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*3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.
2nd Cor. 1 NIV*

FAMIN REPORT SOUTHINDIA

Editor: Reinhard Bärtschi & Team

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FAMIN, Allmendstrasse 16, CH-4410 Liestal BL
To whom it may concern
Friends, supporters, well-wishers
in Switzerland and the World

FIELD VISIT SOUTH-INDIA (extended)

Team Bro. Reini Bärtschi, Bro. Silas Rameshkumar (Field Executive / Coordinator / Interpreter) and Pastors Abraham and Norman Bernad
Date Monday, 28. October 2019 Tuesday, 4th February 2020
Areas Bangalore Dharmapuri; Tiruppattur, Vellakkuttai, Kakangarai, Mamallapuram, Erode, Coimbatore, Valparai, Hosur, Goa, Nagalapuram (District Tuticorin)

Objectives

1. To study culture, spirituality, economic state and church orientation of **FAMIN** beneficiaries' families
2. To support and encourage prayer fellowships and house-church setups among believers
3. To visit unexplored areas and people to study their ministries, focus and visions
4. To study and evaluate the needs and possibilities of projects towards development of poor and needy
5. To spread the Good News to the people, to preach, to counsel and comfort people with spiritual need
6. To evaluate, follow-up and analyze the life-situation of the people who received support.

FAMIN Switzerland and **FAMIN-India** have organized a 2-months PACE (**Prayer and Cultural Exposure**) program to achieve the objectives specified above. In December 2019 the visit was extended into January 2020 to exploring new areas. Details of activities carried out are given below.

Overview trips in South India

1. 14. – 17.11.2019
Bangalore - Dharmapuri – Kakangarai – Tiruppattur – Chennai – Mamallapuram – Bangalore
Companion: Silas
Transportation: car with driver, back by plane
2. 24. – 29.11.2019
Bangalore - Erode – Coimbatore – Valparai – Hosur – Bangalore
Companions: Pastors Bernad, Abraham and Norman
Transportation: car
3. 04. – 08.12.2019
Bangalore - Goa (..) – Bangalore
Companion: Silas
Transportation: plane
4. 11. – 17.12.2019
Bangalore – Nagalapuram (WWTC) – Bangalore
Accompany: nobody
Transportation: plane, car with driver
5. 30.12. 2019– 04.01.2020
Bangalore – Gudiyattam – Kakangarai – Tiruppattur – Bangalore
Companions: Silas, Shobha, Simon, John
Transportation: car

The days between the trips I could stay either with Silas family, Kammanahalli or with Bernad' family, Geddalahalli, both places in Bangalore. Here I visited many known through **FAMIN** and new friends.

The journey from Zurich airport to Doha, Katar was comfortable as the second flight from Doha to Bangalore. Bro. Silas with his son Simon picked us up at the airport and Sis. Shobha was waiting at home to welcome me. The first days were used to purchase some clothes and shoes for the Indian stay.

Trip 1

Bangalore - Dharmapuri – Kakangarai – Tiruppattur – Chennai – Mamallapuram – Bangalore

After about three hours driving, we arrived the outskirts of Dharmapuri where the leprosy colony is. There are living about 250 people, the older most with leprosy

It gathered about 100 people, we could share an encouraging message and pray. Assigned from FAMIN India Trust we distributed food for two weeks for each family. Each bag would be handed over personally.

Just before sunset we arrived Subha's family with husband Thirupathi and daughter Shamini (15) and son Poorvesh (12) where we stayed one night. The other day we drove to Tiruppattur, where we visited Vani's family with husband Madhan and two daughters Varshita (7) and Shakshitha (5). Madhan owns a furniture shop on three stores and it runs well. Vani has not yet a job, she will go for an M.Degree. (as Subha will do this year).

In the same town we stayed for dinner and next night with Vijaykumar and Leelavathi with two daughters, Negaashree (15) and Lekhashree (9). This house is full of Hindu signs, figures and pictures, so I prayed for a release from them. Here we learned that Sharmila, a cousin from Shobha is still in a hospital in Chennai because of the delivery of her third child, a boy. We decided to visit and bless them.

Afterwards we drove to Mamallapuram to meet Pastor Paul Anbazhagan and his family and also Anbukani with her family. On Sunday we attended the church service, I was invited to preach the Gospel (2nd Corinthians 1:2-4), and enjoyed the most wonderful fellowship there. In the evening we had a flight back to Bangalore.

