



**Writing a New Chapter- Glocalization:
Creating Libraries Across the Globe
A Case Study in Sri Lanka**

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Abstract

The MNSLFF was created in the aftermath of the Tsunami to help rebuild the lives of the people of Sri Lanka, by building homes and a learning center. It was a grassroots effort by a few dedicated volunteers with no prior experience with non-profit organizations or library design. The design calls for a financially independent library (without taxpayer's money). When technology is used to its fullest capacity; administrative costs remained less than 1%. Anyone with the motivation, a modem, and money can help anywhere in the world. The library plan will hopefully serve as a model for other libraries in Asia and Oceania.

“As a librarian, I believe that we have a great role to play, particularly in developing third world nations. A library is a valuable place for changing the lives of people; making them creative and productive citizens. In this digital information age, the library remains the place where “the “haves” and the “have nots” of all ages go to read, think, and learn. In this regard the library can play a central role in closing the achievement gap between the two. Librarians can make a great difference in the lives of poor people by helping their children develop a thirst for reading and higher education. I envisioned building a state-of-the-art library with a computer lab, so that they could become connected with the global community. It is my dream to see this community, primarily home to fishermen and their families, be proud of their library and technology center and to use the facility to enhance and enrich the quality of their lives.”

– Ms. Lillemar “Nevanka” Goonewardena

A Brief Background

On December 26, 2004, I¹ woke up to the ringing of the telephone. It was a call from a Sri Lankan-American crying, her family lived near a coastal area in Sri Lanka which had been hit by

the tsunami. Like millions of people all over the world, we² were captivated by the television when images of the horrific natural disaster were played over and over.³ We dreaded the worst and wanted to find a way to help.⁴ Two days later, on December 28, 2004, when we gathered with two close friends, the Minnesota-Sri Lanka Friendship Foundation (MnSLFF)⁵ was born. The idea of rebuilding a village was discussed before the end of the meeting⁶ and on December 30, 2004, when Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) interviewed one of the founding members of MnSLFF people began sending donations. Meetings soon followed, more volunteers joined the organization⁷ and a check list of tasks was created: (a) register the MnSLFF⁸ as a non-profit organization; (b) find a non-profit organization in Sri Lanka to collaborate with and provide immediate relief efforts;⁹ and (c) finally, have one of the MnSLFF founders visit Sri Lanka to do a feasibility study exploring the possibilities of rebuilding a village with 20–30 houses and a new community learning center keeping in mind whether this building project our team could manage from Minnesota, some 10,000 miles away.

Simultaneously, after the tsunami, the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB)¹⁰ of Sri Lanka posted an announcement on the UNESCO¹¹ website. The NLDSB was seeking assistance from the international community, especially from the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA),¹² to reconstruct/repair the damaged libraries and restore damaged books and other library materials. Among the devastated libraries was the Hikkaduwa Public Library, whose photo was posted on the UNESCO website.¹³ After seeing these articles and photos,¹⁴ I requested that the MnSLFF look into the possibility of including a library in the proposed learning center.

MnSLFF's intent was to build a thriving and self-sufficient community that could organically grow within the geographic scope of the area. Also envisioned was a community that had a basic degree of shelter providing a platform from which they could rebuild their livelihoods. We hoped to support these rebuilding efforts until the community has the capacity to orchestrate their own development in a sustainable manner. Further, we were confident that through this process we would be able to create goodwill and a shared understanding between two disparate cultures in two distant parts of the world, Minnesota-USA and Sri Lanka.

After much discussion it was decided that the MnSLFF would build a total of 50 houses.¹⁵ In addition, we envisioned a community that had the ability to gather in a central location such as a community learning center where members could engage as a public in civic processes addressing issues of shared concern.¹⁶ We visualized this Learning Center as a place where children could begin their early childhood education while adults would have the opportunity to improve vocational skills. The library and the technology center were designed to fulfill this need. In building this learning center, it was our dream to make it a model¹⁷ for others to follow.

On Monday, January 10, 2005, the day after the President of MnSLFF¹⁸ arrived in Sri Lanka he visited the NLDSB and met with the Director General of NLDSB¹⁹ and the Senior Management Staff Librarian of the Library Development Division.²⁰ As a result of this meeting the NLDSB extended their support and offered their assistance when the MnSLFF was ready to proceed with the building. In March of 2005, the MnSLFF received a booklist from the NLDSB for the opening day collection containing suggested reading material particularly for tsunami affected libraries. Although the MnSLFF was interested in getting a modern model library plan,

unfortunately the NLDSB did not have one available because they were expecting UNESCO to draft some type of model library plans to suit Sri Lanka in their rebuilding efforts. Meeting with the NLDSB further strengthened the MnSLFF's effort to help rebuild a library for tsunami survivors. After this three week visit to Sri Lanka, the MnSLFF was ready to move forward with the idea of rebuilding a village and a learning center that included a library and technology center for tsunami survivors.

It was the goal of the MnSLFF to build a library through the lens of glocalization²¹ and to introduce a new model to other international donors extending their generosity in building libraries in Sri Lanka.²² The adaptability of the library to the Sri Lankan community became more natural only as some members of the MNSLFF realized their advantage in understanding the social fabrics of both nations. In a glocalizing effort, this proved key.

Planning the Library & Technology Center

The Library

The planning, design and construction of the Learning Center was truly a collaborative effort from both ends, Minnesota and Sri Lanka. The primary goal was to support the Sri Lanka National Library and Document Services Board's efforts to meet the public library service needs of this newly built village and the adjacent villages through the year 2025 and beyond. The need to build the library facility was determined because the Hikkaduwa Public Library²³ was largely (approximately 75%) destroyed by the tsunami; as a result there was no public library within a 3 mile radius of the village at that point in time. This newly built village will eventually have over 1,000 houses and an expected population of over 5,000 people. The village setting dictated a multi-level configuration for the Learning Center with the library and the technology center located on the second level, each will have a separate entrance from a corridor divided by a glass partition wall with a glass door so that it could be utilized as a part of the library or as a separate unit.

The main objective of the library was to stimulate and nurture a desire to read in all people. For the youth it would make available the necessary books encouraging early age reading and for all the ability to find research and reference books to continue and do well in their studies. For adults the library would be a place not only to bring their children but also to read with them and have the opportunity themselves to engage in national and global affairs either reading the newspaper or researching on the web.

The Technology Center

The feasibility study indicated that there was no technology center within a 10-mile radius of the village. The MnSLFF believed that a technology/computer center was an integral part of the library and decided to incorporate this element into the library. The purpose of including a technology center within or adjacent to the library was to "open the world" to library patrons. This area would include computer workstations for public use. The patrons will have access to the internet and other library databases. The computer lab was added for several reasons including a) introducing computers to needy community users; b) giving school-aged children a powerful educational resource; c) providing a place for community members, children and adults to further their computer application training; and d) enabling everyone to have access to the World Wide Web as they explore the globe and connect with the world around them. In

addition, after normal business hours the technology center could be rented out not only for computer application training classes but also for various other vocational training classes.

