

Report about the 5th journey to Sri Lanka from 3rd to 18th June 2006

Our 5th journey to Sri Lanka took two weeks. The founder members Hans and Christine Heinrichs were accompanied by the members Dr. Saskia Versteeg and Dr. Jörg Schröder. Ute and Roland Fischer joined them in the second week. We could achieve a lot with the funds of 60,000 € that were available.

1st day:

Right after the arrival in Colombo, on the way to the hotel, we visited the primary poor school building in Panadura which is under construction. Unfortunately, the construction work was delayed due to the monsoon rainfalls and thunderstorms during the last two months. The shell of the building and the lathes on the roof were done, and will be followed by the roofing and the plastering work. We are confident that by the end of the upcoming three months - depending upon climatic conditions - the school can open.



2nd day

Today we went to Haburogala and donated € 500 to built a fountain for the water supply of 51 families. Additionally, we visited some godfather families to hand over the sponsorship money, clothing and toys.



3rd day

In the morning we travelled to Payagala where we had acquired a piece of land in February. The 7 families who will be living there in the future have already been nominated. In the meantime the land was measured and also cleared so that the construction work start shortly. In the afternoon we visited some more godfather families and handed over sponsorship money. Furthermore we could initiate a new sponsorship for a badly ill "tsunami victim".

In the evening we met with Lotti Loosli, our Swiss friend and helper, in order to discuss the finished, the ongoing and the pending projects.

4th and 5th day

On these days we had the honour to be witnesses to two marriages. The wedding ceremonies and various rituals lasted the whole day and were attended by approx. 200 guests.



6th day

Today we visited again two godfather families and handed over sponsorship money. In the evening we met with the executive committee of the "Old Boys Foundation" of the Bentota Gamini school and happily informed them that with support of the SEB donation we are able to establish the urgently needed new school building for their primary school.

7th day

Sunday was themed „Eyeglass Day “ which had been organized by Lotti Loosli in co-operation with the Lions Club of Bentota. Two ophthalmologists, one optician and three assistants were present in the school building in the district Bentota in order to measure the eyes of about 500 patients and to assign the correct eyeglasses. Most people could be helped, however, it turned out that some of them needed an eye operation. We decided to bear the expenses for the operations of 10 persons of 5,000 Rupies each (approx. € 40.). Since we want to maintain this "Eyeglass Day" also for the upcoming journeys, we spent 200 € for a portable measuring instrument called "lensometer" for the ophthalmologist.



Our special thanks goes to the companies Design Optics in Duisburg and Borsutzki Eye Optics in Bensberg which provided us with the largest part of the eyeglasses free of charge. Our sincere thanks also goes to the many donors who collected eyeglasses for us. **Further eyeglass donations (with information of glass strengths) are most welcome. Also battery-operated hearing aids are urgently needed.**



8th day

While viewing the mother/child hospital in Kalutara we had to find out that the hospital consisted of only one cavity which means that the medical examinations took place in the waiting room. Toilets were not available and there was no seating-accommodation. Highly pregnant women, partially also holding their children, had to stand leaning against the wall for hours while waiting.

These circumstances caused us to support an extension building with investigation spaces, waiting room and toilets. The material costs including the expenses for furniture etc. amount up to approx. € 4,600, half of which was contributed by us. The other half of the costs will be paid by a gynaecologist from Duesseldorf.

9th day

Today we visited the Bentota hospital. The fountain donated on our last journey was now installed so that the internal water supply is guaranteed in long-term. We handed over various orthopaedic material which we collected in Germany, such as finger and leg splints, dressing material, etc..



Additionally we visited a family whose six-year old daughter urgently needs a heart surgery. The costs for the operation which demands a 20-days stay in hospital will be at least 500,000 Rupies (approx. € 4,000). The government's fund has paid 140,000 Rupies as a part of the total costs. Additionally, the mother had collected another 50,000 Rupies from relatives and friends. We have contributed the remaining amount of €2,300.



10th day

Today we visited twelve families together with Lotti Loosli who were badly met by fate and were considered for a sponsorship. We saw predominantly infinite misery: Families who did not have anything to eat; huts without any furniture; children who cannot go to school due to lack of money. Sick children and adults who cannot not go to a doctor due to lack of money. Mud or wooden huts which threatened to break down; disastrous hygienic conditions since neither fountains nor toilets were nearby. Especially in these families the provided clothes and toys could be used very effectively. Our special thanks go to the many single donors and the kindergartens in Steinhöring and Holzelfingen who had collected for us. **Further summer child clothing (also underwear) and stuffed animals are very welcome.**

The godfather parents are being informed separately about their sponsorships.

11th day

Today we met again with two destitute families. The father of the first family recently committed suicide because he could not care for the family any longer. Since the twelve-year-old boy has a double tongue which is adnated at the mouth ground, an operation is necessary but no money available. In a first step we paid for a medical diagnosis and took care of a temporary food supply.



The eleven-year old daughter of the second family needs a second heart surgery. From the president fund of the government 140,000 Rupies were made available. The parents of the child had scrounged some cash by selling auxiliary tickets. The remaining amount for the operation has been provided by us.



In the late afternoon we met with six sewers to whom World Vision had put small shops at their disposal. However, they possess neither sewing machines nor fabrics or sewing equipment etc. We decided to hand over sewing machines, each to be shared by two sewers, and for the very beginning a small amount of money for buying materials. The sewing equipment and accessories which we got in Germany from a former master tailor were handed out to these six and two other sewers.

12th day

Today we met again with Lotti Loosli and discussed with her the necessary remedial actions for the next months. The fishermen in Balapitiya were more than grateful for the fishing nets given by us. They asked us for rain jackets and baseball caps because they spend more or less three days a week at sea exposed to wind and weather. **Second-hand clothing is most welcome.**



After long efforts of our natives, the Buddhistic temple has provided us free of charge with a piece of land of 5,382 sqf (500 sqm) located on their area in Beruwela directly at the main street for the construction of a mother/child station. After checking the cost calculation we have placed the order for the construction of the building. The inauguration will presumably be in February 2007.

Munich, 27th June 2006