



Toraja Rural Development Trust

Annual Report

The project whereby we are supporting the capacity of farmers in Toraja, Indonesia, to grow greater yields of better quality coffee, has proceeded well.

Our partner in Toraja, Jalesa, is now back to full strength under the enthusiastic leadership of Eveready Lolo.

During a visit in October I was able to see that Jalesa have maintained the strong level of rapport with the village farmer that characterised the leadership of Daniel Salubongga. It was also good to see that the coffee peeling machines donated by our supporters were appreciated and were assisting in the achievement of better grades of coffee.

There is no doubt that we are now seeing real improvements in the productivity of the village farmers and I was given good evidence of gains in both yield and quality.

This year we completed the first of a two year funding support with NZ Aid. However the government has restructured their support of private sector development with changes in geographical focus and a move to funding 100% of an approved project instead of the previous 80%. This has meant we had to apply all over again for accreditation. Although we have lodged an application for this accreditation it has yet to be approved.

In the meantime we have taken on the total funding ourselves and are of the opinion that is probably more appropriate at this time than one that is fully funded by government. We have always seen the importance of this as a farmer to farmer project and will now increase our efforts in fundraising.

We have had had a consultative relationship with the Dutch development ngo, VECO, who also fund Jalesa. This has developed further and we have now merged our projects with our funding being channelled through VECO. This will mean a better level of monitoring as well as less transaction costs for Jalesa. VECO are assuming this role for a very modest fee.

Can I thank the board for their on-going input. As we have developed this project from scratch and learned a great deal along the way, this advice and wise counsel has been important. George Brown continues to look after our accounts which we appreciate greatly. Especially can I thank Clare Freeth for her contribution. While Clare was engaged on the basis of being remunerated she has chosen to donate her administrative duties, which as you all know, are carried out with cheerful efficiency. We are also grateful to Barry McLauchlan who continues to maintain our website.

We are now seeing significant improvement in family incomes in the villages where Jalesa work and it will be pleasure to have a group of our supporters visit Toraja shortly and cement those 'people to people' ties which are an important part of the project.

Graham Robertson