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HELA SARANA NEWS LETTER

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Charity No. 1093504

UK Government Approved Charity

58 New houses completed

Hela Sarana is happy to announce that we have so far completed 58 new houses in rural remote villages in the North and East regions of Sri Lanka. When we formed Hela Sarana one of our main aims was to provide *"a roof over the head"* for those who could not afford it. We have achieved this aim by helping many families who lived in makeshift huts facing an uncertain future. Now they have permanent houses. We would like to express our sincere thanks for your support in raising funds for this worthy cause. We have provided not just homes but also clean drinking water (without having to walk miles to fetch it) and decent sanitary facilities, thereby improving health and hygiene.

There is land that farmers could use for cultivation if there is water. Hela Sarana helped to develop an irrigation system (see **News letter Issue: No 5, November 2000- Restoration of Hinguruthanna irrigation tank, cultivation well and tanks at Pulaweli Village agro scheme and others**) and encouraged farmers to cultivate the land, providing them with the opportunity to generate some income of their own. They have sufficient food and decent housing. The children attend school regularly. We achieved our aim of building striving communities at Thanthirimalaya, Nuwaragalathanne and Tampitiya.

* The 59th house is under construction



"They have achieved a great deal and improved their life style so much"

15 Scholarships

Having learnt from previous experiences Hela Sarana has already decided to release more funds to provide 15 scholarships for students with financial difficulties. We have already selected one medical student, one engineering student and are in the process of selecting few more undergraduates. Additionally we have decided to sponsor further students with exceptional achievements throughout their educational programme from grade 1 to GCSE. So far we have allocated £6000 and need funds to provide more scholarships in the future. It is our fervent belief that our patriotic Sri Lankan community will continue to support in achieving our long-term vision of providing a better future for the children in under privileged communities in Sri Lanka.

EDITORIAL

Hela Sarana was founded in July 1996 by a group of friends to help the poor and the needy fellow Sri Lankans in remote villages in Sri Lanka.

Our philosophy is not to give money food or cloths for short-term benefit but to help people themselves to improve their living standard. Some villagers who lived in mud huts are now in secure homes made of bricks and mortar. We are sponsoring income generating schemes such as agricultural / cooperative farms, irrigation tanks, agricultural wells with the involvement of the local community.

Education is the key to a future, free of poverty. We believe that we can build a strong community by educating children at grass root level. Hence we utilize our resources largely on educational projects.

We are well aware of the health needs of a developing country. We have given some help to Badulla General Hospital. and are considering other health related projects for the future.

We select projects and assess them at our regular committee meetings. The projects, which benefit larger community, are given the priority. Many projects are planned to be carried out in stages and funds released according to the progress made. This way we can keep control of the project and get value for money. Administrative costs and other overheads are kept low and often met by committee members dipping in to their own pockets.

We have co-coordinators who operate locally in Sri Lanka. They are accountable for funds sent. Our members regularly visit Sri Lanka to assess the progress of our project.

We collaborate with reputable Sri Lankan organisations such as "Shastrodaya Padanama" and the Badulla "Asarana Sarana Samithiya." and use their local expertise to achieve speedy results in our projects. We have no association with political parties.

We have over 200 members to date and numbers continue to rise. The executive committee meets regularly. Last year we met 8 times. AGM was held in August.

In 2002 the Charity Commission granted us charity status. We hope to use this opportunity to improve our finances by claiming back tax paid on contributions.

Hela Sarana has organised many events not only to raise funds but also to raise the awareness of needs of the poor in Sri Lanka. Many people have given a lot of their time and effort to bring about these events. A concert featuring Pandit Amaradewa was a memorable event among these.

Our work relies on the financial support of the people like you. If you haven't joined us yet, we request you to be a part of those worthy causes by giving a contribution of £5.00 per month by standing order (larger contributions are most welcome), and become a member of Helasarana. Even a small contribution can make a big difference. We have been fortunate also to receive significant contributions from some generous supporters.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has supported us in the past and hope that you would continue to support us in the future. You can be reassured that your contributions will help to improve the lives in Sri Lanka, now and in the future.

