

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Batticaloa West Education Zone

TEACH FIRST SRI LANKA / CHILD ACTION LANKA

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21st November 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ABOUT TFSL

Founded in 2021, we are an independent, not-for-profit social impact organization on a mission to ensure all children, irrespective of race, gender or income-level, have access to a high-quality, inclusive education so they can realize their full potential. We are a group of passionate, entrepreneurial individuals with a bias for action. We're focused on results - working tirelessly to transform the education sector in Sri Lanka and expand opportunities for all children. We're committed to being the change we want to see in our country!



60% of disadvantaged children fail to complete their secondary education

FUNDING REQUEST

Total Budget: **Rs 25,512,500** (USD 85,042)

Fellowship Program: Rs 14,712,500 (USD 49,042)

Cost Per Fellow: Rs 980,833.9 (USD 3,269)

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Address critical shortage of teachers in Science, Technology, English and Mathematics (STEM).
- Incorporate students' holistic needs, including socio-emotional, literacy, numeracy and critical thinking.
- Empower educators and support local initiatives to address systemic/social challenges in schools.

“As a nation, we must ensure all children, irrespective of race, gender or income-level, can access an inclusive, holistic education”

STAKEHOLDERS

Fellows: Program participants (change agents).

Students & Parents: Direct beneficiaries of the program.

Provincial/Zonal Administration: Program support/facilitation

Teach First Sri Lanka & Child Action Lanka: Service provider

Corporate/NGO Funders: Sustainable financial support

SOCIAL IMPACT

Fellows will be developed into *teacher-leaders*. They will be equipped and inspired to directly address educational inequity and create positive change in classrooms.

Students will receive instructional support in key STEM subjects essential to academic/economic opportunities.

Educational quality will be objectively assessed and field research data collected will inform continued innovation in teacher professional development.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

This project will serve as pilot and a learning opportunity for Teach First SL and Child Action Lanka to assess and adapt to the needs of Educational Development in the Batticaloa West Zone. These learnings will be used to further develop the program into a fully fledged fellowship program that is contextualised to the Batticaloa West Educational Zone and will be further improved with the support and direction from the Teach For All network. We hope project success will attract Fellows of increasingly better caliber as they recognise the importance of social entrepreneurship in education.

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT TEACH FIRST SRI LANKA

Vision: *“Ensure every child experiences a holistic education to achieve their full potential”*

Mission: *“To empower our nation's youth to transform education through collective leadership”*

Teach First Sri Lanka was founded by David Boehm and Lilani Munasinghe in 2020 and incorporated as company limited by liability in November 2021. Teach First Sri Lanka will adopt a locally led fellowship model that has created impact in more than 60 countries since 1989, with over 83,000 alumni that have contributed to this global change and is continuing to transform education¹. This network is supported by Teach For All, to ensure that they are collectively working towards a vision of enabling all children to have access to a high-quality education.

Teach First Sri Lanka (TFSL) believes all children have a right to a high-quality, holistic education. To achieve this, our country needs diverse and capable leaders across all sectors of society who share an understanding of current education inequities and are committed to ending it. TFSL will introduce a Fellowship Program in which young leaders will be trained and placed in schools that face educational disparities to serve as for a period of two years. This program will be firmly rooted in collaboration with underprivileged schools to learn and make an impact in disadvantaged communities.

Teach First Sri Lanka intends to recruit passionate university graduates, career-changers, and young teachers who want to make a real difference in their community and their nation. We will empower our Fellows through rigorous training and mentorship in educational leadership to understand the intricacies of the education system and social support mechanisms. They will grow into problem solvers, innovators, and future policy makers, continuing to have an impact on systems and policies for social development in poverty-stricken rural areas. With teaching at the foundation of their leadership, our Fellows will engineer social change and find solutions to improve outcomes for underprivileged children across the country. Leveraging our young talent creates a multiplier effect across the entire socio-economic fabric of Sri Lanka.

OBJECTIVES

- Attract young leaders to serve in the education system and transform our nation.
- Create learning environments that foster an active, enjoyable, supportive culture in schools.
- Achieve measurable improvements in student performance (assessments and wellbeing).
- Identify underlying systemic shortcomings that can be addressed to improve learning.
- Develop sustainable processes and delivery mechanisms to address community challenges.
- Support movement of young leaders to transform our education system at grassroots level.
- Become a nationally recognized alternative teaching certification pathway.