The building has been wired to support modern technology needs. At first the plan was to buy fifteen to twenty computers. Twelve to sixteen computers would be kept in the technology center; two computers would be used for the reference department/desk and two computers for the circulation department/desk. If there is a future demand for more computers, there is a plan in place to provide fifteen more computers in the quiet study area. In the event that more computers are installed in the library for public use, this space could be used as the information commons area of the library. If more computers are added to the library area, flat screen monitors are recommended in order to provide adequate workspace for patrons.

In addition, the plan is, if necessary, to charge a nominal user fee, much like an internet café's charge, for maintenance purposes. This would financially help to manage the library and would also be tremendously helpful for the perpetuity of the library and the technology center.²⁴

The Construction of the Learning Center

Finding a location

The first post-tsunami visit²⁵ by representatives of the MnSLFF occurred in January of 2005. They traveled from Colombo to the eastern province around the coastal area, assessing the damage, visiting refugee camps and schools, taking pictures, interviewing people, and looking for a village to rebuild. Simultaneously, the government of Sri Lanka was changing the zoning laws to move the people inland and to include a 100 meter buffer zone from the coastal area. Thus, it was not easy to find free land to build upon and most of the international donors gave up building because they could not find suitable land on which to build. This was also not an easy task for the MnSLFF, but the President of MnSLFF persisted tirelessly and on separate occasions met the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, the Secretary to the Prime Minister and the Personal Secretary to the Prime Minister to discuss a suitable location to rebuild a village. Finally, after several visits to the Ministry of Urban Development and Water Supply (UDA), the Minister of UDA offered a piece of land to the MnSLFF to build houses and a community center in the District of Galle,²⁶ which was the hardest hit area in the entire nation.

Finding Local Volunteers

The driving force behind the MnSLFF organization was its volunteers. The MnSLFF organization is a 100% volunteer organization. Residents in Sri Lanka were onsite coordinators helping to build the village and Learning Center. Finding local volunteers is extremely important for various reasons, especially when donors are pledging to rebuild a village from 10,000 miles away. The MnSLFF identified this need at the very inception of the project and the President of MnSLFF, while in Sri Lanka, searched for a reliable person with a connection to Minnesota and an exposure to western business practice to coordinate the project. It was vital that MnSLFF ensure a reliable and a dependable project coordinator in Sri Lanka to coordinate the activities.²⁷ Later, librarians in Sri Lanka were also enlisted to help set up the library, hire personnel, and provide training.

At the inception of the project the volunteers made a pledge to use their own funds to travel to Sri Lanka rather than using the donor funds. Every dollar that the MnSLFF received for the

tsunami project went directly towards the rebuilding of the village and the Learning Center. The President of MnSLFF made the preliminary negotiations with the minister of UDA and obtained a letter of commitment for the piece of land.²⁸ Immediately thereafter the MnSLFF moved forward with their plans for building the village.

Organization

To receive donations, the MnSLFF needed to be a tax-exempt charitable organization. Therefore, the MnSLFF immediately contacted a law firm and filed for tax exemption under §501 (c) (3) of the Inland Revenue Act as a charitable non-profit organization. Within three months of its application²⁹ the MnSLFF was granted the tax-exempted status for four years. Simultaneously, the MnSLFF invited a Six Sigma³⁰ specialist to facilitate the project strategic plan development and the development of the governance of the MnSLFF. The greatest strength of this organization was that all volunteers knew each other and trusted each other; they also brought their various talents and expertise to the project. The disadvantage was time commitment and the lack of civil engineering skills.³¹

The Six Sigma specialist³² was able to provide guidance in evaluating the strengths of the group and in helping to develop the project plan. The project development tools facilitated the development of the mission, vision, and strategies for the organization and the project. During the Six Sigma session the MnSLFF went the extra step and performed a stakeholder analysis, a needs assessment, and a cause and effects diagram to gather and prioritize their ideas. Later, a timeline was developed.³³ When the MnSLFF developed the needs assessment, it reviewed data from the World Bank's report "Sri Lanka: 2005 Post Tsunami Recovery Program"³⁴ and other reports the government of Sri Lanka provided.³⁵ The research and data confirmed that a library would be a significant addition to the newly built village.

Schematic Building Plan

The initiation of the schematic building plan³⁶ was one of the most complex and exciting processes of the learning center project. The goal was to design and plan a facility to meet the present and future library service needs of the newly built village. The building program statement represented the best projections of the library facility at that point in time regarding the effective arrangement of library services and space. The next challenge was to find a volunteer architect to draw the conceptual building plan according to the schematic building plan.³⁷ Eventually, the MnSLFF approached the Architecture for Humanity Minnesota Chapter (AFH)³⁸ and provided them with a copy of the schematic building plan. After perusing the plan, the AFH made a commitment to volunteer their time and resources in accomplishing this task.³⁹ The visuals and drawings⁴⁰ the AFH created during the planning process helped to convince the board as well as the donors⁴¹ of the library design.

Because the project began with limited funds, a project plan was created so that the library could be built (equipped with furniture, computers, audio/video material, books, etc.) in incremental steps (months or years) as funds become available. The program described the spatial and environmental needs of the Learning Center. It was imperative to draw up the program plan as the library's service goals directly affect the library's space needs.

The new Learning Center is approximately 4,000 square feet (1,219 square meters) and houses a Montessori/Pre-School along with a Communication Center on the ground floor with the library and the technology center on the upper floor. The staff room and the bathrooms are located in a single story building adjacent to the Learning Center, which is connected by a corridor. Finally, the features such as the size of the collection, the number of computer stations, and the number of reader seats were determined according to the layout of the library.⁴² The AFH designed architectural drawings for different aspects of this learning center project.⁴³

Construction

The MnSLFF called for bids from prospective leading contractors in Sri Lanka to build the Learning Center. After a vigorous selection process the MnSLFF decided to hire the Central Engineering Consultancy Bureau (CECB).⁴⁴ After long negotiations followed by paperwork over the Internet, the MnSLFF signed the building contract which was sent digitally via email to the CECB. The documents were in PDF format and the architectural drawings were in AutoCAD file format. The agreements were signed, scanned, and emailed through the World Wide Web to Sri Lanka. All plans and invoices were sent electronically in PDF format and Excel files attached to an email. The construction payments were remitted from Woodbury, Minnesota, using the Wells Fargo Bank's wire transfer service to the CECB bank account at Bank of Ceylon. Communicating through the World Wide Web via email, instant messaging (IM) and other technologies, the MnSLFF was able to keep the administrative costs at less than 1%, so that monies could be best spent for the housing and learning center projects.⁴⁵ The Minister of Urban Development Authority of Sri Lanka stated that this was the first successful project that made use of modern technology with such great impact and success in Sri Lanka.⁴⁶

The founder⁴⁷ of International Architects for Humanity also viewed the design of the building. There were certain elements that the AFH was interested in having included in the learning center building, which would enhance the esthetic beauty and the functionality of the building. The AFH undertook to fund the landscape work and provide the architectural drawings to be sent to CECB for implementation. These landscape drawings were also sent to CECB digitally via email and the World Wide Web. The additional funds were used to landscape the property and to build the fence, a gate and a well, plus a man made stream to run across the premises that would include an overhead bridge to drain the rain water coming from the higher ground.⁴⁸ Later, when the local coordinator of the International Architecture for Humanity visited the site, she was extremely happy and impressed with the quality of the construction of the learning center building.⁴⁹

The architectural drawings of the interior layout became useful when negotiating with furniture contractors.⁵⁰ Seeing the detail drawings, a Sri Lankan donor was impressed with the library and wanted to fund the construction of the circulation desk.⁵¹ Consistent with the elegant building design, it was decided to construct a granite circulation desktop. The furniture will be polished in a mat finish for durability. A glass wall is also in place to partition the technology center from the library. Once the library and the technology center are fully furnished the interior designer will determine the color, style, and material for the curtains in the technology center.

