

## FINDING A FUTURE IN SRI LANKA

Categories: Hygiene Assistance/Community Building/Psycho-Social Care/Community Development

### BE A PART OF THE PROJECT: PARTNER WITH JEN AND CONTRIBUTE

<http://www.jen-npo.org/en/contribute>

#### Community Building

#### Water Supply and the Issue of Prices

Although Sri Lanka has slowly been rebuilding peace within the nation, due to the rise of crude oil prices in early 2012, prices of every other product is rising throughout the region as well.

Yet this is only a minor problem compared to the lack of clean water supply throughout Sri Lanka, particularly in the Eastern Batticaloa district. But the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JEN supporters have been able to back well construction projects in the area. In the east, excavation projects are more difficult, because in order to reach the underground water supply, teams must dig deeper than they would in the north. Although the team faced many obstacles such as fluctuations in the price of stone and other such materials necessary to build the well, the project eventually fell onto a smooth path.

#### Community Building

#### New Project Supporting Recovery

In February 2013, JEN staff members attended a signing ceremony for a new project commenced in collaboration with JEN supporters and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was a relatively large ceremony with many press members there to document the event, and the ambassador of Japan to Sri Lanka and JEN signed and exchanged written contracts. JEN representatives then provided the audience with a brief explanation of their upcoming project, followed by a speech made by Japan's ambassador.

The new project that the opening ceremony recognized is planned to support recovery efforts in the Mullaitivu district in northern Sri Lanka

and Ampara district in Eastern Sri Lanka to support constructing agro wells and provide training workshops for community members in order to create leaders who can eventually run their own workshops on agricultural education. The project is expected to provide for nearly 250 families in the area.

#### Psycho-Social Care

#### Project Evaluations Show Success



*Above: Renovated well at Ms. Toffek's household being used to provide drinking water*

On November 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, JEN conducted evaluations of previous JEN projects in Vavuniya and Mullativu districts. JEN took a look at the 426 cleaning wells and 230 repairing wells that were built over a two year period between June 2010 to December 2012.

In fact, the Well Management Committee were still using the feed-water pumps and cleaning equipment previously provided by JEN, and as a matter of fact, were able to obtain new ones as well. The committee members actively pursue important roles within the community by paying

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visits to local households in order to ensure that wells are kept in good condition.

Further, because it has been over two years since people have returned to the area, construction of permanent residences has begun, replacing temporary housing. Specific to this project, a Housing Construction Committee was established, with a handful of members from the Well Management Committee taking leadership roles.

“Well cleaned and repaired water is shared with people of ten households in our neighborhood for various uses,” Ms. Toffek, leader of the Well Management Committee stated.

The local people are certainly enthusiastic about the construction within their neighborhoods. Ms. Toffek went on to explain that her daughter now feels safer being able to bathe closer to home, and her husband is having an easier time bathing due to his leg and shoulder disabilities he obtained during the internal conflict.

Further, wells provide a haven for communication among community members, providing a psychological form of treatment for those who previously felt isolated. The gates to public wells are always kept open, allowing for people to come together to share ideas and thoughts, creating tighter bonds among community members.

Community Development

**Recovery Runs Slow and Steady**

Towards the end of 2012, JEN staff members paid a visit to Puthukkudiyiruppu DS or Mullativu District for the first time in a year to find a number of surprising discoveries. This was an area that JEN provided aid to by building shelters and encouraging locals to rely on their own abilities to rebuild after returning to the region following Sri Lanka’s civil war.

In fact, JEN staff members found that the number of residential buildings around the Transitional Shelters JEN had built had dramatically increased in the past year. Shops had replaced previously run down shacks, roads were lively with cars and public buses, and electric wires spread to distribute electricity throughout the area. Recovery is clearly headed towards the right direction.

Yet despite the positive discoveries, there are still a number of people who are concerned about their futures due to their current financial statuses. Without any funds to develop their own farm land, many are left to depend on other resources rather than building up their own socioeconomic status.

Thus, we can conclude that although Puthukkudiyiruppu is well on its way to recovery, there is still much to be done in order to seek long term success.



*Above: A recently built shop along the side of the road*



**The 7 EN’s of JEN**

- Engage
- Entrust
- Encourage
- Endeavor
- Enjoy
- Encounter
- Enable

**DONATE NOW AND HELP THE CAUSE!**

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