



**Project name: Thal Aramba Pre-School, Matara District.**

**Overview.**

The south coast of Sri Lanka, on which the proposed site lies, was hit very hard by the tsunami of 26<sup>th</sup> Dec, 04. The site is in the village of Thal Aramba, part of a continuous line of housing stretching along the south coast. It is situated a kilometre or so from Mirissa, a popular tourist spot and renowned as perhaps the finest beach in Sri Lanka. Mirissa itself was largely protected from the worst effects of the tsunami. However, it is the surrounding villages that took the full force of the tsunami that give the area its charm and character and also provide the manpower and resources for the tourist industry. Investment here, such as this project, will enable the area to continue its recent development into a high quality tourist resort. This is crucial for local people as the principle livelihoods of the area are fishing and tourism, both of which have been very badly hit. A great many of the houses were either damaged or destroyed. Within this village, three private pre-schools were completely destroyed. Two small pre-schools were within a 100m distance of the beach, where the Sri Lankan government has forbidden any new development. There is currently a pre-school on temple grounds still operating. This temple is outside the 100m boundary and was undamaged. However current buildings are ill-equipped and cannot handle the extra children now attending pre-school. Many children are being turned away and therefore unable to continue their pre-school education.



## **Project Objectives**

To build a fully functioning pre-school for up to 135 children in the Thal Aramba area. The project will both replace and improve upon pre-tsunami facilities. We intend this pre-school to provide a permanent place of learning and support for the children of the area.

- To replace the damaged pre-schools which cannot be re-built on their original sites.
- To provide a safe environment for quality early years learning.
- To ensure a quality place of learning and support for the long term, giving some form of continuity to a damaged community.
- To complement the development of long term facilities that match the long term development of the area as a tourist destination.
- To improve the standards of facilities currently available.

## **Benefits**

Provision of high level facilities to local children; a safe comfortable working environment in which to learn and develop.

- A pre-school provides employment for local women
- It provides crucial support for parents. It provides a safe environment in which they can feel comfortable leaving their children while they get on with their daily tasks. It makes reversion to work more practical especially for the men left widowed by the tsunami.
- As a project supported by the travel industry – local people see tangible benefits from the travel industry in a practical way, even if they do not themselves directly benefit from tourist related work. In terms of local politics and relations, this is potentially very important.
- Will provide up to 135 children with quality pre-school learning facilities.

## **Technicalities**

The land for this pre-school is being donated by the temple, Siri Mihindu. While the ownership of the land will continue to reside with the temple, a document is being drawn up between the monks and the local provincial council, guaranteeing the use of the land and site for a pre-school in perpetuity. The area has an existing play area which we hope to upgrade. Pre-schools in Sri Lanka are privately run and administered. The contribution paid by children (around £1 a month) is enough to pay the salaries of teachers and provide some basic up keep of facilities and resources. Long term investment in extra facilities and resources will be very welcome as this system, in what is a very poor area, provides only a basic living and facilities.

## **Details:**

Building:

Preliminary Plan

Expected number of students upon opening:

60

Planned capacity allowing for expansion:

135

Number of square feet required per child minimum	20
Space required square feet	2700
Planned Foot print 29 ft by 95 ft.	2755

We have a plan drawn up and a costing done by Senani Construction Limited as recommended to us by “Jetwings”. They have priced the building as follows.

Total:	4.13 Million rupees
Based on 1:187 exchange rate	£22,085
Plus VAT of 15%	£3313
Total	£25,398

Once the contract is signed, this price is fixed.

#### Structure to include

- Separate office.
- Records room.
- One stage area, large enough to be used as a class room.
- One large teaching area, 40x18, which could be partitioned to make two classrooms.
- Brick/Concrete/Steel construction.
- Tiled roof.
- Tiled floors.
- Glazed windows and fanlights.
- 3 toilets and a washing area.
- Indoor playing area and sand pit.
- Covered veranda
- Timber doors, window and finish.
- Teak Wood ceiling finish.

#### Interior.

The existing pre-school has basic facilities for 60 children.

We would hope to upgrade these facilities and provide decent pre-school equipment for 135 children. This includes of course, tables, chairs and sinks. We also intend to provide play and learning materials of as high a standard as possible (see below). It would make sense to spread this money over a period of at least two years, providing for regular update and upkeep of the available materials.

We have also budgeted for the provision of an outside play-area.

Lastly, we also intend to provide provision for allocating “free places” within the pre-school, to encourage children who do not currently attend. However, due to the administration needed, we will offer this for one year only. This will in itself ensure that the pre-school teachers receive an adequate salary in these months immediately post-tsunami.

The two pre-school teachers currently running the pre-school have not been paid for 4 months since the tsunami. We have made arrangements to backdate their pay a month and will continue to pay their salary for 3 months. After this time the position will be reviewed, as the pre-school must start to function independently again, as soon as possible.

Until we got the go-ahead for this project we had not been able to attain any kind of realistic budget for costing the above. A large amount of research is needed for this. Local estimates are that it could be done for £3000.

To allow for a higher standard than currently exists we feel that more money would be preferable.

Interior, furnishings and equipment budget.	£5000
Special assistance budget:	£1000

Administration budget.

Wages:	£150
Travel and administration costs:	£400

Previous experiences of regeneration projects of this nature have shown us that it is very important to work within existing conditions. While we intend to ensure that this building is high quality; an improvement on what they had before, it must also be in keeping with local standards. We do not want to create a local imbalance by developing a building far better than any of the pre-schools around it. This could provoke jealousy and bitterness. It also needs to be maintained locally and we have to bear this in mind during construction. This will not be an educational centre of excellence by European standards, but will be a building of high quality by local standards, tailored to suit the needs of local people.

Based on all of this, we have made a provisional estimation of **£30,998**.

### **Project Delivery**

The project will be overseen and delivered by 'Aid Sri Lanka'.

'Aid Sri Lanka' will be responsible for handling funds, overall management and completion of the project. Aid Sri Lanka will endeavour to ensure that the project is able to continue in the long term providing quality pre-school education for children of the area. They will set up and work closely with a trust to provide for continued administration of the pre-school.

### **Day To Day Management of the project.**

Aid Sri Lanka' has recently employed a full time development worker on a six month contract. She will oversee this project. She has great experience in development work and is well aware of the issues involved. In particular she will liaise with Senani Construction Limited, checking on progress and communicating any issues that arise to Travel Aid-50, PATA and Aid Sri Lanka. She will oversee the

purchase of materials and will initiate the trust that we intend to set up to support and protect the pre-school in the future.

Where possible, labour will be sourced locally. In the case of unskilled labour, provision has been made to employ Thal Aramba people on a rotational basis. Senani Construction Limited is based on the south coast and the foreman lives only a few kilometres along the coast.

### **Technical Delivery.**

We have every faith in the ability of Senani Construction Limited to produce a building of the highest local standards and quality. They have been given a brief to ensure the building is in keeping with the surrounding environment and in particular the temple in which grounds it will reside.

### **Contacts**

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