

Bringing a Shining Life to children in Kirimetiawatte



In our last newsletter we introduced you to our new project with the community of **Kirimetiawatte**, a small, remote village in the hill country of central Sri Lanka. It was once part of a productive tea estate, which, along with its inhabitants, has been left neglected, with little investment or change, since the 1970s.

The 80 families, who live in “line houses”, terraced houses where each house consists of just one room measuring 3m by 4m, would previously have made their living through tea cultivation, but now scratch a living through rearing animals, and unskilled, daily wage labour. Education, health and leisure facilities

and opportunities are severely limited. ¼ of babies are born below weight and malnutrition continues to be a problem at all ages. No child from Kirimetiawatte has ever been to university and there is a high prevalence of child labour and child marriage. However the community want to build towards a better future and it therefore seems appropriate that Kirimetiawatte should be the focus of the next programme for Shining Life Children’s Trust.

We have made a good start, in 2016 we worked with the community to encourage everyone to share their ideas and communicate their needs and priorities. We started a **Children’s Club, Women’s Society and Village Development Committee** and over the next 3 years will work with these groups focusing on both immediate needs and capacity building, to ensure that the community can continue to thrive.

Our work with Kirimetiawatte will include: developing a **nursery school** in the village with new outdoor and indoor facilities and qualified teachers, a wide range of **health support** to improve nutrition and care of other conditions in adults as well as children such as addiction and diabetes, and a wide range of activities to help build a **stronger, more prosperous and cohesive community** - from infrastructure work such as constructing a community hall, to providing employment training, developing new vocational skills and empowering the community to link in with local authorities to improve services.

We look forward to sharing this journey with you over the coming months and years.

Cycle Challenge 2017

Shining Life’s 2017 **Cycle Challenge** will be held on **Saturday 10 June** in **Epping Forest/Lea Valley**. There will be 3 different cycle routes so you choose the one that suits you best. We can help you arrange bike hire, travel and accommodation if needed, and we will host a BBQ at the end of the three routes for everyone completing the Cycle Challenge and their supporters. There will also be a **20km walking challenge** for any non-cyclists who want to take part. All funds raised will go towards our projects in Kirimetiawatte and Medawachchiya. To book your place and for more information, contact events@shininglife.org



Thank you for your 2016 Shining Life Christmas cards and gifts purchases which will go towards our projects supporting children and families in Kirimetiawatte and Medawachchiya.



Give as you Live



Every time you shop online, you could send us a small donation without it costing you a penny!

The vast majority of online retailers have signed up to help charities through Give as you Live. All you need to do is register your details at www.giveasyoulive.com and select Shining Life Children's Trust as your charity.

Every time you shop online, you could send us a small donation without it costing you a penny! Give as you Live is a great way for small charities like Shining Life to raise funds. Try it out, and tell your friends!



A message from our partner, Women's Development Centre

Sashi Stephen, Director of Women's Development Centre in Kandy wrote:

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank Shining Life Children's Trust for the support given to us. A special thank you goes to Bella Hodgkinson for her professionalism, exceptional support and tolerance while walking closely with us in the planning, implementing and monitoring processes of our joint work in Pudurassa to teach the women to sew. All learned new skills and many are now earning an income from sewing."

"Our joint work in Kirimetiyaawatte is already making a difference. The phase one pilot project has been successfully completed and gained a lot of trust with the communities, important as this marginalised community had lost faith in the state mechanisms and others due to false promises. We look forward to working with Shining Life and the community of Kirimetiyaawatte over the coming years."

The Women's Development Centre are a Sri Lankan development organisation that Shining Life is partnering with to deliver some of our projects.

Welcome to Sally, our new Field Director

Sally Chandler, Shining Life's new Field Director, arrived in Sri Lanka in November 2016. She had recently returned to the UK from her role as Volunteer Manager in Sabah, where she worked alongside local communities and project partners on a series of sustainable development projects. Sally has worked in the charity and health sector for the past ten years and brings with her a wealth of experience that will help us to continue to develop our projects further over the next two years. Sally is already making a real difference to our work in Kirimetiyaawatte and is finalising plans for a new project in Medawachchiya.

Sally said: *"I am honoured to be part of Shining Life and am joining at a very exciting time with the upcoming launch of our project in Medawachchiya. I have already seen first hand the valuable work Shining Life is supporting in Kirimetiyaawatte and witnessed the positive difference this is making to the community. I look forward to continuing the good work of Shining Life into its 20th anniversary year, working with communities and local partners to build a sustainable and brighter future for children in Sri Lanka."*

How to donate to Shining Life Children's Trust

Regular donations

Regular donations help us to plan our work in Sri Lanka better. If you would like to donate regularly, please set up a standing order. You will need to give your bank these details:

Account name: Shining Life Children's Trust, Sort Code: 40-52-40 (CAF Bank), Account Number: 00016399.

If you set up a standing order, let us know at admin@shininglife.org or write to us at the address on the right.

By credit card

You can donate by credit card through the Charities Trust or BTMyDonate websites. Please go to our website (www.shininglife.org/support.html) for links.

By cheque

Please send your donation to Shining Life Children's Trust at 1 Chestnut Lane, Amersham, Bucks HP6 6EN.

If you are a UK taxpayer, we can claim an additional 25% through Gift Aid. Thank you.

