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## 2011 Review

By Dian Alyan

As we look back at the last 12 months, we continue to feel inspired by the generosity of our supporters and the accomplishments of our children. There is so much good news to share but let me focus on some major highlights:

1. Our oldest girl, Nur Samawi will be graduating from College on Dec 18th. We will publish her story and pictures from the graduation ceremony in our next Newsletter.

2. We solidify our partnership with Microsoft as Givelight was given access to use their theatre at the store in Valley Fair for meetings, presentation and "Teach A Class" project.

3. We did groundbreaking Ceremony in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Both homes are being build on donated land with target completion in Dec 2012 for Sri Lanka and June 2013 for Bangladesh.

4. A New York based consulting firm decided to donate over \$14,000 of their fees to Givelight.

5. Four of our orphans in Aceh are now in College and are doing well academically. We can not wait for the day they graduate and become a contributing member of society.

**We thank you all for your generosity and for continuing to share our dream. Please remember our children and Givelight as you make your final contribution in 2011.**

With gratitude and prayer,

Dian Alyan (President) & The Givelight Family.

## Trip to Indonesia

By Sh. Aleadden Bakri

On a recent trip abroad, I visited the Give Light orphanage that is situated in the mountains of Takengon in the region of Banda Aceh, where the tsunami hit worst in 2004. I took my ten-year-old son with me; it was a life-changing experience for both of us.

When the tsunami hit Indonesia and other countries in 2004, I was very sad. I prayed a lot and wanted to help somehow, but I didn't know what I could do. Not long after, I came to know of Give Light, an organization that dedicates itself to the service of orphans. Sister Dian had started Give Light after feeling a similar need to help the victims of the tsunami; the only difference being that she lost forty members of her own family to the flood.

Upon landing in Banda Aceh, my son and I first took a tour of the city and visited a museum dedicated to the tsunami, where we viewed photos, videos, and debris from the disaster. It was apparent that the catastrophe was of epic proportions – close to 200,000 people lost their lives in this city alone. Everyone we saw on the street had lost someone they loved to the ocean waves. Interestingly, what helped people to cope with the tragedy was their collective loss; the whole city was like one big funeral



home, except without any outside visitors, only family members mourning together.

On the way, we were informed that the most crucial pass road to Takengon was under construction and would be closed all day except for a few hours. Halfway through our journey, it started raining and we had to stay in a local hotel for the night.

As we drew near the town the following day, we noticed red tropical flowers growing on either side of the road. The city lies on the shores of a fresh water lake, surrounded by mountains on both sides. What a sight! It felt as though we were in Switzerland rather than Indonesia. The two weeks we spent in this town were surreal, serene and out of this world.



I felt like I had opened a fictional novel and entered a magical land – a novel that begins, "Once upon time, there was a town in the hills, with beautiful, simple, generous people. Everyone knew everyone else, and people could be seen smiling and talking all the time. The weather there was always beautiful..." Yes, indeed it was, and I lived in this beautiful setting with thirty-six orphans in a beautiful building on the lake, right under the mountains.

While on the way to the orphanage, I had been expecting to encounter hot weather

**Read more:** <http://www.givelight.org/projects/inspiration.htm#sheikh>