

Project Share

Catalysts in community transformation

Gushegu and Karaga Districts



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Christmas project 2007

THE 2007 CHRISTMAS LUNCH

We are privileged to share with you the happenings surrounding the Christmas lunch for outcasts. It was a successful project and all the preparations were definitely worth the effort. Let's start with Tuesday 25th December 2007.

After a couple of team meetings, we determined what was necessary and how to tackle the project.

The next step was finding sponsors, as well as arranging for practical things. All team members decided to let friends and family know about the lunch for outcasts. Your response was overwhelming and very soon we decided to expand the lunch to include clothing for our special guests.

Next we decided to organise a separate Christmas lunch in Kpatinga for the ladies in the 'witch camp' there.

In all our special guests included the widows of the previous chief of Gushegu, the old ladies who are accused of being witches (both in Gushegu and in Kpatinga), the physically and mentally challenged – generally anyone who is normally seen as 'different'.

The local Christians were invited to help us prepare for the event and serve our guests.

This, we felt, was what Christmas is all about. Jesus came to earth in poor conditions to serve *all* people, but in so doing God showed a particular interest in the outcasts – both then and now.



Serving the lunch

Doing the shopping was quite an experience: 100 kg of rice, 20 crates of soft drinks, 25 watermelons and 4 goats (among others). Together with the canopies and chairs, everything was transported to Rahman and Nelleke's spacious yard which was cleared just in time for the event.



SUPPORTERS

We at Project Share and also all guests at the Christmas lunch would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who supported the project either financially or in prayer. Only through your contribution have we been able to make this Christmas an unforgettable experience to those who needed it so much. It is heart warming to see how many people have been part of this project. Thank you!

In this report we hope to give you an impression of what we were able to do.

READY, STEADY, GO...



The take-away boxes are ready

On the day itself 5 local ladies started cooking at 7.30 am. The goats had been 'prepared' the night before. The sauce was prepared and the rice boiled. In the meantime the chairs were ready and our fellow-servers ready to go. Around noon the yard

was filling up nicely. It wasn't always easy for the lads at the gate to make sure that only the special guests were let in: hordes of children were queuing up too. The happening in itself drew quite a crowd and even the regent (interim- chief) of Gushegu

honoured the invitation. While he normally eats only at home, as culture demands, he shared the lunch with us and said afterwards that he really enjoyed the occasion!

SINGING, DANCING AND EATING

Within the next hour or so things really got started. Rahman welcomed everyone and then the young men from the churches started singing.

Before we knew it everyone had joined in and a whole group of ladies came up to dance and clap to the music. It was truly a celebration and the guests clearly enjoyed being in the spotlight for a change. It was heart warming, since this was the reason we organized the lunch.

Rahman explained what we celebrate at Christmas: that God became our friend by sending his Son to earth. And that Project Share hopes to be people's

'neighbour', like in the story of the Good Samaritan. The guests applauded – the message was clearly grasped.

And then, the eating could begin! Everyone (well over 200 people in total) received a take-away box of rice, sauce and meat, along with a sachet of water and a bottle of soft drink. It was clearly a very special meal for them. Some even put their soft drink in the empty back to take home.

This delicious meal was topped with a slice of watermelon. All the left-overs were taken home as great treasures.



Singing and dancing

'All the left-overs were taken home as great treasures.'

THIS IS CHRISTMAS

The biggest surprise was yet to come: handing out material for skirts/shirts. We personally wished everyone a blessed Christmas and a good new year.

In groups people were called to come forward: first the widows, then the accused 'witches', then those physically or mentally challenged and any others. One lady exclaimed: 'First you feed us,

then you give us drinks and now you even give us clothes?!' Everyone was excited and some people thanked us over and over again.

What seemed at first glance and unorganised mess, was cleared up in no time with everyone's help. We were tired, but satisfied: our guests were able to have an unforgettable meal.

The next day in town a number of people asked why they had not been invited. We explained that this meal was meant exactly for those who normally do not have enough, to give them something special. People found it hard to comprehend that we would do such a thing, but respected it greatly.

This is what Christmas is about and it has clearly left an impression.



Handing out the clothing

CELEBRATIONS FOR ALL

That evening at our team BBQ we were able to enjoy even more, since we had given first. It was a special day and we too were impressed.

God blesses us greatly and it truly is a joy to share the blessing.

On Friday 28th December we celebrated in Kpatinga. Here too the lunch was a great success: the ladies loved the food, our company and of course the clothing!

It was good to see the local Christians involved in the organizing and experience the joy of giving and sharing.

FINALLY ...

Your contributions to this Christmas project totalled € 2125. Many thanks! The lunch itself cost about € 500 and the clothing almost €1200. So there's almost € 500 to spare! We hope to use this to buy blankets for the ladies in the 'witch camp' in Kpatinga, as the cold nights are hard for them. Once again: we are touched that you have helped make this possible!