

Sri Lanka: Termination of the humedica family sponsorships in Sri Lanka

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by Lina Koch, 2014/05/05

Nearly a decade of effective and elaborate help comes to its successful end: humedica closes the sponsorship program Sri Lanka and, once again, lets numerous families go into their newly acquired independence. Join us in a review of the past years, learn about the beginnings, about the different kinds of help that have been realized and why the sponsorship program can now be closed under the best premises.

How everything started – the answer to the catastrophe

The relations between humedica and Sri Lanka date far back. Already in 1983, managing director Wolfgang Groß made first contacts on this insular state suffering from poverty and conflicts. Varied help measures followed, which could be developed over the years and which, in 1994 led to the formation of the subsidiary organization humedica international Lanka, still active today.

When on December 26th, 2004 big parts of the island were destroyed by a tsunami and the misery of many families already affected by civil war and poverty was even increased, Wolfgang Groß decided to offer, besides emergency help, also a long-term support for the aggrieved people there.

The humedica family sponsorship program was brought into being. The regular help from German sponsors for families in the extremely damaged coast town Point Pedro in the north of Sri Lanka has been quickly implemented.

Thus, not only the basic provisions for the concerned people but also their access to food, medical care and education could be assured.

The plan, to be by the families' sides on their way back to an independent life with better prospects, has succeeded.

A success which has reflected in the many positive changes in Sri Lanka until today, and which is still effective in countries like Ethiopia or Brazil.

Modification in the sponsorships – from the coast to the heart of the country

From the beginning on, the aim of the program has been pursued consequently: to support people concerned by neediness and poverty until their situation is stabilized and this in the medium term. The 300 families which had received regular help from Germany since after the tsunami catastrophe could confidently go into independence in 2011.

But as a consequence of the civil war which had lasted for decades, the humanitarian conditions were still problematic. Reason enough to continue the humedica sponsorship program with other needy families. In four villages in the Vanni region, a former war zone in the north of Sri Lanka, 230 families could be taken in this program.

In order to provide an ideal support there, too, the families got the possibility, in the scope of their support, to choose between different urgently needed aid supplies.

Be it bikes to cover the way to school; gasoline engines, pumps and hoses for the realization of irrigation systems; sewing machines or farm animals – the distributions organized by humedica always conformed to the particular needs.

This program was completed by individual aid to each family member: As the youngest in society, the children received free tuition classes after school. Women, who had often lost their husbands during the civil war and who, being widows, have to

earn their family's living, could undergo practical training in the context of a specially organized sewing course.

And medical care has also been provided for: In the case of a family member's illness, an emergency budget assured the quickest and best treatment for the ill person. Yearly Christmas presents, in the context of the great humedica campaign Geschenk mit Herz (presents given wholeheartedly), as well as specially organized game and fun days for the sponsorship children made the multifaceted program perfect.

Even if the named help measures seem to be very different, they all serve the same purpose: To give new prospects and better living conditions to people who have lost nearly everything because of dramatic incidents in their home country.

28-year old Sujaana is one of these persons who could find new strength and hope, thanks to the sponsorship program. Because of a bomb attack during the war, the young woman had lost both legs, one forearm and an eye. A terrible situation. But Sujaana didn't give up, remained strong, got married and was accepted in the humedica family sponsorship program.

As she and her husband, Sasikumar had wished, their seed capital was the equipment for selling fish. Thus, Sasikumar can work on the market in the mornings and in the afternoons he has got time to care for his wife.

Sujaana's story looks like a little wonder and stands for many other stories of people's lives in Sri Lanka. Stories which could take a positive turning, thanks to the sponsorship program and which have enabled the people to lead an independent, self-determined life full of chances.

An effective termination and a new start

After nine years of intense help, the family sponsorship program in Sri Lanka can successfully be brought to a close these weeks. The many success stories of the families prove that this concept works.

Women, who have visited the offered sewing course, are selling their self-made clothes now; the distributed farm animals are being bred and resold; the irrigation systems enable the people to have an independent agriculture and the tuition classes contribute to a promising future for the children.

Success stories, which ought to be repeated on the Philippines. After typhoon "Hayan" had caused incredible damages in November of last year and had taken away the livelihood of thousands of Philippian families, humedica has provided for medical care and started a new sponsorship program.

On the island Samar, concerned families receive comprehensive and individual support. In order to improve the future prospects of all family members, the focus is, like it was in Sri Lanka, on education, job creating measures and medical care.

Because the number of needy families is still high, even six months after typhoon "Hayan" – hundreds of children, women and men are still waiting for sponsors from Germany who will accompany them on their way back to normality.

Please become part of our efforts on the Philippines and take over a family sponsorship. Because together we can provide effective help and bring about positive changes in of other people's lives, even if they are on the other side of the world. Thank you very much for your support!

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