

Newsletter December 2009

To the donors and supporters of the Netherlands Sri Lanka Foundation.

It is a good practice to look back at the end of a year to the year past. And then we, the foundation, have plenty of reason to be happy and grateful.

Grateful, among others, because of your contributions, stimulating words, invitations to explain our project and many other ways of acknowledging our work for poor and needy children in Sri Lanka. These expressions of appreciation are heart-warming for us and stimulate us as a foundation to continue on the chosen path.

For us it was also an exciting year. In April we visited the children's home and we were very impressed with the work that Mahesh Jayakody had done for us, even though it was not yet finished. We are very grateful and happy for the work he has done for us. The construction of the children's home suffered a lot of setbacks. The worst was the death of our agent Gamini Jayakody. Nevertheless, our children's home could still be opened in June.

This was a festive event together with the children and the sisters who take care of them. The children clearly indicated that they found it very special to be able to live in such a beautiful house. One of their reactions was: "Is this bed really for me?" And every day the children enjoy their beautiful living environment and they are doing well. We are also happy with that. And if you consider how some children lived before they came into the orphanage, this reaction is understandable.

Just to illustrate here the report of a girl with a poignant story of great poverty:

One day Sister Amatha went to a cemetery to visit a grave. It was dusk. Suddenly a girl came to her. When Amatha asked her what she was doing there, the girl replied that she lived there. Amatha was amazed and asked her, let me see, and in a corner of the cemetery between the gravestones a kind of partition was made with some cardboard and old cloths, where the girl had been living for six years. She did not know where she came from, who her father and mother were or whether she had brothers and sisters. She only knew her first name. She occasionally received food from a woman, or she took it from the gardens of other people. Amatha took her back with her and through an official report to the police and child protection she was adopted in our children's home. After being examined by the doctor and in the hospital her age was determined as good as possible and this is the date that remained. A problem with her is that she has difficulty in learning, so unfortunately she cannot go to school. Now she makes herself creditable by doing handicrafts and at a later stage the sisters want to teach her how to work on a sewing machine, so that she can possibly provide for her living in the future. This is an example of one girl and in fact every child has his own story.

For these children we also continue our work in the new year and we try to give them a future in their own country.

The sisters were also happy with our commitment of € 150.- to buy a personal gift for each child and something delicious for the upcoming Christmas season.

We always send the children and sisters a card on their birthday, which they really appreciate.

Finally, we wish the children and the sisters in Sri Lanka and all of you at home:

A very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

And in the new year we hope to be able to continue our work for the children in the Milhous Jayakody Children Home in Sri Lanka. On our agenda are the further furnishing and decoration of the children's home, the setting up of a relaxation room with computers, the construction and layout of a playground and the construction and implantation of the garden. In short, enough activities to keep us busy the coming year. Because, our motive is:

"Whoever who saves a child, saves the world".

With sincere greetings,

The board of the foundation "Stichting Netherlands Sri Lanka".

Ria Milhous-Willemse.

Dick Keizer.

Theo Schouwenaar.

Elsbeth Sanderse-van den Berg.