

A Marvelous Community Youth Initiative



Several years ago, a university student, Manjula, contacted Buddhist Relief Mission for assistance. The temple in his village, near Kurunegala, was badly in need of repairs. We visited the community and met the school principal, other local officials, and the monks of the temple. We were told that villagers would do all the work. Happily, we could provide the funds, and the job was successfully completed.

We kept in touch, off and on, and Manjula finished his studies. The community was affected by Covid, of course, and local plantations were severely impacted by the government's fertilizer ban and the economic collapse.


Last month, Manjula again took the initiative and asked whether BRM could provide food parcels for one hundred distressed families. Given fuel shortages and the high cost of transportation, we asked him to find out what was possible locally. He readily agreed, and we were able to transfer the funds. This is his report:



To ensure that the one hundred neediest families received the dry ration parcels you gave us the money for, I personally checked the list of recommended families which I had gotten from village community heads or Grama Sevaka. Then, to reduce the cost, we went to local wholesale shops who gave us low prices for buying rice and beans in bulk. Likewise, we went to a local coconut mill with recycled bottles to buy coconut oil. The cloth bags were purchased from a small sewing business. In this way, we were able to reduce the cost for each dry ration pack without losing any quality. Also, this helped to support our local businesses which are facing great difficulties in these hard times. We had free transportation support, thanks to friends and community members, who volunteered their own vehicles.

All the parcels were distributed in a remarkable ceremony in the community center. Manjula and his friends made sure we were able to attend the ceremony via ZOOM. It was extremely well-organized, and the distribution was beautifully managed. Congratulations and much thanks to Manjula and his friends!



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