

SPACE TO LEARN

Improving the Learning Environment in Mannar District



From
the People of Japan

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi KENYA

Tel: 254-020-7623120 (Central Office)

www.unhabitat.org

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Contributors: Charmalee Jayasinghe, Keiko Matsuo, I A Hameed, Piyal Ganepola, Mohamed Aleem, Thevanathan Nadesapillai, Kumarasamy Sutharshini, Rafeek Athambawa, M.Kajenthiran, Culas Thevathas, A. Firthows, Srinivasa Popuri, Chanaka Talpahewa, Naoko Goto

Editors: Charmalee Jayasinghe, Keiko Matsuo, Mohamed Aleem

Design and layout: Charmalee Jayasinghe, Three Sixty Marketing (Pvt.) Ltd.

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This book celebrates the teachers, children, parents and community members who contributed towards improving the learning environment in Mannar District.





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Dr. Joan Clos

United Nations Under-Secretary
General and Executive Director,
UN-Habitat – United Nations
Human Settlements Programme

Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this publication, entitled “*Space to Learn: Improving the Learning Environment in Mannar District*” which documents the partnership between the Government of Japan, the Government of Sri Lanka and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to improve the learning environment in 25 schools in Mannar District in the north of Sri Lanka.

Through a series of photographs, this publication highlights the key achievements of the project “*Sustainable Resettlement through Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in Mannar District*” implemented from April 2015 – September 2017 through a participatory people’s process. This process has provided the school authorities, parents of school children, teachers and community based organizations a sense of achievement by contributing to the planning and construction process themselves, with technical assistance from UN-Habitat.

The publication showcases a cross-section of learning spaces and teachers’ quarters on diverse aspects including the use of environmentally friendly, alternative building materials, incorporation of disaster risk reduction features and technologies in construction, the participation of key stakeholders in designing and constructing the learning spaces and the valuable contributions of the Government of Sri Lanka, the school authorities and the community members.

This publication is dedicated to all the school teachers, children, parents and community members who assisted in the creation of the learning spaces and teachers’ quarters in Mannar district.

UN-Habitat gratefully acknowledges the support of the Government of Japan in funding this project, and the participation of the Sri Lankan Ministry of Education, the Provincial Ministry of Education, Zonal Education Offices, Local Authorities and the Divisional Secretariats.



H.E. Kenichi Suganuma

Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary of Japan
to Sri Lanka

Message from the Government of Japan

I am pleased to introduce this publication by UN-Habitat entitled “Space to Learn: Improving the Learning Environment in Mannar District” which illustrates efforts and successes of the Project “Sustainable Resettlement through Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in Mannar District” supported by the Government and the People of Japan, collaborating with UN-Habitat.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1952, Japan has been committed to supporting the socio-economic development of Sri Lanka through diverse and comprehensive projects in many parts of the country. It helped particularly the reconstruction and consolidation of peace in conflict affected communities.

The Government of Japan has partnered with UN-Habitat since March 2013 to support the efforts of Sri Lanka to reconstruct community infrastructure facilities and empower communities in the conflict affected areas. The Government of Japan has provided a sum of USD 11.5 million for the three projects implemented by UN-Habitat and helped to improve the living conditions of affected communities through rebuilding community infrastructure such as internal access

roads, community centers, and water drainage systems, and provided trainings for community leaders and women in Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi, Mannar and Batticaloa.

The Government of Japan further committed to improve the learning environment in Mannar district with the funding of 507 million Japanese Yen (USD 4.2 million) in March 2015. Over 10,000 returnees including 6,800 school children benefitted from the project through providing fifteen schools with sanitation facilities, seven teachers’ quarters, and capacity building programmes.

The Government of Japan highly appreciates the achievements of the project and all the efforts made by the relevant partners, particularly UN-Habitat. Japan continues to be committed to cooperating with Sri Lanka for its sustainable and inclusive development and hopes that the projects will provide further benefits for the people around the areas.



Mr. Sunil Hettiarachchi

Secretary,
Ministry of Education

Message from the Government of Sri Lanka

On behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka, I warmly congratulate UN-Habitat's publication "Space to Learn: Improving the Learning Environment in Mannar District", documenting the improvement of educational facilities in Mannar District with funding from the Government of Japan.

The Ministry of Education is committed to providing primary and secondary education to Sri Lankan children. In accordance with the country's free education policy, the Government of Sri Lanka strives to provide high quality learning facilities including educational infrastructure for schools. With the devastation of the thirty year conflict, much of the educational infrastructure facilities in the North including Mannar District were damaged and destroyed. Hence the support from donors and development partners in providing reconstruction support in conflict affected areas is much appreciated by the Government of Sri Lanka.

Over the past 30 years, UN-Habitat, has been a trusted development partner of the Government of Sri Lanka. Since 2010, UN-Habitat has supported the Government and the people of Sri Lanka with reconstruction support for housing and community infrastructure facilities in North and East.

This photobook illustrates the key achievements of the project "Sustainable Resettlement through Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in Mannar District, Sri Lanka" implemented by UN-Habitat to rebuild learning spaces through a participatory people's process.

I gratefully acknowledge the support provided by the Government of Japan, the Chief Secretary's Secretariat of the Northern Provincial Council, the Ministry of Education of the Northern Province, Zonal Directors of Education of Mannar District, School Development Committees of schools, parents, school principals, teachers, Local Authorities and UN-Habitat in implementing this project. This photobook is a testament to the commitment and dedication of the communities and school authorities of Mannar District who reconstructed learning facilities for children, following years of conflict and hardship.



Introduction



Three decades of conflict had severely affected the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, displacing families, destroying homes and infrastructure facilities. Communities in Mannar District in the Northern Province were displaced from 1990 to 2007, living for many years in other areas, housed in temporary accommodation or with family and friends. With the end of the conflict in 2009, thousands of displaced families returned to their places of origin. The Government of Sri Lanka together with the support of donors and development partners provided reconstruction support to returnees including construction of houses and rehabilitation of critical infrastructure facilities.

However, due to years of destruction and neglect, many needs including educational facilities were lacking in Mannar District. As a result, children in resource poor schools were badly affected as they lacked even basic facilities, such as classroom buildings, water and sanitation facilities and teaching materials. The absence of proper residential facilities for teachers also resulted in a shortage of qualified teachers in the area.

