

ONF

Ono Niha Foundation

Newsletter – June 2018



My good friend Steve Brassington and I visited Nias in April this year. Steve is an engineer, and is eager to help improve Ono Niha Oil factory operations.

We are very excited to welcome Icum to the Foundation. She started in January as the full-time on-site manager. I spent some time with Matt and Icum discussing Foundation management and operations.

Local employment

Matt owns Ono Niha Oil which employs up to 20 people. Ono Niha Oil provides funds and considerable in-kind support to ONF, such as electricity, security guards, bookkeeping services, and Matt’s valuable time. An efficient factory will help make ONF self sufficient.

Matt now has Indonesian Food Authority registration and halal certification for his coconut oil, and demand in Indonesia is increasing. The existing factory is “busting at the seams”, processing up to 4000 nuts per day. Matt estimates up to 7000 nuts per day will be required to meet future demand. He has already acquired some of the land for a purpose-built factory. Steve observed the manufacturing process, product flows and energy requirements. We developed some very preliminary sketches on what a new factory might look like. One of the immediate requirements is to replace the petrol motors on the screw presses with hydraulic pumps to eliminate significant noise pollution in the processing area.

PS: Steve and I met with Michael Weisenberger in early June. Michael is production manager at KW Automation which produces horticulture and packhouse equipment. He offered to help design the factory and to donate the conveyor and roller systems required to move product efficiently around the factory. Michael, thank you so much for your generosity and enthusiasm.



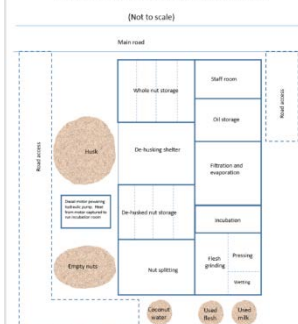
Steve with some of the kids in the factory truck



Coconuts, coconuts and more coconuts!

Ono Niha Oil factory II

Alternative draft Site Plan



One of our many draft sketches for the new factory

Additional funding for the factory will be via Ono Niha Oil bank loans, and our Foundation purchasing the existing factory from Ono Niha Oil. This will provide the cash flow for the new factory, and the existing factory will be re-furnished for Foundation use.

Coconut water: Icum is eager to find alternate uses for the coconut by-products. She gave us some tasty nata de coco she made from fermented coconut water. She is sourcing innovative packaging and will then investigate marketing opportunities, including to the international surfers visiting Sorake Beach.



Icum's Nata de coco, made from coconut water

Education

The computer classes are in full swing with two classes per week. About 15 students share the 6-7 computers in each class.

We are still struggling to find a suitable English teacher. Icum was so eager for the students to learn that she ran some English classes herself, then encouraged Pastor Gary (from the US) and his wife to run classes every Friday. The students were very excited to have a Westerner teaching English. Unfortunately, Gary no longer has time for this, so Icum circulated flyers around Sorake Beach to encourage visiting surfers to donate an hour of their time to help the students. Good on you Icum!

Six of the sponsor students graduated from junior high school in May: Martinus, Irfan, April, Selina, Trimoni and Fagalosi. Thank you sponsors for supporting these students and their families.



Gary teaching English



Computer classes



The junior high class of 2018

Disabilities

Steve and I accompanied Iwan and several of the disabilities members to aqua therapy in Teluk Dalam. I never cease to enjoy seeing them so much more mobile in the water, smiling and splashing, and Iwan and the carers doing exercises with them. We also had fun at our community centre on Saturday morning.

Kristin is 17 years old – she has significant physical disabilities but has a beautiful personality and spirit. Amy, one of our previous volunteers, donated a tablet to Kristin several years ago and she has taught herself to read English. Steve listened and helped her read an English comic book. It reignited Steve's childhood memories, and also bought lots of smiles.



Iwan, with Arif, and Natalius' sister with Kristin

Getting the disability members and their carers to aqua therapy and the community centre is difficult. Motorbike is the most available transport, but this is increasingly difficult with their physical disabilities and as they grow from child to adult. Ono Niha Oil now donates the use of its truck, and ONF pays a driver to take the members to and from the centre and the pool. They are now able to participate more regularly.

Community health

Pinta is now a qualified dental therapist. Congratulations Pinta! ONF will pay Pinta to run two oral hygiene (scale and cleans) clinics per month in outlying villages. Pinta's dad died in January so she is now the only income earner for the family. Pinta's younger brother Randy is one of the disabilities kids.

Icum will help Pinta register as a practicing therapist, probably under the auspices of ONF. She will then be able to run clinics including fillings and extractions on people up to 22 years old (I think). She will use the ONF dental facilities and Matt and Icum will help her with the business aspects. We hope she can get further training from volunteer dentists. Iwan will continue with the oral hygiene clinics in the centre 2-3 times per week.

So, this is Jill's dream coming true – locals trained to continue the work so we “do ourselves out of a job”!

HwP

You may recall from our last newsletter that Dr Raf from Sydney plans to set up a foundation to support at least monthly medical clinics at Sorake Beach. I met him at Sorake in April – his plans are progressing and he is leasing and has renovated a small building. We are hoping that the visiting specialists will include dentists (they can use the ONF facilities) and those who can help the disabilities group.

Other

I will visit Nias again in August with my sister Tania and Rachael Wilcox.

Oh, and I have finally learnt (I hope!) Facebook. I will try to keep the LSM Ono Niha Foundation page (<https://www.facebook.com/LSM-Ono-Niha-Foundation-417944544891604/>) updated. Also check out our website; <http://ononihalsmfoundation.squarespace.com/>.

Peter Hofman

Project manager



Kristin reading an English comic to Steve, with mum watching



Pinta with her University certificate



Pinta running a clinic in one of the neighbouring villages



Matt, Pinta, Pinta's mum, Iwan and Icum sharing a meal as we plan the ONF programs