**Project Title: Empowering 600 teenage mothers living in Monaragala district,**

**Sri Lanka**

**1. Project back ground and justification:**

 Monaragala district is situated in the southeast quadrant of Sri Lanka within the region known as the Lower Uva . Monaragala is the second largest district in the country, occupying a total land area of 5, 545 sq.km. It is approximately 9% of the total land area of Sri Lanka. The district itself subdivided into 3 Electoral Divisions, 11 Divisional Secretariat Divisions and 319 Grama Niladhaari (GN) Divisions (Villages). It is also identified as one of the poorest districts in Sri Lanka.

One of the significant issues of the Monaragala District is underage marriages. The main reason that causes this issue is the livelihoods of the communities in the Monaragala district. The main income of the district is Agriculture. Out of the 90% farmer families in the district, about the 70% cultivate seasonal crops to generate income for living. Further nearly 2.3% of the Tamil minor ethnic families live in line rooms in the plantations. Most of the cultivations of the farmers are situated far away from their own homes. When the elders leave for the cultivations, mostly the younger girls stay at homes looking after the siblings. It is at these instances such relationships develop and incidents take place. Among Tamil minority communities who live in plantation line rooms with congested living spaces influences the youngsters to develop sexual relationships causing problems of this nature.

Among these underage marriages, Vehilihini Development Centre (VDC), as an NGO which has been working for the oppressed community in Monaragala district since its inception in 1985, was able to identify the group of women who had developed sexual relations at the age of 16 and 18 with hope of marriage and later abandoned by the partner deserted with a child. This issue was identified by the VDC through the “Community Police Committees”( CPC ) those were empowered under the “Community Policing Concept” in par with “Community Policing Monaragala Program “that was launched by the VDC with the assistance of USAID through The Asia Foundation from 2009 and later by the British High Commission up until 2015 and continuing.

When the issue was reported to the CPCs by midwifes and analyzed under the problem solving approach it was revealed that the girl child can give her consent to live with a partner at the age of 16 but cannot marry until she is 18 years old. Taking this opportunity perpetrators have sexually abused the young girls and abandon them when nearing the age of marriage sometimes with a pregnancy. When they are abandoned they cannot even claim maintenance, no way even to register the child born out of wedlock with the father’s name. The worst is also lack of other social protections. She has no land rights or any other rights and she becomes a non citizen compelling her to take up sex trade the only way of living. If the girl goes behind the man who abandoned her, she is harassed, assaulted physically or even exterminated.

After the identification of the issue, VDC launched and awareness raising activities using street dramas and awareness campaigns titled “Let us be safe” and “Let us protect our children” in collaboration with the police and relevant government authorities, under the Community Policing Monaragala Program. There were 781 reported teenage pregnant mothers in 2011 and such numbers were reduced to 599 in 2013 and 343 in 2017(Source: Director of Provincial Health Services-Monaragala) because of the intensive awareness raising activities implemented as above.

Even though the numbers of incidents have been reducing gradually up to now the teenage marriage girls have become under age marriage mothers as deserted by the partners .So far no one has paid any attention this issue and facilitated the victimized young women to form in to collectives in order to overcome the problems they face and protect their rights. Therefore as the VDC we have decided to submit this project to “Global Giving” for fund raising to empower these teenage mothers socially and economically.

**2. Objectives:**

1. To identify the needs of most victimized 600 teenage mothers for empowering them through mobilization process within 2 months.
2. To form 30 groups comprising 20 teenage mothers in divisional level to establish district level organization that helps them to work as collectively within 1 month.
3. To prepare 600 individual plans, 20 group plans and 1 district level strategic plan within 2 months that shows how the teenage mothers empower immediately and afterwards.
4. To scale up the capacity of teenage mothers and the group leaders to implement their plans by providing technical and financial support within 7 months for achieving their targets.

**3. Activities & budget according the objective**

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| **Objective 1 : To identify the needs of most victimized 600 teenage mothers for empowering them through mobilization process within 2 months.** | Budget (USD) | Donation Options(USD) |
| Activity 1: Ten 1- day divisional workshops for midwifes to identify most victimized 600 teenage mothers | 1815 | 10(10\*600) |
| Activity 2: Ten 1- day divisional mobilizing seminars to identify the needs of teenage mothers.  | 3053 |
| Activity 3: One 5- day’s positive thinking workshop for selected teenage mothers to act as the group leaders.  | 1132 |
| **(Activity 1,2 & 3 for 600 teenage mothers) Total** | **6000** |
| **Objective 2 : To form 30 groups comprising 20 teenage mothers in divisional level to establish district level organization within 1 month that helps them to work collectively .** |  |  |
| Activity 4: One 1 -day training for 30 selected teenage mothers how to form their groups in divisional level | 294 |
| Activity 5: One 1- day district level meeting to from Victimized Teenage Mothers Form (VTMF)  | 473 |
| Activity 6 : One 1- day meeting for working committee of VTMF to develop constitution  | 92 | 440(440\*20) |
| Activity 7 : One 1 – day district level meeting of VTMF with participation of all teenage mothers to pass the constitution  | 475 |
| Activity 8 : One 1 – day facilitating skill development workshop for the group leaders  | 294 |
| **(Activity 4,5,6,7 & 8 for 30 groups of teenage mothers) Total** | **1628** |
| **Objective 3 : To prepare 600 individual plans, 20 group plans and 1 district level strategic plan within 2 months that shows how the teenage mothers empower immediately and afterwards.**  |  |
| Activity 9 : One 1 – day training workshop for group leaders how to prepare development plans for individual & the groups | 295 |
| Activity 10 : One 5 – days workshops for group leaders of VTMF to develop strategic plan for VTMF | 2080 |
| Activity 11 : To purchase equipments & supplies for VTMF to implement plans  | 1190 |
| Activity 12 : Coordination & monitoring cost for VTMF to assure the group activities  | 3607 |
| **(Activity 4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11 &12 for 30 groups of teenage mothers) Total** | **7172** |
| **Objective 4 : To scale up the capacity of teenage mothers and the group leaders to implement their plans by providing technical and financial support within 7 months to achieve their targets.**  |  | 1500(1500\*20) |
| Activity 13 : Ten 1 – day skill development workshops for victimized teenage mothers  | 3450 |
| Activity 14 : One 1 – day awareness raising program for 30 group leaders on security fund  | 17330 |
| Activity 15 : Ten 1 – day divisional level interactive dialogues with government / other officials to get their technical support to implement the plans  | 1660 |
| Activity 16 : To obtain the technical services from others to implement the plans  | 6540 |
| Activity 17 : Communication expenses for implementing project activities  | 670 |
| Activity 18 : Six 1 – day working committee meeting of VTMF to review the progress for preparing reports  | 350 |
| **(Activity 13,14,15,16,17 &18 for 30 groups of teenage mothers) Total** | **30000** |
| **Grand Total**  | **44800** | **44800** |