



SPRING

2007

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Samarakoon Watta Project Reaches Completion After Three Years

Shining Life Children's Trust's three-year project at Samarakoon Watta has been successfully completed and will now be taken forward sustainably by the local community. In our last newsletter we reported that the project was providing training and workshops in child nutrition, sanitation and reproductive health, as well as running savings groups, mothers' societies and children's clubs.

We can now announce that work has finally begun on building a community centre which will provide an important focus for local people

and ensure the sustainability of all these projects. Over the years



4 years ago when Philippa and Jonathan first visited Samarakoon Watta to assess the project proposal.

three of our Field Directors (Philippa Raja, and Helen) have worked tirelessly to secure the land and obtain the

rights to build this community centre!

Since her arrival in Sri Lanka, Helen has worked closely with Mal-kanthi our local NGO partner to ensure that reporting, monitoring and financial systems are robust, and that a committee formed from a fair representation of the local community is established to sustain the work that Shining Life has started.

Thank you to all our Friends whose donations have ensured the success and sustainability of this effective and important project.

Shining Life Website Goes Live!

After many months of hard work, Shining Life Children's Trust finally has its own website!

One of our Friends, Thomas Lloyd kindly volunteered his time to set up the original site. More recently, Raja has taken on the project of developing our website, spending several weekends on the painstaking work. Currently the website gives a brief history of Shining Life Children's Trust, background information on our current projects, news of fundraising and social events and how to donate to and contact Shining Life. In the longer term we plan that visitors to the site will be able to read up-to-date reports from the field, look back over former projects and contact us.

Please visit the site at XXXXXXXXXXXX—we'd love to hear your opinions on the usefulness of the site for our supporters. Please email any feedback you have to XXXXXXXXXXXX Happy browsing.....

Uplands School Play Area



“Earlier there was no place for us to play . Now we have our own playground of our own.... I look forward to playing netball and elle “ (a traditional Sri Lankan game.)



Children enjoy a playground in a Shining Life pre-school .

It all started 3 years ago when Stella Brown, one of our Trustees, took a gap year after University to volunteer to teach English in a small school on a tea-plantation near Kandy. The school made a strong impression on Stella, and she became particularly concerned that the children had no proper place to play. When Stella was invited to become a Trustee she immediately brought her

experience of Uplands to the Board. Raja, our Field Director at the time, visited the school and discussed with them their plans to buy some land to use as a play and sports area for the children and the local community.

The project then passed to Helen Clancy who visited and straight away remarked, “what an amazing place and fantastically dedicated head!” Helen advised the headteacher how to put together a proposal .

for the play area, ensuring that all those involved had a voice— teachers, parents, local people and of course the children. Soon afterwards Shining Life received a proposal for a fully-equipped playground, a sports area and tools and mowers to maintain the field. The community would provide the labour to clear the land and erect a fence.

Despite the potential obstacle of discovering large boulders which had to be removed, the project was completed within the deadline. Helen attended the opening event and reported:

“It was a fantastic event and the transformation was unbelievable. All pupils and many parents took part, as well as education officials. There

were a few speeches but it was mainly a sports day for all. At the end of the day students were still asking for sports equipment so that they could carry on playing into the evening.”

The Trustees of Shining Life are very proud of this project because right from the start the community itself identified the

need, and the process the community led was a very inclusive one, involving all people who would be using the play area.

Stella plans to visit Uplands this summer and is looking forward to seeing the difference this project has made to the community and the children.

Shining Life is very grateful of one of our Friends for generously funding this project.

A New Trustee for Shining Life



We are delighted to welcome Raja Dasgupta onto the Board as a Trustee of Shining Life Children’s Trust.

As you know, Raja spent 2 years in the Sri Lanka as our Field Director, where he excelled in all areas of this demanding role, establishing the Trust as a highly effective NGO in Sri Lanka. Most notably, Raja was caught up in the tsunami of Boxing Day 2004, where his expertise was invaluable for directing resources to communities who had been cut-off. Raja now works for a London-based education NGO called Feed the Minds.

Kalpitya Project

This project is very much focused on children: providing parents with advice on home-based early education; giving training in health and nutrition, prevention of dangerous diseases and environmental pollution and establishing small pre-schools and play areas in rural villages.

Last autumn Helen attended an event put on by our NGO partners

HBF to celebrate World Children's Day. She wrote:

"A Shining Life banner was on the stage. It was a brilliant event with nearly 1000 children and parents attending. Four of the Shining Life Children's Clubs presented dramas which were very much their own work. The Shining Life Project library books were distributed at the end of the

programme."

Shining Life has recently provided funding for a new pre-school at Wannimundal and playground equipment for several other schools.



"The Telwatte project has given us knowledge that has helped to empower us and with this we feel so much more positive about the future."

A resident of Telwatte.

Telwatte Project

Readers of the last newsletter will remember that the Telwatte project was set up in the aftermath of the tsunami. Its initial objectives were to provide basic items of furniture and equipment such as agricultural tools, footwear and fabric for school uniforms that had been

lost in the tsunami.

Two years on the savings group is providing business loans for fishing hooks, pans for sweet-making and material for tailoring. Many people have gained a certificate from entrepreneurship training; women and chil-

dren have attended counseling sessions, and 15 women have benefited from alcohol and drug information.

Shining Life is committed to empowering people with the support and training they need to live an independent and sus-

Sponsored Cycle Around The Isle of Wight.

Calling all cyclists! On Saturday 19th May Shining Life Children's Trust is organising a Sponsored Cycle Ride around the Isle of Wight, aiming to make a complete circuit of the island (approximately 60 miles) in one day. The ride will be planned by Jenny Bowen, who has successfully organised other sponsored events for the Trust, and Ros Brawn.

Accommodation for the group will be booked in Cowes for Friday and Saturday nights, which will mean that we can meet up the evening before the cycle ride, relax together and swap stories and show blisters on the Saturday night, have a pub lunch on Sunday before leaving on Sunday afternoon. Please email

jonathanpbailey@hotmail.com if you would like to be sent details of this event. Thank you very much.



**Shining
Life**
Children's Trust



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12 High Bois Lane, Chesham Bois
Amersham, Bucks HP6 6DG

office as above

Tel: +44 (0)1494 432453

Email: Juliet-brown@shininglife.fsnet.co.uk

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Objectives of Shining Life Children's Trust

- To work with local communities and help children disadvantaged by war and poverty.
- To provide support to children in a family-centred environment.
- To work in Sri Lanka.
- To work across cultures and religions.
- To ensure work undertaken facilitates sustainable development.
- To work in partnership with local organisations.
- To support small, unique and new projects.
- To support and develop projects that build on the strengths of Shining Life Children's Trust.
- To promote understanding and knowledge of Sri Lanka amongst supporters in the UK.



How to Donate to Shining Life Children's Trust

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 donation of A cheque is enclosed

STANDING ORDER

NAME: ADDRESS:

.....

Telephone: E-mail:

To the manager of: (insert the name of your bank)

Address: (insert the address of your bank)

My Account Number: Sort Code:

Please pay Shining Life Children's Trust, HSBC, Cheltenham. Sort Code 40-17-10 Account Number 81582828
Amount: Date of 1st payment: Ref: (insert your last name)

I want the Trust to treat my donations as Gift Aid - if you are a UK tax payer, this enables us to increase your donation by 28%

Signature: Date:

Please send this donation form to 12 High Bois Lane, Chesham Bois, Amersham, Bucks HP6 6DG