

PETER MALL

MERT charity's new wave - a group of Sunshine Coast mates who have found the answer to donor fatigue.

They have set up an online clothing business where every item sold raises funds for a school uniform for less fortunate children in Indonesia, Cambodia and Sri Lanka.

This year Smile Clothing raised enough to help 2000 youngsters and it is hoped the idea will grow into a world-wide success.

It began with NAB business banker Soren Mollineux, 25, who said he had developed a strong connection with Indonesia and its people on numerous surf trips.

"I just wanted to help out, really, in particular the kids who grow up with so little. I looked at charitable options, but wanted it to be sustainable," he said. "You can ask people for \$50 for a cause and because Australians are so generous, you will probably get it. But ask them for another \$50 in a few months time and it might be a different story."

"I heard about a US company that sold shoes, with proceeds going to help others and thought it was a great idea. So we decided to do it with clothes."

Mr Mollineux enlisted the help of fellow banker Shaun Denaro, 28, who now lives in Brisbane, and businessman Jesse Kirley, 33, who threw themselves into the cause.



Hearts on sleeves



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Soren Mollineux

Smile Clothing, which has a motto "Give First, Wear Second", was launched this year with a range of men's casual clothing, including boardshorts, walkshorts and T-shirts. A women's line will be available by Christmas.

Mr Mollineux said it was not a not-for-profit organisation, but a socially-conscious business model.

The "one-for-one" promise means that people can buy an item and know that it will also

see a child receive a uniform.

The Smile team arranges for products to be made in the countries helped by sales and visits factories and villages to oversee the clothing drops.

"We have had to chip in quite a bit of our own money so far, but are hoping people will see the merit in what we are doing and the business will expand organically," Mr Mollineux said.

To find out more go to Smileclothing.co.



CHARITY MATES: Shaun Denaro, Soren Mollineux and Jesse Kirley (top) have set up an online clothing company; Soren and Shaun with children during a clothes drop in Tuban, Bali.