

Shining Life Children's Trust working in Telwatte July 2019 – July 2020



In July 2019 Shining Life Children's Trust started a new project with old friends in Telwatte. Telwatte is a village just outside the popular beach town of Hikkaduwa on the southern coast of Sri Lanka. We first worked with this community back in 20005, to help them rebuild after the devastation of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami. At that time, we donated essential items and provided psychological support, established children's clubs and worked with the adults to teach them new vocational skills and help them to set up in self-employment. A women's society was established to bring people together. This society has gone from strength to strength. They continue to meet weekly and have 45 members, providing business loans and loans to families in need, running training programmes for the community and organising community events.



In 2018 the community approached Shining Life to ask if we could assist them once again. So, with our Sri Lankan partner Human Development Foundation, we have returned to Telwatte to start a new project focused on further developing community enterprise. This project has established a shop from which the society can sell handmade products to tourists and locals alike. The women are paid for their time and their skills, and the profits are reinvested in the community. We're delivering training in dress-making & sewing, batik (a traditional dyeing process using wax) and coir (items made from the hairy inner shell of the coconut). The shop opened its doors in August 2019 and is now actively selling to the many tourists who visit the area.



Excitingly, the group has also secured contracts to supply directly to companies. For the international travel company Intrepid the group are making 150-500 tote bags per month and are now in discussions to bring the Intrepid tour groups into Telwatte for community visits. In December the group made 150 batik bags for Embark, a large department store. They also have on-going orders with Sustainablee to make food covers, shopping bags and other household items.



The community is now focused on expanding the range of products on sale and increasing the visibility of the shop within the local tourist market. They also want to gain more national orders.

At Shining Life we are so excited by this work – it is wonderful to see the huge impact this is having in such a short time, and to witness the confidence of the women growing daily as they develop their skills.

All this has been achieved with just £4,000 investment, made possible by a generous legacy from long-time supporter of Shining Life – Jean Smith. A huge thank



you to her family for enabling this incredible achievement.

If you would like to support this community, or our other life changing projects, please text 'SLAPPEAL10' to 70085 to donate £10 or transfer your donation to Shining Life Children's Trust, Sort Code 40-52-40 Account Number 00016399

Thank you