



The Content

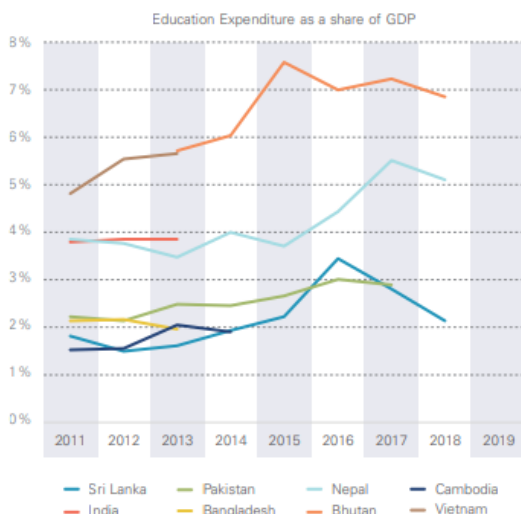
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1. An Introduction to the Project.

Mankind on earth is separated by different geographies, thus in skin complexions, cultures, different levels of the availability of resources, languages, religions, traditions, beliefs, lifestyles etc. resulting in an anomaly in the development of societies. As a result of the societies being developed into different levels in education, discipline, ethical structure and the use of technology, a remarkable gap has been created among different nations walking this planet. So, by today we see across the borders, communities as financially affluent class who enjoy the best facilities in the world while others as middle class worker community and poor or poverty stricken community who enjoy respectively lesser or zero facilities in life.

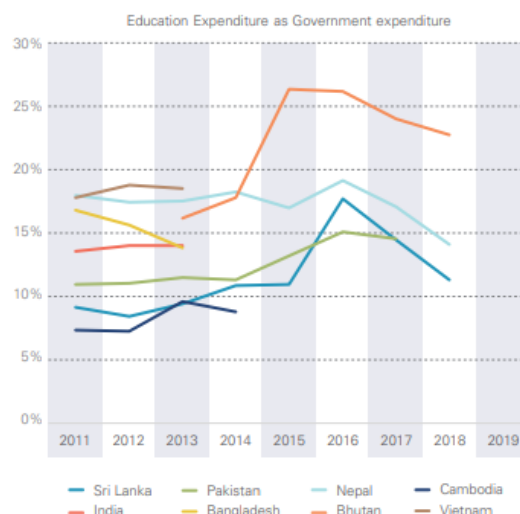
This situation is a bitter and a hard truth as far as Sri Lanka is concerned and this truth is amply testified in the following statistical presentation of the World Bank, World Development Indicator Database.

FIGURE 2 | Sri Lanka's education sector expenditure compared to peers



Source: The World Bank, World Development Indicator database

FIGURE 3 | Sri Lankas education sector expenditure compared to peers



Source: The World Bank, World Development Indicator database

Figure -01

It is imperative that Sri Lanka has to make up her mind that she is among the poor nations in the Asian region. But the fact that Sri Lanka is more or less similar to the lowest – Cambodia (the country that allocates the least amount from the national budget for education in the Asian region) is a dreadful scenario.

Having witnessed this truth among the Sri Lankan society for decades of time, this project implementers, Findex Australia, Australian Partner & ALTEA Association (Aus-Lanka Technological & Educational Aid) Local Partner have witnessed many an instance where resources are set aside in abundance at a developed society like Australia (whenever they are required to for latest versions) where they can be virtually utilized to provide facilities to another unprivileged community like those benefactors in their motherland.

Hence the project implementers have come to think about leveraging these unused resources to the neediest segment of children where they can make use of these resources **to** fulfill their educational needs.

However, by the time they made this resolution to help the needy at large, they had been providing a few laptops and other equipment at their own cost each year since 2012, when they visited Sri Lanka in their vacations.

While being positive of a potential to give birth to such a concept, the project implementers strived at their strength with whatever possible way to draw a line across the borders. And to enable themselves to drain a drop of humanity upon the most deserving group of community in their motherland by way of draining these set aside facilities to them who can't even dream of having such facilities in their life time.

2. The Executive Summary

Hence this project report is prepared in order to bring forward the way how this donation programme happened with post implementation information during the period 2012 to 2018.

