels in the Kalutara area requesting them to regularly donate food. We are hopeful that this will have a positive outcome.

School children



Thanks to the fantastic results of our Facebook campaign and the pledges that we received (Tikkies 😊) we were able to send another 100 children to school for a year and supply them with a uniform, satchel and mathematics set. We saw a lot of very happy faces that day. Every time this type of campaign has a great impact.



Highlights of this trip...



One of the highlights of this trip was the distribution of the 82 football kits we had been given by VV HSV Heiloo and the 40 pairs of football boots collected on our behalf by Sporthuis Johan Jansen.

We took this to a very poor school and the tears in the eyes of the Director spoke volumes. He had been trying for a long time to introduce more sport in to the school curriculum and this was now possible. Things that have a second life on the other side of the World . . . something very special

Thank you...



It goes without saying that we owe a great deal of gratitude to Nilantha. He is our eyes and ears and driving force for the Foundation on the peninsular. His efforts on behalf of the Foundation are enormous, he knows everyone and everyone knows him and his negotiating skills save us a lot of money.

Nilantha is, apart from his work for the Foundation, the proud owner of the Hotel Coconut Bay

www.hotelcoconutbay.com

If you contemplate having a fantastic holiday in Sri Lanka, Nilantha can arrange all your accommodation, tours and also Ayurvedic treatments. We are always willing to put you in touch with Nilantha.

We will be back in Sri Lanka in April 2019. If you have any questions, suggestions or would like to help us in any way please get in touch with us.

Sincerely,

On behalf of Foundation Kalapuwa

Theo, Tineke, Paul, Nancy & Monique