This poor educational environment resulted in low teaching standards and academic performance affecting the school children. The lack of adequate educational facilities for children also discouraged families from returning to their places of origin.

Recognising the urgent need to improve the learning environment in Mannar district and improve the returnees' quality of life, UN-Habitat initiated the project "Sustainable Resettlement through Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in Mannar District, Sri Lanka." Its main objective was to contribute to the sustainable rehabilitation and reconstruction of conflict affected people in Mannar District in Sri Lanka's Northern Province through the provision of an improved educational environment.

From 2015 - 2017, with a grant of US\$ 4.2 Mn from the Government of Japan, this project improved the learning environment in 25 schools, constructing primary and secondary classroom buildings, teachers' quarters and establishing water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities. The project benefitted about 10,000 returnees including 6,800 school children and 360 teachers.

UN-Habitat's methodology for sustainable recovery from disasters, the "People's Process" model, was adopted to implement this project. This process encouraged the active participation of all project stakeholders from the inception to the conclusion of the project, and placed the decision making and ownership in the hands of the project beneficiaries. UN-Habitat partnered with School Development Committees (SDCs) to implement the project at each selected location. The SDCs managed the construction process with technical supervision by UN-Habitat.

Alternative eco-friendly, cost effective construction techniques and building materials were used by the project to construct buildings, wherever possible. The innovative school designs ensured natural light and ventilation in all buildings to ensure a conducive learning environment. In order to recover the green cover lost during reconstruction activities while fostering a greener environment, tree planting and organic school gardening activities were organised in all schools with the active participation of school children, teachers and parents. Other environmentally friendly initiatives introduced by the project included the installation of rain water harvesting systems to collect and re-use water during periods of drought, bio gas digesters, compost bins to reuse biodegradable waste and ground water recharge activities to manage precious water resources.

In addition to the physical assets, UN-Habitat established linkages with local development partners, including government agencies, to improve the educational environment, water and sanitation services, environment management and community infrastructure maintenance for the schools. The school construction methodology followed “Child Friendly Schools” standards to address disparities in the quality of education, school facilities and access to schools in different areas of Sri Lanka.

The key project outputs included the construction of cost-effective, eco-friendly learning spaces and WASH facilities in 15 schools, installation of tube wells and water storage facilities in 15 schools and the construction of teachers’ quarters in seven schools including three cluster teachers’ quarters. The project also provided training for construction workers, teachers, parents, community members and Government officials on diverse subjects such as eco-friendly construction techniques and practices and financial management and maintenance of school assets.

To ensure sustainability of the school buildings and facilities, the completed structures and assets have been duly handed over to the Ministry of Education. All buildings are maintained by the school administration in collaboration with School Development Committees, based on the maintenance plans developed by the project partners.

The project’s interventions succeeded in improving the learning and teaching spaces for school children and teachers in Mannar District. It is hoped that the new buildings and facilities would further improve health and sanitation conditions of children and teachers as well as improve the quality of teaching to facilitate children’s future learning.



Project Location



UN-Habitat supported 25 schools in Mannar District through the project “Sustainable Resettlement through Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in Mannar District, Sri Lanka”. The project was implemented in the Zonal Education Divisions of Mannar and Madhu in the Divisional Secretariat (DS) Divisions of Mannar, Madhu, Musali and Manthai West.

As the project had funds for a limited number of interventions, a transparent selection process was followed to select schools for assistance. A vulnerability survey was conducted for 53 schools submitted by the Zonal Directors of Education (ZDE) in Mannar and Madhu divisions. The selection criteria included current school enrollment rates with expected rates of increase, available facilities, economic status of the community including families receiving welfare grants, location of the school and its vulnerability to natural disasters. Based on the findings, 15 schools and 7 teachers’ quarters, including 3 cluster quarters were selected for support, with the concurrence of the Ministry of Education and the Northern Provincial Council. The concept of cluster quarters was introduced to Mannar District for the first time through this project.

DS Divisions	Schools	Teachers’ Quarters	Total
Musali	7	2	9
Mannar	3	1	4
Manthai West	3	1	4
Madhu	2	3	5

Learning Spaces

- ✓ MN/ Ikra Government Muslim Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Al-Rimsa Government Muslim Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Bathiudeen Government Muslim Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Koolankulam Government Muslim Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Hunais Farook Government Muslim Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Karadikuli Government Muslim Mixed School
- ✓ MN/Palaikuli Government Muslim Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Sithivinayagar Hindu College
- ✓ MN/ Gowriambal Government Tamil Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Al-Mina Maha Vidyalaya
- ✓ MN/ Thevanpitty Primary School
- ✓ MN/ Eachchalawakkai Government Tamil Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Periyamadhu Primary School
- ✓ MN/ Periyapandivirichchan Primary School
- ✓ MN/ Kakkayankulam Government Muslim Tamil Mixed School

Teachers’ Quarters

- ✓ MN/ Al-Azhar National School
- ✓ MN/ Sinnalayankattu Government Tamil Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Periyakunchukulam Roman Catholic Tamil Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Vellankulam Government Tamil Mixed School*
- ✓ MN/ Thadchanamaruthamadhu Government Tamil Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Al Jassim Maha Vidyalaya*
- ✓ MN/ Pandaraveli Government Muslim Mixed School*

Cluster teachers’ quarters*: The cluster quarters also benefited the below schools:

- ✓ MN/ Thevanpitty Roman Catholic Tamil Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Kondachchi Government Muslim Mixed School
- ✓ MN/ Musali National School



Temporary Learning Facilities

With the end of the conflict in May 2009, families started returning to their places of origin. In Mannar District, schools started functioning once again, with returnees sending their children to local schools. However, due to years of neglect during the conflict, many schools were in a state of disrepair and lacked proper educational and infrastructure facilities.

As a result, children in resource poor schools were badly affected as they lacked even basic facilities, such as classroom buildings, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities and teaching materials. The absence of proper residential facilities for teachers also negatively impacted the teachers, leading to many hardships.

Due to lack of space for classrooms, in many schools, classes were held in temporary shelters manufactured with tin sheets and cadjan while some classes were held outdoors. Due to the lack of residential facilities, teachers resided in makeshift quarters converted from classrooms or store rooms without any basic facilities for cooking or storage of belongings. The lack of WASH facilities also negatively impacted the school children as the number of toilets were inadequate for the children and teachers and basic facilities such as hand washing stations were either damaged or non-existent.