In the first place, a brief explanation of the profile of the project implementers, together with how they manifested this interest in helping the poor, needy, deserving children in their homeland of Sri Lanka, have been discussed and the report explains the methodology of providing finance for the whole project including how the project implementers budgeted entire expenses of the process with the minimal cost as the limited fund base had to be managed frugally and with care.

Secondly, it briefs how they managed to select the most deserving community in Sri Lanka and understand “who need what” in this highly underprivileged class of community.

Next, the report goes to explain how the computer equipment and other resources are gathered from Australia and all other formalities to be done in sending them to Sri Lanka. The report further explains the procedure in which the donors organize the fair distribution of the donations to the target community and carry out a review of the success of the donation campaign by receiving accurate feedbacks from the beneficiaries of the donations from different levels of individuals in their community.

At this latter part, this report explains the process in which they managed to monitor the outcomes of the whole donation programme after a certain observation period, i.e. in 06 months and in 12 months to determine the positive results and the evaluation of such results with the expected projections.

Finally, the conclusions of the report go to explain in point form what comes out eventually in the minds of the reader which could in a way be a self-confession that could be applied to any man on the earth.

3. Who need What ?

“The student population in Sri Lanka has come down by 33,529 last year (2020) compared to the previous year, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka reveals”

“Central Bank’s 2021 Annual Report released this week stated that the country’s student population of 4,272,289 in the year 2020 had reduced to 4,238,760 in the year 2021”

Source – Sunday Times, May 08, 2022

The widespread anomaly in the distribution of income existing throughout ages in Sri Lanka has been pushing a massive number of talented communities of children into the corners of unprivileged lot in the society with no attention from the political and powers that be. This situation has woven a long term and unsolveble damage to the fabric of Sri Lanka’s future in which the economic and social repercussions could not be predictable in the years to come. A glimpse of the following chart can give anyone a general idea of the situation of the poverty level among the community of the island.

Item	Poverty Incidence (%)
Industry of employment of household head	
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries	40
Manufacturing	21
Construction	27
Wholesale and retail trade	16
Hotels and restaurants	20
Transport and communications	16
Financial intermediation and real estate	10
Public administration and defense	5
Education	2
Health and social work	7
Miscellaneous labor work	45
Not adequately defined	27
Education level of household head	
No schooling	45
Primary (grades 1–5)	34
Junior secondary (grades 6–9)	21
GCE Ordinary Levels	7
GCE Advanced Levels	2
Graduate	1
Occupation category of household head	
Senior officials and managers	1
Professionals	3
Associate professionals	5
Clerks	5
Sales and service workers	11
Agricultural, forestry, and fisheries workers	34
Craft and related workers	25
Plant and machine operators	16
Elementary occupations	38

Chart-01

Source- Asian Development Bank Regional report on Poverty 2020

The above statistics in a report of a survey headed by the Asian Development Bank in the South Asian Region reveals the industry and the employment of the household heads, the education level of the household heads and the occupation category of the household heads in Sri Lanka in the year 2020 further reveals how poverty has been triggered by the situation in Sri Lanka.

Not having a proper mechanism to identify these problems together with the unending political instability prevailing since she ended up the 30 years long civil war has made up a gloomy future for the future generation of the country.

The above segment of the society mostly in the war stricken rural areas rural districts of the country and also in some suburban areas of the country is totally deprived of receiving a good education with the unavailability of education material, good schooling facilities and the shortage of teachers. The situation has been aggravating due to the huge economic downturn experiencing the country from time to time. Though the syllabus of these government run schools are made up of a standard curriculum which include a good standard of IT knowledge and the latest trends in the field of IT, most of these children have not had a single chance of not only enjoying such facilities but also seeing them in front of their eyes either on a screen or a single virtual machine. Having to choose the neediest among the needy had been an extremely sensitive deal as if to have chosen a very few serious patients among many others by a doctor to administrate a lifesaving drug while the rest are destined to die.

Now let us go back to the Sunday Times news report on May 08th 2022. 33,509 students a year is not a negligible fact for a small country like Sri Lanka. Each year a large number of children attain the age of education (Age 5) and that number is added to this. If this situation is to continue in the years to come, worst outcomes of handing over the future Sri Lanka to an uneducated lot is unavoidable which will be a dreadful nightmare to the whole country.

