



Tsunami Disaster Relief for Sri Lanka



Supporting the Recovery of Small Family Businesses

About Sri Lanka

A beautiful tropical country with diverse human and natural resources, Sri Lanka has struggled for decades in a wasteful civil war. Poverty rates in the densely populated rural and coastal areas are often above 30 percent. In these areas, jobs in traditional cottage industries — fishing, production and processing of coconut meat and fiber, tea, rubber, fruits and vegetables — are low paying but crucial to survival of the poor. Equally important are the numerous small family businesses in manufacturing, trade and transportation. For many Sri Lankans, these livelihoods are the only realistic alternative to a life in the cities' slums.



Fishermen emptying their nets

After the Tsunami

Tens of thousands of coastal families lost not only family members and homes, but also their livelihoods. Gone or destroyed are tools and supplies, equipment for sewing and spinning yarn, food stands, tuk-tuks, fishing boats and nets. Most of the displaced now live in refugee camps with no way to support themselves. Large aid organizations are successfully providing shelter and staving off starvation and disease. Yet, so far, there is minimal support to help these families and their small businesses to “get on their feet

again,” condemning them to a life as aid-dependent refugees in the foreseeable future. This disrupted productivity needlessly extends their suffering and harms the community, which relies on the goods and services these family businesses provide.

SECONDAID's Background

Several of SECONDAID's team members have worked for years with the Sri Lankan coconut fiber industry, both in business and as part of a USAID-sponsored development project. We have established a network of personal and business relationships and love the country and its people. In the wake of the tsunami, these relationships motivated us to draw upon our experience with small



Weaving coconut fiber mats

businesses to provide direct support to those most affected, yet not effectively reached, by aid efforts.

Our Mission

SECONDAID makes small, effective contributions to the economic recovery of local entrepreneurs and their coastal villages while minimizing bureaucratic overhead costs. Our operational concept is simple: with funds raised in the U.S. and Germany, we provide in-kind donations

and revolving, interest-free loans to repair shops, vendors, fishermen co-ops, canteens, and other small businesses that have lost their equipment and have no money or access to credit to replace them.



Destroyed coconut fiber extracting machine

We will also give grants and technical assistance to select communal projects. Identification of needs,

purchase and distribution of goods, and administration of loans is through trusted individuals and local organizations, such as the Methodist church in Tangalle. As **SECONDAID** grows, we will cooperate with other groups, who are helping tsunami victims.

Our Goal

Our initial goal is to raise \$30,000 for direct aid. With typical needs of businesses in the \$100 to \$500 range, **SECONDAID** will help many family businesses to start back up and the families, to rebuild their lives. During this initial phase, all project members are donating their time and expenses to the project, thus there are no overhead costs.



Tuk-tuk and grocery stand

Our First Project

In early February 2005, we provided all 25 families at a refugee camp in Moratuwa, near the capital Colombo, with the equipment necessary to resume their work. The list illustrates the type of businesses in need and how little start-up capital they typically require.

#	Business	Items	Cost
5	Carpenters	Wood planers, drills	5x\$90 = \$450
4	Lagoon fishermen	3/4" Casting nets	4x\$50 = \$200
1	Mason	Trowels, plumb	\$60
5	Metal products vendors	Bed frames, racks, stands	5x\$50 = \$250
2	Fruit vendors	Weighing scales, startup capital	2x\$50 = \$100
1	Snack vendor	Wooden cart, supplies	\$75
1	Ice cream vendor	Bicycle, cool box	Bicycle \$600
1	Firewood retail vendor	Axe, start capital	\$500
2	Tree fellers	Axes, ropes	2x\$50 = \$100
1	Plumber	Plumbing equipment	\$500
1	Seamstress	Sewing machine (will sew uniforms for kids in camp)	\$120
1	Tuk-tuk owner	Repair of tuk-tuk (prepared to pay back \$300)	\$500
Total			\$2,020



Children in coastal town

Team Members

USA

Christel Dillbohner, Kensington, CA
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Sri Lanka

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Donations:

All donations to our work are tax deductible in the U.S. *Fiber Futures* (www.fiberfutures.org), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has kindly agreed to act as our "fiscal agent" and allows us to use its tax-exempt status.

Please make your checks payable to "*Fiber Futures*," and reference "**SECONDAID**." *Fiber Futures* will mail an acknowledgement letter to you.



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