



Factsheet Senehasa Senior Home Baddegama – Sri Lanka

Country and region/town or city

Sri Lanka – Baddegama

Project name

Senehasa Senior Home

Partner(s)

Buddhist monks – local partner
Senehasa Nederland Foundation
Mr Kuruwage – construction partner
Kings Tours – logistical partner

Description

The Senehasa Senior Home is a care home in Baddegama where 48 orphaned elderly people can live. Currently, 35 seniors with no children to care for them live at the senior home. They enjoy their senior years in lovely surroundings.

Since 2008 the VebeGo Foundation has been involved in the construction and realisation of this care home. Together with the initiator, healthcare institution Sevagram in Heerlen, four residential buildings have been realised, a wall has been built around the property and fences have been built around the grounds. Employees of VebeGo companies worked together with local builders on the realisation of this project in the years 2008 - 2009. In November 2009, the building was opened festively with a Buddhist ceremony.

Following the festive opening, the VebeGo Foundation continued to follow the project with great interest. This was not necessary in this phase because, upon commencement of the project, the provision of the care was not arranged by the project initiators. During 2010 and 2011, various initiatives were undertaken at VebeGo to increase awareness of sustainable performance among the management and the parties involved. To achieve this, together with the local parties involved and based on local needs and possibilities, business plans were drawn up in 2011 in cooperation with participants in VebeGo's Strategic Management Course. This resulted in a further study into setting up a tea plantation. Unfortunately, this was not exploitable and the management of the Senehasa Senior Home decided to start a farm in the area. A successful impulse is the promotion and activation of 'dana'. Today, 80% of the food supplies originates from dana. After four years the Senehasa Senior Home has become an example in the southern region and is recognised by the government.

Period

2008 – 2011

Number of building trips

Year 2008 - 1

Year 2009 - 2

Year 2011 - 1 knowledge-gathering trip by the Strategic Management Course in combination with the Sambodhi Institute

Total of 3 building trips and 1 knowledge-gathering trip to this project

Number of ambassadors

A total of 38 employees actively participated in the construction of this project during 3 building trips.

A total of 14 participants in the Strategic course helped with drawing up the business plans.

Investments in € and time

Donations

Residential buildings 2x €120,000

Contribution fencing €10,000

Contribution inventory €10,000

Gift ceremony and mattresses and pillows €1,350

Total = €141,350

38 participants x 40 hours = 1,520 hours volunteer work

14 participants x 20 hours = 280 hours knowledge regarding the business plan

Where do we go from here...?

In 2013 the VebeGo Foundation officially withdrew as an active participant. The Senehasa Nederland foundation is still actively involved, mainly through financial donations and the involvement of volunteers. They finance projects that have a relationship with the Senehasa Senior Home, but they are not primarily geared towards making the projects self-supporting. They want to remain involved in those areas in which the VebeGo Foundation gives the projects themselves the responsibility for the continued existence.

What did we learn?

We learned that it is very important for the exploitation of a project to be arranged up front, upon commencement, and that the project can continue to exist independently after the construction, and thus that it not remain dependent on financial donations. If this still must be organised during the project, this is more difficult to arrange. In addition we learned to 'let go' and to allow the local parties involved to find a working method that is best suited to the culture and customs. With the elaboration of the business plans, we have certainly contributed to insights into how exploitation is possible. We also learned that people must do it for themselves.

Want to know more?

If you would like to know more about this project, visit the website: www.vebegofoundation.nl, or contact Annette van Waning: a.vanwaning@vebeGo.com

1 Giving dana is a Buddhist custom. People give dana on holidays to people and institutions that need it. Dana means the sharing of the meal. On holidays, families bring dana to the Sambodhi Institute for the residents to eat. The eating of the dana is preceded with a Buddhist ceremony.