After considering all the above, a few rounds of discussions were held among the partners in Australia - **Findex Australia** and the **ALTEA Association (Aus-Lanka Technogical & Educational Aid)** and **Mr. Ajith Mario Perera**. Then a decision was made to reach out to help those deserving community of children with donations of IT equipment and internet facilities, utilizing the IT equipment being disposed of in Australia, yet still usable for educational purposes.

So in order to make this concept into an objective and then bring it to a practical scenario, Mr. Ajith Mario Perera, the major hand in this programme began to pioneer the work. Since he has been witnessing this situation ever since he began to work as an expatriate in Australia who has made a number of personal visits to most of these rural places in Sri Lanka whenever he returned to homeland in vacations, it was his strong belief that he could make it happen.

A lot of attention was paid to the facts and careful studies were done with the information gathered from the most reliable sources as to whom these donations should go without anomaly and discrimination.

Figure 1: Percentage of Desktop or Laptop computer owned households by Province

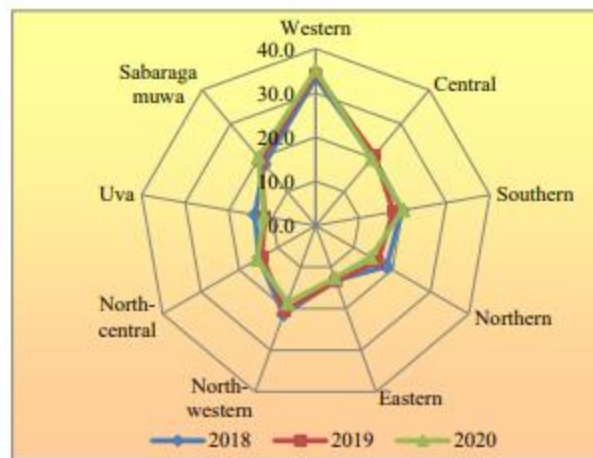


Figure -02

Source – Computer Literacy Statistics -2020 (Annual) , Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka.

According to the above statistics it is obvious that Sabaragamuwa, Uva, Eastern and North Central Provinces of the island are hugely lacking facilities with regard to information technology in comparison to the other 05 provinces that constitute the country. However as a whole, the entire student population throughout the island is generally lacking such facilities except for those in the Western Province which is populated with a relatively affluent community.

3.1 Who do what?

Findex Australia is an Australian based company dealing in business advisory, wealth management, audit, performance consulting, accounting and tax spaces rated as the 5th largest accounting offering in Australia. Findex Australia works with agribusiness, Not-For-Profits, Education, Government, SME and individuals and is committed towards achieving compliance, productivity, sustainable development and overall success in their respective spheres of work.

ALTEA Association (Aus-Lanka Technogical & Educational Aid) is a charity wing. They are a dedicated group of individuals supporting schools from the poorest regions of Sri-Lanka to obtain access to basic Information technology instruments to enable teachers to deliver teaching through the use of technology in order to enhance the students learning experience. (They provide laptops to education department also if they get more than 10 schools from the zone) They are based in Australia comprising a few expatriates from Sri Lanka including Mr. Ajith

Mario Perera who is the founder of this concept. He is a Senior IT personal, having an experience of 16 years in Sri Lanka and another 15 years in Australia.

Mr. Ajith Mario Perera moved to Australia in 2006 for education and presently working at Findex Australia in Melbourne as a senior technology delivery specialist for 16 years as a foreign expatriate with Resident Visa. He was knocked with the idea of leveraging the unused resources of computer hardware lying idling in waste to the most deserving children in his motherland; Sri Lanka, a country far behind the availability of latest versions comparatively. Positively, this idea was initially appreciated by Mr. Mario's seniors in his own company and promoted with the assistance of a few of his friends in Australia. Having learnt about Mr. Mario's concept and this programme, some of his friends from New Zealand, Germany, England etc. have become interested in volunteering to make it a success.

The programme is carried out at the registered address of No 1, Julius Crescent, Noble Park North, VIC, 3174, Australia.

3.2 A Brief History

They started this non-for-profit organization by donating two laptops in 2012. In the following four years, the program continued to donate higher number of laptops, PCs and other accessories to few more schools. However they were able to expand this concept and make their donation to various rural schools, churches, temples and orphanages. By 2017 they expanded the project to a larger scale with a well-managed methodology and proper administration in contrast to the casual donations made before 2017, and also donated projectors in addition to a higher number of laptops, PCs and other accessories. Accordingly, each time the donations were done, the movement particularly paid more attention to the immediate feedback of the recipient and monitored to find out how they made use of the resources in maximizing the proper end use of the resources in order to make sure the initial objective or the purpose is adequately met.