Fundraising

Immediately after the tsunami the Minnesota news media covered the MnSLFF activities in Sri Lanka; the publicity drove individual and corporate volunteers to contribute funds. The MnSLFF collected \$9,085 within the first twelve days following the tsunami. This money was given to a local non-profit organization in Sri Lanka to attend to immediate relief efforts for tsunami victims.⁵²

The Minnesota Asian Business Forum organized a panel discussion regarding the rebuilding efforts taken by Minnesotans in the tsunami devastated countries, which was aired on a local television channel several times. The President of MnSLFF was invited to participate on this panel.⁵³ It was here that the MnSLFF made connections with the major private donors.⁵⁴ In addition, more funds started pouring in after the other donors viewed the television program and read the local newspapers articles about the progress the MnSLFF was making in Sri Lanka. But after a couple of months, the media lost interest and very few stories on the tsunami, the survivors, and those rebuilding Sri Lanka were published. Unfortunately this lack of interest caused donations to start dwindling. The next big setback in the MnSLFF's tsunami rebuilding efforts was due to Hurricane Katrina hitting the Gulf Coast of the United States of America on August 23, 2005. To deal with the diminishing donations, the MnSLFF organized fundraising events and looked into other donor organizations for funding.⁵⁵

The MnSLFF raised over \$600,000, of which approximately \$350,000 was spent on building 50 houses. The remaining funds are allocated for the construction of the Learning Center and for the final phase of the project—the sustainable development of the tsunami survivors.

To raise funds for the library, the MnSLFF drew up a proposal to take to donors. The MnSLFF approached the Pacific Asian Tsunami Healing (PATH), a non-profit organization, to request funding.⁵⁶ This matching funding was applied towards building the library and the computer center along with the other library specific donations.

Tax issues

Sri Lanka charges a 15% value-added-tax (VAT) applied to all building materials and services. To reduce construction expenses, the MnSLFF applied for an exemption from VAT to build the Learning Center. In the summer of 2006, the VAT exemption was granted, resulting in considerable savings. The tedious and time consuming process was representative of the many barriers and hurdles to endure and overcome.⁵⁷

Collection development

Because limited funding was a concern in building the library collection, a sample survey was conducted to assess the needs of the community to provide reading materials to meet the interests of all ages and to facilitate their lifelong learning. In August 2006, a sample survey was done in the community and the findings dictated that the original booklist did not fit this community's needs. The MnSLFF also received a list from the NLDSB which needed to be updated. The reference collection on the list was reduced by at least half and the non-fiction collection was modified to suit the community.⁵⁸ The MnSLFF's local volunteers recompiled the list after visiting several publishers and leading bookstores in Colombo, Sri Lanka.⁵⁹ Then MnSLFF

found a donor⁶⁰ to purchase the initial collection. All of this research helped the MnSLFF to use the library funds wisely and for its intended purpose.

The initial library collection should be adequate for the time being, as a majority of the community is alliterate⁶¹ and did not use public libraries before the tsunami. So it may be a challenge to bring the community to the library and make them comfortable using the facility. Since the library is now a small to medium size library, there is limited shelf space. For the next five to ten years, the MnSLFF projects this shelf space will be sufficient. As funding becomes available, the plan calls for investing in audio books and e-books which could be retrieved and read 24/7 if access is provided to the library databases. In those years with advances in technology, the MnSLFF plans to make the community computer literate so that they will have access beyond just the library catalog and databases to the global community.

The local volunteers were able to negotiate with all the bookstores and publishers to offer a discount that normally is offered during the “literature month” (“Sahithya Month,” which is in September). These titles will be delivered by the publishers once the shelving is in place. The books that are ordered for the library will be primarily for children—both non-fiction and fiction; fiction books for adult; and for all readers—newspapers. As the community grows and as literacy standards improve, the reference collection and the non-fiction collection will be expanded.

It is also a goal of the library to educate the children in the community in their English language skills. To this end the library is planning on buying audio visual equipment and materials to support the learning of the English language. Audio books, along with printed materials, will help the children to take learning and reading into their own hands.

The MnSLFF purchased the necessary books pertaining to setting up the library at the NLDSB bookstore.⁶² Local librarians offered very useful tips after viewing the architectural drawing and gave tours to MnSLFF volunteers. One such tour was at the Overseas Children’s School in Battaramulla, Sri Lanka. Here the MnSLFF volunteers were shown how the library does its collection development and online cataloging, how their collections were organized, and how they provide services to students at the school. One goal is to follow the same customer service practices of the Overseas Children’s School library. In addition, MnSLFF is planning to have a homework center to help children with their reading and writing.

Children’s Corner

The creation of a Children’s Corner in the library was to provide a child friendly environment. The safety of the children was a great concern. Although the original drawings by the AFH were more desirable, the MnSLFF is now faced with living with the current design by the UDA, as the land was given by the government and concessions had to be made. A door near the Children’s Corner will be kept locked at all times during library open hours due to safety and security reasons. This door may be used in an emergency and as a staff entrance when the library is closed to the public.

The current location for the Children’s Corner is charming. As space is limited, it was decided that the children would sit on cushions, which would accommodate more children. In addition, when the librarian sits on the cushions with the children at the same eye level, it will facilitate

the children's communication with the librarian and enhance their learning. The children's librarian's desk is located adjacent to and facing the Children's Corner. The purpose of staffing a children's librarian is to have a daily story hour to facilitate their early childhood reading and to make the children comfortable using the library. A children's newspaper table was added to encourage children to start reading the newspaper at an early age. Getting the children used to a learning environment at an early age will also provide a head start for the local children when they enter school.

Telecommunications

At a board meeting which was teleconferenced with the interior designer, the final colors were decided and instructions were sent to the volunteer civil engineer and the CECB for implementation. The MnSLFF found a volunteer interior designer⁶³ to visit the project site. Once the building construction was complete, the interior designer contacted the MnSLFF via email and sent color palettes along with drawings and her suggestions. This was an area in which telecommunications was invaluable.