Trip 2

Bangalore – Erode – Coimbatore – Valparai – Erode – Bangalore

After lunch we left and drove until Erode (already night) and visited HelanRani with husband Samuel. The two daughters Rebecca (15) and Grace (11) was in a hospital because of Dengue fever. For dinner we met some relatives from Abraham in Erode.

Late we arrived in Coimbatore the hotel. For next morning we had invited all **FAMIN** beneficiaries to a gathering. We could welcome Yessuma, Angel with family, Rajangam with wife Vasuthi and daughter Preethi (17), Kutti with Naveen (19). The guests want to perform songs and then I could share a Bible word with them. After a nice dinner and dessert, where all was invited, we had time for talking in smaller groups and so some needs came up. I promised to discuss this with Brother Peter if I am back in Switzerland.

We left Coimbatore in the late afternoon and arrived Valparai in the evening.

We met Sakunthala and family with husband Raman and son Balamurugan (17) and daughter Dhanalakshmi (14). Raman is weak and quiet about the accident he had few years ago.

We met Giriya with Gayathri and their little boy. Pushpa wasn't there. They are well and are living in the same house.

We met Amuthababy with daughter Nithyababy. They still are very sad about the loss of the daughter Suganyababy. They are living in the same house. Now they are looking for a partner to marry with Nithyababy.

We met Josephine and family with her husband Johnson, daughter Thirsha (6) and son Jearim (4). They are living midst in a tea plantation but are planning to move to Coimbatore.

We met Dr. Kalaiselvan and learnt about his medical care work among the people in the Tea Estates and his great service and heart-attitude to help the poor.

In between we used the time to drive through the Tea Plantations, visited a Tea Factory and Waterfalls at the border of Kerala.

On the way home to Bangalore, we stopped for a night in Erode and visited HelanRani with the whole family. I promised to take over the hospital costs.

On each place we shared bible words, encouraged the people and prayed with them.

Trip 3

Bangalore – Goa – Bangalore

After lunch we left heading the airport and had a good and safe flight to Goa, close to Vasco da Gama. We had a warm welcome from Francis Kumar and he brought us to a guest house. The next day he showed us 'Hope Centre', the main building of 'Tender Heart Foundation (THF) with three floors and rooms for a Day Care Centre, tailoring and computer courses and for staff meetings and other groups. We visited some classes in the Day Care Centre and spoke to the children of God's love and care. Francis told us his amazing life story and the start and development of THF. We really recognized God's hand.

Here the Day Care Centres' run classes for Kindergarden, 1st and 2nd standard. Afterwards there are good schools, mainly from the Catholic Church, without fees for the young students.

On Friday Francis' wife Alison showed us another Day Care Centre close to a slum area. Here are about 50 children from poor families, therefore a lunch was offered to them.

On Saturday the driver brought us to some exciting places in the neighbourhood. We enjoyed Sunset at the shore.

On Sunday we attended the service in the 'Mount Zion Fellowship' and after lunch we flew back to Bangalore.

Trip 4

Bangalore – Madurai – Nagalapuram – Madurai – Bangalore

This trip I travelled by plane and without company, because I got the address from the pastor Anne in Walenstadt, Switzerland. 20 years ago, she volunteered for a year in the 'Women Worker Trainings Centre' (WWTC) (for information see <https://womenworkerstrainingcentre.weebly.com/>) I had mixed feeling to visit this place, because I was unknown by place and people. But the warm and friendly welcome from the singing children and the staff at the Centre changed my mind. Nagalapuram is a village approx. 90km south from Madurai. The WWTC belongs to the Church of South India, CSI'.

With Kasthuri Manickam as leader and a ten people staff, they run many different activities in the Centre area as in several villages in the neighbourhood. Such as Bible school for children in the 10th Std and college, typewriting courses practising for women around, computer and tailoring courses. There are day care centres for lonely widows and toddlers.

I could visit many places and meet the responsible people on the planting fields and in the villages. Because soon before Christmas the older children was practising a nativity play to perform in the villages to bring in the good news of Jesus. On each place I could tell a biblical story and few times teach in the bible class.

The whole time was very impressive with talks with the leader, staff, the volunteer Lea from Germany, and some children. The love gift will be used to remedy deficiencies at the children home. If the airline cancelled the flight back to Bangalore, I stayed two days more and travelled back home filled with many encouraging experiences.