However, it was revealed from these surveys that learning standard of the students had been upgraded particularly with the computer assisted teaching methods though familiarization to resources by the students did not prove much improvement due to the limited availability of IT equipment.

In the next move the programme was able to donate these resources to individual students who were proved to be the neediest among the needy and also to some highly deserving rural schools of Arukgammana Maha Vidyalaya in the district of Kegalle and Maraka Maha Vidyalaya in the district of Matale. In these donations, the programme always made sure that the resources are evenly made available to all the ethnic groups representing multiple religious sectors to ensure that there is no ethnic or religious discrimination for these donations as such inferior thinking should neither have a place in a developed Sri Lanka in future nor in the agenda of the Donation Campaign.

A single dashboard presentation of statistics of the above activities during the period stipulated as above.

Year	Laptops	PCs	Monitors	Keyboards	Mouses	Projectors
2012 -2017	80	25	15	15	15	5
2018	30	15	14	14	14	3
Total	110	40	29	29	29	8

Chart -02

The overall cost of the above activities up to 2017 was personally born by the project implementers and the well-wishers for the donation from time to time. In the year 2018 Findex Australia also contributed.

4. Method of Finance of the Past Donation Programmes

Once it was decided to expand the donation programme to encompass a larger number of deserving children in order to assist their education, a remarkable sum of money was spent on these activities that were also personally born by the project implementers at their personal cost. In the year 2018 Findex Australia also contributed.

The following chart shows the initial expenses incurred on the completed stage of the donation programme in the first few years and how such finances were provided for.

Donation of 80 Laptops, 25 PC's and 5 Projectors in years 2012 to 2017.

Project	Contribution by ALTEA	Contribution by Findex	Mr.Mario Perera's Personal Contribution	Total Expenditure
Donations during 2012 to 2017	Nil	Nil	AUS\$ 3,700.00 Rs. 550,000.00	AUS\$ 3,700.00 Rs. 550,000.00

Chart-03

Above is only an example of one of the projects among many they have implemented so far and how the finances were provided for at the maximum affordable potential Mr. Ajith Mario Perera and other two partners were able to afford within their capacity.

However, it is imperative that they will be requiring much more finances if they are to expand the donation programme for the rest of the other highly deserving children in the following years.

5. How the computer equipment and other resources were gathered from Australia.

Computer equipment's were acquired basically in two methods from Australia. Though we observed many used computer equipment's were set aside in Findex Australia on various occasions, some of such material were either beyond the reusable state or unformattable state that required replacement of parts which is costly and not practical while most others were in good condition. However, all what acquired from the company needed to be formatted and

replenished with new software after removing the earlier programs and the related data for security reasons.

This process had to be handled by responsible hands and involved a remarkable time and cost for proper accomplishment and also needed supervision when such processes were carried out by technical experts in the field. Each time when the equipment's were acquired from the company, a proper disposal procedures and protocols were followed according to the company rules and regulations. These processes were sometimes, time consuming and had to be done without disturbing the routine work flow of the companies as well as that of the project implementers so that all the parties involved in the donation programme are minimally affected with regard to their work productivity.

In the second place, the implementers had to acquire computer equipment for the donation programme from outside parties such as well-wisher individuals / independent donors and from among the implementers themselves in keeping with their CSR budgets. Accordingly the members of ALTEA could make up a contribution of computer equipment with their hard earned, but lavish funds every year from 2012 to 2018.

