

Working visit January 2013



We had set up a whole program at home and we were able to finish that for the greater part. We flew via Dusseldorf and Abu Dhabi to Colombo, Sri Lanka.

It is not easy to arrange appointments in Sri Lanka and to be on time as well. The traffic is extremely chaotic, everything there moves on usually bad roads. Cars, trucks, tuktuk's, mopeds, cyclists, pedestrians and cows and dogs. And the roads go through all the villages where there is quite a lot of active street trade going on.

But now we have a regular taxi / tour driver, who can drive us safely throughout our stay and arrange the overnight stays. For the sake of clarity, we pay the airline tickets and accommodation costs ourselves, so that we can spend every euro received on our projects.

Where our orphanages are located there are unfortunately no hotels, so we always need transportation. Our two orphanages are 75 km apart and this time it took us almost three hours to cover this distance. Our work consisted of a visit to and conversations with the management and the children of our two orphanages. It was nice to see and speak to them again and to see that the children are doing well. We also inspected the buildings and the facility and commissioned the necessary repairs and adjustments to be carried out.



We presented the drawings that the children of the Beatrixschool from Goes had made for the orphans. Each of us had brought a package of clothes for the children in their suitcase and the children were very pleased with them.



We held meetings with the bank, a lawyer and the child protection authorities to arrange a number of things on the spot. We also visited the children at their school, which the children really appreciated, and talked to the teachers. With the management of a long-standing orphanage in Sri Lanka, we also shared experiences on the actual running of an orphanage.



Last year one of our orphans had surgery on her heart and we were glad and moved to see that she had recovered quite well. We were able to pay the extra costs that this surgery entailed thanks to donations received.

It is very nice to spend the money raised in the Netherlands on useful and practical matters in Sri Lanka for our orphans.

This time we were able to buy playground equipment, tables and chairs, a bookcase, drying racks and carts full of food. Doing it this way we also support the local companies. And of course everything is settled in cash, so you always had to withdraw money from the ATM.

During our stay in one of the orphanages we witnessed a so-called "almsgiving". A couple who had an event to celebrate in the family brought a large amount of food to the orphanage in gratitude of their being able to celebrate. Besides that, it is of course very nice to receive so much food and drink for free. It also shows a degree of acceptance of the orphans and the homes by the residents from the vicinity of the homes.

We also visited a location where we could possibly build a third orphanage.

Lastly it is nice to report that we encountered an elephant on the street, carrying a large bunch of branches in his trunk for his owner.

You will understand that we did not spend much time on the beach with such a busy program. And although it was sometimes very tiring to travel in the heat, we look back with great satisfaction on this successful working visit.

Goes, January 17th, 2013.

The board of the foundation: "Stichting Netherlands Sri Lanka"
Ria Milhous, Elsbeth Sanderse, Dick Keizer and Theo Schouwenaar

