



## The Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust Newsletter

June 2014  
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### Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust

*'Empowering communities;  
building trust'*

#### Vision

The establishment and protection of a just, equitable and peaceful society

#### Mission

To collectively promote peace, reconciliation and human rights, sharing responsibility, resources and risks through strategic partnerships with civil society, public sector business community, diaspora, academia and donors.

#### Contact us

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### FOUNDER TRUSTEE SITHIE TIRUCHELVAM PASSES AWAY

NTT's founder trustee Ms Sithie Tiruchelvam passed away on 22 March 2014. A very firm anchor upon whom the Trust had relied was no more. This sense of uncertainty however only spurred us to greater resolve; to live up to the exacting standards that Sithie set for us. March through June saw a spate of work -- overseeing programmes, attending meetings and conferences, and working on hosting the annual commemoration lecture and a children's play! During this period, we saw the departure of 3 staff but we quickly got on board young and energetic individuals who in a short space of time have worked to bring us up to speed. This year, while presenting us multiple challenges to which we need to respond creatively, also offers us some opportunities which we are determined to seize.

**Jacqueline Netto**  
Executive Director

### IN MEMORIAM | SITHIE TIRUCHELVAM (1944 – 2014)

The Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust is deeply saddened by the unexpected demise of Ms Sithie Tiruchelvam, founder and trustee of NTT, who passed away on Saturday 22 March, 2014 at the age of 69. She was Chairperson of



the Trust from 2006 to 2012, and a member of the Finance and Investment Committee of the board of trustees.

Ms Tiruchelvam played a pivotal role in founding NTT and in ensuring the sustainability of the Trust since its inception in 2000.

With her guidance the Trust has achieved a unique status as the only indigenous organization that supports community groups working on issues of social justice and peace.

Ms Tiruchelvam also initiated NTT's foray into the global philanthropic sector as a founding member of the Foundations for Peace Network, an initiative she supported and steered with resolute belief in the power of community foundations to support catalysts for social change. Her vision and passion will be sorely missed at the Trust. May she rest in peace.

*“After Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam’s death Ms. Tiruchelvam wanted to further the values he worked for during his lifetime, and realized that an indigenous grant-making organization could make meaningful contributions to address existing gaps in responding to the needs of communities. This belief led her to establish the Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust, an indigenous organization rooted within the community that has supported catalysts for social change by focusing on community initiatives.”*

**Ambika Satkunanathan**  
Chairperson, Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust

*“Sithie made a great friend. She was a lover of my art and I miss her at my exhibitions. She encouraged me and my art reflects many of the issues she fought for. I appreciate her consciousness of my work and regard for it. She helped promote my work and that of other artists in various circles. The organisation she founded – NTT – supports artists making social interventions.”*

**Chandraguptha Thenuwara**  
Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts, Sri Lanka

*Sithie's passing away is a huge loss for all of us. Sithie is a person to cherish for her indomitable spirit and her irreverent humour. I have many beautiful memories of Sithie's passion for NTT and her leadership during times of serious crises. I cannot believe this woman full of life and a mission is no more.*

**Vanita Mukherjee**  
Ford Foundation, India

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW TRUSTEE

NTT Board of Trustees and staff welcome Ms Rohana Jayaratne who was appointed as a Trustee in June 2014. Ms Jayaratne is an economist with experience in project appraisal and monitoring of private sector projects with the Development Finance Corporation of Sri Lanka, and of public sector projects with the United Nations Development Programme in Colombo. She has volunteered with Shanti, a community animation movement, Sarvodaya Women's Movement and Mithuruwela, an organisation working with cancer patients.

## ADDITIONS TO THE NTT FAMILY

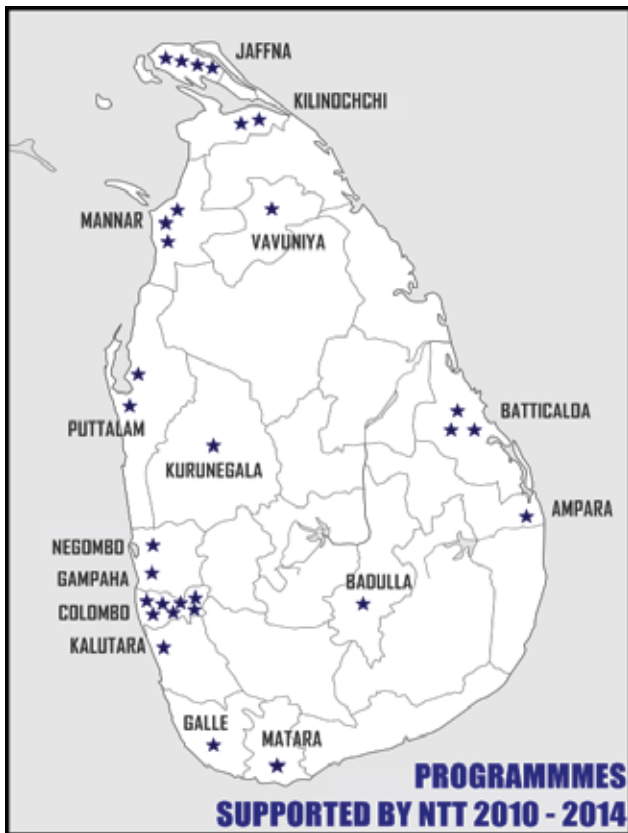
This year we have had many additions to the NTT family, specifically in the form of an entirely new programme team! In May, Ms Melissa Jayasuriya was appointed as Manager, Programmes & Grants and Ms Samurdhi Perera joined as Arts & Culture Officer.

