

Life Lines

October 2016



A new project in Kirimetiawatte



Progress in Sri Lanka over the past few years has been significant with 2016 marking the 7th anniversary of the end of the civil war. With increasing investment and the influx of tourists, the country is looking forward to a brighter future. However, there are communities that still find themselves just as marginalised and isolated.

Let us introduce you to Kirimetiawatte, the village where we have just started working. This was once a productive tea estate but is now private land owned by an insurance company. The 72 families all live in "line houses", terraced houses where each house consists of just one room measuring 3m by 4m.

Schooling facilities are far from adequate. There is no nursery school,

so prior to 6 years old children are simply in their small houses all day. There is a small junior school for 6-14 year olds, although the remoteness leads to the attendance of teachers being very erratic. For older children there is 3.5km walk followed by a 7km bus ride to get to school, most children therefore leave school at 14. Health facilities are equally poor with the community having to navigate the same 3.5km walk and 7km bus journey to reach a medical centre. With the lack of jobs and the extent of deprivation many of the adults, especially the fathers, have turned to alcohol.

For the last 6 months we have been working with the community to encourage everyone to share their ideas and communicate their needs and priorities. We have started a Children's Club, Women's Society and Village Development Committee and over the next 3 years will work with these groups to help the community build a brighter future. We will share our progress with you in the next edition of Life Lines.

Cycle Challenge 2016

This year we held a sponsored 100km cycle ride around the Solent, travelling on no less than six ferries as we journeyed across to the Isle of Wight, along the North coast of the island and then back along the South coast of the mainland. We had a fantastic number of participants this year, who collectively raised over £6500. For many it was their first major cycle ride and Maya Brown, aged 11, was our youngest ever cyclist to complete the 100km ride.



The conditions were perfect, not too much sun, rain or wind and all cyclists came in before dark, despite a couple of flat tyres, having successfully completed their course. We enjoyed a quick celebratory drink at The Royal Oak before returning to our chalets at Shorefield Country Park to replenish spent calories with a home-cooked dinner.

Next year we hope to build on the success of this year's ride, if you would like to register your interest in next year's sponsored cycle

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Pupuressa Sewing Project Completed

This year we have been working with the community of Purpessa on a short project to help women learn sewing skills. We have previously worked with this community and together we planned this extra support with the aim of improving families' income and therefore helping all that we had previously done with the community to become more sustainable. The impact of this focussed approach has been amazing. Over 20 women attended the sewing classes, all are now more able to provide their families with affordable clothes. The women also received training and guidance on setting up and managing their own business and 12 women are now selling their sewing products in their communities. The women who are selling their sewing products are earning approximately 3500 rupees (£18) a month, a significant improvement in their family income.

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Bye Bye Bella

Following two action-packed years as Shining Life's Field Director, Bella is moving on to her next challenge. Bella has done an excellent job in building our partnerships with the Human Development Foundation and the Women's Development Centre, completing our projects in Galewala and Pupuressa, as well as initiating our new project in Kirimetiawatte

Bella will leave Sri Lanka in October and we hope that newly-recruited Sally Chandler will be travelling to Sri Lanka next month as our 10th Field Director. We wish Bella all the best for the future.



Welcome to Gbemi

We are delighted to announce the addition of Gbemi Oni to the Board of Trustees. A Business Change Consultant by profession, who has experience of working with a number of children charities (Barnardos, Action aid and Compassion UK) on a voluntary basis in fundraising and mentoring capacities. With a clear drive to make a difference, Gbemi brings fresh insight to helping us develop our funding strategy and making sure we can continue to thrive into the future.

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, please let us know by email 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 (<http://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