Temporary learning facilities: MN/ Hunais Farook Government Muslim Mixed School consisted of a temporary structure constructed with tin sheets, forest timber and cadjan for the roof. The floor area of the building was simply the sandy soil.





பயிற்சியில் சிறந்தவர்களை தேர்ந்தெடுக்க
1) கல் + சூடு 2) கல் + மிளக
3) அரிசி + சாம்பி 4) கிணறு + மிளக
5) கிணறு + மிளக 6) மயூசு + காய்க
7) கல் + மிளக
8) கல் + சூடு 9) கிணறு + மிளக

MN/ Hunais Farook Government Muslim Mixed School: As the temporary structure had no partitions, multiple classes were held in the building at the same time.



MN/ Sithivinayagar Hindu College in Mannar DS division did not have enough buildings for all the students. Hence several classes were held in makeshift shelters built with tin sheets and cadjan.



School children in a makeshift classroom at MN/ Sithivinayagar Hindu College.



Lessons being conducted in the converted sports complex of MN/ Sithivinayagar Hindu College.





MN/ Sithivinayagar Hindu College had converted the school sports stadium to classrooms due to lack of school buildings.

In some schools like MN/ Karadikuli Government Muslim Mixed School featured below, lessons were held outdoors, often under trees, as there were not enough buildings to accommodate all the school children.



Temporary Shelters in School Gardens



Lessons being conducted in the school yards of MN/ Karadikuli Government Muslim Mixed School and MN/ Palaikuli Government Muslim Mixed School in Musali DS division.

School children in their temporary classroom at Palaikuli Government Muslim Mixed School.



Temporary Classrooms



Due to lack of space in the permanent buildings, classes were held in makeshift shelters built with tin sheets at MN/ Gowriambal Government Tamil Mixed School in Mannar DS division. The heat during the afternoon as well as monsoon rains caused difficulties to school children and teachers as the structures were open to the elements from the sides.



Temporary classrooms built with tin sheets at MN/ Gowriambal Government Tamil Mixed School.





MN/ Bathiudeen Government Muslim Mixed School in Musali DS Division conducted classes in nearby public buildings and even in houses due to lack of space. These temporary classrooms lacked space, facilities and did not have enough light or ventilation.





School girls of MN/ Bathiudeen Government Muslim Mixed School learn their lessons in a house as the school lacked a permanent building.



MN/ Ikra Government Muslim Mixed School in Musali DS division held classes in a nearby community building. This resulted in several classes being held in the same room due to lack of space.



The infrastructure of MN/ Periyapandivirichchan Primary School consisted of both permanent buildings and temporary structures. Here, children are in their temporary classrooms.





The makeshift teachers' quarters at MN/ Periyakunchukulam Roman Catholic Tamil Mixed School where the teachers had to make do with two small rooms that doubled up as their kitchen. Many teachers slept in their classrooms as the quarters did not have adequate space.





Constructing
Learning
Spaces

From 2015 – 2017, UN-Habitat worked closely with the Zonal Education Offices, School authorities and the Ministry of Education to improve the learning environment in 25 schools.

UN-Habitat’s methodology for sustainable recovery from disasters, the “People’s Process” model, was adopted to implement this project. This process involved mobilising the target group into an integrated community.

UN-Habitat contracted School Development Committees through Community Implementation Agreements (CIA), thereby creating ownership and ensuring sustainability of the assets. Physical works were carried out by School Development Committees with technical input from UN-Habitat.

UN-Habitat’s technical team based in Mannar district and a consultancy firm hired by UN-Habitat provided technical and design guidance and supervision.

The school construction followed Child Friendly Schools (CFS) standards which addresses disparities in the quality of education, school facilities and access to schools in different areas of Sri Lanka.

Environmentally friendly building materials and alternative technologies were used in many buildings. These new materials and techniques included compressed stabilised earth blocks, fair-faced masonry work and treated plantation timber to minimise the impact on the environment. Disaster Risk Reduction features were incorporated in all buildings to ensure resistance to extreme weather events.



Rebuilding Schools through a Participatory Process



UN-Habitat followed a participatory process to implement the project. This methodology ensured stakeholder participation from the inception to the conclusion of the project while giving a voice and ownership to all stakeholders – including the schools, Government and community members. The active participation of all stakeholders was sought in the planning and design process.



Participatory Planning and Design



Participatory design workshop facilitated by UN-Habitat in progress.



Commencing Construction



Ground breaking ceremonies were held in all locations to commence construction activities. Representatives from the Embassy of Japan, the Government of Sri Lanka and UN-Habitat participated in many of these events together with the school authorities, parents, religious leaders, teachers and school children.

Providing Technical Support

To support the construction of classroom buildings and other selected facilities, UN-Habitat technical teams provided technical advice on construction related issues. The photo depicts construction work in progress at MN/ Periyapandivirichchan Primary School with UN-Habitat technical staff supervising the progress.





Visits to individual construction sites by UN-Habitat technical staff helped to monitor construction progress and quality. Provision of on-site technical support to artisans helped in resolving technical issues in a timely manner.

A site office was constructed at each location, which doubled up as a work space for the Technical Officers and engineers. Safety equipment such as helmets and boots were also kept at the site office. The technical staff used the site office to monitor project progress with a white board and charts marking milestones and progress.





Safety at construction sites was of paramount importance during project implementation. Safety signage was prominently displayed at the construction sites to ensure safety of workers as well as school children and teachers who were in the vicinity.



Different Stages of Construction



Concrete mixing in progress using a concrete mixer.



Foundation excavation.



Constructing the foundation at MN/ Hunais Farook Muslim Mixed School.

