
WE'RE SL



Home for the Visually Impaired Project Completion Report

Prepared for: **Suravi Association**



Prepared by: Team WE'RE SL

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Introduction

We strongly believe that no project can stand on its own merits without a firm foundation from those who have sacrificed to make it a reality, therefore to begin this report we wish to first and foremost thank everyone involved who made this project a success; everyone from the team at Suravi, your donors, those who have been our advocates to your organisation, the construction workers, planners, supervisors and the Community leader we worked with in that area.

We are humbled to say that because of the chain of trust and perseverance amongst all stakeholders, that we as a team, have reached a satisfactory conclusion to this project.

To briefly recap the details of the Home for the Visually Impaired: ‘Samadhi Ekamuthu Meth Medura (SEMM),’ is a Home for providing necessary care to visually-impaired and hearing-impaired women who have lost the love and care of their families. It is located in Kirindiwela, Sri Lanka. It offers free medical and residential facilities, as well as facilities for relaxation and religious observances thereby making it a comfortable community for these women to reside longterm.



Our initial points of contact were with Melanie Stephens, who was a volunteer worker that was coordinating with Kanchana Samarasinghe (the President of the SEMM), and with Ranga Devi, who is a matron at the SEMM. Over the course of the project Melanie Stephens had stopped volunteering for their

organisation so we were in contact with the organisation directly and with the matron along with our regional community leader Pastor Gunethilaka.

It is with Pastor Gunethilaka's trustworthy nature and invaluable support to coordinate things at a grassroots level at the project site, that allowed us to see the project through to its completion.

As you know these past two years have been a challenge for our nation as a whole, as it must have been in your nation as well. We have been through an unprecedented health and financial crisis that brought the whole nation to a standstill. We are still yet to recover from the effects that this has had on our nation. This led to price increases of commodities needed for construction as well as restriction of movement with quarantines that extended the timeframe of this project.

Despite these unforeseen set backs and increases in price of construction materials and labour, we are overjoyed to report that the project was still able to be completed, and under the projected budget.

Project Achievements:

1. **Donation of 10 personal sized Steel cupboards for the women who were residing their permanently.** Prior to this donation the ladies had kept their personal belongings in bags at the side of the bed or under the bed. This did not allow them to have a sense of personal space and led to anxiety about the safety of their belongings, which were susceptible to theft. Thankfully the steel cupboards donated were more than ample in their size to accommodate all their belongings. We had initially thought that they required curtains around each bed, but after our discussions with the team and the ladies at the centre we decided that it may prove to be a hinderance for them to manoeuvre the curtain and that they had sufficient privacy in the living quarters already.



