

10<sup>th</sup> July 2017

H.E. Antonio Guterres  
Secretary General  
United Nations  
New York, NY  
10017, USA.

Your Excellency,

I am pleased to confirm that Aspirations Education which became a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2008 continue to pledge our support to the ten principles of the Global Compact with respect to Human Rights, Labor, Environment and Anti-corruption.

In this 2017 Annual Communication on Progress, we have outlined our strategies to improve the situation of less privileged communities based on the principles of Global Compact.

We are happy that a lot of international and national universities and donor institutions have established partnerships with Aspiration Education Foundation to assist the underserved communities more effectively. A detailed account of our “Social Duty” programs can be found in our web site;

[www.aspirations.edu.lk/foundation](http://www.aspirations.edu.lk/foundation).

Sincerely Yours,



Ajith Abeysekera  
Chairman

## **Human Rights**

**Principle 1:** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

**Principle 2:** make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

During the year 2017, Aspirations Education Foundation for Community Development (AEF) has extended its project portfolio further to the rural and underserved community in line with the Principles of Global Compact Initiatives. AEF Program direction is based on both right based and need based approaches as well as Community Participation and Stakeholder Engagement. We facilitate the development process to realize the aspirations of the marginalized communities to meet their basic rights. We also engage in the role of advocacy with the Government and the regional level authorities to facilitate the development needs in relation to basic human needs and Poverty Alleviation.

AEF further consolidated the School based development programs in the year 2017, to ensure the Right to education for more needy children. We ensure all the children engage in compulsory education and complete the compulsory education up to secondary level. Therefore, all of our projects in schools would facilitate a child friendly environment for the child to engage in the education process. AEF conducts need based, participatory assessments in all its schools projects with the participation of the School Community; The School Principal, Teachers, Students, Parents, School Development Societies, Well Wishers and the Government Authorities. Thereby AEF would be able develop a Holistic involvement process and ensure the right to Education.

The following are some of the salient activities completed during the year 2017.

### **Student Scholarships:**

- The Apeksha” scholarship financial assistance project continued to absorb more children in rural, underserved schools. The children were able to purchase basic educational materials, stationery, Uniforms, shoes and also attend much needed additional tuition.

### **Water & Sanitation:**

- Access to water and Sanitation is another basic right of children. AEF continued to assist needy schools in this aspect. The children of Ritigaha-Arawa National School did not have access to toilet facilities at all. About 40 Primary school children studying at this school were going to nearby houses or jungles to perform this basic need. AEF with the assistance of Deakin University, Australia and funds from AEF constructed two toilets at the school premises. AEF also supported to streamline the water system at this school.

**Literacy & Reading:**

- Access to basic literacy is a very important principle in Education. AEF organized a number of seminars, workshops, training programs and book donation programme for children, teachers in Ampara, Badulla, Pollonaruwa and Vauniya districts from 20 schools to address this need. AEF conducted a workshop for 15 teachers from 5 schools in Ampara Education Zone on the teaching techniques on development reading habits of Primary school Children.

**Recruitment of Volunteer Teachers:**

- AEF continued to recruit and pay monthly allowance for Volunteer teachers who were teaching English and Tamil languages, Science, Mathematics, Library management in needy schools in remote areas in Badulla, Monaragala, Ampara districts. More than 1,500 children were benefitted from this program.

**Early Childhood Development:**

- AEF strengthened its assistance in the area of Early Childhood Development in the year 2017 as well. Thereby, AEF ensures the right to education for pre-school children in rural Sri Lanka. The pre-school system does not come under the prime purview of Ministry of Education. Therefore, it is our responsibility and task to make this sector more professional. Under the pre-school assistance project, AEF rehabilitated an old pre-school building at Aruanalu pre-school and provided safe and child friendly environment for about 60 children.

**Child Play Areas:**

- These facilities are very important for the mental development and the physical wellbeing and entertainment of the child. AEF has constructed Child Play Areas with all necessary equipment at AM/Ritigahaarawa, Secondary School, AM/Pethiyagoda, AM Wawinna, and AM/Arunalu Pre School with funds from Aspiration Education Foundation and Deakin University, Australia.

**Small Scale Infrastructure Development:**

- AEF has also assisted minor and medium scale infrastructure development at partner schools. We have constructed a Primary school building at Arunalu Pre School of Usbima Village In Ampara district. This building now has a stage and a hall which has provision to conduct 1-2 class rooms. More than 60 preschool children could study here and the stage and hall can be used for meetings, presentations, drama theatre and workshops.

**IT Education:**

- Aspirations Education Foundation identified the importance of IT being taught to school children especially in rural areas of Sri Lanka, where large numbers are shut out from this vital aspect of modern education, as they have no access to computers at home or school. AEF have constructed a fully equipped computer lab building at Arunalu Pre School of Usbima Village In Ampara district. This was a novel experience for teachers and Pre school students. A one day training class was conducted at Arunalu pre School in Ampara and AEF has donated several computer items to the AM/Sirisada Vidyalaya, Polwatta Ampara.