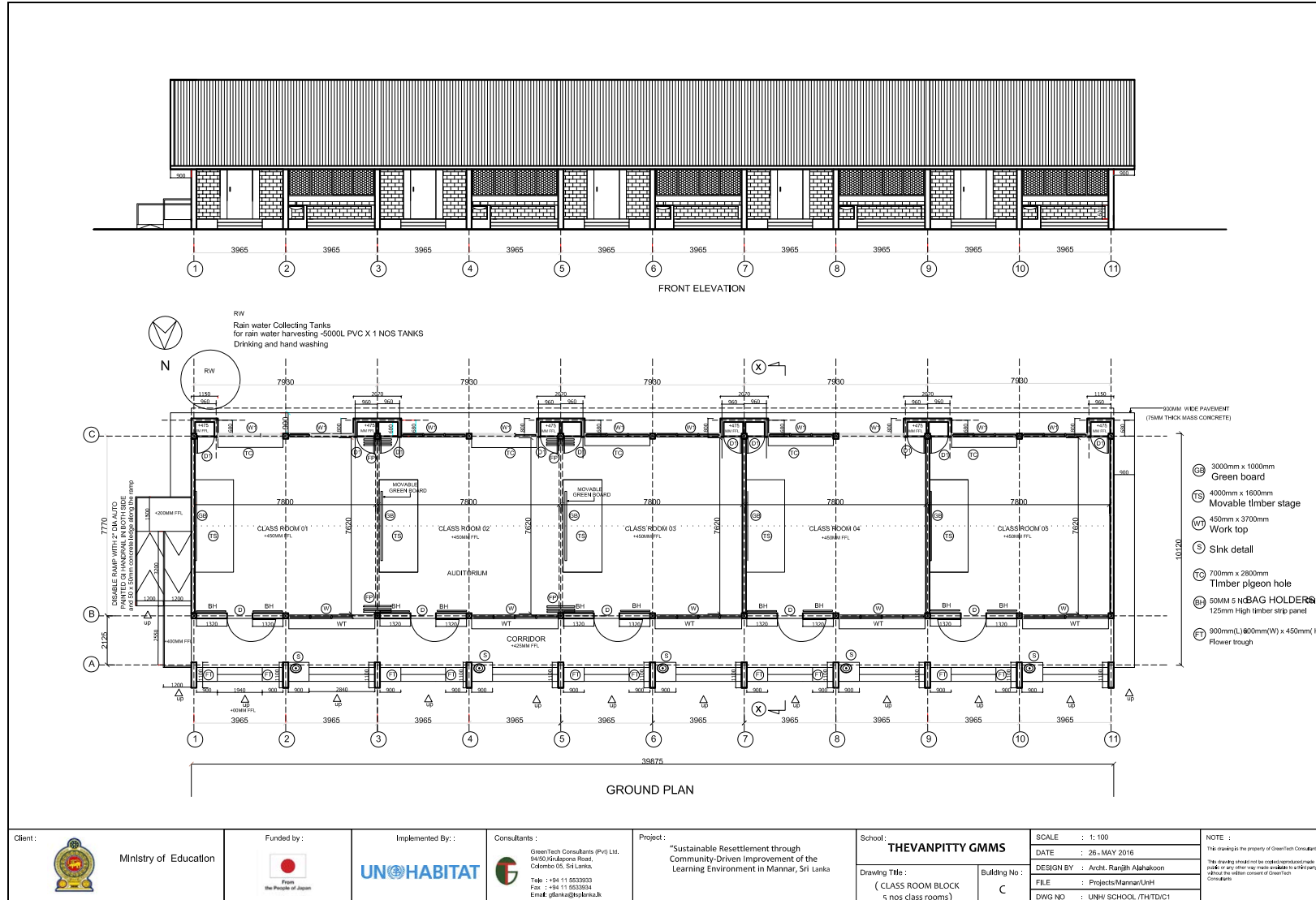


Concreting roof beams.



Roof work in progress at MN/ Bathiudeen Government Muslim Mixed School.

Typical Type Plan of a Classroom Building







Construction of Teachers' Quarters



Construction work in progress at MN/ Al-Azhar National School.

Typical Type Plan for Teachers' Quarters



Client:  Ministry of Education	Funded by:  Japan The People of Japan	Implemented by:  UNOHABITAT	Consultants:  GreenTech Consultants (Pvt) Ltd. 94/50/98, Rajapaya Road, Colombo 05, Sri Lanka. Tel: +94 11 5533933 Fax: +94 11 5533934 Email: gtc@gtc.lk	Project: "Sustainable Resettlement through Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in Mannar, Sri Lanka"	School: Vellankum GTMS	SCALE: 1:100	NOTE: This drawing is the property of GreenTech Consultants. It shall not be used for any other purpose without the prior written consent of GreenTech Consultants.
					Drawing Title: TEACHERS' QUARTERS	Building No: TQ	