6. How the Project Implementers Supplied Finances for the Programmes

Year	Courier	Packing	IT Hardware Collection in Australia			Battery	Buy	Send items	Visit schools and	Photos, Video	IT support
	Chargers	Materials	AUS			Replacement	Laptop	from Colombo	handing over	and editing	& Admin
	from Au to Sri	AUS	Transport	Courier	Other	AUS	Adapters	to Schools	Traveling, Food	#NAME?	From SL
	AUS		Cost	Chargers	Expenses		AUS	SL Rupee	& Accommodation		SL Rupee
								SL Rupee			
2018	850.00	50.00	300.00	400.00	100.00		300.00	10,000.00	150,000.00	40,000.00	130,000.00

Contribution made by Findex Australia
Contribution made by Mr. Ajith Mario Perera

Chart -04

Though the above chart-04 shows the entire scenario of expenses, the courier charges from Australia to Sri Lanka, transport cost and the domestic courier charges in Australia amounting to AUS \$ 1,550.00 were born by Findex Australia while the rest of the expenses in Australia of AUS \$ 450.00 and expenses of SLR 330,000.00 in Sri Lanka were personally born by Mr. Ajith Mario Perera as shown in the chart-05 below.

Year	Location	Findex Contribution:	Mario's Personal Contribution	Total in Australian AUS \$	Total in Sri Lankan Rs.
2018	Australia	AUS \$ 1,550.00	AUS \$ 450.00	AUS \$ 2,000.00	
2018	Sri Lanka		Rs. 330,000.00		Rs. 330,000.00

Chart -05

As shown in the above chart the whole process of arranging the donation incurred a remarkable sum of money in addition to the cost of the equipment gathered during the years mentioned. These finances were provided by the members of the ALTEA in various occasions as and when such expenses were due for payment. The members of the ALTEA have come to a resolution that they set aside a fixed amount of money from their monthly earnings towards this cause. In

addition to that the members had to incur intermittent expenses at various point of the processes in their pre-assigned work/roles and such amounts were accounted in a central record that they reviewed in their periodical meetings and upon agreement of all the members the total additional expenditure was equally distributed among the members at the end of the year.

As the donation programme was implemented by a limited number of members who constituted the ALTEA due to the fact that it is entirely a volunteered charity work of the ALTEA, no burden has been inflicted upon any other individual with regard to providing funds for the donation. Due to this reason, the financial burden taken by the members have always been a tough experience a sort of constraint for the members with their limited income levels. However, in spite of the above fact, the members have made it a success during the years referred to above by imposing frugal measures on their personal and domestic expenses.

7. The procedure in which the donors organized the fair distribution of the donations.

When Mr. Ajith Mario Perera visited his homeland, Sri Lanka each year, he used to tour in various parts of the country with his family and with friends. In different occasions, he could have the experience of coming into contact with rural community as a part of his hobby of exploring and learning the different culture of different communities scattered throughout the country. When taking an insight into the lives of such people, Mario was continuously convinced with a major fact that those children in the countryside have amazing talents and thirst for learning but they do not have barely minimum facilities to come up in life due to overwhelming poverty.

In addition to his personal experiences of visiting poverty stricken people in the country, his further studies and information gathered about Sri Lanka's situation by way of various reports on Sri Lanka, he was further convinced about what category of the poor community among lots of others should be selected as his benefactors of donations.

More attention was paid in the selection of the beneficiaries of the donation to cover all the ethnic and religious sectors in consultation with churches, mosques and temples in the areas selected for the programme.

As a result the members of the ALTEA were able to make a fair distribution of the donations to minimize any discrimination to the zero level and the resulting feed backs were obtained from various sections of the people to ensure the same.

However, it has been a critical as well as a crucial task for Mr. Ajith Mario Perera to choose the highly neediest among the needy children in many rural areas for donation of computer equipment. This was a time consuming process to be done while gathering information from various local community sources, village headmen, government agents and independent bodies and reliable individuals and in consultation with the school principals and various other reliable parties. This process was given high priority as the end results of the programme should see no anomaly or discrimination in the delivering the facilities to the neediest of the needy. The methodology that was undertaken to filter the most deserving is put in a simple way in the following flow diagram.

Method of Selection of Most Deserving Segment to Minimize Anomaly & Discrimination