We also have Navvid Mushin, Dilan Lyman and Senuri Gamage, a trio of young and energetic interns, assisting us with our projects and events.

### Interested in volunteering at NTT?

Email your resume to Melissa Jayasuriya at [programme.manager@neelan.org](mailto:programme.manager@neelan.org)

# NTT PROGRAMMES AT A GLANCE



Promoting rights of persons with disabilities - Vavuniya



Legal assistance & counseling to migrant workers - Galle



NTT Women's Fellowship Programme - training in India



Livelihood opportunities: tailoring course - Kilinochchi



Promoting pluralism through radio dramas - Jaffna



Providing marginalised children access to pre-school education - Kalmunai



Promoting inter-religious harmony - Kalmunai

### NETWORKING

#### FUNDERS LEARNING VISIT, BRAZIL

Executive Director Jackie Netto participated in a Learning Visit to Rio de Janeiro organized by the International Human Rights Funders Group exploring the changing dynamics of human rights and global philanthropy in emerging economies, with a special focus on the BRICS. This provided an opportunity to network with around 20 funders from different countries.

#### WORKSHOP ON MAXIMISING THE IMPACTS OF PHILANTHROPY

The Executive Director, Manager, Programmes & Grants and the Arts & Culture Officer attended this workshop conducted by the University of Sussex (UK) in June 2014. The workshop enabled NTT staff to acquire new knowledge and better understand local philanthropy while learning how to enhance the developmental impacts of NTT's programmes and activities.

### ARTS & CULTURE

#### 15<sup>TH</sup> NEELAN TIRUCHELVAM MEMORIAL LECTURE

This year's lecture will be delivered by Ms Galuh Wandita Soedjatmoko from Indonesia. The event will be held at BMICH, Committee Room A on 3 August at 6 p.m. This year, which commemorates the 15<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of Dr Neelan Tiruchelvam, will be particularly poignant as we pay tribute to NTT's founder trustee Sithie Tiruchelvam. The tribute will be available for viewing on our website, along with the text of the lecture.

#### PERCH THEATRE GROUP, CHENNAI PRESENTS JUJUBEE

NTT brings to a young audience an interactive and entertaining play for children. Six shows are slated; 4 in Colombo and 2 in Kandy. Entrance is free for performances held at Kandy Girl's High School, Kandy St Anthony's Cathedral, Vivekananda Hall Kotahena and the Children's Ward of the Cancer Hospital. Two ticketed performances are also scheduled to be held at the Nugasevana Amphitheater in Colombo. NTT thanks Galadari Hotels, TNL RN, Rithihi and India-Sri Lanka Foundation for helping us make this a reality, and enabling us to stage the show for varied audiences at multiple locations.

#### MONOTONY: TO COMMEMORATE THE UN-COMMEMORATIVE OF JULY 1983 / JUNE 2014

The annual exhibition of paintings, drawings and installations by Chandragupta Thenuwara, part-supported by NTT, will be held from 23<sup>rd</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014 at the Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, commemorating the events of July 1983.

#### SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

The Stages Theatre Group presents "Something Old, Something New" at the Lionel Wendt from 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> July 2014, part supported by NTT. The Stages Theatre Group has for over a decade been pushing the boundaries of Sri Lankan theatre through a number of original plays. This July STG will together two plays: (1) **Dasa Mallige Bangalawa**, an award winning play directed by Ruwan Malith Peiris and Kalana Gunasekera which addresses deep seated and ancient issues of gender and (2) **Walking path**, a play without words, scripted by Ruwanthie de Chickera and directed by Jayampathi Guruge which addresses the current and fascinating subculture of the Walking Path in post-war Sri Lanka.