

Life After War—Children and Young People, Sri Lanka



Project Summary

In Ampara, Trincolamee and Batticaloa, post-conflict areas of Eastern Sri Lanka, families are struggling to recover after 3 decades of civil war and the last tidal wave natural disaster. Infrastructure and the socio economic fabric of the area has been destroyed.

Children and young people have been the most affected having largely missed their education and other life skills. The project will target 4,000 vulnerable children and youths, including orphan bread winners, young mothers and disabled youths with interventions to prevent exploitation from hazardous child labour, commercial sexual exploitation and drug trafficking by providing food security through livelihoods training. This includes youths stigmatised and excluded due to forced

involvement in the war. Reports indicate that the LTTE and EPDP reputedly forced every family to give at least one child to their forces or forcibly kidnapped them.

Needs Assessment

The need for interventions was established through assessment by our partner organisation Business Creations (BCG) working at grass roots level. Methods used to establish need included focus groups, community consultation and key informant interviews. It included discussion with stakeholders, evaluation of current service provision from other organisations and market assessment. 337 children were involved in initial consultation.

Project Aims

- ⇒ Transition children and young people out of hazardous work or risk of trafficking and prostitution.
- ⇒ Inform children and young people of their rights including right to education.
- ⇒ Provide technical skills training for employment or self employment.
- ⇒ Identify children at risk of entering hazardous employment and provide interventions.

Project Activities

The project will target 4000 vulnerable children and youths in the 10 poorest divisions in Ampara, Batticaloa and Trincomallee districts. Children from the poorest families, orphan bread winners, young mothers, stigmatised youths and young people with disabilities will be identified for support. Peer support groups will be formed to facilitate raising rights awareness and provide skills training. Training will be provided to develop safe and lasting livelihoods as well as access to credit and markets. Health will be improved through raising awareness of good hygiene practices. 35 self reliant, community based organisations will support young people to raise their voice and access their rights. The project will work with schools, government and private sector organisations to build understanding of child protection and all project staff will sign up to child protection policy.

Project Outcomes

 By the end of the 3 year project

4000 vulnerable children and youths will have:

- ⇒ Improved health and living conditions.
- ⇒ Increased influence in decision making.
- ⇒ Better protection from abuse and exploitation.
- ⇒ Safe, sustainable livelihoods including access to training, credit and markets.
- ⇒ 2,400 families of vulnerable children will have increased incomes by 25% to address poverty.
- ⇒ Reduced stigmatisation and effective reintegration for abused children.

Evaluation APT has an excellent track record of project monitoring and evaluation conducting regular field visits, mid-term reviews and an independent external evaluation where progress is monitored against objectives with qualitative and quantitative data. Financial management includes quarterly reviews with funds released in stages and financial returns from overseas partners checked by our fully qualified accountant.

Partners Our partners in this project are Business Creations Guarantee LTD (BCG) founded in 2002 who take responsibility for day to day management following plans agreed with APT. BCG has a wealth of experience and previously completed a 5 year project with APT. Comic Relief are our major funders but we still need to raise £9,041.