40 GCSE students

This is another important project since our first educational programme in Thanthirimalaya. There are many poor students with great potential for higher education but cannot continue due to many reasons. Lack of opportunities, books and sheer poverty are among the reasons that prevent them entering universities (See Newsletter 5, 6 and 7 for more details). At present we have funded extra tuition classes (Science, Mathematics and English) for over 40 GCSE students.



05 University Entrance.

Hela Sarana is very happy to announce that since our involvement in the educational programme, five students have been selected for universities. Most of the other students have passed the exams with excellent grades.

"Help a child build a community"

50-Acre Agricultural Farm

This is another large project that Hela Sarana launched in 2003. The 43 permanently settled families in Thanthirimale had no regular income. Providing shelter alone was not enough. On going 50 acre agriculture project is crucial for the survival of those villagers in the long run. We planned the project to be carried in stages. The first stage of the project started in April 2003

Unfortunately the work was interrupted by heavy monsoon rains, which flooded the entire area. The work re-commenced last September and two cultivation wells were built to collect rainwater.

Hela Sarana is monitoring this pilot project. Development of the remaining 40 acres is penciled in for the future.

Presently 10 families are fully engaged in cultivating cash crops in the first 10 acres of the farmland.



"Give them a promising start in life"

Health and Welfare

The gift of sight



Badulla "Asarana Sarana Samithiya" is a long established voluntary organization in Sri Lanka. We send Rs. 100,000/- to build an extension to the eye department to facilitate corneal grafting to enable some blind people to regain sight.

The project is now complete and patients from a wider area are now benefiting from this unit.



Thalassaemia



"Thalassaemia" is an inherited blood disorder where the patient has an abnormal form of haemoglobin. Those who suffer from this disease often have a short life span. These children need expensive daily treatments and specialised care.

Thalassaemia society in Badulla has been striving to uplift the quality of life of these forgotten children. Hela Sarana donated £500.00 to help build a day center at Badulla General Hospital for these children to have some quality time.



"Your generosity builds healthy community"

Flood relief appeal

A devastating flood in May 2003 destroyed many towns and villages in Sri Lanka including Ratnapura, Galle and Matara. The floods claimed over 500 lives and over 100,000 were made homeless. The most affected were the poor peasants. Hela Sarana released £2000.00 for immediate relief work and sent out an appeal asking for help from fellow Sri Lankans.

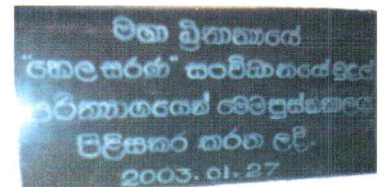


Many Compassionate and generous people responded by sending money, material and clothing. Mr. Weerasinghe, retired food control officer in Ratnapura, voluntarily carried out relief work on behalf of Hela Sarana. Mr. Leelasena, a London based social worker, left UK on 15th of June to oversee the work undertaken by Mr. Weerasinghe. We have been advised that the initial work has been successfully completed.



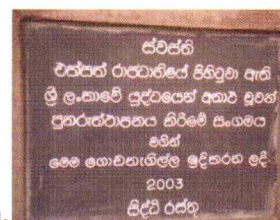
Orphan Sponsorship Appeal

We raised an impressive £ 600.00 at the end of 2002. Funds were sent to "Shastrodaya Padanama" Orphanage at Ratnapura to renovate the library building. The appeal continues to grow and thanks to your support especially the youngsters who spare their pocket money for this worthy cause. When we took up the building work it was only a shell and core. Now it is a complete library with basic essential facilities. It creates reading facilities for over 40 destitute children at the orphanage as well as, local community.



Other Achievements in 2002/3

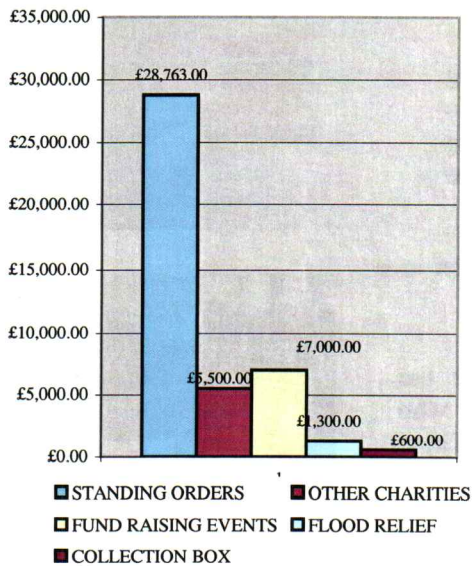
- A new building for the junior school-Ohengama, Polonnaruwa (entire project was funded by our partner charity ' Rehabilitation of War Victims in Sri Lanka').
- Educational materials- above school
- Play ground and play equipment- Kaduruwela Maha Vidyalaya, Polonnaruwa
- Continuation in tuition classes in Science, Maths and English in Thanthirimalaya.