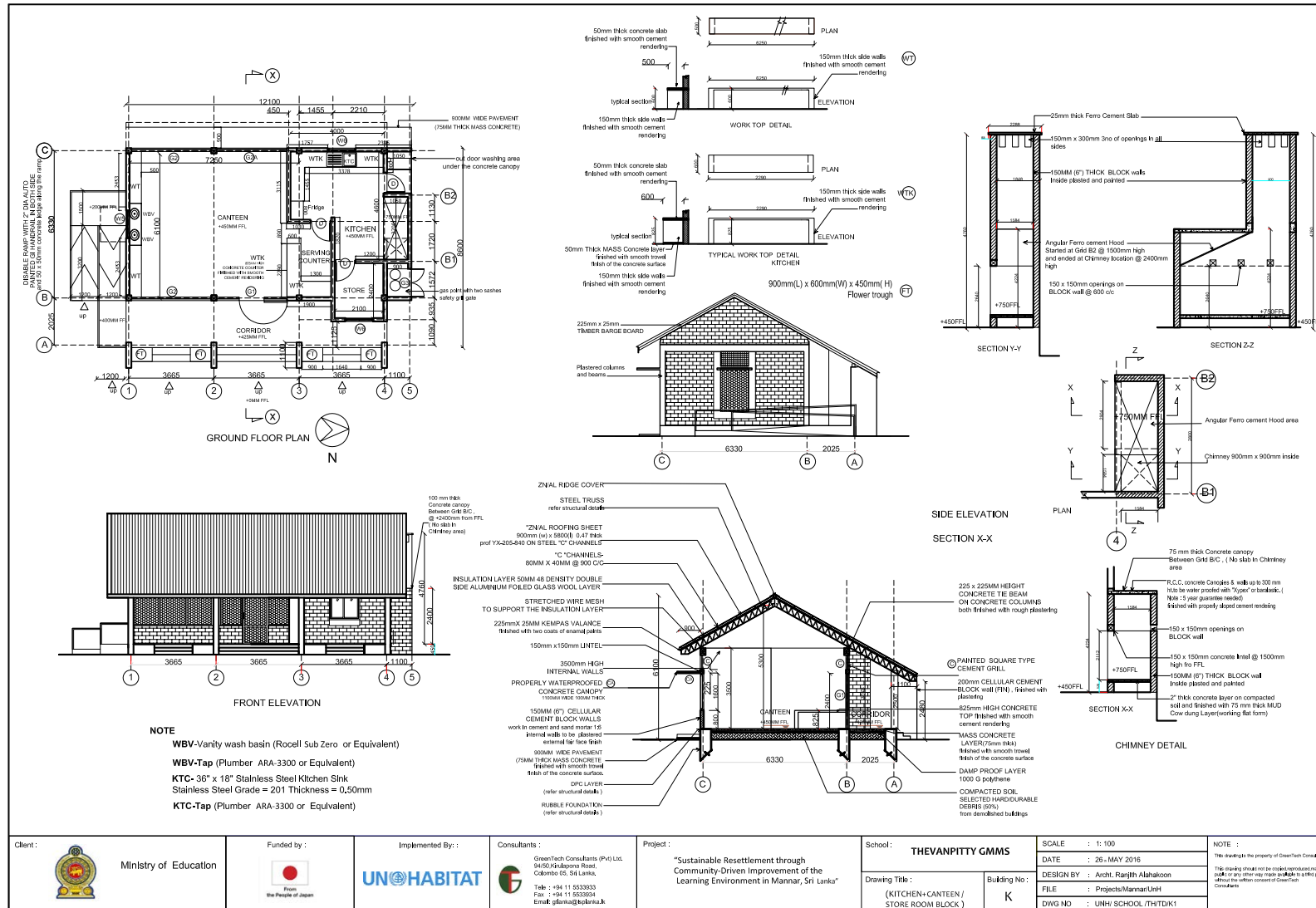
Mason constructing the internal classroom walls at MN/ Bathiudeen Government Muslim Mixed School.





Construction work inside a classroom building with UN-Habitat officers supervising the work.

Typical Type Plan for Kitchen, Canteen and Storeroom



Environmentally Friendly Construction Practices

Alternative cost effective construction practices, favourable to the local environment were introduced by the project.

The main eco-friendly practices in the construction of buildings included walls constructed using Compressed Stabilised Earth Blocks (CSEB) using locally available soil, cellular block production and construction, fair-faced block wall construction and pre-cast door/ window frames.

Other eco-friendly initiatives included construction of filler slabs, mud plaster and mud paint for walls; re-using building materials to reduce wastage and a smoke free chimney in the kitchen. All buildings have been designed to maximise natural ventilation, daylight and ensure passive cooling.



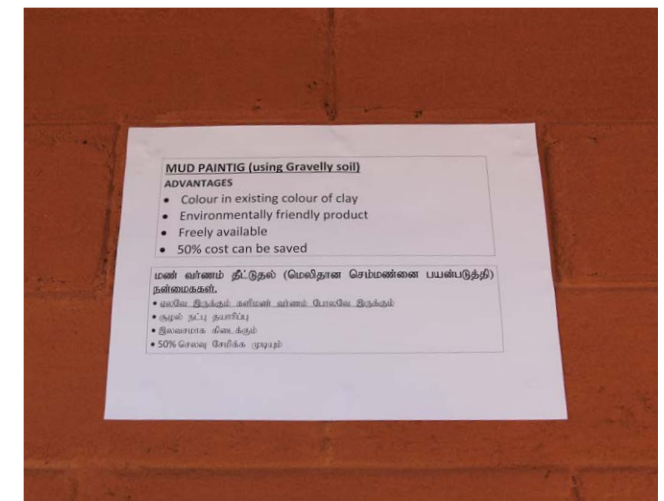
Mason showcasing a precast grill.



CSEB production at the MN/ Ikra Government Muslim Mixed School construction site.



Wall constructed using fair-faced masonry.



Wall painted using mud paint.

MUD PAINTING (using Gravelly soil)

ADVANTAGES

- Colour in existing colour of clay
- Environmentally friendly product
- Freely available
- 50% cost can be saved

மண் வர்ணம் தீட்டுதல் (மெலிதான செம்பண்ணை பயன்படுத்தி) நன்மைகள்.

- மூலம் இலகுவாக கிடைக்கக்கூடியது.
- மூலம் மலிவு வர்ணம்.
- இலகுவாக கிடைக்கக்கூடியது.
- 50% செலவு குறைக்க முடியும்.

Building Resilience to Natural Disasters



Storm water drainage system.

As Mannar District is vulnerable to extreme weather conditions such as drought, flooding, torrential monsoon rains and high winds, UN-Habitat ensured that Disaster Risk Reduction measures were incorporated into all buildings.

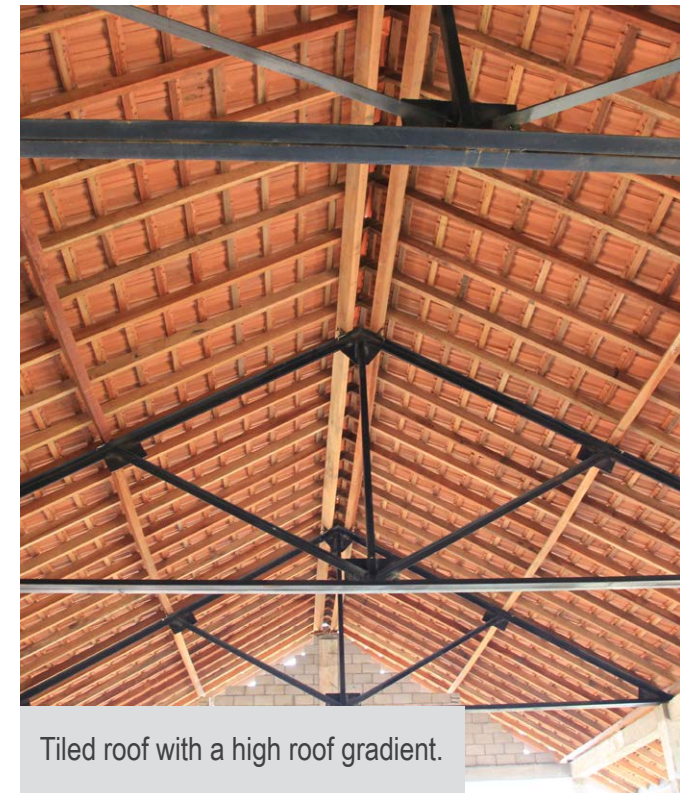
To protect against seasonal floods, the foundations of buildings were raised to a minimum height of one foot above ground level, depending on the topography of the area. Roof structures were anchored to the depth of the ring beam to prevent damage during high winds. Higher roof slopes, with a minimum gradient of 25 degrees have been maintained to withstand strong wind conditions.