In Bangalore, from the two places a was staying, I visited famous FAMIN families and friends I got to know while the former Indian trips 2010 and 2015.

I met Janaki and her family, two daughters (Geetha, Sangeetha) are married and have children, Preethi has a good job in a western company and supports the family. They are well and living close together. We shared a bible word and gave a Love Gift and some weeks later we brought some items for Sangeetha with her new-born.

I met Umapathi / Sheela family. Mettilda is married and has one baby. They are well, but their small house is occupied with 5 adults and a baby. Dishes and laundry work is outside.

I met Devi, the household helper, shared a bible word and gave a Love Gift.

I met the Bethesda Children Home (BCH) with the leader Pastor Bro. Thomas Moses. We interacted with the girl's and the boy's group separately and gave each a present. Afterwards Bro Thomas introduced his family members, we prayed and gave a LG. Here we were informed that his oldest daughter Monica will marry with Kiran in January.

Later I met Pastor Bro.Thomas' the housefather of *ELIM* Children Home on my prayer walk through the urban district he's living. He introduced me to the staff and showed me their old *EMANUEL* Children Home, which is dilapidated and dangerous to live in the house. In fact it is prohibited to occupy (it needs more than 100 Lakhs for renewing).

Afterwards we attended the weekly widow prayer meeting, where I could share my experience with God as a widower.

I met twice Jose and Rebecca Thaya Nithi with Adalia (16). We had a good, cheerful and deep spiritual fellowship. With them I attended their church, FGAC (Full Gospel Assemblies Church), amazing.

I met the Hope Chapel Church several times and had a talk with Pastor Robert D'Roza. The services are held in English language and rather western style.

I met the Bangalore Central Church (BCC, now BCAGC), Geddalahalli, several times. Mainly Tamil spoken with English translation. Also, I met the Revival Centre Church, Lingarajpuram and the tuition group with Sis. Esther in Kammanahalli.

I met a widow group in a private house in Lingarajpuram, it was impressive how fervently they are praying and share many things together. Shared Is 60:1-2 with my life story to encourage these women. Emotionally was to learn they are praying for Gaby and me through the tough time and was crying when she passed away. So, I could tell them about the faith of my wife late Gaby.

I met a tuition group three times in Kammanahalli. Sis Esther, a member of the Revival Centre Church, started this ministry 10 years ago and is teaching about 25 children from 1st to 7th standard. After singing I shared 1. John 4:9-12 (God's love toward us) and Psalm 34:8 (Taste and see). For visualizing I gave them a chocolate to experience the sweetness.

the second meeting I shared Judges 15:17-18 (Samson was thirsty after a big fight with the Philistines and he cried to God for water – God gave it!). To visualize I showed them the dried pressed tissue with some drops of water as it develops to a wet tissue.

the third meeting I shared Mark 2. Four men bring their paralyzed friend to Jesus feet through the roof. For visualizing I used a scale.

I met Brother George Wilson, the undertaker and funeral ceremony manager for a short talk. He is a close friend to Pastor Abraham Bernad.

I met Lilly, Ringal and Nancy, had a good talk with Nancy about the loss of her dad.

I met Maharaj, Rosalyn and Beulah in Hosur and later Beulah in Geddalahalli. We had many talks about her past and future (to get marry, job). After Christmas there was a proposal with a boy and his family, but both denied to go together.

I met several times the Victor family in Horamavu. Anila, a friend from the past introduced first the two ladies (Niharitha and Nikkitha, both below 30): They were travelling in Europe. They are people having good jobs and so is their life style.

Summary and Conclusion

Through this extended PACE Field it was evident that there is a lot of potential and need for spiritual guidance and sustainable help-work in the South of India. We concentrate presently to

- the **Urban area**, District and City of Bangalore Karnataka
- the **Rural area** of Tamil Nadu with its Districts of Kanchipuram with the town of Mamallapuram and the District of Vellore with its towns Vaniyambadi, Tiruppattur and the villages of Kakangarai and Vellakkuttai.
- **Hill area** in the Anamalais, District of Coimbatore

FAMIN Switzerland throughout 2020 and now during the field trip has re-evaluated its operations. It extends support and does help-work through the established channels with Local Trusts and with **FAMIN India** on a case-by-case basis.

Silas Rameshkumar , Field Executive/Representative & Coordinator India, Bangalore KA

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