¹ [Teach For All Approach & Impact](#)

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

To develop this proposal TFSL has carried out a Situation Analysis of Batticaloa West Education Zone in the Batticaloa District to identify the current issues, areas that need immediate attention, and challenges faced by students in the school system. This assessment highlighted the need for intervention of the TFSL Fellowship and helped identify the areas in which the Fellowship can be most effective. *A copy of the study conducted by TFSL can be found in Annexure 1.*

BACKGROUND

Batticaloa West Education Zone (BWEZ) is a rural zone consisting of three divisions, namely Eravapaththur, Manmunai West and Manmunai Southwest. The district was severely affected by the armed conflict, although many have recovered with government and NGO rehabilitation efforts.

The following is an overview of the Batticaloa West Education Zone:

Description	Batticaloa West
Number of total teachers	829
Total Number of schools	68
Total number of students	14685
Average Number of Students per teacher	17 Students per teacher
Average number of teachers per school	12 teachers per school
No. of Trained Teachers	637 teachers (76.84%)
No. of untrained teachers	192 teachers (23.16%)
No. of graduate teachers	513 teachers (61.8%)
No. of development officers in service as teachers	247
No. of graduate trainees	44
No. of teacher assistants	37
Total Shortage of teachers	284
Excess Teachers for non-required subjects	75

BWEZ has 20 primary and 34 middle schools: 5 schools with GCE A/L classes and 9 with middle school classes. The average pass rate at the GCE (O/L) for the last four years is 53% while the year 5 scholarship exam pass rate is 4%. There were 354 dropouts in 2021. In many rural schools the drop-out rate is significantly higher, particularly Grade 9 to 11. Most households live on subsistence farming, inland fishing or artisanal casual work and are marginalized socio-economically and this status negatively affects children's education. The prevailing economic crisis has aggravated their plight, disproportionately impacting children.

PROBLEM ANALYSIS

The in-depth analysis of the above issues reveals several factors that contribute to teacher shortages and the poor quality of education.

- Rural schools experience almost chronic teacher shortages, particularly in Science, Technology, English and Math (STEM) subjects. As a result, students are unable to pursue these curriculum streams and perform poorly on their O/L examinations.
- There are many teachers who request transfers to urban or central schools as they find it hard to commute to distant schools which contributes to the increase in teacher shortages.
- Teachers complain they are not equipped to respond to the psychological needs of children that come from difficult backgrounds.
- In BWEZ, 23% of the teacher population are untrained. Only 62% are graduates, with majority coming from the Arts disciplines. Teachers are offered in-service training as professional development, but it is inadequate, and assessments are not systematically carried out.
- Graduates are appointed as Development Officers and assigned to schools but receive no teacher training (pre-service or in-service).
- Unaddressed social and emotional issues, physical/sexual abuse and economic challenges are experienced by many students. These overlooked issues visibly take a toll on their ability to focus on their studies and some might even be affected by serious emotional disturbance.
- No official system is in place to offer children any counselling, career guidance and this leads to most students to end their education at secondary level and resort to unskilled work that is often unsafe and illegal e.g. sand mining, quarrying, cutting down trees etc.
- A cumulative effect of both lack of career guidance; emotional-social support and poor quality of education on students is that they are demotivated from continuing schooling and their precarious economic situation impels them to seek employment as passing the GCE O/L is not a viable way in which they can secure a future or an income.
- The critical shortage of STEM teachers and lack of high-quality professional development are two major factors negatively impacting the quality of education of rural children in BWEZ. The pass rates at Year 5 Examination and GCE O/L examination are below the national average and children have limited access to A/L streams in science and technology.

BWEZ faces several problems relating to primary and secondary education particularly in rural areas as listed below (and detailed in Situational Analysis in Annexure 1).

Teacher Development

- 15-20% shortage of teachers to match the needs of the teacher cadres
- Acute Shortage of qualified teachers in key subjects such as Math's, Science, English and IT.
- Teacher shortage exist due to sheer number of transfer requests to move to urban schools.
- 20 -25% of teachers do not have adequate training in teaching discipline.
- Identified irregularity in in-service teacher training.
- Gaps in the way teachers are monitored, evaluated and incentivized.
- Limited teacher development support and guidance.
- Teachers do not have adequate knowledge/skills in social-emotional mediation.

