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UN HABITAT

Sustainable Resettlement through Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in Mannar District, Sri Lanka.

Funded by	: Government of Japan
Implemented by	: United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
Partners	: Ministry of Education, Community Based Organizations, Parents and Teachers Associations and Government officials in the Mannar District
Budget	: USD 4.2 million (Japanese Yen 507 million)
Locations	: Mannar District
Duration	: 30 months (April 2015 – September 2017)



Background

During the conflict in Sri Lanka, communities in Mannar District were displaced between 1990 and 2007 and were resettled in their places of origin during 2009/2010. Despite housing reconstruction and rehabilitation of basic community infrastructure, there are many outstanding basic services and infrastructure needs in the district. Educational facilities are particularly inadequate with schoolchildren following classes outdoors or in temporary buildings without proper sanitary facilities, teaching materials or facilities for extracurricular activities. This affects the level of learning of the schoolchildren, which in turn limits their social opportunities and affects future employment opportunities. The absence of residential facilities for teachers has also resulted in a shortage of qualified teachers who are willing to undertake appointments to the area. The poor educational environment has resulted in lower teaching standards and academic performance compared to other areas in Sri Lanka.

The lack of access to education facilities keeps people trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty and affects people's decision to return to their places of origin after displacement. Marginalised children tend to suffer the most from inadequate schooling.

The Project

This project will address the needs within the learning environment of 15 schools in Mannar district, including the construction of primary and secondary school buildings, teachers' quarters and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities for school children. It will benefit over 10,000 returnees including 5,500 school children.

Objective

To contribute to the sustainable rehabilitation and reconstruction of conflict affected people in the Mannar District, Northern Province, Sri Lanka through the provision of an improved educational environment.



Project Approach

UN-Habitat's methodology for sustainable recovery from disasters, the "People's Process" model, will be adopted to implement this project. This process involves mobilizing the target group into an integrated community. The project interventions will be developed at Community Action Planning (CAP) workshops where the community members participate in the decision making process. Un-Habitat will contract with the beneficiaries using community contracts (community implementation agreements), thereby creating ownership and cost effectiveness in the assets. Physical works will be carried out by CBOs, with technical input from UN-Habitat.

Complex work beyond the skills of the local community will be contracted out by the CBOs to small local contractors through the standard bidding process, with the community and technical staff of UN-Habitat responsible for supervising the implementation.

UN-Habitat will partner with a specialist Japanese NGO to undertake value added trainings for women's capacity building as well as the private sector for the introduction of innovative construction material.

Expected outcomes of the project

- Improved access to better learning space and environment for school children and teaching space and environment for teachers.
- Improved access to improved health and sanitation conditions for children and teachers.
- Improved quality of teaching to facilitate children's learning.
- Sustainability of project interventions.

Key Outputs of the project

- Construction of cost-effective, eco-friendly learning spaces in 15 schools.
- Improvement of WASH facilities in 15 schools.
- Installation of wells and water storage facilities in 15 schools.
- Construction of teachers' quarters in 07 schools.
- Training of teachers in 15 schools.
- Construction training programmes.
- Training of children, parents, teachers, community members and Government officials on school maintenance and management.
- Fostering ownership of completed schools and educational facilities.



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