

## Supporting COVID proofing of schools with provision and enhancement of water for school hand wash

SLWP has been promoting school WASH in accordance with its support of SDG 4 and 6. In view of the current COVID -19 pandemic it is even more essential that marginalized schools be provided with handwashing facilities and water for safety of the school community.

In response to a request from the Denuwara Educational zone, Kandy, SLWP provided two Rain Water Harvesting (RWH) systems and a groundwater recharge for existing wells in 2 marginalized schools in Denuwara Education Zone in Central province. These schools which lacked adequate water for school handwashing facilities were particularly endangered during the pandemic. Udawela Primary School in Danture, Pilimathalawa received a RWH System and a Ground Water Recharge pilot project while Wijayalanka Vidyalaya in Welamboda, Kadugannawa, received a RWH System.

The Udawela Primary school previously had access to a well which had been running dry. Students were forced to bring their own water during the dry spells which were becoming more frequent due to climate change. With establishment of a GWR systems the old school well would not need be totally abandoned. A new well had been excavated by 20 parents (active leaders of the PTA) working overnight. The land in the micro catchment where the well is situated has been donated by a generous community leader. The water from this micro catchment flows to form a small stream across Hatharaliyadda to join the Ma Oya near Rambukkan as Rambukkana Oya. The GWR system is a pioneering effort by SLWP in promotion of school hand wash facilities. In view of the changes in weather patterns with high intensity rains becoming the norm, it is seen that GWR will become more important in the future.

This activity was carried out in collaboration with the officers of the NWSDB and Dept. of Health who ensured adherence to health guidelines during construction.



