

# Compassion 575

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly report for 2016

Name of CFCDP	No of Children	District / Province
Poolankaadu	42	Thoppigala / East
Tharavai	42	
Naripul Thorttam	110	Batticaloa / East
Vaharai	95	
Murippu	56	Mullaitivu / North
Pooneri Maththuwilnaadu	40	Kilinochchi / North
Paranthan G.M.T	60	
Elephant pass G.M.T	155	
Colombo Ministry Center, Wattala	65	Gampaha / West
Bogahawatta	71	Nuwara Eliya / Central
Dangedara	116	Galle / South

Children think differently than adults, and they also think differently than children of different ages than their own. This was proved at the exhibition held at NCML's CFCDP in Elephant Pass, North Sri Lanka.

Most schools have the habit of organizing exhibitions with the kids presenting various models and most often allow the kids to present them; presenting something that they have learned in the most beautiful manner. By doing this, students get a chance to apply or do the practical aspect of the things that they have learned from the classroom and undoubtedly these are real opportunities for the kids to easily implement the things that they have learned from schools and display them to the people who have invested so much on their education. This also gives them opportunities to learn to make decisions themselves, solve issues, work as a team and most possibly breaks the fear of public speaking. Public speaking is a common phobia; especially in children. But, with preparation and persistence NCML believes this can be easily overcome by children. During an exhibition, kids need to explain about what they are presenting. This is really a great chance for the kids to speak well. In most cases, the students need to explain to their fellow students, judges and may also need to explain to people who come from outside to see the exhibition. This can help their skills in speaking

and thus their confidence. Further NCML has also learned that it is not enough for the kids to learn the lessons from the textbooks, but they should be given adequate space and time for letting the inner talents get a platform to be showcased.

In support to strengthen their skills and self-sufficiency, NCML has always encouraged child partnership in all its activities in the CFCDP. It always looked to give chances for the children to make decisions or at least be a part of the decision making process.

Thus, when the children of the Elephant Pass CFCDP decided to showcase their abilities and talents through an exhibition, NCML gave the children the chance for implementing the things that they have learned and also to apply their ideas and present things differently in their own unique way. It was amazing to see how the children got together in planning the event. They met regularly; had series of meetings, they approached many experienced people like the teachers, school principal, elders in the village and in fact referred many books to gather information to showcase their talents. The main focus of the children was to prepare a platform that best displayed their talents, capabilities and skills. They were very keen to exhibit the best for the viewers. Therefore there was quite a lot of hard work put in by the children.



The exhibition was held in July where quite a lot of distinguished guests were invited. The invitees were Principals of schools nearby, officials from the Zonal Education Department and the Local Government Office, parents and friends from other schools.

*'My children too did organize an exhibition last year, but this exhibition was well organized and was much better than what my children did'* said Mr. Muththulingam, Principal of the Tamil school in a village close by *'I am carrying a few ideas back home to share with my children. I will tell all what I saw today'* he continued.

Almost every visitor commented on the good work the children had done. Children were highly impressed with so many comments and the amount of people who came to witness the capabilities of the

little children. Ramki, NCML's local staff, reported that over 100 parents came to see the exhibition. He too was highly impressed with the enthusiasm of the children. *'I never believed these children could do so much, they are awesome, I enjoy working with them'* Ramki said.

Every child contributed. NCML made sure that every child displayed his or her ability in whatever way they were comfortable with. NCML looks forward to have various kind of different program in all its CFCDP.



## Parents' Meeting

Like in all other CFCDP's in Paranthan CFCDP too the parents were called for a discussion to talk about their children's education. This is done mostly to encourage parents to be connected to their children's education and many other activities they engage in. In most cases, the parents are hardly seen at school; most parents do not know much about the educational programs in their children's school or what teachers require of them. Effective parent involvement comes when a true partnership exists between schools and families. Creating that partnership, especially around academics is what NCML feels works for student achievement. Some parents don't even know in which grade their children study. We are happy that this mindset in parents is changing. They are showing more interest towards their children's education than ever before. Their participatory level has certainly increased quite remarkably.

When NCML initially invited parents for discussions or meetings, it was about 5 mothers who would attend these meetings, but now we have close to 40 parents participating on an average. We are very happy with this progress. The NCML local staff have worked very hard for this success. They've spent tireless hours with parents to encourage and influence them. All Compassion 575 supported CFCDPs had parents' meeting this term and we were able to have some very positive feedback from the parents. The parents are very happy with the progress. They admit that it was because of NCML's CFCDP that their children are now able to read, write and show some positive behavioral changes. The school staff (the teachers and the Principal) too are very happy with the interest the parents have shown.



Parents' Meeting at Paranthan CDC

## Success Story

Sweetha is a grade 3 student in NCML's CFCDP in Tharavai. Tharavai is a village in Thoppigala which was one of the worst war affected areas in East Sri Lanka. Her parents were displaced during the war and returned home when everything was over in 2010. Sweetha was born during the latter part of the war, so she remembers nothing of the war. She has heard many interesting stories about it from her parents who have had many bad experiences in the jungles, hideouts and camps.

Sweetha has an older sister and a younger brother. Her father does labor jobs while her mother stays home to care for the children.

One day, when her father was working in the garden of a rich businessman's house in the main town, he was given a television that the rich businessman was discarding as he had purchased a more advanced television. The television that was given to the poor gardener was still in perfect condition. Sweetha's father was highly excited with his gift and took it home to show his wife and children that evening. When he got home, the entire village got around him to see what he had brought from the town.

Since the Government has supplied electricity to most parts of the war affected areas, Sweetha's village too had electricity. It was just a matter of plugging the television in to enjoy the evening. Sweetha would invite all her friends to watch cartoons and all the children's programs and would have a lovely time with her friends.

As time went on, Sweetha's parents figured that she was more focused on the television than anything else. She would hardly do her evening studies, her homework was incomplete and the teachers began complaining and she in fact stopped going to the playground to spend time with her friends. The child was eventually getting addicted to watching almost all the programs that went on in the television.

Sweetha's parents got very worried about this as this was effecting her education and everything else and decided to seek help from elders in the village. They approached many people in the village to find a solution to it, but, none of the things they did to change Sweetha seemed working.

One day, her mother heard about the CFCDP that NCML was conducting in the school and decided to meet with our local staff. After she had explained everything to our staff, Sweetha was invited to the CFCDP. Sweetha didn't like the CFCDP, which was quite obvious. Her preference was to stay home and watch all the interesting programs in the television. Sweetha needed to be handled differently. It was important to design programs that attracted the little girl. The local team got Sweetha to engage in many outdoor activities. While working with her it was observed that she loved cats. This was interesting. It was the local team's decision that they will do anything that will make the child like the CFCDP. So, they decided to create activities like drawing, skits, coloring, whatever, that portraits cats. She was given plenty of pictures of cats and was made to color them, she was told many stories about cats and eventually, Sweetha began liking the CFCDP.

Sweetha began making new friends. She liked spending time with them and playing with them. She also started showing interest towards her education and most interestingly, she didn't miss her afternoon television programs any longer.

Sweetha's mother attended the recent parents meeting. She was very happy with her daughter's progress. I am very thankful to NCML for all what they did to my daughter. ***'Sweetha is very much changed now. She does her school work regularly, she helps me scrape coconuts while I am cooking and helps me find firewood. I am very happy now'*** the young mother said with a big smile on her face.