Raised foundations and frame structure.

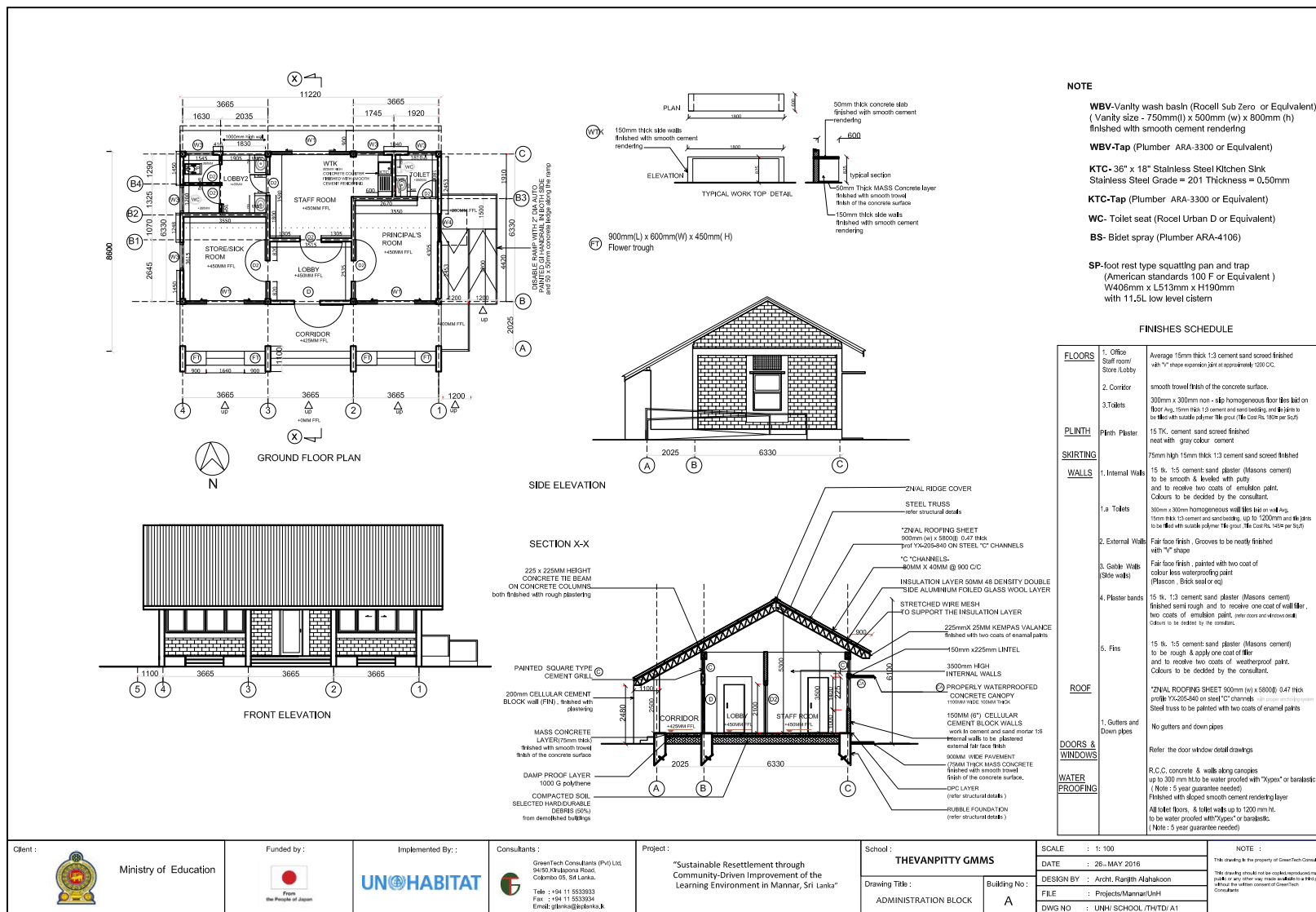
Storm water drainage systems were constructed according to site conditions to protect the buildings from flooding, and to divert rain water to communal ponds or common storm water drainage systems.

A frame structure was included in the building. This structure was constructed with a combination of beam, column and slab to resist the loads and to overcome structural movement.



Tiled roof with a high roof gradient.





Typical Type Plan for an Administration Block



NOTE

- WBV-Varily wash basin (Rocell Sub Zero or Equivalent) (Varily size - 750mm(H) x 500mm (w) x 800mm (h) finished with smooth cement rendering
- WBV-Tap (Plumber ARA-3300 or Equivalent)
- KTC-36" x 18" Stainless Steel Kitchen Sink Stainless Steel Grade = 201 Thickness = 0.50mm
- KTC-Tap (Plumber ARA-3300 or Equivalent)
- WC- Toilet seat (Rocel Urban D or Equivalent)
- BS- Bidet spray (Plumber ARA-4106)
- SP-foot rest type squatting pan and trap (American standards 100 F or Equivalent) W406mm x L513mm x H190mm with 11.5L low level cistern

FINISHES SCHEDULE

Client :  Ministry of Education	Funded by :  From the People of Japan	Implemented By :  UN HABITAT	Consultants :  GreenTech Consultants (Pvt) Ltd. 94/90 Rajaganga Road, Colombo 05, Sri Lanka. Tel: +94 11 5533933 Fax: +94 11 5533934 Email: gtc@gtc.lk	Project : "Sustainable Resettlement through Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in Mannar, Sri Lanka"	School : THEVANPITTY GMMS	SCALE : 1: 100	NOTE :
					Building No : A	DATE : 26-MAY 2016	This drawing is the property of GreenTech Consultants. This drawing should not be copied, reproduced, made public or in any way made available to a third party without the written consent of GreenTech Consultants.
					Drawing Title : ADMINISTRATION BLOCK	DESIGN BY : Archt. Ranganth Alahajoon	
						FILE : Projects/Mannar/JNH	
						DWG NO : UNH SCHOOL /T/NTD/ A1	



New
Learning
Spaces

The Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in Mannar District, Sri Lanka project successfully assisted 25 schools to improve their educational facilities.

