



## Quarterly Newsletter 1-2020

"Everyone has two lives. The second starts when you realize you only have one." - Confucius

This quote from Confucius gets (a new) momentum with the Corona crisis. Sabriye and I are in Kerala, India where, since March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, there has been a 21-day national lockdown that affects 1.3 Billion people. What immediately struck us is that we no longer heard airplanes, the entire air traffic (international and national) has been shut down. The entire public transport system, trains, metro, buses is also shut down. It is a surreal situation.

Every day we are in touch with many of the 226 kanthari alumni who are committed to social causes in 48 different countries worldwide, and guess what, there is only 1 topic of discussion: Corona. Corona has no borders, it is in Europe, Asia, Africa, South, Central and North America, Australia, yes, even on small islands in the Pacific. Many kantharis had to stop their regular activities due to lockdowns, they are now active with interventions in regards to Covid-19

Faruk Musema from Gulu, Northern Uganda has begun to familiarize the hearing impaired in his community with the WHO safety regulations to fight Corona. Due to a gap in communication, the hearing impaired are often excluded of mainstream information.

Robert Malunda is blind, lives in a slum in Bulawayo in Zimbabwe where he trains blind people in mobility, orientation techniques and IT. He had to laugh about the WHO's recommendations, "washing hands with soap for 20 seconds several times a day" ... how should we do that? not only are we short of water, but soap is a luxury item that hardly anyone can afford here.

Akhilesh lives in the Sanjay slums in Delhi. "50,000 people live in this relatively small slum. Social distancing? how should that work? I live with two brothers in a 14 m2 room and then we have it 'spacious'. There are families with 8 children who have to share a similar sized space."

Marlyse is a kanthari from Cameroon. A civil war between the French-speaking and English-speaking population has been ongoing for years. Good news is that the fighting has diminished due to Corona. There is now a common enemy. In a telephone conversation, Marlyse said that she has



Physical distancing while shopping in India



The Corona Crisis is everywhere. (Zimbabwe)

entered self-isolation, this time not to avoid bullets but to prevent possible infection of the Corona virus.

Here in Kerala, we have postponed the the new course that was supposed to begin in May. New date? Unknown. We can only start if safety can be guaranteed for participants and all colleagues. However, we are having critical weeks ahead of us. In India there are app 170 million daily wage workers who earn between 1,5 and 2,5 Euros per day. The lockdown results in no work, so no money, no food, that's their reality. Therefore, they are not so much concerned about the Corona virus, they are more afraid of dying because of starvation. The world is literally upside down. We use the 21-day lockdown period to feature short messages and stories from our graduates. Here we learn how kantharis cope with the current challenges and what they do to mitigate regarding the Corona pandemic. The posts can be found at [www.facebook.com/kantharis](https://www.facebook.com/kantharis) and also we started a daily Blog: <https://www.kanthari.org/coronablog/>

You have already noticed; this quarterly newsletter is different. Why? Because suddenly we have ended up in a different reality. Our team is working hard to raise funds so that we can timely support kanthari change makers who are now focusing on activities to stop the spread of the Corona Virus. We are also helping those who face existential needs. We know that the situation is very serious everywhere and many people need help. But we would still like to ask for your support. Any amount helps. [Please donate here](#). THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

**"Everyone has two lives. The second starts when you realize you only have one. "**

Now is the time to think about what we can and want to do with this one life that we have. Let's think about how we can create a more just world, a world 2.0, a world where EVERYONE counts!

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*Thank you for your support and for sharing this newsletter with family, friends, colleagues and within your network!*

*We wish you a lot of strength and we hope that this crisis will be over soon enough.  
Please take good care, stay safe and stay healthy!*

*with very best regards from Kerala, India,*

*sabriye and paul*

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

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

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