

Policy plan Mullai Foundation

In realizing its objectives, the Mullai Foundation works closely with the rk Congregation Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI). Worldwide, OMI is committed to building a dignified society. Attention is focused in particular on the poor, on all those who live on the margins of society. Education and training for youth / young people is another important spearhead. Based on this vision and mission, OMI has been active in Sri Lanka for 170 years. The policy of the Mullai Foundation is in line with this.

Right from the moment the tsunami on Boxing Day 2004 in Sri Lanka caused a disaster of enormous magnitude, Anton Thurayappah made an effort to provide aid from the Netherlands. A private initiative in which his attention is mainly focused on the inhabitants of the place Mullaitivu where he himself comes from. The situation is very chaotic at first. The (financial) aid is mainly aimed at being able to meet the very first needs. But in order to continue to provide appropriate assistance during the lengthy process of reconstruction and even further into the future, a more structured organization is necessary. All this leads Anton to set up the Mullai Foundation.

Initially, the policy focuses on supporting projects in the context of reconstruction. The choice to support a particular project is guided by the pastor in Mullaitivu, a member of OMI. The question is raised by the board through Anton. A budget is usually submitted for larger projects. Amounts of money are transferred to the pastor who gives a written account afterwards.

The population is still far from over the consequences of the tsunami when in 2008 the war again ignites between the government army and the Tamil Tigers. This war is again causing countless casualties and is further devastating much of the region. Everything that we helped to rebuild as a foundation is lost.

Back to square one, you could say. But not only that. The emergency situation facing the Tamil population since the tsunami is made even more disastrous by this civil war. The number of orphans and single parents is increasing sharply. Just like the group of people who suffer from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

In order to deal with the newly created emergency as adequately as possible, OMI is setting up social development centers in various places, among other places. They serve as a meeting place and also all kinds of courses are offered so that people can (further) develop their skills. Victims with PTSD syndrome can also go here for treatment, individually or in a group. Members of OMI are specially trained for this purpose.

All this also gives our partnership with OMI a different character. The provincial administration would rather see us operate in a broader context. No longer will our aid be mainly aimed at the inhabitants of Mullaitivu, but from now on also those of the district of the same name and other places. One of the OMI members, fr. JA Seger, is appointed as leader of the projects set up by the provincial administration. He coordinates everything and monitors progress. We now transfer funds directly to the provincialate in Jaffna. The Provincial Superior, Fr. Edwin Vasantharajah, is now the first point of contact for us. The contacts, by telephone and e-mail, are between him and Anton.

We work on the basis of this new set-up and make our contribution. Current policy focuses on the inhabitants of the town of Oddusuddan, located in the Mullaitivu district. Here, too, OMI wants to build a social development center for the inhabitants, who, even more than elsewhere, have suffered greatly from the civil war. By offering the children / young people education and other skills, the aim is to help them cope with the war trauma and to hold out the prospect of a meaningful future.