Student Performance

- O/L passing rate ranges from 53-63%, significantly lower than national average (70-73%).
- Absenteeism rate of 5-8% (700-800 children daily). Students from low economic backgrounds, oftentimes hungry. Government meal subsidy is primary incentive to attend school.
- Dropout rate of 2-3% in the zone largely owing to economic challenges and learning disability.
- Number of dropouts currently increasing (particularly grades 9-11). Main reason for dropouts is economic necessities (income), learning disabilities or social disengagement.
- The lack of STEM teachers, combined with limited science/technology facilities to teach these subjects results in students forced into Arts streams with diminished economic opportunities.

The challenges faced in the zone are multifactorial therefore there is a strong need for additional support in underprivileged areas to make sure there are individual leaders to identify and create solutions that will ensure that children will get an equitable education.

PROPOSED PROJECT INTERVENTION

PROBLEMS ADDRESSED

TFSL mandate and competency is in addressing the quality of education particularly to promote equity and equal access to quality education. This entails intervening to remedy teacher shortages, the inadequate level of teacher quality and the creation of interventions in the students' environment to support holistic education.

Problems/issues to be addressed through this project:

- Teacher shortages
- Teacher/Education Quality
- Development in students domestic /community environment

PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed program will address the critical shortage of STEM teachers, improve the overall quality of education available and contribute to the creation of innovative instructional methods contributing to a more holistic education. This will empower young individuals to lead change and address ongoing factors that negatively impact education. The approach Teach First Sri Lanka will take is as follows:

- **Recruit Promising Leaders:** We will recruit outstanding and diverse leaders early in their careers, who have demonstrated evidence of the values and leadership necessary to help children inside and outside of the classroom. We ask these leaders to make a life- long commitment that begins with teaching in schools that are most acutely impacted by educational inequity. TFSL would aim to recruit from the following groups:
 - Individuals that have just finished GCE A/L's, that are committed and passionate about education as a national service. Strong competencies in STEM subjects.
 - Recent university graduates who are committed and passionate about education as a national service. Strong competencies in STEM subjects.
 - Development officers and young teachers currently teaching in our identified schools.
- **Training & Support:** We develop leaders who go beyond traditional expectations to advance the academic and personal growth of their students. In doing so, they expand their

perspective, knowledge, and skill as educators, advocates and change leaders. TFSL will guide and facilitate their personal development in the following ways:

- **Pre-service training:** TFSL will engage Fellows in an 8 week pre-service training before placing Fellows in schools as trainee teachers.
- **In-service Coaching:** All Fellows will be assigned an experienced instructional coach to provide consistent (in-class) guidance and support for continued development.
- **Alumni Strategy:** We help alumni connect with each other and with high-impact opportunities to continue to grow and learn in pursuit of collective impact. Informed and inspired by their students, they may choose to teach in high-need schools and communities, or they may lead from many sectors that shape the context and conditions in which schools operate as district leaders; policy makers, founders of advocacy organizations; social entrepreneurs; and business, philanthropic, and civic leaders working to make change. TFSL will collaborate with existing organizations to identify alumni pathways that will be appropriate for education development in the aforementioned areas.
- **Impact Measurement:** We will define leadership competencies that will demonstrate that we are making progress towards our vision. This will help guide what our coaches look for during classroom observations, how we select and recruit our fellows, and how our future external evaluators determine the impact our organization has on communities and the education ecosystem of Sri Lanka.

The project (in consultation with the Zonal Office) will select five under-resourced schools from BWEZ and deploy a total of 15 trained TFSL Fellows.

PROJECT LOCATION

Five schools will be chosen in the Batticaloa West Education Zone in Batticaloa District of the Eastern Province based on the collective decision of the Eastern Provincial Ministry of Education, BWEZ, donors and implementation partners. Ten BWEZ schools with identified teacher shortages:

	School Name	Science	Math	English	CIVICS	Bus/Acc.	ICT	Total
1	Bt/Bw/Irudducholaimadu Vishnu Vid.	1	2	1	1		1	6
2	Bt/Bw/Karadiyanaru Maha Vid.	1	3	1				5
3	Bt/Bw/Iluppachchenai Ambal Vid.		1	2	1			4
4	Bt/Bw/Kiththul Srikrishna Maha Vid.	1	2	1				4
5	Bt/Bw/Panchenai Pari Vid.	1	2		1		1	5
6	Bt/Bw/Navatkadu Namagal Vid.	1	3	1				5
7	Bt/Bw/Ayiththiyamalai GTMS	1	1				1	3
8	Bt/Bw/Mahilavaddavan Maha Vid.	1	2	1		1		5
9	Bt/Bw/Kayanmadu Saraswathy Vid.	1	1				1	3
10	Bt/Bw/Munaikkadu Vivekananda Maha Vid.	1	2	1				4