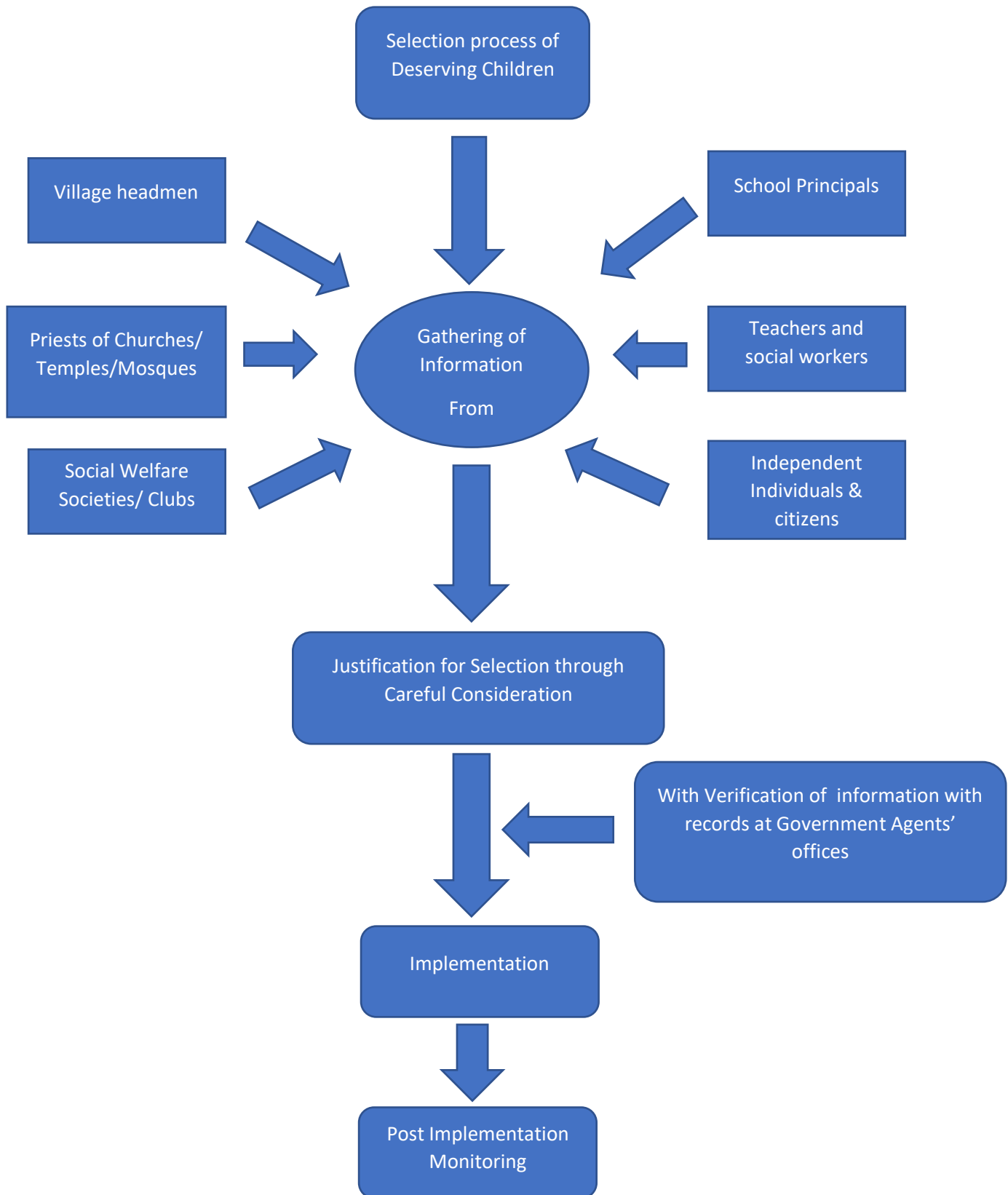


Figure -03

It could probably be a matter of concern or a problem faced with any individual who reads this report that how these project implementers found time to get engaged in organizing, arranging

and selecting most deserving beneficiaries for such a successful project during these years in reference.

When it comes to the virtual situation, it is nothing but the well-organized plan and the proper communication among the members of the ALTEA and Mr. Mario had with and top of all that, the “goal driven mindset” they all had, as a proof of which the following chart gives a general idea of the man hours they spent for this worthy cause.

Period of Donation	Man Hours Spent
From 2012 to 2017	Not less than 2000 Man hours
2018	Not less than 1000 Man hours

Chart - 06

Most importantly, it should be mentioned Mr. Mario and the members of ALTEA have spent these man hours without affecting their routine duties in places they work and nor to the activities of their day-to-day life.

