

## **SALAM Children's Home Newsletter May 2007**

We have had a couple of very busy months here at the Children's Home. Lots of tests have been written and kids are now all waiting to see how they did. As you may know 10 of our kids will be graduating this year. They all need your prayer as they go out into the world to find work or continue education. As of right now we have two kids that are looking at going to college. One would like to become a pastor and the other an accountant.

Also we will need your prayer and support for the new kids that we will have coming in. We are right now in the processes of surveying 20 or so families to fill the vacancies that we have at this time. The new school year starts in July and so we have only a month left before we have to move the new kids in and get them settled.

We had 3 students from an international college in Singapore come and join us for 5 days. They hung out with the kids and helped them with their conversational English. It was a great blessing and the kids had fun. They were happy with the timing as it helped them to prepare for exams that were coming up. If you are interested in coming by to visit or help out at the Children's Home please feel free to contact the children's home at [salambali@gmail.com](mailto:salambali@gmail.com)

The kids were also excited to have two birthday parties happen at the Children's Home. The Indonesian birthday tradition is to give away presents on your birthday, so often we have people ask if they can make a donation by throwing a party. These are a really fun time. One of the parties was a McDonalds birthday party and they even brought up Grimace! The littlies really enjoyed that.



The kids are looking forward to being able to harvest our first batch of fish from the aquaponics projects. The Tilapia are getting very large and are almost ready for the plate. Many times we have seen the kids drooling over the water thinking of barbecued fish. As well the chili plants that are in the vegetable side are really starting to grow like crazy. We have heaps of chili plants popping up all over the place now.

For the past few months our Steering Committee has been in the process of restructuring our non profit status license. Indonesian law on this matter has

changed a lot over the years and we must apply for the renewal in Jakarta. Every notary seems to have a different answer to the same questions! Please pray for this as it is a real challenge to do these types of tasks in this country. Conflicting information causes huge problems.

Our most pressing need as always is for increased funding to SALAM Children's Home. Prices of petrol, groceries, utilities have gone up in Indonesia, leaving the poorest of the poor even more devastated. Food, education and medical expenses make up a huge percentage of Indonesians' annual income as compared to that of people in the west. SCH is not exempt from these costs.

Recently we have had massive expenditure in both medical costs and education fees. With 10 of our children graduating we have had to find 15 million Rp (approximately \$2000.00 AUD) in fees to allow them to graduate. The education system here is not lenient in anyway. Without the upfront fee the children are not allowed to sit their exams. This has left our financial reserves totally depleted. We have had to borrow money to meet our food requirement for this month which we will be able to pay back next week from our small regular donations.

Within the next two months we will have 11 more children joining, again resulting in fees required to join the local schools. If we don't take in these children, not only are we keeping them from a life changing opportunity, but the rice and oil donations provided by the government will be decreased. The amount is calculated on a percentage of how many children SCH has (the government provides about a third of what is required).

It is a leap of faith to be accepting these children as it has been extremely difficult to meet our costs in the last few months, but we believe in striving to give as many as possible an opportunity at being educated. We have seen over the last 28 years that SCH has positively affected many children's lives and those in their communities. What we need now is a concerted effort by organizations and individuals to commit funds each month. Currently the cost of keeping a child well fed, clothed and educated at SCH costs 450 000Rp per month (approximately \$60.00AUD/ less than \$50.00 USD).

Please contact us if you would like to sponsor a child. We thank you for your assistance and support which allows us to do this.

Warmest regards,

Jonathan and Meri Ford (onsite operations), and Matthew and Alicia Trevatt for SCH Steering Committee.

Please visit our website at [www.salambali.com](http://www.salambali.com) for bimonthly updates on SCH. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter please send us an email and we will have you removed from our contact list.