

NEWSLETTER

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'GOTONG ROYONG UTRECHT' FOUNDATION

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The virus effects on the projects



1. From the board

Four months after the global Covid-19 outbreak, we are wondering how close the virus has come and to what extent it has affected us personally. No people have died in our own circles. Some have fallen ill, but fortunately to a limited degree. We have not received any messages from or about sponsors who fell ill and died. And fortunately, no victims in Indonesia are involved in our projects. We hope it will stay this way.

We thank all loyal sponsors, especially extra generous donors such as Noortje, Marcel, Pak Pok, the Woensdregt family and Cecile. Nevertheless our overall revenues are significantly lower compared to previous years and we need to take action. What also worries us is that the institutional sponsors who normally donated large amounts, now have to make difficult choices because their earnings are minimized because of the extremely low interest rates. In June we learned that one of these sponsors, who has made very large donations every year since the early years of our

existence (between 10,000 and 20,000 euros), will not support us this year. For us this is a substantial amount and a call for action. Without sufficient continuity in income, our reserves will run out quickly.

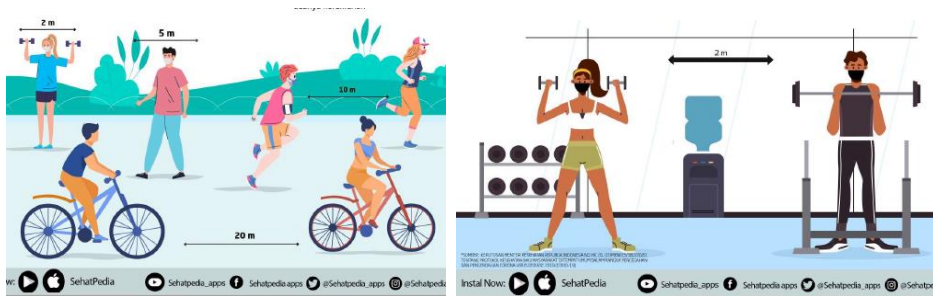
That is why we ask for your support: both for scholarships and for seniors

2. 'Corona locale' Indonesia

It may have surprised you too, but Indonesia hasn't been in the news much in relation to Covid-19. This is remarkable, because after all it is a country with very densely populated conurbations. Indonesia houses the world's fourth largest population after China, India and the US. At the moment (mid-July) 75,000 people have fallen ill, 35,000 of them have already regained health and 3,500 have died. Most of the victims live in Jakarta. Despite the large flow of domestic Ramadan migration, Bali has been spared with only 30 deaths to date. However, Covid has a major side effect there: the foreign tourist flow has come to a halt and the economically dominant tourist industry is at a standstill, resulting in large official and unofficial unemployment.

Resignation is a quality which characterises the Indonesian way of dealing with the situation. Indonesian people also appear to take the social and physical distancing measures seriously. But it is still far too early to lean back, because in the past month there was a strong increase in the number of ill and deceased. We can only hope Indonesia will not follow the way of India.

In the meantime, the term "the new normal" has been officially banned and replaced with "adapting to new habits" because the word "normal" implied "back to what used to be okay."



3. The effects on our projects

I Corona and the scholarships

Schools and universities are still closed. Pupils and students are studying at home and are being supported online. The governments of both Java and Bali have already decided to continue this regime at least until the end of the first semester, at the end of December.

For the children in the two children's homes this means they stay on the grounds. Fortunately, both locations have large gardens and sports facilities (a volleyball court and a badminton court) so the children are not 'locked up'. In addition, all children have chores like cooking, tidying up and washing dishes. And there are computers and mobile phones available to keep them from getting bored. According to the staff, the atmosphere is very pleasant and the older children and students help in guiding the younger and new children.

You may remember Fredno and Ayu Ningshi. We wrote about them previously because they were going to graduate from high school in June and were eager to continue their studies. Both have graduated and they will start their university studies of Economics and Accountancy. They will both continue to live in the children's home.



Fredno and Ayu

The children in Yogyakarta are also at home, where there is usually less supervision and control. Fortunately, the schools maintain good contact with their students via Google Classroom, WhatsApp and email. Amaliah, our local scholarship coordinator, is busy these weeks because she has to visit all 113 children at home to collect their school results and talk about the coming year. With the parents she discusses the choice of further education after primary school and after secondary school.

II Corona and the Rumah Kita nursery

In preparation of a possible reopening of the nursery by the end of July, we have accepted an application for a donation to make the facilities and the environment extra Covid proof. For example, immediately after entering the gate, still outside the building, a counter has been created with running water and dispensers. These type of measures work as a recommendation in Indonesia, where visible loyalty to government policy is seen as a quality aspect. In this case it demonstrates reliability with regard to hygiene. Unfortunately, on July 12 it became clear that the nursery will remain closed at least until the end of November and will not reopen until the area where the school is located is in 'the green zone' (that is: an area where there have been no new cases of Covid in two weeks). At the moment the area is still in 'the red zone'. In the meantime, the parents receive a teaching package each week with exercises they can do with the children. The supervisors also visit each child and its parents once a week. The parents pay a voluntary contribution for this.

III Corona and the seniors

'Our' seniors are still doing well, and they are being given good care. A few seniors have died in recent months; but that was not believed to be caused by Covid, but rather by the strenuous time around Ramadan. This is especially true for those who were already weakened before Ramadan and for whom the fasting, which is an important religious activity, was heavy. Our 20 volunteers still support their older neighbours with great diligence, dedication, respect and pleasure, taking all necessary precautions to keep them safe.



4. The children and seniors need your support!

Because of the developments mentioned above, extra gifts are more than welcome at our bank account in Holland: NL74ABNA084.21.36.932 (for the attention of Stichting Gotong Royong - Utrecht). For people who want to donate and who are living outside Holland, please contact us by email (info@gotong-royong-utrecht.nl) so that we can find a proper method of transaction for your donation.

We also call on you to forward this newsletter including your personal recommendation to your friends and family members



Our dedicated volunteers