**Sports Development:**

- Sports play a vital role in developing mental and physical health in school children. Most of the schools in rural Sri Lanka have no facilities to develop this sector. During the year 2017, AEF donated financial assistance to AM/Padagoda Vidyalaya, AM/Pethiyagoda Vidyalaya and AM/Dewalahinda Vidyalaya to conduct its Inter- House Sports meet.

**Agriculture Development:**

- AEF has consolidated its Agriculture projects and mango fruit growing at Schools during this year. We continued to assist the schools with technical advice, fertilizer, and water for agriculture, training and development. The final goal of the agriculture program is to have an additional income generation for schools to continue their development activities. In addition to that, Teachers, senior students, Parents and Community members are trained in modern agriculture practices and Organic Agriculture through this agriculture implementation project.

- **Community Business Organization**

AEF have formed a Community Business Organization (CBO) at Usbima Village Ampara from among the people in Usbima area. They will commence various income generation activities. AEF implemented a bamboo based income generating project within this village to make maximum use of the available natural resources. They have already commenced a bamboo weaving and bakery production as an income generation activity. This group was given a two day training of bakery production and bamboo weaving process by AEF consultant.

- **Health Care facility Development**

In collaboration with AEF medical aid relief programs, the Health Faculty of Deakin University has been instrumental in delivering several medical equipment needed to save and improve the quality of life for thousands of individuals AT Inginiyagala hospital in Ampara District.

- **First Aid box donations**

Lack of First Aid Knowledge is a severe problem in rural schools. To bridge this area, AEF conducts First Aid training programmes for teachers and students. AEF has already trained 35 teachers from 20 schools in Ampara district with the assistance of St John Ambulance, Colombo, also AEF in collaborations with Deakin University have distributed First aid boxes to schools in Ampara, Badulla, Pollonaruwa, Vauniya, and Killinochchi districts.

- **Individual House construction Project**

Aspirations Education Foundation has been involved in many school development projects in and around Kandegama area for the past year. Among those schools, Kandegama Maha Vidyalaya benefitted from the Mango Project initiated and monitored by Aspirations Education Foundation. During the Mango Project the teacher in charge of the project at the school, Mr. Piyarapana informed Aspirations Education Foundation about a poor family who deserved a new house. He requested the Foundation to take initiative to construct a new house for this family.

Mr. Ajith Abeysekara, chairman of the Aspirations Education Foundation visited the needy family at their house in Ritigahaarawa, and talked with them. The recipient, Mr. W. Senevirathna Banda is a casual laborer without regular income. He and the entire family lived with an income less than Rs.5000 per month. The entire family of 5 lived in abject poverty in a dilapidated house which could crumble upon them any moment

After assessing the situation to which the family was subject to, Aspirations Education Foundation decided to help this poor family. Mr. Ranjith Withana who is a well known philanthropist agreed to provide necessary funds for the construction of the house. He has committed around Rs.1.1million for this charitable cause.

Aspirations Education Foundation is implementing and monitoring the progress of the construction of the house with the assistance of two teachers at Kandegama Maha Vidyalaya.

- **Womens Empowerment Project**

Many unemployed women in rural Sri Lanka are desperately in search of income generation areas. To facilitate this need AEF has trained more than 50 women in the villages of Kobbewala, Weddeniya, Lihiniwehera and Kandegama in the districts of Kegalle, Kurunegala and Badulla. Also AEF has Donated 2 sewing machines and an oven To Arunaloka Abilasha Community Business Organization (CBO) in Usbima village at Amapara.

- **English teaching Programme.**

AEF has conducted English teaching programme at Padavi Jayanthi School to support disadvantaged children through educational support. AEF volunteer teachers are assigned to work in a classroom environment to work on speaking, listening, and pronunciation skills. Volunteers will also be paired with a local teacher to help with classroom management and other tasks. More than 1000 students are benefitted from this programme.

## **Labour**

**Principle 3:** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

**Principle 4:** the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

**Principle 5:** the effective abolition of child labour; and

**Principle 6:** the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation  
AEF operates its mandate with great deal of transparency, Integrity and accountability. The

Employees' rights are protected by implementing the best HR practices. We have one Vision and Mission shared by all employees. AEF does not tolerate any form of discrimination and all are treated equally irrespective of the race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, family circumstances, political opinion, trade union membership, age, nationality or disability.

AEF's philosophy is based on democratic principles and encourages team work and stakeholder engagement in all projects implemented throughout the Country. Community participation is encouraged in all school projects and community development projects.

## **Environment**

**Principle 7:** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

**Principle 8:** undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

**Principle 9:** encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

AEF is concerned about the environment issues of today's World and incorporated the environmental supported concepts into all projects. One of the main objectives of AEF's agriculture projects is to support and maintain a green environment. We also discourage deforestation and encourage reforestation at all times. AEF has planted over 3000 Mango trees of a special variety, in over 30 schools project across 4 districts.

## **Anti Corruption**

**Principle 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

AEF principles are based on Integrity, transparency and accountability. Therefore, AEF practices best accepted policies and procedures nationally and internationally. We are accountable to the donors as well as to the Government Authorities and Law and Order of the country. We are against all types of corruption, bribery and extortion.