

Brief Report (Aug-Dec 2017) of model MM Pre-school (MM2) in collaboration between ZOA, YMCA and MM Foundation

After visiting several pre-schools to explore the possibility of relocating the MM pre-school, which ZOA hopes to develop into a model pre-school in Batticaloa, ZOA decided to partner with the Batticaloa Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) for this initiative. MM Foundation is supporting this collaboration. The reason we feel the YMCA would be a good fit for this project is their past experience in running a pre-school as well as the



panel comprising members of ZOA, the YMCA staff and the YMCA Education Board held interviews for potential teaching staff on 29th August 2017. Out of 26 applicants, one teacher Ms. Jeyamala and two assistant teachers Ms. Tharmika Jeyanthiran and Ms. Abinaya were selected. All three were sent for an intensive 10 day training programme at LPF pre-school, which ZOA has identified as a suitably like-minded venture in terms of curriculum and methodology.

Following productive discussions with the District Secretariat, the Social Service Department of Batticaloa has approved the use of its upstairs

availability of unused facilities and space in their premises. Both ZOA and the YMCA agreed to share responsibilities, with ZOA providing more technical support, in terms of designing the curriculum, training teachers and taking on the major part of the monitoring and evaluation component of the project, while the YMCA will function as the administrators of the pre-school and see to its overall management.

A meeting was held between ZOA and the YMCA on 23rd May 2017 to formalise the agreement.

The recruitment process commenced soon after and a





building as an in-kind contribution, on the condition that the MM pre-school would also accommodate children with special needs and engage in inclusion activities.

An MoU between ZOA and the YMCA was signed on the 14th September 2017 at the YMCA offices and our activities officially commenced.

We conducted several initial meetings with various stakeholders, such as government officers, school teachers, pre-school authorities, the

YMCA Board of Directors and other officers including its Education Board, potential management team members of this project, and the newly recruited teachers. Finally, with everyone on the same page, we held a kick-off meeting on 20th of October 2017 to explain to parents and government teachers and officers the objective of piloting a model preschool.



The regular functioning of the pre-school commenced September with 10 children. Despite the limited timeframe, parents have already reported significant changes in the manner and thinking capacity of their children.



A variety of educational materials have been purchased, with the input of the teachers following their training, to utilise in the upcoming year. An

exposure visit to the LPF pre-school was conducted with a team comprising staff from ZOA, BEdS (Batticaloa Education Development Society, which is a potential partner on this project), Board members of the YMCA, and two teachers in-charge of the inclusion activities who will also be involved in the model pre-school's development and daily functioning.