Recognition of Donors

The MnSLFF values their donors as well as all volunteers and stakeholders. People of all walks of life in Minnesota contributed to building this village. An elegant memorabilia case was built inside the library to place the history of the organization and the newly rebuilt village. Included are photographs and news articles of the different fundraising events and other relevant information pertaining to the creation of the 50 houses and Learning Center.

In addition, a granite plaque located in the Learning Center (designed in Minnesota and created in Sri Lanka) recognizes each individual donor, all board and charter members of MnSLFF, and all volunteers in both countries.

The largest contribution to the project was received by the Shimek family. In recognition of their generous effort the Learning Center was named after them and is officially called the Shimek Learning Center. Not only did they personally contribute but they also were instrumental in organizing the Wave of Hope fundraising event, an event that raised over \$500,000. Moreover, what the MnSLFF appreciated is the trust and belief the Shimeks placed in the MnSLFF's building of the village and Learning Center. During the opening and the dedication ceremony in the summer of 2007, the plaque will be unveiled and the Learning Center will officially be introduced as the Shimek Learning Center.

Staffing and Management

The perpetuity of the Learning Center is of great importance to the MnSLFF. Therefore, the MnSLFF decided to hire a management team rather than handing over the Learning Center management to the local government. The final stages of setting up a management team to run the entire Learning Center are currently being discussed. At present the MnSLFF is working with the Galle Rotary Club, the Lions Club, and the Postal Union on a management plan, and the MnSLFF is hoping to sign an agreement with the chosen organization by June 15, 2007.⁶⁴

The MnSLFF developed a staffing model to suit the environment. When the library is ready to be open for the public, the MnSLFF initially decided to hire at least one professional librarian, a

computer lab assistant and two support staff to run the library.⁶⁵ This is if the library hours are to be from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. As the community users increase, more staff will be added to provide the service needs of the library and technology center. The addition of more computers inside the library would also mean that a technologically savvy staff member be hired to provide help to patrons in the library information commons area. Further staffing needs may include an additional lab assistant for the technology center. The reference desk has been integrated into the computer lab so that service can be provided to both areas from this one desk.

The circulation desk will be staffed by two support staff members.⁶⁶ One of the librarians will be trained to do the story time and the MnSLFF has done the preliminary planning to send this staff member to the Overseas Children's School library⁶⁷ for an internship to learn their school model for working with children. This librarian would be seated closest to the children's corner, at the circulation desk. The other circulation support staff member would help to check in and check out materials, catalog, and perform other miscellaneous tasks per the supervision of the librarian.

The Principal Librarian, who will report directly to management only, will manage the library and all of the library staff. The technology center specialist/manager will also report to this librarian. Tentative job descriptions have been created, but as the library becomes fully operational, a job analysis will have to be done and job descriptions may alter based on operations. After their initial training, all staff members would be crossed-trained to answer basic technology questions and identify basic research material. The vision of this new staffing model is intended to be an ideal model for small and medium size modern libraries in Sri Lanka.

Measuring Success

The MnSLFF has developed a plan to evaluate the success of the library. In the summer of 2007, a study will be done to ascertain the literacy level of the community.⁶⁸ Effective evaluation can be done with the pre-school students as they would be introduced to use the library from an early age. This evaluation will help measure the success of the new service model. Since a gate count (people counter) will not necessarily indicate the success of the program, from time to time a survey will be done to assess the success and usage of the library. Because the new service model is more prone toward encouraging academics versus the typical casual library services the country is accustomed to, measuring success with the new culture of the library and the community will be unique and challenging. The "frequency of use" and "user learning" will definitely need to be measurements.⁶⁹

The advantage that the MnSLFF has is that local volunteers are keen on continuing to work with the community. In addition, most volunteers in Minnesota are well acquainted with the economy, politics, culture and language in Sri Lanka.

Rewards and Hardships

In a project of this magnitude one cannot expect their goals to be completely attained without facing obstacles. It is a difficult yet fascinating journey.⁷⁰ Working with community members who are accustomed to a certain lifestyle is not necessarily easy when introducing modern concepts. Seemingly simple decisions such as the paint color of the building, the type of fence, the landscaping of the center were difficulties not imagined until the time came and contradicting

views were expressed. At times, changes would need to be made and we would find it necessary to veer off our direct path to create balance and peace for all involved.

Time zone differences often made communication difficult. Volunteers had sleepless nights and days while working around a global clock. Minnesota daytime is Sri Lanka's nighttime and visa versa; for Minnesotans with full-time jobs, the night time communication had its advantages (Sri Lanka was beginning their day), but free time and sleeping became sparse.⁷¹

At times the technological advances or lack thereof, limited research in Sri Lanka and often proved an obstacle for both countries. This situation is to be expected when working with developing countries or with countries that have undergone a major catastrophe, in tenfold when dealing with both factors. Due to damage to the infrastructure, faxes and emails sent were never received or received days later, telephone lines were frequently engaged and software and technology were at times incompatible between the two countries.⁷² Another factor would be the amount of time it takes to accomplish a task. What would seem simple to a westerner may prove difficult in a developing nation because resources and energy are varied. While the MnSLFF found less concern in this area as the housing project progressed, the Learning Center delivery date was delayed due to the weather and political climate.⁷³

Also foreign exchange differences were proving advantageous to one country but not the other. When budgeting for overseas projects, currency differences must be taken into account as even a slight currency change could make a large difference in overall budgeting.⁷⁴

The opportunity to meet influential people on a local, national, and international level was very rewarding and inspiring.⁷⁵ The impact that we have on others and that they have on us is exemplified now and as our venture moves forward. The MnSLFF received letters, memos and cards with encouraging and supportive messages that fuel their drive encouraging volunteers to move forward and embracing the beauty of the struggle. A particular note from a little budding philanthropist (child) containing a five dollar donation continues to touch the hearts of our volunteers.

Conclusion

While many terrible things happen in our world, it is "what we do next" that really matters. For many years passionate individuals who are driven and inspired by their efforts and those of others have made differences in the lives of those who have been less fortunate.⁷⁶ It took only a handful of volunteers and a multitude of generous hearts in both Sri Lanka and Minnesota to build a village and a community learning center. This project became a success with 100% volunteer efforts in fundraising, project administration and supervision (Over 99% of the donated funds were spent on the building project while administration costs were allotted less than 1%). The MnSLFF rose to the challenge of trying to make the world a better place for others, in this case the survivors of the tsunami. In a shared-power world, humanitarian issues, particularly involving natural disaster, cross borders and become global concerns, not of any single organization but of many. This project is a great example of how glocalization works. A network of organizations made headway against the problem with no single organization in charge. By working with local Minnesotan organizations and national Sri Lankan organizations and with the help of various individuals, the MnSLFF was able to accomplish its goals. As

technology has caught up to the good intentions of librarians and other people around the globe, it is now possible to rebuild the livelihoods of individuals' one step at a time. From one librarian⁷⁷ with a passion to share her inspiration to the hundreds and hopefully thousands she will affect, it is important to understand what any one individual with the motivation, the technological support and the ability to raise funds can do to transform lives anywhere in the world. This library in Sri Lanka is part of a message not only in glocalization but of commitment to nurturing present and future generations.