TFSL will work with the Zonal and Provincial authorities to identify the best host schools in the region that can accommodate and work with the TFSL intervention. School situation and geographical dynamics would play a key role in determining the ideal schools for placement of fellows.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Acknowledge current deficiencies related to education in rural schools and the way it affects the lives of rural students. The lack of access to a high-quality education limits students' opportunities to achieve academic &/or future economic success.

We have identified three specific (targeted) outcomes to transform the quality of education. Identifying and recruiting Fellows who are proficient in STEM-related subjects; training them to help students with their social and emotional issues and engaging the local school community to maximize the benefits to all teachers, students and parents resulting from this project intervention.

Development Goals

All students at selected BWEZ schools will experience an improved quality of education, based on a more personalized learning approach, social-emotional support and globally-benchmarked teacher professional development.

Indicators

- A. Increased % of students completing GCE O/L and seeking STEM-related A/L streams.*
- B. Reduced % of students who drop-out and enter the job market as unskilled workers.*
- C. Increased % of active teachers with STEM-related qualifications.*

Targeted Project Outcomes (desired short-term results)

Outcome 1: STEM and business-related subjects are taught effectively and students of selected schools are able to access science, commerce and IT streams for their advanced levels.

Indicators:

- A. Increased number of students studying science, commerce, and technology streams.*
- B. Increased number of pass rates and performance (grades) in STEM subjects.*
- C. Increased number of passes in the GCE O/L examination across all streams.*

Outcome 2: Students' holistic needs, including, socio- emotional, literacy, numeracy and critical thinking needs are addressed in an effective manner.

Indicators:

- A. Increase in the number of students that complete GCE O/L.*
- B. Decrease in the school drop-out rate.*
- C. Increased number of students who access vocational skills training courses.*

Outcome 3: Systemic and social challenges pertaining to the school system and the local community of the school are addressed through Fellow-led interventions.

Indicators:

- A. Projects implemented to address challenges in the schools and local communities.*
- B. Positive perception of the school environment by all school community stakeholders.*
- C. Incidence of cooperation between regular teachers and Fellows in school community.*

Project Outputs: (defined actions/metrics to support outcomes)

- 15 Fellows with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) related subject knowledge are deployed in the 5 selected schools.
 - *Indicator: Number of Fellows to whom subjects are allocated by the school Principal.*
 - Identify, recruit and mentor young individuals with potential to become effective teacher-leaders from local A/L students, Development Officers and graduates.
 - Ensure Fellows recruited have subject knowledge in STEM related subjects.
 - Provide effective coaching/mentorship to support teacher competency.
- Teacher training and leadership program materials produced/available for Fellowship.
 - *Indicator: The developed material is approved by the BWEZ.*
 - Carry out necessary consultations required for developing training content.
 - Documented program materials, activity plan to deliver fellowship program.
 - Recruit an experienced instructional coach to support the 15 fellows.
- 15 Fellows skilled in teacher practice, leadership competencies, social and emotional learning and career guidance engage with students in the 5 selected schools as teachers.
 - *Indicator: Availability of teacher practice, leadership competencies and social-emotional guidelines for assisting students.*
 - Provide Fellows with six weeks of pre-service training to inculcate skills / competencies in teacher practice, leadership, and socio-emotional learning.
 - Provide Fellows with consistent in-school coaching support to develop/improve their skills/competencies through professional development activities.
 - Implement objective assessment of Fellows' capabilities in above-mentioned skills/competencies.
- Identify and provide extra support for students in the lowest quartile of the classroom.
 - *Indicator: Plans and framework created to identify and create a support system for students of a lower quartile on classroom/subject performance.*
 - Prepare support mechanisms for students who require additional help
 - Find solutions to provide additional support to the weaker students.
- 15 Fellows with improved leadership and entrepreneurial capabilities, motivate and engage with local school stakeholders to initiate community development solutions.
 - *Indicator: BWEZ official contractual documents offering approval to Fellows to conduct projects in the selected schools.*
 - Coaches supporting Fellows identify, assess and apply innovative solutions to enhance the quality of life of students and their families.
 - Engage Fellows to develop strategies which will critically solve systemic challenges they identify in the education system.
 - Create projects in collaboration with other Fellows to achieve their intended objectives in education development.
- Fellows implement community development initiatives that support the school system.
 - *Indicator: Develop plans and proposals for school community development initiatives.*
 - Fellows (w/stakeholders) prepare plans for school development initiatives.
 - Obtain approval from stakeholders and implement projects.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP: GOVERNMENT ROLE

