



### **Introducing E.A.S.E. Foundation**

E.A.S.E. Foundation, since its inception in 2007, has been working to ensure that people with disabilities, especially children, access their rightful place in mainstream life. We achieve this through our pioneering programs that Educate, Advocate, Support and Empower people with disabilities and their families. Our programs are directed at society, as well, to create a "World Where We All Belong." Our special advantage is that our co-founder/co-president Mr. Chandima Rajapatirana, being a person with autism, brings us an insider's knowledge of the needs and dreams of people with disabilities. A volunteer board of trustees with impeccable reputations, relevant experience and lifelong commitment strive to achieve these very important goals to uplift the most marginalized and vulnerable citizens. We are a government registered Social Service organisation – Reg No. L-147104. Our annual audits are always excellent and we are committed to accountability and transparency.

Our many programs have improved the lives of countless children, and their families, and have changed the view of disability held by too many people. While autism is our first love we accept all those who come to us for help. Our core educational program brings out the untapped abilities of our students. For example, one of our students previously diagnosed as a "slow learner" now earns an income from a children's book

she wrote. We have several others who are contributing their very own essays, stories, and poems to a collection of work which will be published shortly.

A strong, informed family is necessary for all children to thrive and it is doubly so in the case of children with disabilities. Since our services are provided free, we serve mainly economically stressed families sometimes headed by a single mother. Predictably, their caregiving responsibilities deprive these mothers of the ability to earn a much needed income. It is with this view that we plan to expand our services to provide employment for our mothers which we hope will also make E.A.S.E. Foundation financially sustainable.

### **Project Description**

Our "Caregivers to Breadwinners" pilot program will focus on the mothers of our students and train them to produce re-usable grocery bags "From the store to the fridge and back again". This pilot project will start with employing six mothers of E.A.S.E. students who would greatly benefit from an additional source of income. The workspace will include day-care facilities and the services of a caregiver so the mothers have the space and time to work.

### **Project Goals**

- Within six months we will have employed a minimum of six mothers to produce re-usable bags, which will be sold on-line and via monthly pop-up stalls. We aim to sell a minimum of 50 sets (8 bags per set) of bags per month, on average within the first six months of production.
- Grow our sales by 10% each month for the first six months of production using a targeted online marketing campaign through our Facebook page and the community marketplace
- After six months, extend purchase points (to those that can be accessed daily) to a maximum of two on-going purchase points
- Within one year of production, target production and sale for 150 sets per month
- After one year establish a partnership with a supermarket chain/retail outlet to provide E.A.S.E. bags

## Project Budget

The Foundation proposes to use donor funds to rent a workshop space, procure six sewing machines, day-care facilities as well as pay for the running costs of the operation for six months – this will include salaries, the cost of raw materials and utilities. After a period of six months, we will base the wage bill calculation on output rather than a fixed monthly cost to ensure sustainability of the operation. This will encourage productivity and provide employees with the opportunity to increase their earning capacity.

| <b>Start-up expenses for six months</b>  |                     |                 |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|
|  | LKR                 | USD             |
| <b>Workspace</b>   |                     |                 |
| Rental cost - six months   | 180,000.00          | 1,125.00        |
| Interior modifications   | 22,000.00           | 137.50          |
| <b>Equipment required</b>  |                     |                 |
| Sewing machines – 6nos   | 360,000.00          | 2,250.00        |
| Chairs - 10 nos  | 17,000.00           | 106.25          |
| Cutting table  | 23,000.00           | 143.75          |
| Cupboard   | 22,500.00           | 140.63          |
| Daycare facilities (tables, chairs, cupboards, toys and educational equipment) | 97,000.00           | 606.25          |
| Office supplies  | 55,450.00           | 346.56          |
| Opening inventory  | 100,000.00          | 625.00          |
| <b>Other (list)</b>  |                     |                 |
| Training fees - six months   | 120,000.00          | 750.00          |
| Salaries - six months  | 360,000.00          | 2,250.00        |
| Salary for caregiver   | 90,000.00           | 562.50          |
| Pre-Opening Advertising and stall rental for six months                        | 33,000.00           | 206.25          |
| <b>Total Startup Expenses</b>  | <b>1,479,950.00</b> | <b>9,249.69</b> |
| <b>Expected Revenue</b>  |                     |                 |
| Average of 50 sets per month at the price of LKR 1,000 per set                 | <b>300,000.00</b>   | <b>1,875.00</b> |

## **Sales and Marketing Plan**

While there are many options for re-usable grocery bags, we are yet to see a re-usable option for produce bags. Retailers still require that vegetables be individually bagged, by type, and weighed. Therefore, even though the more “green conscious” shopper may bring along reusable bags for their grocery shopping they have to resort to using plastic bags for their produce. The added advantage of having a reusable fabric bag is that users can refrigerate their produce whilst still in the bag, making shopping and storage much more convenient. As there is no competition in the space and we see a need for this product, we expect a thriving demand for our bags. We will sell the product as a pack of eight bags – 2 small, 2 medium, 3 large and 1 extra-large bag.

The initial marketing plan will focus on selling the product at the local community market that promotes businesses of local social entrepreneurs and online via our Facebook page. We are also hope to establish contacts with retail outlets to sell E.A.S.E. bags in the future. E.A.S.E. Foundation will use additional earnings to replenish inventory and expand the operation, as this is a not-for-profit enterprise. In the long term, we hope to create a profit-sharing partnership with all employees.