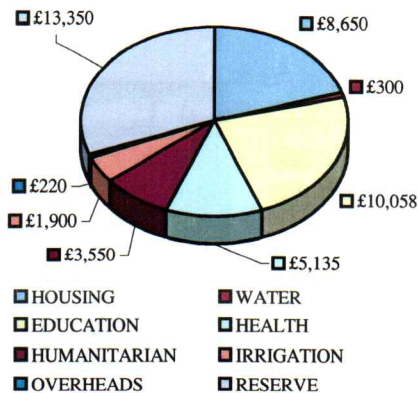
You have done so much..... Thank you .

Financial Details

INCOME



EXPENDITURE



Obituaries

It is with great sadness we announce the passing away of Dr. Malcolm Mawalagedara & Mr. P.B. Liyanage. We extended our heartfelt condolences to their families. Your inspiring dedicated and selfless service to the Sri Lankan Community will be sorely missed.

This organization has lost devoted friends yet your legacy shall always remain with the charity. May they attend *Nibbana*.

Greetings

We extended our sincere and most warmest greetings and best wishes to Mrs Sumana Sellers and Mr. Ananda Panditharatne for a long and happy retirement. May your retirement be filled with good health and peace. The members of this organization express their deepest gratitude for your dedication and continued support for this worthwhile causes.

Proposed Future Projects

- Continuation, monitoring of the first 10 acre farm development, stage 1 of the 50 acre cultivation programme.
- Building of the gravity fed water supply scheme at Gallalla village settlement of flood victims.
- Building of the flood damaged cold-water storage tank at Godigama Vidyalaya.
- Village development & rehabilitation in Vavniya (අවන්තලාව, මුක් 07, පලෙයිපුරුව, රත්නකන්තම) in partnership with charity-Rehabilitation of War Victims in Sri Lanka.
- Continuation of the tuition classes at Thanthirimalaya.
- Launching of scholarship programme for 15 students.
- Flood affected school building project at Matara District.
- Provision of Medical equipments to Karapitya Hospital, Galle.
- Low cost electricity supply to rural villages. In partnership with Perera Development Cooperation, Canada.
- Release of collection box funds to a orphanage in Sri Lanka (project yet to be finalized).

We really value your support.

- The Charity – Rehabilitation of War Victims in Sri Lanka.
- Allco Leasing & Finance limited.
- Stadium Group Plc.
- Logica Limited, London.
- Flood relief team headed by Mrs. Hema Liyanage and Mr. W A Lelasena.

Big Thanks to our dedicated team in Sri Lanka

- Lucky Wijesekera, Hema Karunachandra- Hela Sarana Joint Coordinators
Sepali Sri-Nanmuni, Susil Chandrapala
- **Anuradhapura**
Ven. Thanthirimale Chandrarathana Nayaka Thero
Mr. Bandula Senaratna (Technical officer),
Mr. M. A. K. Bandara (Retied Post master)
- **Ratnapura**
Daya Meehitiya (Retired Civil Engineer)
Mr. K. P. Weerasena (Retired Heath Officer)
- **Pollanaruwa**
Mr. P. G. Mudiyanse (Principal Onegama Vidyalaya)
Mr.M. B. Dissanayaka (Principal Parakrama Samudra Viddalaya)
- **Badulla**
Uva Thalassaemia Association.
Badulla Asarana Sarana Samithiya.

අමර ඩි සර (Amaradewa Concert)



Amaradewa Concert was a huge success. It drew a large crowd of classical music lovers to the Camden Centre by bringing the evening into a spectacular close.

We welcome your comments. Please send your suggestions