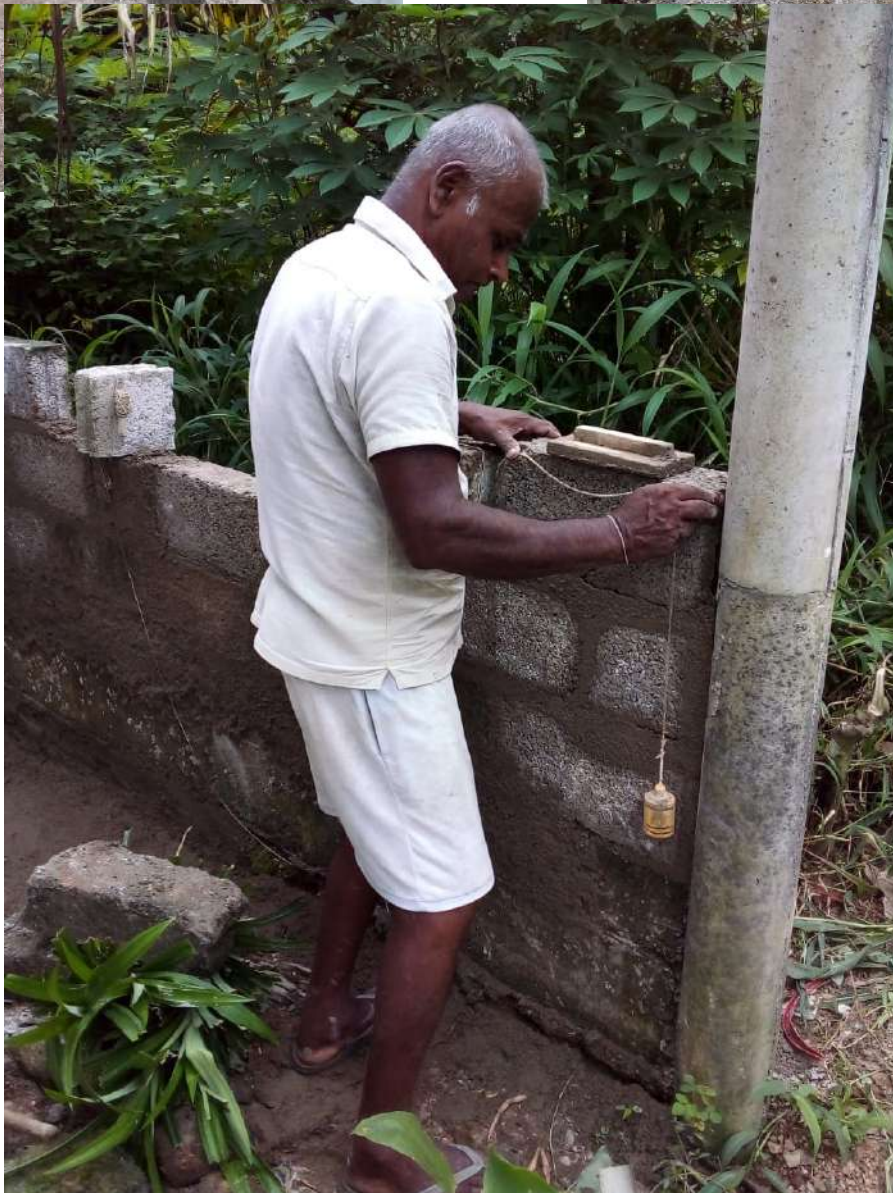


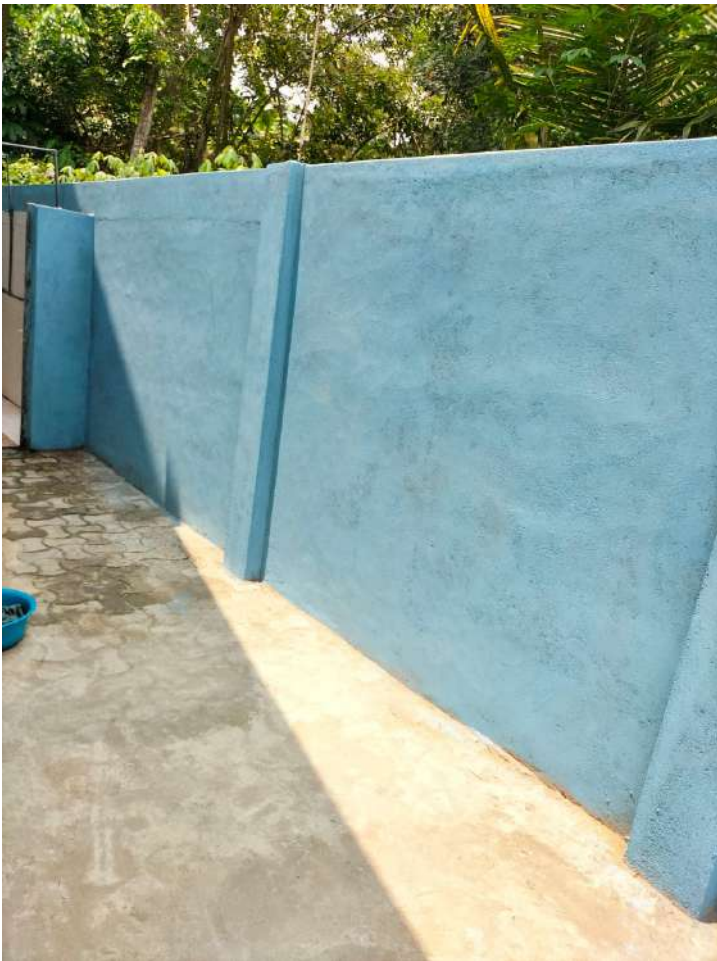
2. **Donation of 1 large steel cupboard for staff.** This had been a point of concern brought to our attention by the staff working there. They had experienced a substantial loss of raw food and other ready-to-eat foods at the hands of pests. This cupboard allowed them to protect the goods from household pests and any that might come in from the nearby fields.



3. Construction of an extension of a wall and door for the bathroom for protection/privacy for the women while they take their showers. The reality of their situation prior to this extension was deeply saddening. These ladies had a section to shower in at the back of the house that was completely open on both sides and the wall was short enough where people could see inside from the neighbouring areas, this couple with the fact that all the women had visual impairments was a huge concern. Initially our concern was that since the bathroom was outdoors that they may require rail guides or tactile guides, however, on further discussions with the ladies there they have said that privacy was their main concern and since the bathroom was only situated 5-6 feet from the house door it was a manageable walk for them that didn't require rails or guides. The changes that were made allowed them to maintain their dignity and gave them a sense of comfort that was otherwise unavailable to them.







4. Construction of a 6 ft foundation near the kitchen which was initially a slope that was overlooking an open field. On careful inspection of the property we noticed that there was a huge slope and sudden drop on the back area of the property where the ladies with visual impairments could possibly have a severe accident/injury if they tread in this area. It was completely open with no proper fencing. Upon our questioning, the organisation running the SEMM had cited a 'lack of funds in the budget' as a reason for why this was not closed earlier. Thankfully this was rectified as you can see in the photos below.





5. **Installation of a gate at the side of the house near the stair way.** This allowed for privacy as well as didn't allow intruders to freely walk into the premises. We were very concerned for their safety when we noticed that this section of the house was open to the surroundings with no barrier to entry to the living quarters for the staff, to the backyard, toilets, and side entrance to the main house. We realised that installation of this gate was going to be one of our main priorities at the outset of the renovations done.



6. Installation of a wire mesh for the new plan of an extension of a hall for meetings for the women.



Video Links:

1) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fvX0ZhIE4nJg5nvU5MT7kK-zJyzfaGcC/view?usp=sharing>

2) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/15BpKECfiSx1ySKs0UUjwzyx-nJRgmTRx/view?usp=sharing>

Has it made a difference?

We, as well as the ladies themselves, strongly believe that these changes have made a substantial difference to their day-to-day living. It has been a positive contributing influence to their sense of autonomy, well-being and has created a conducive environment in which they can live, learn and have emotional growth.

This project has contributed to our personal growth as a team as well. Everything that we have learnt during this project will be applied to all our future endeavours around the country; to not just achieve a goal successfully but to do it in a timely manner, under a strict budget and with good stewardship of the donations received.

Our heartfelt thanks and appreciation goes out to Suravi once again, for all the contributions and patience your team has given us.

We look forward to working with Suravi again and we welcome any feedback that you have for us as well.

Thank you!

