

Reflections

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Big Smiles!

Isuru's Story

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EDITORIAL

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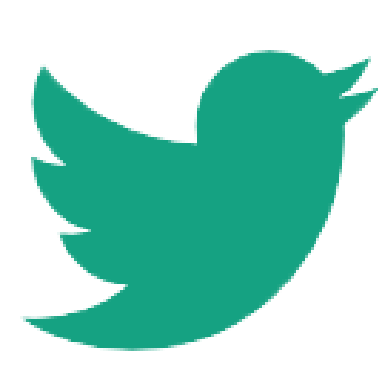
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MESSAGE

FROM THE CD'S DESK

“

We are very pleased to share with you the work of the ADRA Sri Lanka team through the first issue of our newsletter, *Reflections* that contains the very reason why ADRA as a faith-based organization and the official humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church exists - to extend Jesus' ministry of compassion to all especially to the most vulnerable regardless of their religion, creed or race.

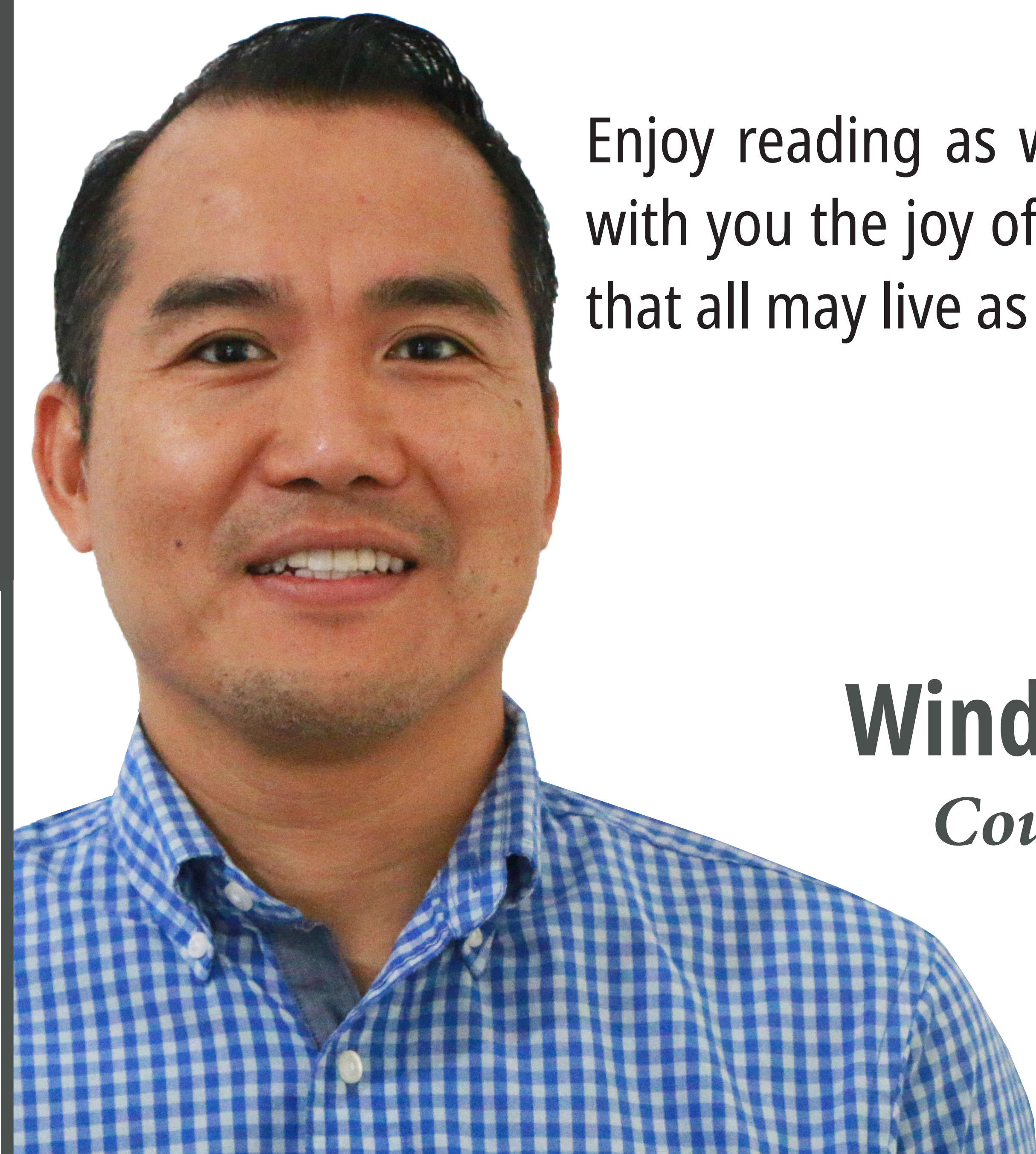
The newsletter shares a number of the Agency's most impactful stories in the lives of those we encounter "along the way" who needed the most help and alleviate the beneficiary partners' plight out of poverty and disadvantage. Special mention is the life of Isuru, the boy who is born differently abled and being raised by his mother single-handedly after the loss of his father.