The Ministry of Education at the national level and provincial levels are responsible for the government school system and manage them. National Schools are managed directly by the Ministry of Education while all other schools come under the purview of the Provincial Ministry of Education. All aspects of education are the responsibility of government. However, there are constraints the government faces in allocating adequate resources in equitable ways. Therefore, there is a need identified to supplement the education system by introducing individuals that are passionate about innovating solutions in schools that are affected by inequity.

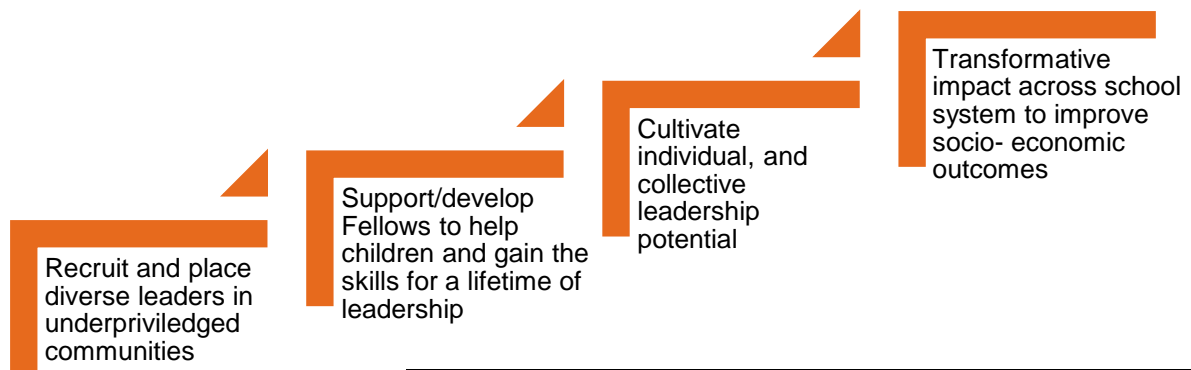
THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

THEORY OF CHANGE

Teach First Sri Lanka will facilitate leadership in education development to benefit Sri Lanka's people and its future. With advancements in the quality of education, we intend to promote knowledge, life skills and transferable skills needed to realize children's full potential. Equal access to quality education plays an important role in eradicating poverty and plays a central role in giving poor children a better chance at a more fulfilling life.

Teaching is a profound act of leadership - one in which you are also driven to learn. With teaching at the foundation of their leadership we encourage our fellows to develop a mindset, capabilities and competencies that will be effective in using collective leadership to engineer social change and find solutions within underprivileged communities. By teaching first we find that our fellows focus on self, then work with communities and then transform national systems. We wish to foster a sense of leadership that is linked to a culture and a vision that is founded within a shared set of organizational values that will be the compass for our young fellows throughout their lifelong leadership.

PROGRAM FRAMEWORK



COMMITMENT TO MISSION

- *Theory of the Problem*: Fellows learn the extent of inequity in their communities.
- *Theory of Change*: Fellows learn about their personal role in transforming education.
- *Collective Leadership*: Role of local educators and parents in transforming education system.
- *Community & Culture*: The importance of creating a culture for change.
- *Student Impact*: The role of teachers in empowering students to achieve their goals.
- *Leadership Journey*: Fellows embark on journey of self-transformation and career exploration.

PROJECT MONITORING & EVALUATION PLAN

MONITORING

Monitoring of the performance of the project will be based on a logical framework matrix (attached) and baseline measures established prior to the implementation of the project. Indicators of outcome and output metrics will feature strongly in our project monitoring tools.

The recruitment and training of Fellows, including ongoing coaching/mentoring will be carried out according to proven Teach for All guidelines and global best practice. Once the Fellows are deployed, project work will commence in the five selected schools. The performance of each Fellow will be tracked in the following ways:

- Examination of detailed logs maintained by each Fellow by TFSL Program Manager
- Reports and observations from onsite coach
- Periodic observations and field visits by TFSL Program Manager
- Joint quarterly feedback sessions between Zonal Office, School Principals, Project Manager, and Coaches. Feasible recommendations will be implemented.
- Stakeholder evaluation surveys assess student, parent and teacher satisfaction, perspectives, and reflections at regular intervals.
- Special projects prepared by Fellows (approved by TFSL Program Manager) will be monitored based on the logical framework matrix of each project.