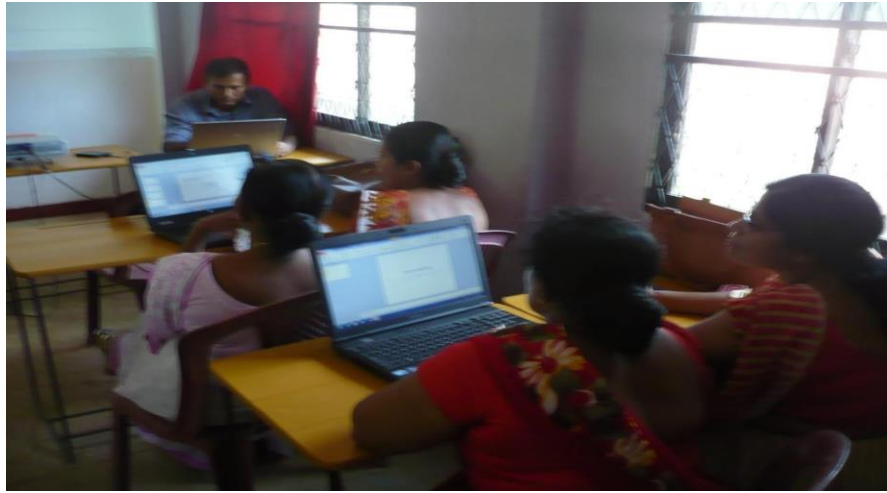
8. Donation Programme Implemented in 2018

I. Arukgammana Maha Vidyalaya in the district of Kegalle

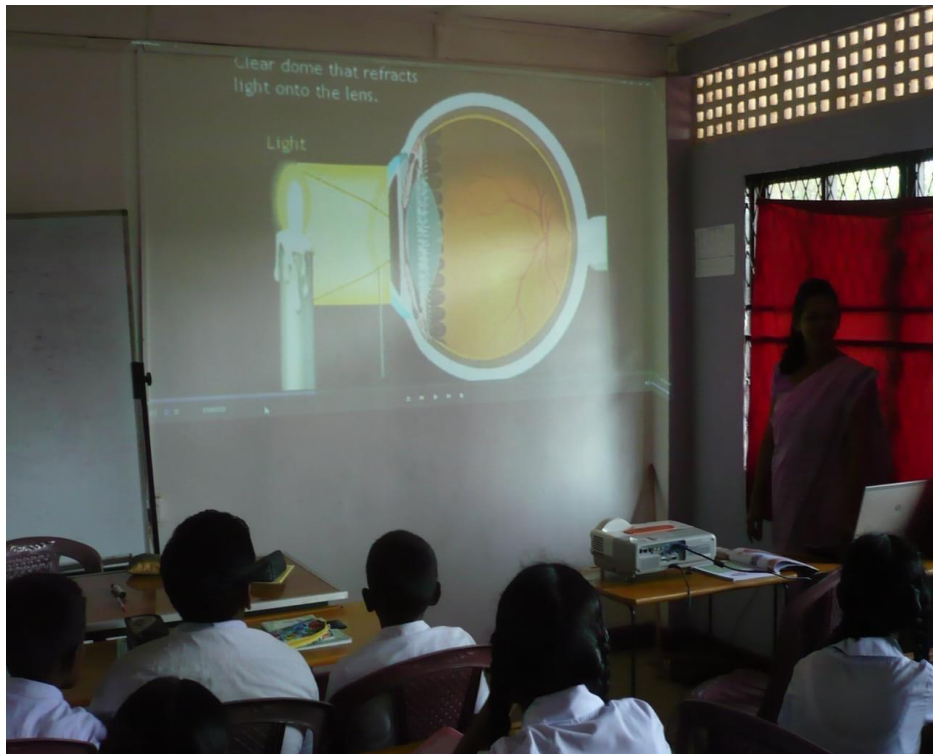
Donating IT equipment to Mr Bandula Dharmathilake (Left) the Principal of Arukgammana M V.



According to Mr Bandula Dharmathilake, the school has organised an ICT training. This program teaches students and teachers how to use computer technology to its fullest extent to better assist their education/ learning and teaching respectively.



Teachers undergoing ICT training



Students undergoing an ICT training



Multimedia assisted teaching Arukgammana M V

9. Review of the Success of the Donation Campaign.

The importance of the post-review of the donation program and the magnitude of the weight the implementers showed in fulfilling the major objective had been taken seriously into the consideration by the teachers and the principals of the schools that they took a lot of energy to communicate with the implementers continuously.

