

Quarterly Newsletter 1-2018

Worldwide, the year 2018 has experienced a quite turbulent start. With all the turmoil that many people are facing it is good to know that another batch of kantharis has returned home to make a positive impact in their communities.

The jump

"Run, jump and swim" this is the title of act 5, the start of the participant's future. When we think of last December, we remember that tears and happiness went hand in hand. Tears because we had to say goodbye to the 23 participants with whom we have intensively worked for 7 months. Happiness, because all of the freshly trained kantharis returned home to start their social ventures.

Now they might face the most exciting time of their initiatives. They will need to identify the right board-members, draft a constitution, arrange registration, set up their office, interact with their future beneficiaries, detect their target group, getting their program started, informing the media and, of course, very important, raise funds. Since most of our participants are bread winners in their families, we want to give them the financial support and with this the adequate time to intensively search and approach the right supporters and future partners. Therefore we offer a stipend and mentorship for the first 5 months with the condition that foundations and individual donors are approached proactively. So far we are glad to announce that all participants have started with the above mentioned tasks and we are hopeful that soon many people will benefit from their actions. The dream speeches of the 2017 kanthari batch are uploaded to the YouTube [kanthariTV channel](#)

Here a few examples of projects that are started up by 2017 kanthari participants:

Thailand:

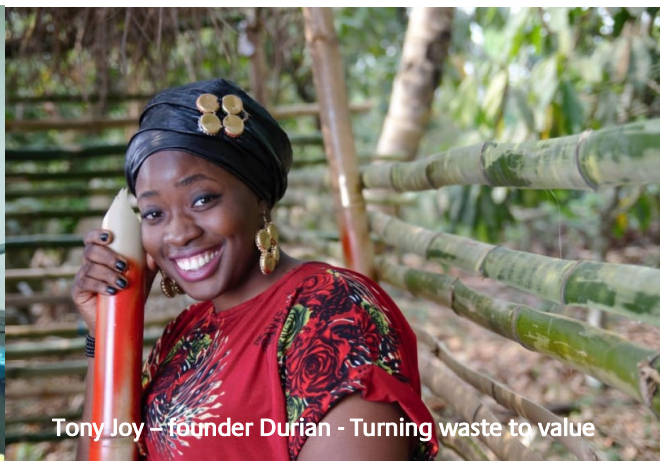
Our 3 Thai participants, the founders of [Happy Hub](#), Phorntip Limpichaisopon, [Hypper](#), Pannavat Veeraburion and [PakDone](#), Manita Vivatsethachai, were invited for an interview in DJ's Sangiem, a one hour radio show.

It was a great opportunity to present what their social ventures are all about:

- Happy Hub sees a Bangkok where marginalized people who live the Chumchon (slum) overcome social disparity, poverty and lead happy, healthy and fulfilled lives.
- Hypper provides a friendly environment for children and teenagers with hyper-activity, hyper-creativity and those with ADHD
- and Pakdone creates an alternative waste management system that are driven by the people for the people.

Nigeria: [Durian](#) – Tony Joy

"Imagine a space where children in rural communities come together to learn! Reading, writing and turning waste materials into musical instruments. Imagine a 9-year-old boy playing drums he made out of waste jerry cans! This is exactly what the rural children's learning space is all about." Every Saturday's Tony and her team meet with children of the Imafon community, a rural forgotten





place, giving the children of poor farmer's families an open space to explore their creativity. The dream of Durian is to see empowered rural communities that transform their local waste (resources) into means of livelihood. One of the ways to achieve this is to engage the children and to detect future leaders and entrepreneurs.

