

Project Kalapuwa Sri Lanka

May 2016

From the 16th. to the 26th. May I (Theo) was back in Sri Lanka to further our project. The emphasis this time was on starting entrepreneurs, the students, initiating the English school and the opening of the community centre/hotel.

Why have we decided on an English school: In Sri Lanka tourism is a booming business and many new hotels are being opened. This also applies to the Kalapuwa peninsula where two new hotels have been constructed. For anyone looking for employment in these hotels it is essential that they have a command of the English language.

Whatever the job, gardener or waiter, a basic knowledge of English is a pre-requisite. With this aim in mind and with the help from the COCMA Foundation (Dutch Foundation) we have started an English school. This school is not only for children from the age of ten but also adults. We have enlisted two English teachers



(photo) to give the lessons. As a pilot scheme we set up two classes for adults and one class for the children. They have all completed the preliminary stage well. Starting on the 1st. June one class for adults has ten students, one class for children has twenty attending (four classes for adults and four classes for children) twice a week for a two hour lesson.

Our students



I visited and talked to the twelve students currently being supported from the Micro-Credit returns and without exception they are proud of their grades and progression at school. The young lady in the photo was given a grant in March last year to complete a year at the university in Colombo following a course in web-design. She was proud to show her diploma and first pay slip for April (Rs.22.000 – Euro 150). With this she is able to support her family (Mother and Sister, her Father died in the Tsunami) and the parents of her deceased Father.



Our starting entrepreneurs

From the 32 entrepreneurs we have helped twenty-eight are doing well. Unfortunately two of the remaining four have suffered temporary injuries, heart attack and a broken arm, and in these cases we have put the Micro-credit repayments on hold. Two others have given up their activities.

The photo shows one man whom we helped last year to set up a business selling beach clothing to tourists. Proudly he showed me the second-hand scooter that he had been able to buy out his profits at the same time keeping up his repayments. 90% of the clothing he sells is bought in from women on the peninsula to whom we have given sewing machines.



The community centre

On the 12th.May the community centre/hotel was officially opened. There are two main aims with the community centre/hotel. Firstly as a community centre the aim is give the elderly and those living alone, a simple meal a few times a week and to give them a place to gather and relax.

Secondly the hotel has been built with a commercial plan in mind. The couple in the photo will run the community centre/hotel. This couple used to have, before the Tsunami, a restaurant/community centre at this location. It is an unique location, directly on the beach, with six room with views of the sea.



