

Life Lines

May 2013



Challenging the status quo in Life

A report from Kevin McParland, our Field Director.

I'm sure I'm not the only one who has been on the receiving end of excuses for NOT taking action, whether in my community, social club or workplace. To maintain the status quo seems to become a default; a safer position. Development and change are hindered as a result. Obstructions, disappointments and ultimately deadlocked frustrations descend.

It's rare to find a group of people, especially a group of young people, reaching a point where not only have they explored their social situation, but analysed it and organised a blueprint of action to transform it. Over the last 18 months, with the support of Shining Life Children's Trust, the 40-strong members of the Children's Club in Denmark Village in Kandy have done just that.

The capacity for instigating change by these young people has been remarkable to witness. They demonstrated conviction in approaching the *Pradeshiya Sabha*, the local Divisional Council, to request the redevelopment of playing grounds in their village. Their confidence has led them to work as real partners with the Women's Society in the same village to plan a series of New Year Celebrations for the last two years. Members of the Children's Club have also actively participated in community activities such as providing food for the people who observe *Sil* (observance of the eight Precepts of Buddhism and meditation) in the local temple. Their leadership has won them recognition within the village, including from the leader of the village temple.

I was excited to be present at this year's Independence Day celebrations that were coordinated by the Children's Club in Denmark Village. A day of celebration and competitions saw a series of events that all young people could participate in, whether singing, dancing, art or an essay writing competition.



Denmark Village Children's Club members on Independence Day



Children's Club members take part in an essay writing competition

An inclusive, participatory and above all a fun occasion, it certainly reflected the on-going contributions these young people are making to the wellbeing of their wider community.

Denmark Village is home to 66 families whose livelihood is based on the minimal wages of the agricultural economy. Your support, and the inspiration provided by these Children's Club members, gives Shining Life Children's Trust the motivation to ensure that we build on these successes throughout 2013.

Life Cycle



The next Shining Life Children's Trust Sponsored Cycle takes place in the UK on 18 May. A group of 'fair weather cyclists' will aim to complete the 100k Round The Island route on the Isle of Wight. **It's not too late to join us**, so if you fancy a fun fundraising weekend, please check the full details on our website and email events@shininglife.org to register your interest. We can organise your accommodation, food and even a bike – you just need to get yourself there and back!

If you would like to help us but cycling really isn't your thing, there are details on the next page about how you can raise money for us without it costing you a penny through Give as you Live.

www.shininglife.org

See Life for yourself

It's really rewarding for us when a Friend of the Trust gets to see what's happening on the ground in Sri Lanka. Alison Fraser took a break from her cycling holiday to visit our project in Kandy. Alison met the founder of the Women's Development Centre, our partner NGO in Kandy, and heard first hand about the issues of domestic abuse that they are addressing.

She also visited the village hall in Ullapane, where the local children performed traditional dances before the school prize giving. Alison was left in no doubt that

these young people are highly organised and structured in their requests for help to enable them to maximise their opportunities.

We wish Alison all the best in her new venture as she is now working in Brussels on projects involving gender equality and anti-discrimination: two issues also prevalent in Sri Lanka.

If you would like to visit us in Sri Lanka, please contact any of the Trustees.



Alison with the children in Ullapane

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Please register today!

How to donate to Shining Life Children's Trust

Visit our website, or donate to us safely and securely through CharitiesTrust.org

I would like to help bring a shining life to children and their families in Sri Lanka by donating:

£10 a month £25 a month £50 a month £100 a month other amount £_____

I am unable to give regularly, but would like to make a single donation of £_____

Name..... Address.....

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Telephone..... email:.....

To the Manager of (insert the name of your bank)

My Account Number..... Sort Code.....

Please pay Shining Life Children's Trust, CAF Bank, Sort Code 40-52-40 Account Number 00016399

Amount:..... Date of First Payment:..... Ref: (Insert your last name)

I want the Trust to treat my donation(s) as Gift Aid – if you are a UK tax payer, this enables us to increase your donation by 25%.

Signature..... Date.....

Please send this donation form, or a cheque, to SLCT at 1 Chestnut Lane, Amersham, Bucks HP6 6EN.

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