Lebanon: [Mesewat](#) (Share the little thing you have) – Rahel Zageye

Rahel Zageye was 18 years old when she left Ethiopia to seek a job in the Middle East. Little did she know that that this journey was going to become a terrible nightmare. As a domestic migrant worker she has experienced exploitation, being bullied, being beaten and betrayed and even rape. However, Rahel never surrendered. She turned all her experiences into a film script and later into a movie. Her organisation Mesewat takes care of those migrant workers who need legal or psychological support. Often they are denied the most basic human rights. Their passports are taken away and salaries are often not paid. In February Mesewat organised a picnic in the mountains for migrant domestic workers. 150 persons were taken to the mountains to cook in the snow and to have a happy time away from the daily tough routines.

The tenth generation

It seems like yesterday, when we welcomed the first students in our campus, that, back then was still a half construction site. We remember walking into the auditorium that was filled with laughter. There were Julian and Eric from Ghana in suits and polished shoes and Hussni from Saudi Arabia in a sheik outfit. Nine generations have experienced the kanthari journey ever since and this year we will have the tenth anniversary. This generation will start in May. So far, we have received over 300 applications from more than 50 countries. Since the measurement of success is not the amount of people we train but the amount of participants who start projects, we have to select the most suitable applicants. We wish to start this year's course with app 22 to 25 participants.

Alumnis in action

Nepal: [prayatna nepal](#), Sarita Lamichhane

Sarita, a blind kanthari from 2014, started an organisation that focuses on the empowerment of blind and partially sighted women. She herself had experienced harassment and thus she wants to empower her peers to fight back. Prayatna Nepal conducted a five days FIGHT BACK TRAINING for visually impaired women. Fight back is a sexual violence risk reduction education program for women and girls which builds their mental, vocal and physical skills to effectively deal with the risk of sexual violence. The trainees learnt how to identify high risk zones, how to deal with fear, how to use voice as a weapon, various sexual harassment prevention and mitigation strategies and easy to remember hard to forget self-defense techniques. They also learnt how to use their white cane as an improvised weapon.

India: [Global Network for Equality](#) - GNE – Raja KR

"It's easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." - Raja KR

Raja KR, founder of GNE returned to kanthari for a visit. Raja, a 2011 kanthari graduates has been working for more than 5 years on a unique task that many would shy away from. He became a spokesperson of children whose mothers are dead and whose fathers are behind bars, having murdered their wives. The real victims are the children who have lost both parents and who are now



stigmatized by their surroundings. His main aim is To Reduce Re-offending Rate in India. Raja works with children of prisoners as well as with prisoners to provide a better future for each of them. Learn more about his amazing work at: <http://gnequality.org/>

India: [Yurt on wheels](#) – John Peter

John Peter, founder of Yurt on wheels works with children of the nomadic and marginalized Narikuravar community. John is actively involved in the community and bringing about changes in the lives of many children. Various interactive activities in the after school program brings down the rate of school drop-outs and encourages girls to continue their studies after reaching their puberty, thereby preventing child marriages.

Cameroon: [Enkindle Cameroon](#) - Teh Francis

Enkindle Cameroon's vision is a Cameroon where rural women are famous for being financially independent to solve their own problems. Through 'hands-on' business training the women acquired skill such as hair dressing, tailoring, knitting, marketing, designing, and use of a computer. On the 6th of January 2018 the graduation ceremony was held for the computer training. Additionally, underprivileged young single mothers were trained by graduates. They are then connected to donors and some of them are ready to fund the setting up of individual businesses.

Alumni networks around the globe

In March in three locations around the globe; East Africa, South Africa/Zimbabwe and India, alumnis of 9 different generations met to exchange knowledge, ways to overcome challenges and to discuss collaboration activities. In all three gatherings, many meet for the first time, yet their life and experiences in kanthari built a strong understanding of belonging to a group that believes in big dreams to create positive social change.

Centre for Innovation in Science and Social Action meeting at kanthari

kanthari offered the use of its campus to CISSA India for a meeting with Scientists, Social activists and Farmers to discuss on possible ways to conserve Vellayani lake. This meeting, part of the World wet lands day program was presided by Dr P.Hari Narayanan, Senior Scientist KSCSTE and inaugurated by the President of Kalliyoor Grama Panchayath Smt Jaya Lakshmi. kanthari Supports all efforts to protect our Wet lands and our lake.

