

N E W S L E T T E R

January 2017

**Care-Co (Rodrigues) & The Trevor Huddleston Association for the Disabled –Rodrigues
(Gonzague Pierre-Louis Special Learning Centre)**

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Greetings for year 2017.

I have noted a sudden and excessive arrival rate into my Mailbox of SPAM & SCAM mails ranging from offers for me to purchase Boilers from someone in Sharjah to Scented Firewood from France, not counting the news of million dollar wins (that we all get) from non-existent lotteries.

Therefore I am prompted to send off a News letter as this flow of activity on the internet must signal that this is the right time to get busy.

On Monday 9th January we shall certainly be busy here, as the Care-Co Workshop will be re-opening its production and training activities for 2017 and the GPL Centre will also be soon buzzing with the noise of all the children arriving back from the 'summer' & Festive Season vacation.

The first job will be to open up the Bee-hives in our two Model Teaching Apiaries and see if the Honey Flow season is extending into 2017, or whether we shall get a disappointment and find that we shall have to start feeding.

There has been a dearth of nectar sources in some regions of Rodrigues this summer, and many beekeepers have reported poor yields of honey.

We have been mainly satisfied that our beekeepers with disabilities have done quite well and we have been able to harvest Honey for sale and thus somewhat cover the costs of our beekeeping and training courses.

The other source of income for Care-Co to enable us to continue our products development and training of the disabled in income generating activities is CSR.

As mentioned in my last NEWS in November, the 2016 Budget announcement that there are to be some far reaching changes in the way the CSR Funds are collected and distributed to NGO's cast some doubt on our financial resources in this respect (refer previous NEWS).

But I have been assured personally that the government does not have any objection to our approaching individual private companies for CSR Funding, in the same way that we have been doing.

The new CSR Foundation will be set up in early 2017 and the name of the new president (or Chairman) of the foundation has just been announced, and so we look forward to having more information as to how this will work for us in the coming months.

Meanwhile, for me, it is business as usual, and I am sending out the usual information and propositions for funding of our various new and innovative projects as well as our present need for running costs assistance- particularly for the GPL Centre for children with disabilities and learning difficulties.

We are still thankful to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for their continued support in providing part running costs funding for the Centre and to all the private companies that also contribute to make up the financial shortfall.

In this way our services to the disabled can be maintained.

We also received a most welcome contribution to the beekeeping Project from our friends at Merstham Aid in the UK.

Is our work effective? Does it bring about real change – or are all our promises & claims just words only without any real visible progress in our aims to bring the disabled a more normal and healthy standard of life , and ‘alleviate poverty’.

To get the answer to this you should be here at the end of the year when the full remunerations are paid out to all those who are employed in the Care-Co production and a rehabilitation workshop as they take home their wages for December and also their 13th month bonus and reimbursement for all their leaves that were not used up.

This, together with their government pay outs (& bonuses) assures that they can afford most of all of what they need and more.

It is satisfying to see that this mostly meets expectations (although not always!) and assures them a more normal life and ability to construct a more secure and comfortable future.

If only we could expand and do more, it would be better, but we are mostly grateful for the way things are at present.

So we go into 2017 with hope and expectations.
I will keep you in touch with our events and news.

Blessings!

Paul.