It is a story highlighted amongst the project updates of a mother-and-son in the remote village of Gaburu Oya, Matale as a source of encouragement through Isuru's cheerful personality and aura that can augment one's despair in life and a reason to believe for the best amidst the seemingly hopeless and dire situation someone could be.

As well, we will share with you testimonies of our dedicated staff and how their work and ministry impacts their own view of life and service as they perform their duties to effect change in the lives of those who are misfits of the society.

Enjoy reading as we continue to share with you the joy of serving humanity so that all may live as God intended!

”



Windell Maranan
Country Director

COVER STORY

Big Smiles!

Isuru's Story

By Shenal Hettiarachchi



Ever since her husband's demise, Imanlatha has been raising her differently abled son, Isuru amidst so many hardships and challenges. She is unemployed and faces isolation from her own family after the death of her spouse. They depend solely on the government welfare scheme which provides them a meager allowance each month. "Amma (mother) is the only word Isuru knows. Whenever he wants something, he calls out Amma," says Imanlatha as she smiles at her 14-year-old son. Isuru has been bed-bound from birth and his mother is his only caregiver. Despite the challenges and difficulties he faces, Isuru has a very cheerful personality. He always wears a big bright smile on his face. "Life has been tough since my husband's death two years ago from a heart attack. I've been raising Isuru on my own without the support of anyone else," Imanlatha narrates.

ADRA discovered Isuru and Imanlatha through its European Union funded Assisting Communities in Creating Environmental and Nutritional Development

(ACCEND) project. Imanlatha was a member of the Water Management Committee (WMC) in her community. Water Management Committees are established within communities through the ACCEND project to ensure proper maintenance of the water sources established and/or renovated through the project. Upon learning that she did not have proper sanitation facilities at her house, the project selected her as a potential beneficiary for its latrine construction activity. The project constructed a customized disable friendly latrine unit for them. Prior to the assistance, Imanlatha faced extreme challenges when attending to her son's personal hygiene. She had to fetch water from the hand pump situated in front of their house regularly. Considering her situation, the project team realized that having running water within the premises of her house was very important. Hence, ADRA designed a special system that channels water from the hand pump towards an overhead tank on top of the latrine in their house when pumping. "Thanks to ADRA, we now have a latrine with a commode and running water. It has made my life so much easier," says Imanlatha.

The ACCEND project is a four year project being implemented from 2017 to 2021. It's funded by the European Union, in collaboration with the Government of Sri Lanka and is implemented by ADRA, in partnership with Oxfam. Moreover, the project focuses on improving water, sanitation, hygiene, health and nutrition with gender and disaster risk reduction woven across all project activities as cross cutting themes, in both rural and estate communities of Matale, Monaragala and Nuwara Eliya districts.



STAFF TESTIMONIES

Florentia Amarasinghe

Programs Officer- Gender, Programs Development & Knowledge Management

“I started working at ADRA Sri Lanka as an Intern in 2015. It was my very first job and I had no clue about the journey I was about to start. At the time, I was struggling to identify God’s purpose in my life. I was spending most of my time praying for God’s guidance and asking him to give me a sign of what I was sup-

posed to do with my life. When I started working at ADRA, it was with the expectation that I would finish my year of internship by when I would have found out how God wanted me to lead my life. When I was offered the chance to continue working as a part of the Programs team after my internship, I knew that this was what God wanted me to do with my life as it was a direct answer to my prayers. I have grown to love the work being done by ADRA to share God’s compassion and love with the communities in need.