End Notes:

¹ Lillemar "Nevanka" Goonewardena, Project Coordinator of the board of directors of MnSLFF. Practicing law in Sri Lanka for over seven years, she understands the situation of third world countries; coming to the West, she also understands how easy it is to forget the difficulties that exist in the developing countries. She understands the legalities and economics of the developing countries and working through the MnSLFF, she took the initiative to build a model library with a computer/technology center with hopes of enriching the lives of tsunami survivors in a village in Sri Lanka. She did the preliminary writing of the building program statement, remained the coordinator of the library planning group and was the liaison with the design team. Since she was the only professional librarian in the volunteer group, she was responsible for planning, fundraising and implementing the library and technology center.

² Nevanka and her husband Ananda Srilal Liyanapathirana (Lal), live in Woodbury, Minnesota-USA.

³ On December 26, 2004, the Indian Ocean earthquake claimed more than 175,000 lives in 11 nations along coastlines from Asia to Africa. Sri Lanka (population 20 million) lost more than 35,000 lives and 100,000 homes. Many homeless still live in tents or refugee camps. The CNN gave broad coverage for several days of the tsunami disaster in USA.

"The worst casualties were public libraries in coastal settlements of Sri Lanka especially Ampara, Batticaloa and Jaffna in the North East Province, and Galle in the Southern province. A total of 70 public libraries were destroyed or damaged in the tsunami, most of which were rural libraries in the Pradeshiya Sabhas. Library staff also number among those who lost their lives when the tsunami struck. The worst affected were libraries in the North East Province where 51 libraries were affected and 15 in the Southern Province, which were also areas worst hit by the tsunami. 28 of the affected libraries were completely destroyed while the rest suffered damage to library buildings. Almost all of the affected libraries lost their collections, furniture and equipment." See Baba, Zawiyah (2007, February 24-27). Redevelopment of Library and Information Services after Tsunami: A Comparative Study of Aceh and Sri Lanka. Retrieve on April 15, 2007, from http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/docs%5CAceh-project%5Cfull-papers%5Caceh_fp_zawiyahbaba.pdf

⁴ Bonner, Brian. & Bauer, Mary. (2004, December 28). Minnesotans worry, offer help some locals have ties to devastated region. *St Paul Pioneer Press (MN)* p. A6. Retrieved February 22, 2007, from <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/>

⁵ See the MnSLFF website for more information of the organization's members. Everyone in our group had good ideas, the passion, and the internal desire to help. We had a program office, comprised of the executive board that had the ownership and oversaw the entire project. <http://www.mnslff.org>

⁶ The library came later.

⁷ Bonner, Brian. (2004, December 29). Minnesotans begin getting word from Asia relief efforts continue to take shape here. *St Paul Pioneer Press (MN)* p. A5. Retrieved February 22, 2007, from <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/>

⁸ The MnSLFF was registered as a non-profit organization with the Secretary of State of Minnesota on January 4, 2005 following the tsunami of 2004. In April 13, 2005, the MnSLFF received the tax-exempted status under section 501 (c) (3) of the internal revenue code with effective date of exemption January 4, 2005. After receiving the tax-exempted status it became easier for the organization to raise funds.

⁹ Bonner, Brian. (2005, January 3). Rituals relief efforts continue: Indian, Sri Lankan groups mourn dead, organize aid. *St Paul Pioneer Press (MN)* p. B1. Retrieved February 22, 2007, from <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/>

MnSLFF collected \$9,085 which was handed over to Success Colombo, a non-profit organization in Sri Lanka to take care of the immediate needs of tsunami survivors.

¹⁰ For more information on National Library and Documentation Services Board and the National Library and Documentation Centre, Sri Lanka, see the website: <http://www.natlib.lk/>

¹¹ The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). For more information, see www.unesco.org/

¹² For more information on the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), see the website: <http://www.ifla.org/>

¹³ UNESCO New Delhi. (2005, January 1). Situation with Information Institutions: A Testimony from Sri Lanka. (http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17915&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

¹⁴ (a) Abeysinghe W.A. (2005, January 3). Sri Lankan Libraries Call for Assistance. Retrieved February 22, 2007, from the UNESCO website: http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17842&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

(b) UNESCO Starts Assessing Situation of Archives and Libraries in Asia Disaster Region (2005, January 5). Retrieved February 22, 2007, from the UNESCO website: http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17892&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

(c) IFLA/UNESCO. (2005, January 7). Sri Lanka Disaster Management Committee for Libraries, Information Services and Archives Established. Retrieved February 22, 2007, from the UNESCO website: http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17908&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

(d) UNESCO New Delhi. (2005, January 10). Information Institutions: A Testimony from Sri Lanka. Retrieved February 22, 2007, from the UNESCO website: http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17915&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁵ The MnSLFF built 50 houses in Monrovia Estate, Hikkaduwa-Galle and delivered the houses to the recipients on January 16, 2006. The tsunami survivors who were the recipients were selected by the Pradeshiya Sabha (local government authority), according to the Sri Lanka government's established process of distribution and development.

¹⁶ Most tsunami survivors lost everything they owned. The majority of them were fishermen and the wives were involved in the coir industry and lived by the beach. They all lived in the nearby villages. This learning center will help the community integrate and reinforce the importance of knowledge and information. People are very unlikely to invest in books that they cannot afford. These people had been neglected throughout the years. They had the means to study, they had the brains, but were deprived of opportunities others on the mainland had.

¹⁷ If another disaster happened, librarians could apply this model anywhere in the world and build libraries cost effectively.

¹⁸ Ananda Srilal Liyanapathirana was the Assistant Commissioner for the Department of Immigration and Emigration prior to immigrating to the USA in 1979. He is the Senior Systems Analyst for the Minnesota Department of Human Services and is currently on sabbatical leave. He received a Bush leadership fellowship for 2006-2007 and is studying for the Mid Career Masters in Public Administration Degree at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota. In addition, he is the current President of Minnesota-Sri Lanka Friendship Foundation (MnSLFF), a Board of Director of the Asian Pacific Cultural Center (APCC), and a Board of Director of Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans (CAPM).

Also see Bonner, Brian. (2005, January 24). From words to action: a Minnesotan's Sri Lanka homecoming is dominated by scenes of destruction. *St. Paul Pioneer Press (MN)*. Retrieved February 22, 2007, from <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/>

¹⁹ Mr. Upali Amarasinghe is the Director General of National Library Development and Services Board.

²⁰ Ms. D. Daniels was the Senior Management Staff Librarian of the Library Development Division.

²¹ Glocalization is a term that was invented in order to emphasize that the globalization of a product is more likely to succeed when the product or service is adapted specifically to each locality or culture it is marketed in. http://searchio.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid19_gci826478,00.html

²² In a calamity or devastation the librarians could use this cost effective model to build libraries anywhere in the world. This model was developed after giving much thought to the legalities, culture and economics of the newly built village. Total construction cost of the Center (which includes the library, pre-school, the communication center and the technology center), and furnishing the library and the technology center is estimated to be less than \$200,000.

