



## Partners in Micro-Development Inc.

Building Sustainable  
Village Communities





## About PIMD

Partners In Micro-Development Inc. (PIMD) is an association of volunteer professionals from the education and ICT sectors, who are highly motivated and committed to improving access to education and ICT in developing countries and communities. Our expertise is in ICT for development (ICT4D) and education.

As a non-profit non-government organization (NGO) we lead projects, working directly with developing communities, that focus on the development of educational and ICT capability at a grass-roots level with the goal of assisting communities in becoming sustainable as a social and economic unit.



## Our Work in Sri Lanka

*"It is 10 a.m. on the second day of the Teacher Training Course, Wednesday 7th January 2004, roughly two years since the peace process was brokered. The conflict that has lasted for twenty years has impacted on the lives of people all over Sri Lanka.*

*One of the teachers is talking to her conversation partner in English telling her experience during this time. Each of the fifteen days of the ESL teacher-training course started like this - with the students talking in pairs on a topic prepared the night before. Each morning the twenty-four participants from remote villages told their stories and expressed themselves, hesitantly at first, on a range of topics from the role of women in Sri Lanka to the role of computers in the classroom. Sharing and talking amid lots of laughter helped the group to have a sense of cohesion that is so important for maximizing adult learning.*



### Phase 1

Our current project is based in Sri Lanka and is an investment in the next generation. The project involves the development and delivery of a curriculum for Computer Literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) to children in grades 1 and 2 in village primary schools.

To support the curriculum, we provide training for local teachers in appropriate teaching methods and use of computers in the classroom. On the successful completion of a pilot in thirty schools in 2005, we will seek to extend the program to more schools across the country and ensure its sustainability through ongoing public sector and international aid community support.

Our partners in this project are the village community, village school and Principal, teachers and education authorities.

*"Sri Lanka ..holds a unique position in South Asia. It was one of the first developing countries to provide universal health and education coverage... As a result, Sri Lanka achieved human development outcomes comparable to those of high income countries.."<sup>1</sup>. Sri Lanka is widely*

<sup>1</sup> World Bank Country Assistance Strategy for Sri Lanka, April, 2003, pp. 13

recognised for its achievements in human development. Education is therefore seen as being a fundamental lever in protecting and strengthening the commitment to peace, and in recovering the ground lost, in terms of human development, as a result of the war.



*"It is also clear that the education of an entire generation of children has been severely affected by the war. Its impact will undoubtedly be felt for years to come and will remain a challenge in building a lasting peace. Any delays in restoring functioning schools will only exacerbate matters. Critical areas... include the replacement of temporary buildings and sheds; the completion of incomplete buildings; provision of water and sanitary facilities; the provision of furniture and other equipment; and the provision of computers."*

Government of Sri Lanka Whitepaper on Needs Assessment submitted to the Oslo Donor's Conference, November, 2002

This project will lay the foundation for a generation of students in the N-E to continue into the secondary schools equipped with the skills required of a modern curriculum.

## Phase 2

In 2005 we hope to launch the second phase of this ICT4D project.

As a starting point, local village members will be trained to manage the computer resources, and to build a database of information on students' health (such as inoculation history, nutritional needs, etc.), identify and access available health services, and update the computer records. This can then be expanded to address the social (health and education) needs of the wider community and eventually economic development needs.



The village can use this information to develop plans in line with their needs and priorities and draw down on public services and aid programs as required.

## Sustainability

*Selected National Goals and Basic Competencies as set down by the Sri Lanka National Education Commission:*

*"The evolution of a Sustainable Pattern of Living, a Sustainable Life Style which is vital for the year 2000 and beyond when, for the first time in history of mankind even air and water cannot be taken for granted.*

*The generation of Work Opportunities, that are, at one and the same time, dignified, satisfying and self-fulfilling.*

*In the above framework, the institution of a variety of possibilities for All to participate in Human Resources Development leading to cumulative structures of growth for the nation."*



Our ultimate goal is sustainable communities. To achieve that end the program itself must be able to be sustained.

The school component of the program will be sustained by the more experienced teachers training new teachers as they come on board. In addition, the training curriculum has been handed over to the Department of Education. The Computer Literacy part of the curriculum will require continued investment in infrastructure by the Government of Sri Lanka with the assistance of the aid community.

The community development component of the program can be sustained by communities training and providing leadership to other communities based on the pilot model. Infrastructure such as computers can be shared across multiple villages. Micro-enterprises based on the facilities will also assist.



## Become Involved

To accomplish our goals, we rely on the generous donation of time and expertise by our member-volunteers. We currently need expertise in a range of areas including solutions for affordable rural telecommunications and Internet access, solar energy, child health, identifying and packaging resources for teachers, fundraising (community and grant applications), marketing, use of computers in education for young children, sourcing second-hand computers.

If you have experience in any of these areas we offer the opportunity to become directly involved in the project and with the communities with whom we work. Just contact us by emailing [info@microdevpartners.org](mailto:info@microdevpartners.org).



Clearly we also rely on financial and in kind support. We are actively seeking partnerships with organisations who are interested in sponsoring our work. If you are able to help us in this area please contact Donna Vaughan by emailing [info@microdevpartners.org](mailto:info@microdevpartners.org).



## Our Credentials

PIMD is a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct. ACFID is the peak body for organisations in Australia working in the field of international development.

We are incorporated as an association and governed by a Management Committee. We comply with all Federal and State legislation and administrative requirements relating to non-profit operation and charitable fund-raising. 100% of funds raised from the Australian community are used to provide resources (computers, software, teacher training, etc.) for the schools in our project in Sri Lanka. Administrative costs are met from other sources.

The members of our Management Committee each have over twenty years professional experience in the education or ICT fields and in addition have worked either in community related fields, or senior management roles in the corporate sector. Our Projects Manager holds a Masters in Social Science (International Development).

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