

# TORAJA.CO.NZ

...outputs  
...outcomes  
...sustainable change  
Registered Charity No. CC26900



- In brief -**
- # Thank you very much for your support of this small but very rewarding project.
  - # We need more financial help to keep the project going.
  - # Government support for overseas aid projects has changed.
  - # We have formed an alliance with Veco to monitor the project.

## Background

The project started in 2004 followed a visit to Toraja by Robyn McPhail, [then minister of of St. Johns Church, Methven] and subsequently by Graham Robertson and Dick Davison. The aim of the project is to assist Torajan farmers improve their farm output and profitability, particularly of coffee. New Zealand can offer skills in using latest technology, the application of modern farm management techniques and co-operative marketing. It was these skills that we hope to transfer to Torajan farmers. The project involves funding a Torajan Small Farmers Association, called Jalesa, to work with coffee growers through visits and discussion groups, work to improve coffee husbandry, pruning, fertilizer use and pre-and post-harvest techniques. The result to date of this approach is both improved coffee yields and quality and higher family incomes.

## Where is Toraja?

The region of Tana Toraja is in the mountains of Sulawesi, about 300km north of Makassar. The area is heavily dependent on agriculture and farm sizes are small. Crops of rice and vegetables are grown on terraced areas in river valleys with coffee, cacao and passion-fruit grown under the jungle canopy on mountain sides. Although located almost on the equator, the climate in this region is quite moderate because of its height above sea level. Temperatures are rarely above 30 C. Farm families are very poor and young people tend to leave Toraja to improve their prospects of a better life. Torajan architecture is famous because their houses are built to resemble boats. A popular belief is this distinctive house design developed following migration of these people from coastal areas to remind them of the boats they left behind.



### **Co-operative marketing**

Quality coffee is best produced at high altitudes. Mountain farms in Toraja lie between 900-1600m above sea level and is renowned for producing Arabica coffee. Most farmers produce only small volumes of coffee, their quality is variable and they become price takers. Coffee at present is sold to middle men and traders who offer cash prices to individual farmers. As a result of inputs from the project, better husbandry practices and more emphasis on pre- and post-harvest treatments farmers are producing more reliable quantities of good coffee, they are looking to develop marketing strategies to improve returns. There is little experience of co-operative marketing among Indonesian farmers. Our latest move has been to link Jalesa and our project with Veco, to provide closer monitoring and a more sustained advisory programme to farmers

### **Our collaboration with Veco**

We have recently formed an alliance with a large Belgian aid organization Vredeseilanden which has a branch in Indonesia called Veco-Indonesia [veco-ngo.org](http://veco-ngo.org)

Veco have development officers throughout Indonesia including one who monitors the work of Jalesa and assists them where necessary. We now have a joint project to work together with Veco in both evaluating and monitoring the project. While we visit Toraja at least once per year, we cannot exercise the close control that Veco is able to do with a staff member based in the region. We still intend to visit Toraja to maintain good will and cement farmer to farmer ties.

### **Government support.**

While we qualified for substantial government support in the past, in the last year the rules have changed. When a project meets the Government's official aid policy, it will be funded 100%, if it doesn't meet the policy then it doesn't get funded.

We decided, rather than face the uncertainty of waiting to find out whether the project is eligible or not, we would fund the project ourselves.

We have been conscious of making maximum use of our supporters' donations by keeping overheads low. Any contributions donated are channeled directly to the project. Those who help within NZ do so without remuneration and travel to Toraja is self-funded.

### **Our visit this year**

A group of eight NZ farmers visited Toraja recently, visiting remote villages and meeting local farmers and their families. They visited a local school, met the local mayor, and enjoyed the wonderful scenery. Another farmer visit to Toraja will take place next winter. It can be coordinated into a longer trip by routing through Singapore.



*I had previously known little about Indonesia, which has the world's 4<sup>th</sup> largest population and produces 40 million ton of rice each year, all harvested by hand.*

*Children, even infants are able to get themselves to and from school, safely, independently and in immaculate uniforms, pretty much like New Zealanders could do a generation ago.*

*It is our aim to help the Torajan people improve their lives with technology, sharing of ideas and cooperative marketing, but an unexpected win maybe us learning from these wonderful happy people.*

**Jim Sim**

*Privileged - on so many levels – to be included in a group of terrific people, all prepared to step outside their comfort zone, to meet, accept, learn and thoroughly enjoy what this amazing region and its beautiful, open and giving people had to offer. Our visit there, truly was, a once in a lifetime experience. A revelation when it comes to understanding these, people their culture, the lives they lead, and the limitations they face. Their openness honesty and hospitality was extraordinary and very humbling.*

**Jill Shearer**



Should you wish to contribute to the work of Toraja.co.nz, you may either:

1. Post directly into our bank account

Our account number is 01 1807 0146929 00

Our account name is Toraja Rural Development Charitable Trust.

**Please notify me of your donation by emailing** **XXXXXXXXXXXXXX** including your name, address and the amount donated.



We will forward a receipt.

2. Pay by cheque

Please print off and return your cheque with the form below.

**Form for Donations to Toraja.co.nz**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to TRDCT.

Tick here if you do not wish to be added to the [Toraja.co.nz](http://Toraja.co.nz) mailing list.

**Please return this form to** **XXXXXXXXXXXXXX**