²³ Hikkaduwa Public Library is located approximately 4-5 miles away.

²⁴ An interesting side note is that the MnSLFF is currently working on collaborating with the President of Sri Lanka in his initiation to build 1000 technology centers, a project called the "Nenasala."

²⁵ Ananda Srilal Liyanapathirana was joined by journalist Brian Bonner and photojournalist Ben Garvin of the *St Paul Pioneer Press*. Kalamatiya was the first ideal village the MnSLFF came across, which had 31 houses washed away, but it was too late, as the Green movement had already pledged to rebuild this village. After they traveled through the many devastated villages, the MnSLFF could not decide on a location. See Bonner, Brian. (2005, January 24). Devastated village, but one of many all 31 homes were destroyed and nine lives lost in Kalamatiya on Sri Lanka's southeastern coast but a determination to rebuild is apparent. *St. Paul Pioneer Press (MN)*. Retrieved February 22, 2007, from <http://infoweb.newsbank.com/>

²⁶ Monrovia Estate, Hikkaduwa Galle.

²⁷ Ms. Becky Gunaratne, a Native American, was on a five months vacation in Sri Lanka when the President of MnSLFF visited Sri Lanka shortly after the tsunami. He met Becky and Jayani Adikarama, who is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin Superior, in Wisconsin and lived in Minnesota prior to leaving for Sri Lanka in September 2004. Ms. Adikarama was MnSLFF's first local coordinator. Currently, our local coordinator is Mr. Sydney Seneviratne, a retired engineer. Ms. Ama Kitulgoda and Ms. Uma Kitulgoda (sisters), who are undergraduate students of University of Sri Lanka Colombo Campus, have volunteered to set up the library and the technology center. Ms. Ashani Goonewardena, an interior designer from Sri Lanka, volunteered to help with the interior designing work. Ms. L.P. Karunawathie, Chief Librarian of the Colombo Public Library, volunteered to assist MnSLFF to set up the library and hiring librarians; and Ms. Cathy Hunt, the library coordinator of the Overseas School of Colombo in Pelawatte-Battaramulla, volunteered to provide necessary training if needed.

²⁸ Hon. Dinesh Gunawardena gave a letter of assurance dated January 28, 2005, promising to provide land in Galle and housing plans for the MnSLFF. Thereafter, on March 21, 2005, the President of MnSLFF and the Minister of UDA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and MnSLFF received the land from the government to build 50 houses and a community learning center.

²⁹ Attorney-at-Law Mr. J. Hazen Graves made the application on behalf of the MnSLFF in February 2005. All the legal work he provided for MnSLFF was on a pro bono basis. Mr. Graves is a partner in Faegre & Benson Law Firm (Minneapolis office), concentrating on matters relating to charities and charitable giving. He advises nonprofit organizations of all kinds regarding nonprofit corporation incorporations, governance, business matters etc. Mr. Graves provided legal advice pro-bono for the MnSLFF during its incorporation and during the process of seeking its non-profit tax exempted status.

³⁰ In brief, Six Sigma is a systematic process to defuse many data objects to a few key objects that are actionable. For more information on Six Sigma see: http://www.isixsigma.com/sixsigma/six_sigma.asp

³¹ Later, Mr. Sydney Seneviratne, a retired Civil Engineer joined the MnSLFF as a local volunteer filling this void, on or about March 2006.

³² Mr. Jim Jacob (Master Black-Belt in Six Sigma), used many tools namely Business Alignment Framework (BAF) and Six Sigma in developing the project plan. The advantage of engaging Mr. Jacob was that he understood the dynamics of both countries as an expatriate from Sri Lanka with an understanding of both countries' cultures and economies.

³³ This information can be found on the MnSLFF website: <http://www.mnslff.org/timeline.php>

³⁴ Asian Development Bank, Japan Bank for International Cooperation, and World Bank. (2005, January 10-28). Sri Lanka: 2005 Post-Tsunami Recovery Program – Preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment. Retrieved March 1, 2005, from <http://www.iucn.org/places/usa/DCMC/dcmcpublishations/slnafull.1.pdf>

³⁵ These reports provided useful insights and were later included in the MnSLFF booklet. Minnesota Sri Lanka Friendship Foundation (MNSLFF): www.mnslff.org Published April 2005.

³⁶ Ms. Nevanka Goonewardena prepared the schematic building plan since she is a librarian and also possesses a diploma in Montessori education. The schematic building plan for the community/learning center included a health care center. Later, the MnSLFF learned that a new healthcare center was being constructed in the newly built village, so the MnSLFF decided not to proceed with the health care center. This room is now designated for a communication center.

³⁷ Networking with the Asian community in Minnesota helped MnSLFF to overcome this barrier. In May 2005, Mr. Sishir Chang an architect, who is also a founder of PATH, agreed to talk to Architects for Humanity (AFH) - Minnesota chapter to volunteer to draw the plans.

³⁸ The Architecture For Humanity (AFH): Minnesota Chapter volunteers, Jeffrey Swainhart, Maureen Ness, Cassie Neu and Troy Gallas worked on the interior design of the library and technology center while the learning center building was designed by seventeen other architects. See the website: <http://www.mnslff.org/mnafh.php>

³⁹ Rand, Dorothy. (2006, January/February) Wave of Hope. *Architecture: Minnesota*. 32(1), 20-23.

⁴⁰ On Friday July 15 and Saturday July 16, 2005, the AFH arranged a two-day design charrette at the Smith Group office in Minneapolis, where a group of seventeen architects worked tirelessly to come up with a building plan. They divided into four groups: site/landscape design; space planning; connections; and heating, cooling, and ventilation. See Rand, Dorothy. (2006, January/February). Wave of Hope. *Architecture: Minnesota*. 32(1), 20-23.

⁴¹ The architectural drawing done by AFH was then sent to Sri Lanka for approval through the World Wide Web via email to the Urban Development Authority (UDA). Unfortunately, one of the officers at UDA decided that it did not suit the Sri Lankan style of architecture and wanted to redesign the learning center drawings according to the Bawa style. The Bawa design is a popular design model developed by the Sri Lankan architect, Jeffrey Bawa. This new plan called for a smaller building and did not accommodate handicap accessibility to the second floor of the building. Although MnSLFF was keen on adding handicap accessibility, one of the UDA officers was not receptive to that idea. The UDA also took a few months to review and develop their new plan. Although the MnSLFF was not quite satisfied with the new drawings, they decided to go ahead with it because the building costs were going up the longer they waited, the tsunami was no longer in the public consciousness—no more CNN photos, and fundraising was getting more difficult. Also new building projects were mushrooming in Sri Lanka and the UDA was swamped with more requests for architectural drawings. Therefore, the MnSLFF did not want to delay the building construction since the handicap accessible features could be added later to the building.

⁴² The original drawings by the AFH were done according to the schematic building plan. These plans were later modified by the UDA in Sri Lanka when they were sent for approval. The size and the design of the library changed and the MnSLFF decided to modify the program plan and to follow the UDA plan.