I have changed so much from the person I was four years ago and it’s all because of the experiences I’ve gone through and the people I’ve met through ADRA. But one of the thing I have loved most in my years at ADRA is watching and learning from the communities we work in. Working at ADRA allows me to experience and be inspired everyday, by the strength, humility, perseverance, capacity for love & forgiveness people possess, and to witness and play a part in God’s amazing plans in answering people’s needs and prayers.”

NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

CSR Project with John Keells Foundation

ADRA Sri Lanka implemented a CSR project with the John Keells Foundation to provide drinking water for the Tamil Medium School in Mathalan. As a part of the project, the rain water harvesting tank and the water collection gutters of the school were renovated and a hand washing station was established along with a water filtration unit to ensure that the water is safe for consumption.

Health & Nutrition Fair in Monaragala

In an effort to promote and create awareness regarding the health services offered by the government and the current health issues faced by the public, ADRA and Oxfam organized a health and Nutrition fair through its ACCEND project. The fair was successfully held on 26th of February in the Buttala town and was organized with the assistance of the office of the Medical Officer of Health of Buttala and Regional Directorate of Health Services office of Monaragala.

Advocacy Campaign Promotions

“Every Child. Everywhere. In School” is ADRA’s advocacy campaign to support children around the world who do not have access to quality education. ADRA Sri Lanka visited several Adventist institutions including schools and churches to promote the advocacy campaign and gather signatures for the petition carried out through the campaign.

COVID-19 Outbreak & ADRA’s Response

The COVID-19 virus started spreading rapidly throughout Sri Lanka during mid March and the country was immediately placed under lockdown as a response measure by the government of Sri Lanka. ADRA Sri Lanka responded to the pandemic through the allocation of funding from the ACCEND, and LESS II projects and it’s Emergency Response project: EM 20-018. Await more information regarding the responses through our next issue.

SPECIAL

FEATURE

Students with the Principal
of the school, Mr. Balakrishnan



CDB & CCC Projects *by Nisansala Perera*

The Czech Republic Development Cooperation funded Children Deserve the Best (CDB) project was implemented to contribute towards the psycho-social development of children in the tea estates communities of the Nuwara Eliya District. The said project was implemented in one of the District's oldest schools, the Lower Cranley Tamil Vidyalaya in Agarapathana which has been in operation for the last 150 years and has 400 students/enrollees.

Through the CBD Project, ADRA Sri Lanka - as the implementing agency renovated two school buildings and equipped the classrooms with needed audio-visual equipment in the primary level. As well, the project improved an existing space as a playground with basic facilities giving the opportunity for children to enjoy outdoor activities that will promote and stimulate their learning and social skills through different games and related activities. Aside from the basic improvements on school buildings and facilities, children were given opportunities to learn more on applying personal hygiene and sanitation practices. The activities included proper waste disposal practices with proper garbage segregation, thus promoting support to environmental conservation.

With the CDB Project comes the Children Centered Communities (CCC) project funded by ADRA Korea. It was implemented in the same school to augment and fill the gaps in terms of the basic needs of school children. The project reinforces and complements the activities of the CDB Project to further provide not only the school, but most importantly, the space for children to thrive and develop their fullest potential. The CCC Project focused on improving the school library. Through the project new books were provided and a library management system was established. More so, the project assisted teachers through training on current teaching methods and techniques that will promote a total learning experience for both teachers and students alike.

The project's highlight includes a "Child Champion" program that gives recognition to children who are very engaged in the promotion of positive personal and community-related work such as cleanliness, practical healthy habits such as maintaining small home gardens, taking care of elders, and others. As to the project's sustainability, those students from low income families were provided complementary education and a training-for-trainer's (TOT) for youth mentors in the community were conducted. The combination of both projects in the same community were quite impactful in making sure that the basic needs of the vulnerable children in the tea estates are provided and met.



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