

SWISS LADIES' CHARITY GROUP 2006-2007

As the cost of living in Sri Lanka continues to rise, both people and organizations are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet. Therefore, the donations of the Swiss Ladies' Group and others like us remain vital to supporting social work for the most vulnerable in society.

The Bazaar of 9th December 2006 was our main annual activity again, and proved a great success despite the relatively higher costs of some of the items we regularly buy in such as cheese and bündnerfleisch. Our total profit was an impressive Rs.307,500, which was distributed among good causes across the island in early February 2007.



This year's cookie bake was a different experience with a new Ambassador – Mrs Flint – at the Swiss Residence. Mrs Flint and her husband were a great support on the day helping with the baking and plying the ladies with good wine to ensure they worked to their best ability! Piles of delicious Swiss cookies were prepared, while in the other rooms the chocolates and other items were priced and the cookie boxes were decorated.



New items on the stall this year included Pannetoni, sunglasses, watches, Ricola, Choc Ovo, and biberli, while as usual the fondue cheese was the star item, being snapped up within the first ten minutes of the bazaar!



The raffle was again a great success in adding further profit to the night, and all in all the ladies were very happy that despite the economic situation in the country we only ended up with Rs.70,000 profit less than last year, which was our best year yet by far.

The post-bazaar meeting saw the handover from Rosemary Samarasinghe, who has done a wonderful job coordinating the Bazaar for many years, to Sabine Wittachy, who will be the new coordinator. Catherine Liyanage will continue to maintain the reports and correspondence and between them along with the support of the other ladies, next years stall will be a great success.

At the post-Bazaar meeting, we distributed the proceeds of the Bazaar to the organizations around Sri Lanka that we have maintained links with over the years and continue to feel are making a real difference in peoples lives. Since the **OSC School Fund for Children with Cancer** was the main recipient of the Bazaar door sales this year, we decided not to support them with our own fund.

The main beneficiaries of support were **I.D.E School** for disabled children and young people, that continues to run in Nugegoda, Colombo. The money was given as a boost for staff salaries which remain very low due to the difficulties of funding running costs when the childrens parents in many cases cannot pay school fees. This year they received Rs. 75,000.

Secondly, **ECSAT** received a grant of Rs. 80,000 in order to support the work they do with disabled adults in Galle. It was recognized that while this work is extremely worthwhile, it often cannot be funded due to the preference for work with children. ECSAT themselves have UNICEF funding for their work with children, but have found it very difficult to fund their work with disabled young people and adults.

Action Gemina and **Cheshire Home** received Rs.22,000 between them, while Gemina also requested another Rs.10,000 for the **St Francis Boys Home** to go towards their fund for a new fridge. The continuing good work of **Daya Mina** led us to grant them Rs.20,000 this year in recognition of their work with the disabled. **SERVE** of Moratuwa are in need of a playground for the slum children they support and so Rs.20,000 were given for this use.

The **Mother Theresa Home in Mathakuliya** were discussed in detail and it was felt that Rs.20,000 should be allocated to them in order to purchase basic medicines that can be given to them to help the aged people there who often have no medicines for their wounds. **Nylander Polio Home** were given Rs.20,000 to help them to develop their livelihoods work.. The **National Council for the Deaf** were provided with Rs.20,000 to contribute to the money needed to build an outer wall around their site, and the **Payagala Community Centre** was also given Rs.20,000 towards its running costs.



In total, Rs.307,000 was donated to 11 local organizations working with the disabled, elderly, poor, and orphaned of Sri Lanka. We thank all of you who have contributed to this effort both from ourselves and also from those who will be supported through these 11 organisations.

Every donation given, spare kilogram of excess luggage provided, time taken to attend the Bazaar, raffle ticket bought, cookie baked and word of encouragement spoken makes a difference - and we thank you for whatever you were able to contribute.

Our sincere thanks for your generosity and support.

The International Christmas Charity Bazaar 2007 will be held at the BMICH on 7th December.
In charge of the Swiss Stall will be Sabine Wittachy (077-3020106, sabinecarrard@yahoo.fr)
and supporting will be Cath Liyanage (077-3409707, cathmole@gmail.com), either
of whom you can contact if you would like more information or would like to help.

For postal enquiries please send to Mrs. Rosemary Samarasinghe at 53/2 Torrington Avenue, Colombo 7.