⁴³ The architectural drawings done by the AFH are:

- (a) the original Learning Center drawings
- (b) the landscape drawings
- (c) the Library and Technology center layout, and
- (d) the Montessori/Pre-school furniture layout.

These features evolved directly from the community's demands for improved services from this learning center.

⁴⁴ The President of the MnSLFF met with the CEO of CECB, observed some of their construction sites, and conducted some follow-up interviews with some of their clients before making the final decision. The CECB is a quasi government agency and the MnSLFF selected this agency due to many reasons: quality of construction, guarantee of the work, reliability (since the MnSLFF is 10,000 miles away), transparency, company profile, dependability and integrity of the organization.

⁴⁵ The in-kind donation towards actual administrative cost is between 3%-4% and the administrative cost directly incurred by the MnSLFF is approximately less than 1%. Yet the aggregate of the actual administrative cost in total is less than 5%.

⁴⁶ Hon. Dinesh Gunawardena delivering his speech at the opening ceremony of the 50 houses built by MnSLFF on January 16, 2006 made this statement. See Bonner, Brian. (2006, January). A gift of shelter: left homeless by the tsunami, 50 families in Sri Lanka begin moving into new houses built in a picturesque subdivision, thanks to efforts and donations from Minnesotans. *St. Paul Pioneer Press (MN)* p. A1.

⁴⁷ Mr. Cameroon Sinclair visited MnSLFF in March 2006. He pledged additional funding to complete the learning center project. As the construction progressed, the AFH inspected the building and approved the pledged amount to be paid to the MnSLFF. The AFH donated \$30,000. They were interested in building a bathing well, which was later removed from the list due to concerns about health hazards.

⁴⁸ Drainage is an important building design, as the community center is located in a valley and the water drains into a paddy field.

⁴⁹ An email was sent by Susan Pratt, AFH Local Coordinator in Sri Lanka to Jeffrey Swainhart, Architecture For Humanity Minnesota Chapter dated Monday, March 5, 2007 under Subject: Re: Hikkaduwa.

⁵⁰ In August 2006 two board members of MnSLFF visited four furniture contractors including CECB, interviewed and inspected the quality of their work. One of the main concerns that the MnSLFF had was over the quality of work and the cost. They visited the Galle Secretariat building to inspect the quality of furniture of the CECB while they were in Sri Lanka. As the MnSLFF was satisfied with the quality of the work provided by CECB, the MnSLFF signed the furniture agreement with CECB using the digital media as previously done. Finally, the furniture contract was given to the CECB (the building contractor) who subcontracted to a contractor in Colombo.

⁵¹ The wife and children of the late Mr. E.P.P. Jayasuriya, attorney-at-law, undertook the construction of the circulation desk in his memory. The circulation desk construction was included in the furniture contract that MnSLFF signed with CECB.

⁵² The money raised was deposited with the Triple Gem North of Minnesota, which is a non-profit organization, who acted as the fiduciary agent of MnSLFF since the MnSLFF had not received the tax-exempted status from the Internal Revenue Department (Tax Department). A money order was drawn in favor of Success Colombo, which is a well established non-profit organization in Sri Lanka, who provided the immediate relief for tsunami survivors on behalf of MnSLFF.

⁵³ Other panelists were from India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, who were engaged in immediate relief efforts.

⁵⁴ The major donors (Dan and Kay Shimek) were quite impressed with the MnSLFF and made a commitment to give the remaining funds they had collected from the Wave of Hope fundraising event. Out of the Wave of Hope funds, \$275,000 was donated to the International Red Cross Organization. The Wave of Hope was a fundraising event was organized at the Enjoy restaurant. Dan and Kay invited the Apple Valley Chamber of Commerce into a process with the Mayor and the Superintendent of District #196 to find a way to match Dan and Kay's personal funds amounting to \$100,000 to be given for tsunami relief. Over one-half million dollars was generated as a result of their generosity and leadership. A great majority of that money came from the students of Independent School District #196.

⁵⁵ Other organizations that made significant donations were Architecture for Humanity (AFH), The Minnesota State Government Libraries: the Capitol Area Library Consortium (CALCO), the Maplewood Middle School, the St. Paul Central High School, the Wave of Hope fund, and the Pacific Asian Tsunami Healing (PATH) with the funds received from Bremer Foundation, via the St Paul Foundation.

⁵⁶ The PATH was created after the tsunami to help local organizations in Minnesota aid tsunami affected countries in their relief and rebuilding projects. The Bremer Foundation provided the funding for the PATH through the St. Paul Foundation. The PATH received \$250,000 from the Bremer Foundation, which was allocated \$200,000 for matching funds and \$50,000 for administrative expenses. Out of the \$200,000 of matching funds, the MnSLFF received \$89,979.15; out of the \$50,000 allocated for administrative and capacity building, the MnSLFF received \$6,580.58 for administrative expenses and \$8,213.41 for capacity building.

⁵⁷ It was a very time-consuming task for the two board members of the MnSLFF who had to make several trips to individual agencies which took two days (that is if one is lucky). There is no parking close to the buildings due to security reasons; there are heavy security checks at each building; employees are often at meetings, on breaks and vacations, not to mention the high humidity, blazing sun or heavy rain that were all part of the governmental permission experience. First, approval for the project is needed from Reconstruction and Development Agency (RADA), then a bid from the contractor with detailed expenses for the project. This document then had to be submitted to the fiscal affairs branch of the Treasury to apply for tax exempted status. Once the Treasury accepts the application, it needs to be certified by RADA verifying the project, the activities and the cost of the building. Then this certified paper from RADA needs to be taken to the Treasury for the final VAT approval. If taxes have already been paid by the contractor to the Inland Revenue Department (Tax Department), to get a tax refund of the paid taxes one must first get a document from the contractor to prove that taxes to the Tax Department have been paid. That information is then forwarded to the Fiscal Department of the Treasury. Then the paperwork provided by the Treasury is taken to the Tax Department. Once the Tax Department goes through the files and approves the amounts of tax payments, a certificate is given on the amount of VAT taxes paid. This document needs to be provided to the Fiscal Branch of the Treasury, which then approves the VAT refund. In order to receive the refund, MnSLFF needs to wait until the Parliament approves it in the next budget. This was a time consuming, bureaucratic, and cumbersome process. Unfortunately this was a system problem. But the employees (professionals) were extremely pleasant, welcoming, knowledgeable and helpful.

⁵⁸ In August 2006, a sample survey was done by Nevanka Goonewardena, Ama Kitulgoda and Uma Kitulgoda. The sampling was done with the recipients of the houses MnSLFF built. They visited ten houses. Their goal was to assess the communities' reading abilities, their interests and level of reading. During the sampling sessions they found out that over 90% of the men were in the fishing industry and hardly ever read a book or a newspaper other than the betting (gambling) sheet. Women over the age of 30 hardly read the newspaper, which they never bought as it was too expensive for their household budget. The adults hardly read the newspaper or books as their priorities of life were quite different from the people who lived away from the beach. During the survey, it was discovered that most school-aged children in this community did not read books other than their textbooks. When three school-aged children (in grades 4 and 5) were asked to read their English textbook, they said they could not read the book. When they were asked to write specific words from the alphabet, they were able to do so. In two of the households parents said their teenage daughters read Sinhalese novels if they received them from their friends. Basically, this community watched television and listened to the radio for news about what was happening in the country.

