



## UKFG PROFILE

### WHO ARE UKFG

UKFG was set up by Devsiri (Siri) Hewavidana and his family immediately after the Tsunami disaster that shocked the world in December 2004. It is supported by many of his friends in UK and some large British Companies. Devsiri is a Sri Lankan who was born in Galle; he received higher education in the UK and graduated as a Lean Manufacturing Engineer. He has lived and worked in the UK ever since. He currently works with Airbus 350 project and lives in Ashford Kent with his wife Ruvini and the three children Deshan 16, Shynie 15 and Dinum 8. His children take part in various fund raising activities and also donate most of their pocket money to help poor children. Devsiri is also an active writer and journalist with a regular column in Sri Lanka's Sunday paper LAKBIMA.

Every Summer Devsiri and his family return to Srilanka to visit Tsunami victims and very poor schools in rural areas of Galle and Matara distribute much needed books, stationery and other gifts that have been donated by British friends and companies.

Last summer (August 2011) Devsiri and his family went to Srilanka on a 5 week Charity work. Highlight of their tour was the handing over brand new library to Gatara School in Matara and Computer centre and a new school stage to Massmulle School, donated respectively by Alan Hutchison (London) and Nicky Pharoah (Tunbridge Wells). On 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012, UKFG is handing over another brand new library to rural Ratanapala School at Kamburupitiya. This is donated by Neil Carson, Chief Executive of Johnson Matthey (London)



Ruvini's father Sirisena Gamage is our project manager, Devsiri's brother Laksiri is our Scholarship manager, and Ruvini's sister is our architect. 5 doctors in the family look after the scholarship children's health.

We are a small group of friends whose interest is to support the children (approx 220 now); we do not use any of the donation/scholarship money to fund expenses. We all give our time freely and NO expenses are ever expected. We believe you should know where any money you donate goes, and therefore we don't accept open donations. Please get in touch with us and tell we'll advise you how can help and then keep you in touch with how your money is being spent. Please see our website [www.ukfgsrilanka.co.uk](http://www.ukfgsrilanka.co.uk) for how to help us to help Srilankan children

It is great credit to all the supporters in UK that UKFG has managed to raise well over £100,000 for poor children in Srilanka since Tsunami disaster.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES - SHOES

### Shoes

UKFG have donated more than 2000 pairs of shoes for poor children in 10 schools so far. Most of these children walk miles to school and were lucky if they previously owned a pair of flip flops. UKFG arrange to have every child's feet measured then have the shoes made at a local factory. The shoes are presented to the children with new socks, to complete their gifts from UKFG, at a school assembly

### Massmulle children received shoes, a computer and a complete library with new books



## SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

### Computers

CASCO Computer Services have donated a laptop, camera and printer for the child co-ordinator to use to keep our sponsors in touch and up to date with the children they sponsor. CASCO also donated a new desk top computer to Ullalla School for the students to use. This was awarded at a school assembly and was very much required as it is the only one the school owns.



School in Matara Sri Lanka.

The Learning Curve has donated three computers to Massmulle School and Ruckinge Rainbow children have donated computers for Devsiri's old primary Howpe School in Galle. Nicky Pharoah of Tunbridge Wells who owns the Learning Curve has donated a brand new LILIAN library to Massmulle School as well as school uniforms and a printer in May 2010. Richard and Sam Kennerly of Shrewsbury and their wedding guests donated their gift money to build Kennerly Library at Akurugoda

## HOUSES

### **UKFG have now completely rebuilt 7 houses**

Unfortunately many people are still living in temporary wooden huts that really need to be demolished for more permanent housing. Depending on how much you wish to donate, (as this could be a part donation or fully funded build), the cost could be anything up to £8000 for a fully built and furnished home.

UKFG would choose a family who already own land but whose home was demolished by the Tsunami, so at the end of the build they will be the sole owners. As sponsors you would be kept up to date with the family and the build. At the final stage of build when UKFG hand over the keys UKFG would encourage you to attend the handing over ceremony and meet your family.

## BOOKS

UKFG have been able to supply several schools with desperately needed books, pens, rulers, rubbers etc. UKFG fund this with donations from Alan Keen who sponsor 2 children and Gill Budd who sponsor five, banks, Schools (Kennington Junior School and Willesborough Junior Ashford), colleagues and small cash donations from friends and Devsiri's current and previous employers and their workforce. Some of our sponsors have donated bicycles for children who can now ride to school instead of walking for many miles.

## CHARITY DONATIONS

UKFG works closely with Harrow school Development Trust and Yala Fund both are very active in Sri Lanka. Both charities process large donations given to UKFG as the tax is refunded through this system and creates more donation money. Harrow School and a Governor, Mrs Harriet Crawley, are sponsoring 15 children between them through UKFG. It was Jon Ashworth's Yala charity that secured the donation from De Beers London which enabled us to complete our final Tsunami house De Beers. Johnson Matthey was the first company to help us by donating 40 scholarships's followed by THE SKY TV with 20. One of the first schools to support UKFG children was Kennington Junior School Ashford. Currently they sponsor five poor children including an orphan throughout their studies. KM EXPRESS and other local papers in Ashford have been instrumental in getting a few scholarships from their readers for the poor children we look after.





DEBEERS HOUSE



BROOKSON HOUSE



FRICROFT & SMITHS HOUSES

**SUMMARY**

Seven years after the Tsunami disaster there are still many children who are in desperate need of help. They cannot attend school lessons because they have lost parents and there is nobody in Sri Lanka to support them long term. After a few years of education the children have no option but to drop out of school as their parents cannot afford to purchase the necessary school uniform or books. This means that finishing school or any higher education or university is totally beyond their means. This is a main concern as there are many very bright children who wish to study to become doctors, lawyers and follow other professional careers. Also, although not affected by the 2004 tsunami, there are 100s of children who live in abject poverty in rural areas that need help. An alarming number of schools in rural Srilanka have been closed recently by the education authorities due to lack of funds and facilities. UKFG's new mission is to save at least a handful schools by donating them a much needed library with books or building a computer centre with PCs. Saving a village school from closure means helping the whole community and UKFG would continue to help Rural Srilanka where poverty is rife.

By sponsoring just one of these children with £90 pa, or funding a new library you will be helping not only their families but also the whole villages and communities and giving them hope of a future. Please join UKFG and sponsor a child or donate money to build library for another poor school in Srilanka.



Major Donors. Alex Budd, Valerie Chittenden, Ruvini, Gill Budd and Dan Budd (2005)



Devsiri and Ruvini Hewavidana with their children Deshan (15), Shynie (14) & Little Dinum (7).



Nicky Pharoah and Colin Newbold with daughter Sara

For more information please see [www.ukfgsrilanka.co.uk](http://www.ukfgsrilanka.co.uk) or Email: [devsiri@hotmail.com](mailto:devsiri@hotmail.com) [devsiri@btinternet.com](mailto:devsiri@btinternet.com)