



June 2021

Hi dear readers,

It is a pleasure to keep you informed of the developments of Friendshifts. In January I went on a working visit to Togo. We started cooperation with a local high school where maaaaany children wanted to participate in our exchange project. Furthermore, I met the students we support, distributed letters from the Netherlands to players of the football club, attended a lesson from the English Club and took many photos.

I had to postpone the working visit to Myanmar again. As you have probably heard in the news, the situation in Myanmar is extremely difficult due to the military coup and corona. Together with the board of World Child Care, we find it difficult to cope with the misery we see and can do little to help the people there. As soon as the situation allows, however,

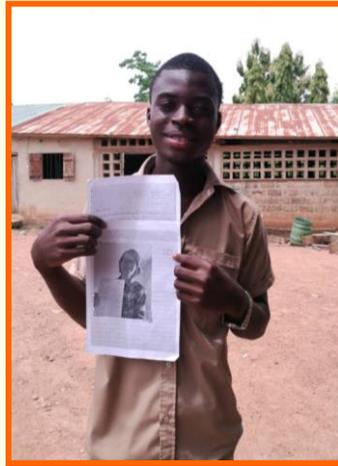
we will be ready. Nevertheless, we have already started projects with children there.

Since the start of our activities with Friendshifts, many distressing situations have come to our attention. Our focus is on education. But: children with hungry bellies or who are ill, cannot participate optimally at school. If their parents are seriously ill and do not take care of their children, there will be little studying. So we have decided to spend a maximum of 7% of our budget on emergency aid (food and medicines).



Komi (met kleine Amen)

Hervé shows his letter from Sylvana



News from Togo

Salary Komi Katchikiti: The letter exchanges have most effect when there are 1-on-1 contacts. This requires a lot of logistics. In Togo, Komi will take care of everything for us. We are paying part of his salary.

Laptop: We paid for a laptop for the CAST office. This is used by Roc. Roc lived with CAST, is now following an MBA course in Lomé and works as a volunteer for CAST on weekends. He can take the laptop with him and work in both locations.

Students: In addition to the students we already support financially, we now also finance the seamstress trainings for Rebecca and Abra, and half of the MBA study for Roc.

Birth Certificates: We financed the applications for birth certificates for 13 children from the orphanage. These are necessary to register them at school. We also pay 10 "certificates de nationalité", a kind of ID card which is needed to receive a diploma, for example.

Emergency aid: During the working visit, I again learned a number of distressing situations. We donated food parcels to 6 families who were starving due to various circumstances. We also made a contribution to the funeral of the mother of a girl whom we support. Furthermore we paid the medical costs for an artificial eye for the seriously ill father.

Bicycle Lydia: During my meeting with Lydia, she told me that she would like to become a teacher. She is now in the high school, which is 10 km away. Every morning she leaves at 04:30 to be at school at 06:30. She walks in the dark for the first hour. We bought her a bicycle because it seemed safer to us and because we want to support her in her beautiful ambition.



Lydia with her bicycle



News from Myanmar

Students: This is M Aung. There is no secondary school in her village, which is a dangerous area due to guerrillas. She lives in the Golden House so that she can follow the free education of PDO Highschool. Later she would like to become the principal of the primary school in her village. We pay all costs for education for her.

Bridging program: This year 30 (instead of 120) young people followed the Bridging Program. Due to corona, only young people / novices living on the monastery school grounds, could participate. We have contributed € 1000.

In Myanmar, many poor boys become novices in order to receive free education. Yan Aung Pa Ying graduated from PDO High School and then took part in the Bridging Program. *"I learned how to communicate with others. How to take care of the environment, how to work together and how to use my time wisely. Furthermore, I have learned to analyse and solve challenges for a good future instead of being afraid and surrendering myself."*



Covid-19 in partner countries

Togo: According to the WHO, only 221 cases of corona are currently active and a total of 127 people have died from covid-19 Since March, 350,000 vaccinations have been given. Fortunately, there have been no cases of covid-19 in the CAST orphanage nor among staff.

Myanmar: In Myanmar, the delta variant has entered the country. The effects of this are unknown. According to WHO, a total of 3250 people have died from covid-19 in Myanmar and 3 million vaccinations have been given. 2.3% of the population is now protected. Children and staff who are still living on the school grounds, have not been allowed to leave the compound since October. This is how corona has been kept out.

Questions to a novice in Myanmar

Students of Herman Jordan Lyceum are happy with their letter



Isabel, 3rd grade

Short news from The Netherlands and France

- Trilium International School in France has started learning with a teaching box from Myanmar. Next school year they will start exchanging letters and drawings.
- We have facilitated Peacable School lessons for the Wereldwijzer. There was a discovery box for Kindergarten and 1st and 2nd grades. For 3rd grade we did interviews with 4 girls from Myanmar. Grades 4,5 & 6 learned about major religions and asked questions to novices in Myanmar.
- Pupils from the Drachtster Lyceum (32), the Twents Carmel College (24), the OLZ (67) and Herman Jordan (230) in Zeist wrote with great enthusiasm, French letters to young people in Togo.
- Pupils of V3 (27) of the Drachtster Lyceum have written English letters to the English Club of the Lyceum of Yokélé in Togo. The students of the English Club come to practice English 3 times a week after school in order to improve their level. The letters helped.
- We were the charity at AH Hoofdstraat, AH Binnenhof and Jumbo in Driebergen, AH Doorn and AH Zeist Emmalein. A total of € 2074 has been donated.

We are growing

"Love money" are funds that friends and family give for the first costs of a start-up. We are very happy with the "love money" of Het Relatie Atelier in Driebergen. They believe in developing contacts (relationships) between young people about from all over the world, as we do. More information can be found at www.hetRelatieatelier.nl. We use the donation for our operational costs.

HET RELATIE ATELIER

Thanks for reading. All the best, Marieke 

www.friendshifts.org