⁵⁹ The MnSLFF provided the NLDSB's list to Uma Kitulgoda and Ama Kitulgoda (sisters), who volunteered to set up the library with assistance from the Head Librarian of Colombo Public Library.

⁶⁰ The North Cross School and the citizens of Roanoke, Virginia, USA raised money for tsunami relief efforts. MnSLFF presented the booklist to the donor. The books that will be purchased with this money will be stamped to acknowledge the donors.

⁶¹ Alliterate is defined as having the ability to read but choosing not to. It is to be mistaken with those who are illiterate, and cannot read. <http://www.unwords.com/unword/alliterate.html>

⁶² The NLDSB bookstore has many useful books available for purchase regarding building a library. The books discuss various valuable aspects such as cataloging, furniture specs, ledgers etc.

⁶³ Ms. Ashani Goonewardena—an Interior Designer of Nedimala, Dehiwela, Sri Lanka.

⁶⁴ If the CECB decides to hand over the premises to MnSLFF before signing the agreement with the management team, MnSLFF has already taken steps to employ a security guard to monitor the premises. In March 2007, the MnSLFF solicited resumes from this new community who expressed their interest in being employed at the learning center. Already, MnSLFF has narrowed down prospective candidates to interview for the open positions at the learning center until the new management team takes over.

⁶⁵ Ideal situation would be to hire one librarian for the reference desk and one for the circulation desk to work with the children.

⁶⁶ The MnSLFF is planning to send the library staff for special training organized by the NDLSB. In addition, we encourage the staff members to follow the library science diploma course.

⁶⁷ Ms. Cathy Hunt, the Library Coordinator of the Overseas School of Colombo in Pellawatte-Battaramulla, volunteered to provide opportunity for an intern of MnSLFF to get trained from the librarian(s) at the Overseas Children's Schools' practices and procedures in training to work with the school-aged children. The MnSLFF's vision is to apply the teaching practices of the Colombo international school standards to this village setting to enhance the quality of service to this community. The Overseas Children's School provides a high-quality English-medium education for pupils aged 3 to 19 years in its infant, junior and secondary sections. There are over 400 students from over forty-two different countries attending the school. Nearly all the buildings are purpose-built and include science laboratories, computer rooms, a library, an auditorium, art facilities and a swimming pool. For more information on the school, see <http://www.osc.lk/>

⁶⁸ The MnSLFF will be conducting a study in this newly built village in the summer of 2007 as part of a study with the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute (University of Minnesota) Synthesis workshop. The survey will be done to ascertain beginning data to develop a statistical model to measure progress of the community. The President of MnSLFF will be living in Sri Lanka for three months organizing the opening and the dedication of the Learning Center and conducting the survey and the study. The statistical survey will be done with the recipients of the 50 houses built by the MnSLFF. If other communities living in this new village are interested in joining the study, the MnSLFF can measure their growth as well.

⁶⁹ In the summer of 2007, a process will be developed to measure the success through the Synthesis workshop conducted by the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute (University of Minnesota).

⁷⁰ The majority of the members showed a keen interest in the library and technology component of the building, but a few members had concerns about theft and other such issues. While theft will always be a concern, it is apparent (by observation of nearby libraries) that this should be an issue that we should see beyond, realizing that ultimately this service will provide more to the community than whatever could ever be stolen.

⁷¹ During the construction some of the board members had less than five hours of sleep until the housing project was completed. Since Sri Lanka is approximately eleven to twelve hours ahead of Minnesota, when the offices are opened in Sri Lanka it is nighttime in Minnesota.

⁷² Very often the MnSLFF experienced difficulties getting across to Sri Lanka over the phone. Most telephone calls are made to Sri Lanka during the daytime (over there) and the telephone lines are jammed with incoming calls to the country. Also, the software incompatibility created difficulties in reading the architectural drawings done in Sri Lanka and vice versa.

⁷³ In May 2006 CECB informed the MnSLFF that they will be able to deliver the building by July 31, 2006, and that should be ready to take over the building. So, Mr. Srilal Liyanapathirana and Ms. Nevanka Goonewardena arrived in Sri Lanka on July 31, but due to the monsoon rains and other unexplained reasons, the CECB could not complete and deliver the building on time during their stay in Sri Lanka.

⁷⁴ Fortunately, the MnSLFF gained from the currency exchanges, but a change in orders and an increase in the cost of building materials absorbed this gain.

⁷⁵ It was an opportunity to get to know the senior government officials in Sri Lanka. In one such example a group of people in Australia was so impressed with the development of the project that they organized a fundraising event which brought in US \$7,500 (Australian \$10,000). In another example a group from Virginia, USA (North Cross School and the Citizens of Roanoke, Virginia, USA) who raised money for the tsunami reconstruction projects visited the MnSLFF project site in Sri Lanka in March 2006. They were so impressed that they donated the remaining money they collected to buy the opening day collection for the library. The Minnesota State Government Libraries: the Capitol Area Library Consortium (CALCO) contacted the MnSLFF and made a generous donation.

⁷⁶ The next project is currently under development by the MnSLFF President Ananda Srilal Liyanapathirana, who is being funded by a Bush Fellowship via the University of Minnesota Hubert H. Humphrey Institute. An English language library will be built to help improve the language skills of adults.

⁷⁷ Lillemar Nevanka Goonewardena was born and raised in Sri Lanka and immigrated to the United States of America in December 1988. In 1980 she obtained her Bachelor of Law degree from the University of Colombo and became an attorney-at-law in 1981. She practiced for over seven years mainly in Colombo and the Southern Province of Sri Lanka, and is a life member of the Galle Bar. In June 1993 she received her Jurist Doctorate degree from William Mitchell College of Law (WMCL) in St Paul, Minnesota. She worked at the Warren E Burger Law Library of WMCL for nearly twelve years. In January 2005 she received her Master in Library and Information Science degree from Dominican University, Illinois. Since April 2004 she has been working for the Minnesota School of Business/Globe University as an Associate Librarian on the Woodbury Campus. She also works for the Metropolitan State University Minnesota as a part-time Faculty Reference Librarian. After the Tsunami 2004 she helped found the Minnesota-Sri Lanka Friendship Foundation (MnSLFF), which is an all volunteer non-profit foundation, and where she initiated and spearheaded the building of the library/technology centre in Sri Lanka. Currently, she is a volunteer board member and the project coordinator. She also volunteers her time for the Asian Pacific Cultural Centre (APCC) – Minnesota, which is a newly found non-profit organization, which is building a 10,000 square foot language library in St. Paul, Minnesota. Presently, she is involved in setting up a state of the art language library/auditorium for this organization in St Paul, Minnesota.

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