

Greetings Extended Room to Read Team!

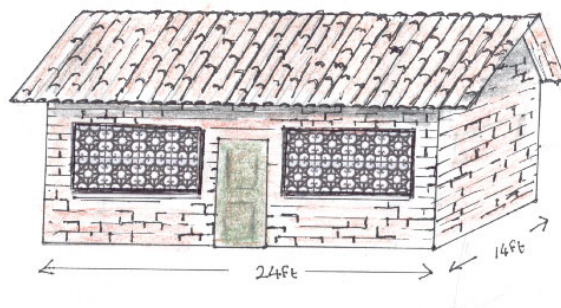
We are excited to share with you an update on our progress in Sri Lanka as you have been a pivotal partner in our rebuilding efforts there! Once again, we GREATLY appreciate your substantial donations and enthusiasm towards these projects!

Room to Read has started construction on two school room projects and have a team of partner NGOs, volunteers, and staff on the ground in Sri Lanka identifying our next slate of construction projects.

On the fundraising side, we have been fortunate to continue working with individuals, over 200 schools across the world as part of our Students Helping Students Campaign, as well as partnering with corporations and foundations. This generosity brings us closer to our goal of funding our first three years of rebuilding efforts in Sri Lanka.

Getting Children Back Into School

We are well on our way to completing our first two schools in the eastern region of Ampara. Each of the schools will be 24 feet by 14 feet with brick walls and a tiled roof. There will be wrought iron grills on the windows for security and fresh, cool air. The schools will include desks, chairs, a storage cupboard, and a blackboard. In addition, the local teams will be providing exercise books, pencils, crayons, games, and sports equipment to facilitate a smooth transition back into school for these children. Outside, the schools will have a playground with swings and a see-saw, and be surrounded by a fence or a wall.



The **Ammen Preschool** in the village of Thambilivil was home to 35 - 40 students and two teachers. It was completely destroyed in the tsunami and five of the children from this school perished. There is currently a makeshift shelter where informal instruction is being held.

The new school will be located 600 meters inland on the grounds of the existing junior/secondary school Kalai Magal School. Our partnership with the Shiva Charity will provide funding for the teachers' monthly salaries and all maintenance and equipment as needed. A teacher training program is also planned in order to help raise the standard of teaching in this school as well as other preschools in the Ampara District.



Photographs of the current makeshift Ammen Preschool



The **Kasduripa Preschool** is in the village of Vinayagapuram, also in the Ampara District. The former school was situated 150 meters from the shoreline and was devastated in the tsunami. Currently, one of the teachers, Thumbirajah Shiva, is conducting school in her home. The new school will be utilized by 40 children living in the area and possibly additional children staying in the refugee camps nearby. This school will be built on land owned by the Social Welfare of Ampara District (SWOAD) organization and is located 800 meters inland from shore. The long term operating costs of this school will also be supported by the Shiva Charity and the Paignton Lions Club.

Photograph of the new school under construction (taken late February 2005).

Students Helping Students Campaign

Schools from Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, Canada, and across the United States have rallied to support their peers in Sri Lanka. The creativity and compassion that these students have unleashed is truly ***INSPIRATIONAL!*** We've received donations from preschool classes along with art projects for our friends in Sri Lanka. Other schools have been sending us weekly checks from the proceeds of their bake sales. Again, we love to hear the individual stories from all of you, so please keep sending us updates! A few more examples include:

The Wilson Family in Washington DC has raised money in both the US and the UK by ingeniously hanging multicolored ribbons in their backyard on the Ribbon Tree. They have successfully raised over \$7,000 USD!!!!

The Firmage Family recently appeared on the Montel Williams Show to raise awareness for Room to Read and help others understand what it was like to experience the tsunami first hand. Along with handling inquiries from the show, they are also raising money in their local schools through the sale of wristbands.



This brings us to the wristband campaign!

Amazingly, the **Rasch & Sackstein Families** have partnered with schools across the country to sell over 70,000 wristbands. Congratulations on the success of this campaign and thank you for all of your efforts in coordinating such a huge endeavor! A special thank you to Dr. Helen Chaset at **Burning Tree Elementary School** for expediting this initiative in her district and providing the seed donation! We estimate that over \$100,000 will be generated from this successful campaign.

The **Parkgate House School** in London held an "Auction of Promises" where students auctioned off promises of household chores, school work, and other wonderful items bringing in more than £14,000!



Woodley Hills Elementary held a Dance of Hope, a Read-a-Thon, and sold Marigolds to raise money for schools in Sri Lanka! **WGO Capiague School** raised over \$19,000 in their school district by building model schools, holding dances, and teaching global citizenship classes.

Thank you for inspiring an entire generation to think and ACT globally!

Corporate and Foundation Partners

We also have additional corporate and foundation partnerships to announce since our last update! **Scholastic** has generously donated over 100,000 books to distribute to the schools in Sri Lanka, which will provide many of these students with age-appropriate, illustrated children's books for the first time. In addition, we have received amazing grants from **XL Capital**, **Marsico Capital Management**, **BSkyB** Scotland, **Umpqua Bank** in Oregon, **Readers Digest**, and increased funding from **ING Asia Pacific**, **Accenture Germany**, and **The Skoll Foundation**. These corporations and foundations lead their industries in social responsibility and they are identifying long-term solutions to create positive global change. We are honored to partner with them in the rebuilding efforts in Sri Lanka.

Local Team in Sri Lanka



Local school children in Sri Lanka

Our Chief Operating Officer, Erin Keown Ganju, is currently in Sri Lanka working closely with two local volunteers to establish long-term governmental licensing for Room to Read, to identify additional NGO partners, and to decide on our next slate of construction projects. Our current NGO partners include the Shiva Charity, One Sri Lanka Foundation, the Asia Foundation, and the Social Welfare Organization of the Ampara District (SWOAD).

Room to Read is committed to building a foundation in Sri Lanka that is sustainable for many years and will facilitate improved educational infrastructure in all of Sri Lanka, not only the tsunami affected areas.

We will continue to update you as we receive new information and have made more progress on these construction projects. Our next update is slated for mid-April and will likely be sent from Erin's laptop in the field!

Together, we look forward to building hope in Sri Lanka through the gift of education!

Warmest Regards,
John, Erin, Emily, Kara, Lisa, & Bella
Room to Read Team