The key project outputs included the construction of cost-effective, eco-friendly learning spaces and WASH facilities in 15 schools; Installation of tube wells and water storage facilities in 15 schools and the construction of teachers' quarters in seven schools including three cluster teachers' quarters.

All schools assisted were provided with a classroom building consisting of five classrooms with a convertible auditorium. Depending on the needs of each school, other facilities were provided including a kitchen and canteen, toilet facilities and an administration block.

The teachers' quarters were constructed as separate units with each unit consisting of a bedroom, kitchen, sitting area and toilet that can accommodate two persons in each unit. Three of the teachers' quarters were constructed as cluster quarters, thereby benefitting several schools in the area.

The project has provided a new lease of life to the returnee families in Mannar District as it has provided their children with infrastructure and facilities in a clean, hygienic and conducive environment taking into account environmental sustainability and disaster risk reduction to protect the teachers and school children in the event of a natural disaster. These new facilities will provide a much needed incentive towards improving the educational standards and the quality of life of the residents of Mannar District.



“ We can now easily achieve proficiency in teaching in terms of knowledge, skills, attitude and performance as we have the best classrooms with all necessary facilities. ”

Mrs. S.J.J. Paul Mesiya
Principal, MN/ Periyapandivirichchan
Primary School





Classroom buildings: A typical classroom building is 4,290 square feet. It consists of five classrooms (each 825 square feet), a convertible auditorium and handwashing facilities, green board, wooden stage, bag holders and in-built cupboards in each classroom. The classroom building has a disability access ramp with handrails and a wide corridor.



Newly constructed classrooms are bright and airy maximising natural light and ventilation. Each classroom has a blackboard, pigeon holes and pegs to hang the children's school bags.



Newly constructed classroom building and canteen at MN/ Koolankulam Government Muslim Mixed School in Musali DS division.





“ Now, our school has a brand new classroom building with a canteen and kitchen with facilities. The Child Friendly Schools concept has been followed in constructing these facilities. The classroom building has hand washing stations, bag holders, pigeon holes and accessibility for differently abled persons. This has created an inspiring learning environment for the school children and teachers. ”

Mr. K. R. Yasar Arafath,
Principal, MN/ Koolankulam Government Muslim Mixed School

The learning environment has been transformed by the new buildings, facilities and learning spaces. Instead of the cramped spaces the children now have large classrooms with natural ventilation.





The classroom buildings are specially designed so that they can be converted to an auditorium through a retractable wall.

School girls during their lunch break at MN/ Koolankulam Government Muslim Mixed School.





The exterior of the new classroom buildings at MN/ Periyapandivirichchan Primary School.

Wide and spacious corridors at MN/ Periyapandivirichchan Primary School.



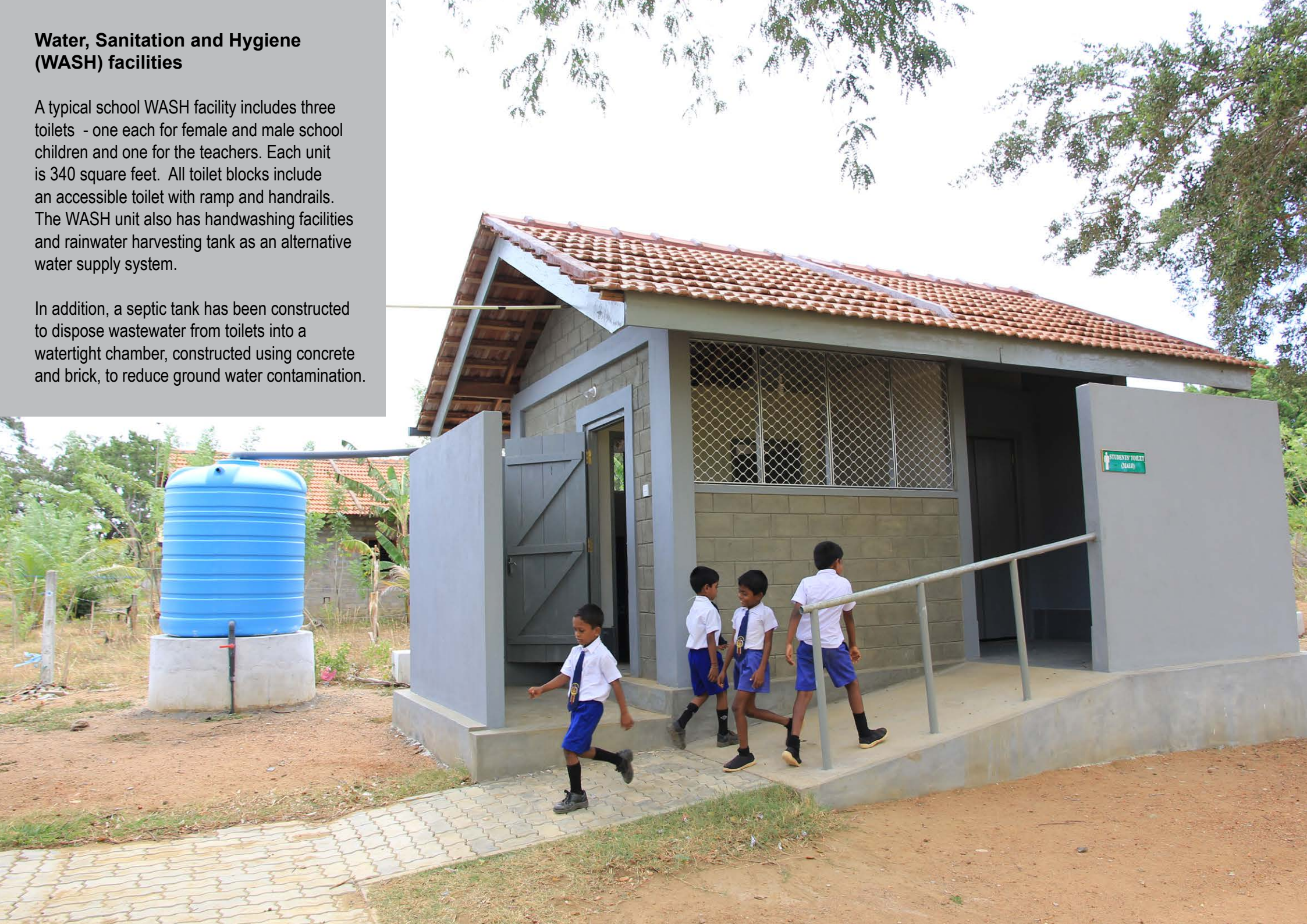


Wide corridors with cement benches along the classroom walls provide additional space for both children and teachers to work, play and also as a break from the classroom.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities

