



These photos from the Manmunai West, Batticaloa District, show the building that will be redeveloped to house the new School Technology Centre with some of the students.

Investment Proposal

Project Name: School Technology Centre, Batticaloa, Sri Lanka,

Project location: Manmunai West, Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka

Area Overview

Batticaloa sits on the east coast of Sri Lanka. During the 25 year civil war many residents of Batticaloa were displaced or detained in Government camps, returning to their villages to find their homes and livelihoods damaged or destroyed. Additionally, the 2004 tsunami that hit Batticaloa displaced over 27,000 people. Many children were orphaned, property and crops destroyed with the loss of life affecting thousands of families.



More recently (2014), Batticaloa required emergency intervention from ChildFund as they experienced devastating floods and droughts affecting livelihoods and regular incomes. In this region most parents of the children we support are traditional farmers and fishermen, who do not earn a regular monthly income. Both the dry and rainy seasons further hinder livelihoods and what little income they gain during the short period of plenty, is not sufficient to provide for adequate living standards.

Woman stands in front of her parched paddy land in the eastern Batticaloa District, one of Sri Lanka's largest paddy producing regions.

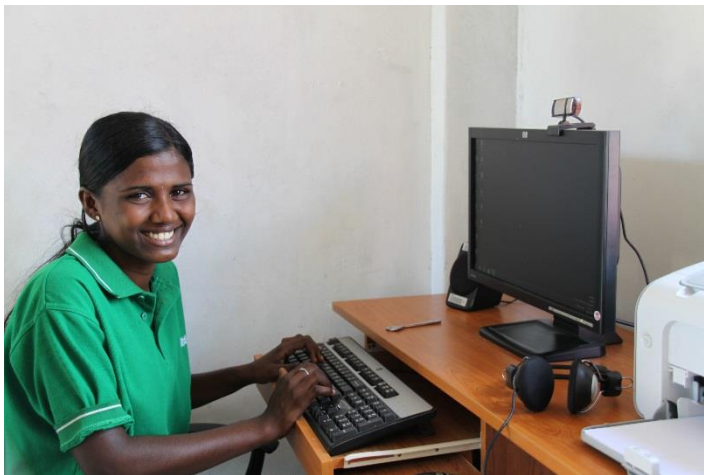
The importance of technology has been emphasised by local governments in Sri Lanka, yet areas like rural Batticaloa fall behind. Manmunai West is a rural sub district of Batticaloa where ChildFund New Zealand focuses all of its work. It was one of the areas most affected by the ethnic conflict which

ended in 2009. Nearly half the population are under 18 years of age, with 14,000 children from grades 1 – 11, accessing 27 schools in the region. This project will focus on one of these schools.

Project Description

This project will set up one school as a technology centre pilot, providing computer infrastructure, training (for teachers and students) and internet access enabling the use of online teaching and learning tools. Technology plays a major role in education around the world but is yet to be realised in rural Batticaloa. Technology will encourage children to be more creative, whilst they develop new skills and a better understanding of how things work.

For the rural poor in the developing world, books, teachers, classrooms, money and time continue to be significant barriers to distance and e-learning. Whilst the availability of, and access to new technologies may have opened up developing economies to the world market, little has been done to help deprived groups gain access to educational opportunities.



Youth using computers in a separate ChildFund New Zealand funded 'Youth Centre' project

In the 21st century, technology and media education provide access for students to a wealth of information and knowledge and is an increasingly significant part of the society children are growing up in. It is therefore important to understand and learn about the equipment and systems that they will come to rely upon in their daily lives. It is through these mediums that the exciting possibility of overcoming cost barriers and the geographical access to learning, will greatly benefit the less fortunate.

This project will engage students between 11-18 years old. The various tasks and activities will seek to compliment other educational objectives for the children, specifically around multi-literacy competencies.

Selected School: Irudducholaimau Vishnu School

The Irudducholaimau Vishnu School has been selected for this project in Manmunai West. Most students travel long distances to attend school. Additionally, this school is lacking many of the teaching and learning resources it needs to take education forward.

Recommended by the Zonal Education Director, this school will be developed as a model school for the area. As a learning hub, this school will be able to train other schools in the future. There are 345 students, which includes 170 females, 175 males and 13 teachers – all eager to learn about the world outside Batticaloa and Sri Lanka through technology.

The school's facilities include:

- Some classrooms (with some classes held under trees)
- Electricity (Only recently made available and still limited)
- Unused building (suitable to be refurbished as technology centre)



Timeline

Up to one year

Project Goal

The goal of the project is: ***To enable children to learn through technology in Irudducholaimau Vishnu School.***

Project Objectives

- 1. Increased access to learning technology**
- 2. Improved media literacy for students**
- 3. Enhanced learning experiences in school**

Project Management

ChildFund Sri Lanka has been working in the Manmunai district for a number of years and has a close relationship with the Department of Education and the proposed school. The organisation has worked in assisting the education system by supporting the students to continue their education and by helping the schools to create a child-friendly teaching and learning environment.

Project Implementation and Monitoring

This project will be implemented and monitored through ChildFund's local partner, the Vavunathivu Development Organisation (VDO). All ChildFund projects are carried out in conjunction with the

community and Government to ensure sustainability. A report will be sent on completion of the project.

Future Potential

This particular project will create a pathway for communication between the Sri Lankan school students and students at King's College using a range of multimedia tools. Following its completion, there is the potential for sharing knowledge between Kings College and Irudducholaimau Vishnu School, as well as the possibility of a school visit to Sri Lanka. Going forward, this project will act as a pilot for other schools in the area to adopt similar strategies and enable children throughout the district to learn through technology.



These photos are from the Manmunai West, Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka where the Technology Centre will be built and equipped. As a pilot programme the long term potential for this district will be invaluable, providing the children of this region to educational opportunities not previously available to them.