Renew, redo and restoration

During the beginning of each year, the curriculum, the campus and all facilities receive a new 'dress'. Through an intensive study of evaluations, the catalyst team has decided to make some minor and some major changes in the journey. Act 3 will be completely renewed. This year the participants will exhibit their dreams at a public event with interactive stalls, films and posters within Trivandrum. Before the new participants arrive, the campus is always renovated.

- The filter of the grey water treatment plant has been renewed.
- Currently, next to the duck- and fish pond, a bamboo grove is created. This is a space, surrounded by water, it has a great Lakeview, a refreshing breeze and it is quiet enough to serve as an outdoor classroom.
- In a few weeks from now, smells of freshly baked bread and cookies will be detected around the

auditorium. An addition to the kitchen is under construction that will function as a bakery. Jibin, our new chef, is a trained baker who will soon provide healthy bread.

Recognition:

During the DISHA Career Queen Summit 2018 in Cochin, well known actress Parvathy received the Bold and Beautiful Queen Award and kanthari was honored with the "Empowering Award". The event was organized by Prayaana that offers an exclusive finishing school and career support mission for women who wish to make an impact in the world.

- The kanthari team congratulates Sristi KC from Nepal, a kanthari graduate from 2012, with the 'WOW Women Achievers award 2018' social activism category.

kanthari in the media

- On the third of March 2018, an article about kanthari with the title [Sea Change](#) was published in the Deccan Herald

- A multi-page article (in Malayalam) was published in the Mathrubhumi magazine in February.

Speaking

04-FEB-2018: "The Things I see in my head" was the subject that Mathraboomi wanted us to speak about at the Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters. In front of a highly interested and welcoming audience we shared our personal journeys from Europe to Tibet and from there to Kerala. The talk was illustrated with several short films and an excerpt of the book "My Path Leads To Tibet".

24-02-2018 The Travancore National School celebrated the 'Passing the light of learning' ceremony. The 12th standard students received a warm sent off. Director Sandhya Prajin, Chairman Prajin babu, all teachers and staff are making a huge difference, not only by creating awareness in society regarding the difficulties of learning disabled children, but also by providing a suitable learning platform for the same. We were invited and delivered a speech to wish the students success with their next studies.

25-02-2018 The Barrier Free International Kite Festival on Kovalam beach, organised by Helping Hands, an organisation working for the welfare of autistic children, was a great success. As many as 400 differently-abled children, youth and adults including autistic and paraplegics from TRV city experienced the joy of flying kites on the beach. In the evening the audience was addressed by a.o. Shashi Tharoor, Nipun Malhotra, Madhusudan Srinivasan, and by us.

03-MAR-2018: Niveditha Nair, a student of Sree Chitra Tirunal college, invited us to address female engineering students about dreams, adventure, taking a risk and living life to the fullest. To demonstrate how to embrace challenges, a video was shown by embrace the change, an organisation, founded by Amrita Gyawali, a 2016 kanthari graduate from Nepal. Check out this inspiring [video](#)

03-MAR-2018: kanthari was invited to deliver a key-note speech at the International Conference on Entrepreneurship and Technology (i-CET 2018) in Hyderabad.

04-MAR-2018: As long term followers of the Laurie baker architecture and philosophy, kanthari representatives spoke at a panel during the centenary celebration in Trivandrum.

Dear friends and supporters and partners,

The tenth kanthari leadership training course will start soon. We are extremely grateful to all who have made it possible to reach to this point. On behalf of all of our participants and colleagues, we say THANK YOU VERY MUCH for your ongoing interest and support.

Also we thank you for sharing this newsletter within your network.

We wish you a wonderful spring time! With very best regards,

The entire kanthari team, sabriye and paul

Do you want to support the work of bwb-kanthari?

You can do that [here](#) – THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

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