A typical school WASH facility includes three toilets - one each for female and male school children and one for the teachers. Each unit is 340 square feet. All toilet blocks include an accessible toilet with ramp and handrails. The WASH unit also has handwashing facilities and rainwater harvesting tank as an alternative water supply system.

In addition, a septic tank has been constructed to dispose wastewater from toilets into a watertight chamber, constructed using concrete and brick, to reduce ground water contamination.



WASH Facilities



WASH facilities for girls at Periyapandivirichchan Primary School and RWH system and water tank at Koolankulam Government Muslim Mixed School.





School children using hand washing facilities in a classroom building.

Kitchens and Canteens



Functional indoor kitchens and canteens have made it easier for school authorities to prepare meals for school children in a clean, hygienic environment.



Kitchen and canteen at Koolankulam Government Muslim Mixed School: A typical kitchen/ canteen is 1,120 square feet. Each building has a canteen area for the children to have their meals, with a counter and worktop with wash basins, a kitchen with a stove, smoke free chimney and a store room. An outdoor washing area has a hand washing station with sinks. A compost bin is provided to recycle and reuse kitchen waste.



“ Ikra school was earlier functioning in temporary shelters and a multi-purpose hall, without any facilities. Now this school has a modern classroom building with all facilities including washrooms and a canteen with kitchen. The school enrollment has increased from 26 to 50 due to the improved facilities and the conducive, green environment in the school. The school children and parents are very happy with these positive changes. ”

Mr. A. L. Zainul Abdeen

Secretary

School Development Committee,

MN/ Ikra Government Muslim Mixed School.

Environmentally Friendly Value Additions



Some classroom walls at Ikra Muslim Mixed School have been adorned with informative maps produced with mud paint.

The project provided “green” spaces for learning wherever possible. Seating areas under shady trees have provided an informal space for children and teachers to learn, study and interact.



Greening Learning Spaces

The project gave emphasis to environmental conservation in order to recover the green cover lost during the conflict and the subsequent reconstruction activities. Tree planting and organic school gardening programmes were implemented in all locations.

These greening activities were particularly important for school children to learn about conserving the environment and to grow vegetables and fruit for daily consumption. Many community members supported these greening activities.

Tree planting and school gardening helped to reduce the negative impacts on the environment due to construction, while greening the project areas and improving the nutrition of the school children.



“ Earlier I had a long distance to travel to school from my home town in Jaffna. At that time, I couldn't devote much time for extra curricular activities and school development. Now that I am residing in the teachers' quarters, I conduct evening classes for school children and support the school greening programmes. All these activities are positively impacting student accomplishment. These residential facilities have a very positive impact on the entire school. ”

Mrs. B. Rajitha,
*Teacher,
Thevanpitty Roman Catholic
Tamil Mixed School.*





The exterior of the female teachers' quarters at MN/ Thevanpitty Roman Catholic School. There is ample verandah space and a terraced garden area where the teachers and their guests can relax.

Cluster teachers' quarters at Thevanpitty Roman Catholic Tamil Mixed School. The residential facilities include four units. Three of the units consist of a bedroom, kitchen, sitting area and toilet that can accommodate two persons in each unit, while the fourth is a family unit with two bedrooms, kitchen, sitting area and toilet for the school principal.





Teachers' quarters at MN/Thadchanamaruthamadhu Government Tamil Mixed School has provided accommodation for both male and female teachers in separate buildings.





“ I used to face many hardships living in a rented room with very few facilities. There was no regular supply of electricity and water. Now I am happy in these new quarters, where we have good facilities. I conduct afternoon classes for school children who need extra help. Also, these residential facilities have helped us to develop closer friendships and share our knowledge with others. ”

Ms. Sivaranjini. S.,
Teacher, MN/ Thadchanamaruthamadhu Government Tamil Mixed School.

Opening Ceremonies



H.E. Kenichi Suganuma, Ambassador of Japan to Sri Lanka at the official opening of Periyapandivirichchan Primary School.



Official opening ceremonies were held with the participation of Government officials, school authorities, school children and UN-Habitat.



School children and teachers at the official opening ceremony at Ikra Muslim Mixed School.



Happy school children celebrate the opening of their new learning facilities at Ikra Muslim Mixed School.



During the conflict in Sri Lanka, communities in Mannar District in the Northern Province were displaced between 1990 and 2007 and were resettled in their places of origin during 2009/2010. Despite assistance with housing and community infrastructure, there were many outstanding needs for infrastructure and basic services in the District. Educational facilities were particularly inadequate, with school children following classes outdoors or in temporary buildings without proper sanitary facilities. The absence of residential facilities for teachers also resulted in a shortage of qualified teachers who were willing to undertake appointments to the area.

From 2015 – 2017, UN-Habitat supported the construction and improvement of learning facilities in 25 schools in Mannar district with funding from the Government of Japan. With a total budget of US\$ 4.2 Mn, the project supported the construction of primary and secondary classroom buildings, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities and teachers' quarters. This project benefitted over 10,000 returnees including 6,800 school children.

UN-Habitat Sri Lanka

202-204, Baudhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 07

Tel: (94-11) 2580691

Fax: (94-11) 2581116

E-mail: info@unhabitat.lk

Website: www.unhabitat.lk

United Nations Human Settlements Programme

P.O. Box 30030, GPO, Nairobi, 00100, Kenya

Tel: (254-20) 7621234 (Central Office)

Fax: (254-20) 7624266

Email: infohabitat@unhabitat.org

