

Newsletter May 2019

On 23rd. April 2019, two days after the bomb attacks, we flew to Colombo to pursue the Foundation projects. We had no idea what we would find there. When we arrived at Kalutara (the Foundation work area) the atmosphere was comparatively quiet and appeared safe and we were able to get on with our work with no real problems. After a few days the situation became more immediate as a negative travel advice had been given. We decided to stay and follow our planning as best we could but definitely keeping an eye on the situation, probably more from the heart than from the head. We were planning to organise a large gathering to distribute school uniforms, satchels, workshops and training sessions for students and entrepreneurs but decided to focus on other business. A summary of our activities during the period 23rd. April to 4th. May follows.



Micro-credits – new style!

Following on from the great success last year and together with Mr. Mangale Asoka (social worker) at which time we had organised a group-credit for 30 women, which achieved a great success and where the credit given was paid back in full within 12 months, we decided to further extend the concept. This is made possible by a tight co-ordination, shared responsibility, weekly gatherings and a set day for the repayments. Our plan is to have **12 self-support groups fully operational before the end of 2019** in which 12 individuals in one group receive a collective credit of €1200. They have to pay back 90% of the credit loan within 24 months. We do not charge rent but

a condition of the arrangement is that they give '**Food Support**'. This means that each group has the responsibility of supplying, twice a year, a nourishing meal for the boys in the orphanage. The credit repayments are invested in the education support ('A ' level and university) for the existing students on our list. In this way we utilize our funds twice, investing both in Entrepreneurship/Education and for the boys' orphanage, where there is often a desperate shortage of suitable food, who will receive extra nutrition in the form of a good evening meal 24 times a year.

A visit to the prison



As with each trip we make to this area we again visited the mothers and children in the local prison in Kalutara. There are currently 8 children with their mothers and 2 pregnant women confined in the prison. Having established the requirements we distributed useful packets of items needed by the women and children. The summer clothing donated in the Netherlands came in very useful in this case and we are grateful for all those who supported us with this.

Meals on wheels



In November 2018 we started a pilot project to supply twice weekly meals to 10 elderly people without income or support and living on the peninsula. Nirmala purchases the necessary ingredients, does the cooking and delivers the meals. This pilot has proved to be such a success that we have approached a like-minded foundation to increase the number of people



benefitting up to 20 for the whole of 2019. We are delighted that this has resulted in additional funds enabling us to supply food to the elderly. One extra advantage to this arrangement is that Nirmala receives a salary for her work enabling her to support her three children. Monique went along on one of the delivery days and was able to see for herself that the meals service was working well, the food was good and well appreciated.

Items we took with us and help given by local networks



Every time we go to Sri Lanka a large quantity of goods from the Netherlands travels with us. Especially summer clothing for babies, children and adults. This time we had over 40 kilos extra baggage, all donated by our network partners. We are very grateful to everyone who helped us with this. As usual we also had a large number of old telephones for



Kanishka who is one of our young entrepreneurs running a telephone repair shop. The old telephones are either used for spare parts or repaired and sold. We have an agreement with Kanishka that he may keep 50% of the profits made with these old telephones and the other 50% is put towards meals for the boys' orphanage. A win-win situation.



As we have been operating for some years in this area we are now finding a greater sympathy and desire to help from people within the local community. For example a local doctor now does not charge us if we have to send someone to him for help and medicines are supplied at cost price. The owner of a local bicycle shop has forgone his profit margin as we are able to purchase bicycles at cost price. This is much appreciated. medicines are supplied at cost price. The owner of a local bicycle shop has forgone his profit margin as we are able to purchase bicycles at cost price. This is much appreciated.



Intense moment



It is traditional in Sri Lanka that 7 days following a death (or in this case multiple deaths as a result of the bombings) a gathering (wake) is organised for



which food is arranged. Thanks to a generous sponsor we were able to donate 50 kilos of chicken. The gathering offers the opportunity for condolences to the bereaved and where, collectively, food is prepared for everyone, including the poor. This is called 'arms giving'. In Kalutara 1000 people came to the gathering. This was an extraordinary experience to be a part of.

Oven for the Girls' orphanage

During our last visit to the Girls' orphanage we had received a request from the Director of the orphanage for an oven. Back in the



Netherlands we had approached the Stichting Keer op Keer in Heiloo and they were only too happy to oblige. The oven was purchased and together with a mixer and baking utensils we delivered them to the orphanage where they are already being put to good use.



Chathuri, Miluka and Cavya

We have an exceptional working arrangement with all the students we support but sometimes it is necessary to go a little further. This time Chathuri, Miluka and Cavya needed extra help.

Chathuri has a damaged spinal cord but with our support is able to attend university. She has been desperately ill and we were able to arrange the necessary medical help for her.



Miluka (an orphan) was on the point of finding herself in a forced marriage but wanted to become a teacher and not get married. Following discussions with her and with our support she has chosen for herself and her future.



And Cavya, our brilliant maths student, has had a really hard time following the death of her father, but has now been able to find a new positivity in her life and is progressing well. We are delighted that she has decided to give something back to the Foundation and she now gives English lessons every week at the boys 'orphanage. She invited us to enjoy a meal at her house which we gratefully accepted.

School children



Because of the necessity to avoid large public gatherings we had to postpone the distribution of satchels and mathematic sets and the measuring for uniforms at least for a few weeks. The list of 100 children has been established, the satchels have been made and the school sets ordered at the bookshop. Sometime in the near future the children will receive all the requisite items and attend school for another year. The football kit received from the de Zuidwester junior school in the Netherlands will also soon be put to good use at a poor school in Kalahari North.

Special thanks



We wish to express our grateful thanks to our friends and in-house experts Marc-Jan, Mirjam, Klaas and Femke who, for the second time, travelled with us to Sri Lanka to help the project. It is a great help to have more people on the team and to have their insight and feedback.

We grow together. Thankyou.

As usual we must say a very special thankyou to Nilantha who is our eyes and ears and who plays a vital role in the Foundation on the ground. His input for the Foundation is immense. He knows everyone, organises everything and is key in price negotiations on our behalf.

In November 2019 we will be back in Sri Lanka. If you have any questions or wish to help in any way please get in touch with us.

Sincerely,

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On behalf of the Foundation Kalapuwa

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Theo, Marc Jan, Mirjam, Klaas, Femke, Tom en Monique



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