EVALUATION

The project will carry out an evaluation at the end of the project period to assess performance, if the planned goal, outcomes have been achieved or not, and outputs delivered/produced. Also, any lost opportunities and project deficits will be noted for remedial action. Lessons learnt will be an important focus of the evaluation along with recommendations.

ASSUMPTIONS

Assumptions are understood to be events, conditions and decisions that are outside the control of the project but necessary for effective implementation of the project. Hence the project will ensure that these identified assumptions do occur when required. Some of the critical assumptions particularly related to the BWEZ will be assured through the MOU that will be entered into with it.

Assumptions made:

- Fellows will not be transferred out from the schools they are deployed in.
- Provincial/Zonal authorities permit the recruitment/placement of Fellows in schools.
- Principals and staff will induct Fellows into their schools and facilitate their work.
- Local communities will extend their cooperation to the Fellows in their work.
- School Development Societies will extend their cooperation to the Fellows.

FINANCIAL EVALUATION

PROJECT BUDGET

DESCRIPTION	MONTHLY COST	# OF MONTHS	TOTAL (LKR)	TOTAL (USD)
ADMINISTRATION				
Salaries				
CEO Salary	300,000	15	4,500,000	15,000
Program Manager (school coordinator)	200,000	15	3,000,000	10,000
Instructional Coach	150,000	15	2,250,000	7,500
Overheads				
Shared Office (workstation)	15,000	15	225,000	750
Staff Laptops			600,000	2,000
Company Secretary	5,000	15	75,000	250
Finance/Accounting	10,000	15	150,000	500
Total Admin:			10,800,000	36,000
PROGRAM COSTS				
Admin & Overheads				
Communications (Phone & Internet)	7,500	15	112,500	375
Office/Training Space (on location)	10,000	15	150,000	500
General Supplies	15,000	15	225,000	750
Staff Transportation	25,000	15	375,000	1,250
Program Content Development				
Program Content Development	200,000	6	1,200,000	4,000
External Consulting Expenses	75,000	6	450,000	1,500
Monitoring & Data Analysis Tools			200,000	667
Recruitment				
Communications & Marketing	40,000	15	600,000	2,000
Travel & Accommodation (Admin)	50,000	15	750,000	2,500
Candidate Evaluation Expense	75,000	2	150,000	500

Program Delivery				
Pre- Service Training				
Training Logistical Expense (inc F&B)	250,000	3	750,000	2,500
Training Supplies & Materials	50,000	3	150,000	500
Trainers' Accommodation/Travel	50,000	3	150,000	500
Fellows' Benefits				
Laptop Rental	150,000	15	2,250,000	7,500
Internet Data Allowance	30,000	15	450,000	1,500
Shared Accommodation / Allowance	25,000	12	2,250,000	7,500
Travel Allowance / Stipend	300,000	12	4,500,000	15,000
Total Program:			14,712,500	49,042
TOTAL PROJECT COST			25,512,500	85,042
DIRECT COST (PER FELLOW)			980,833	3,269
TOTAL COST PER FELLOW (inc O/H)			1,700,833	5,669

PROJECT TIMEFRAME

	M 0	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 4	M 5	M 6	M 7	M 8	M 9	M 10	M 11	M 12	M 13	M 14	M 15
Project Milestones																
Recruit Program Manager																
Secure permissions from Provincial Ministry																
Program development																
Collect baseline data in 5 Schools.																
Identify recruitment partners & pipeline																
Procure space, supplies																
Recruitment of Fellows																
Matriculation into schools																
Fellowship Program																
Pre-Service Training																
Matriculation into schools																
Training Workshops																
School Exams																
Observation & Feedback																
Learning Circles																
Program Manager Support																
Zonal Review Meetings																
Community Project																
Alumni Pathway Evaluation																

The work plan has been created on the assumption that the following dependencies have been achieved.

- Agreement with Provincial Ministry has been secured to recruit and place teachers in 5 selected schools in the Batticaloa West Education Zone.
- Necessary partnerships required to carry out the program have been secured.
- 75% of project funding has been secured.