



WiTR and friends give a home to 30 railway children

This year Women in Travel Retail set out at their October meeting in Cannes to build additional capacity for a further 30 children at the Brahmaputra Home built by TFWA Care in Guwahati, Assam, working with Lotus Flower Trust.

The poverty and appalling living conditions of the children and their families living next to the busy railway line are heart-breaking. Home for these children is at best a hovel made of old cardboard boxes, tins and rags. There is no electricity, no running water, no toilets, no medical support and no education.

The funds raised through the prize draw and silent auction that was generously supported by many brands and retailers at TFWA's World Conference and Exhibition last week, with a further €1,000 donation from Sunil Tuli, King Power Hong Kong's Managing Director who started life on Assam's tea plantations amounted to €9,347 which left WiTR short on target.

At the Frontier Awards Dinner where WiTR was recognised for its contribution to the industry and in response to an impassioned plea by Gerry Munday, Godiva Chocolatier's CEO Mohamed Elsayed donated a massive €10,000 followed by a further contribution from Frontier with €1,000, plus a further €500 donated by a private contribution the following day enabled WiTR to exceed the target of 20K to €21,947.

"The generosity of many individuals and companies is so very much appreciated, particularly at this tough time for our industry," said Gerry Munday, Furla. "Without Mohamed's stunning gesture, we would have had to scale back our plans but this makes all the difference!"

"The extension to the Brahmaputra Home which already houses 25 children, will give 30 more children a safe home, regular meals and the opportunity to go to school, something that most of us take for granted," said Sarah Branquinho, World Duty Free Group. "The generosity of this industry never fails to amaze me."

Thanks go once again to TFWA for their ongoing support, Follador for the wonderful prosecco which added sparkle to our meeting, and to Rob and his team at QuestExhibits for their help with the logistics.

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Note to Editors:

Lotus Flower Trust is a UK based charity (Reg. no. 1127316) which over the past five years has changed over 2000 children's lives by building homes, schools and skills centres, typically in remote rural areas. Lotus Flower Trust has few overheads - no office premises, no full-time paid staff, so almost all the funds raised go direct to the projects. For more information visit www.lotusflowertrust.org

Women in Travel (WiTR) was established over 6 years ago as a forum for the women in the travel retail industry. It allows us a privileged medium to exchange ideas, and just as importantly to support people in need who we believe would benefit from our help. From year to year we help different groups or communities (from Haiti to India to Sichuan) to help themselves, with a strong focus on children.

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