In order to further make sure if the programme has catered to the right category/ segment of schools and students where the neediest children are schooling, a continuous communication through telephone calls and emails with the school principals and some selected teachers were maintained for a period of 01 months from the donation. This work was assigned to different members from time to time to avoid work constraint as all this voluntary work had to be handled by a limited number of ALTEA members while attending to their routine jobs.

This post monitoring communication always proved to be very effective and they posed a remarkable impact upon the users of the equipment that they have to use the equipment with the given guidelines especially regarding preventive maintenance.

10. Periodical Evaluation in 06 Months and in 12 Months to Determine the Positive Results with the Expected Projections.

Evaluation of results of the project of this donation programme was a must in these donations as with any other project, to make sure that the expected objectives are properly met with. Therefore the project implementers of this donation programme allocated a separate time and energy to fulfill this requirement in each of their programme.

To achieve this end, the members of the donation programme set up a quarterly return of Progress and Capacity Utilization to be completed by each of the beneficiary schools. This document was to be completed by the Teacher-In-Charge of the ICT studies and countersigned for accuracy by the respective school principal and finally sent to ALTEA by email for verification and records. This return included the number of children already studying ICT as a subject, the number of new entrants to the subject, their achievement in periodical tests held from time to time and the remarks of the teachers and that of the principal of which the format is shown below.

Quarter of The Year	No of Students	New Entrants	Total No of Students	Average Achievement in Marks	Teacher's Remarks	Principals' Remarks
1 st Quarter						
2 nd Quarter						
3 rd Quarter						
4 th Quarter						

Chart -07

Together with the above return lists of students with their respective average achievement in marks for each quarter was also called for assessment of capacity utilization of the teachers as well as that of the equipment donated and a further technical reports were called for each quarter to determine the proper use of equipment.

In addition to the above an independent report of the general opinion on the donation held by the teachers and the principals were call for a year.

In one of the above independent report of the general opinion sent to us by the principal of Arukgammana Maha Vidyalaya in Kegalle District, Mr. Bandula Dharmathilake has mentioned that after the ALTEA donation of computer equipment the students' academic performance had been rated to No-01 in 2018 from their earlier achievement of No-15 in the year before. The programme had donated only 9 laptops, 5 PCs and 01 projector to this rural school at the beginning of the year. This is a clear demonstration of the increase of the students' academic performance with the donation.

11. Receiving Accurate Feedbacks from the Beneficiaries of the Donations.

Even though the reviewing and post-monitoring of the whole project was done remotely from Australia, the project implementers were yet to satisfy themselves with the virtual reality that is occurring in the motherland. Hence, as and when the implementers visited their country, they more interested in visiting the schools they made their donations previously to witness the learning outcomes and the accomplishment of their objectives.

According to Mr. Ajith Mario Perera and a few of the other members of the ALTEA, it was revealed that they were fully convinced with the fact that the children have tremendously progressed their learning process and acquired a great improvement in the ICT knowledge.

12. Conclusions.

Starting from 2012, when Mr. Ajith Mario Perera offered to help poverty stricken but identified talented school children he came across at his visits to his homeland, and thereafter venturing into form a small movement for donating computer equipment to a large number of school children, it was revealed from time to time that the word “**giving**” has a deep everlasting contentment and an irresistible inner peace that is generated deep within in a human heart which is much more noble than “**exploiting**” situations merely for self- improvement. Together with that important concept the following also came into light.

- A human who has been cherished by any religious faith in this world has to fulfill a certain noble duty for the other fellow humans who walk with him on the planet without expecting a grain of benefit.
- This feeling should come from within the very heart of that person and it does not need money, wealth and social acceptability but need to do it.
- There is a great deal of resources that lay in waste everywhere we live which could well be turned into a noble gift to the highly deserving who are the victims of dire economic and social problems.
- There are millions of poverty stricken children but gifted with high talents everywhere in this world who can change the world in the next few decades.
- The valuable and reusable disposed IT equipment lying in waste by many larger companies could well be diverted to those needy communities if the project implementers have a sound financial backing.
- This donation project of ALTEA and Mr. Ajith Mario Perera is a good eye opener and a good example to many donors who wish to extend a humanly hand to the poverty stricken communities in any part of the world.

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-The End-