

International Education Provider Raises £100,000 for Schools in Developing Countries

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Funds raised for schools in developing countries by Study Group, a global leader in the provision of international education, have reached the £100,000 milestone.

The Building Futures project was initiated in the aftermath of the Asian Tsunami in 2004, and allows all Study Group staff to make a contribution to a central fund for the reconstruction of communities affected by natural disasters or poverty; in particular the reconstruction of schools. The organisation pledged to match every donation pound for pound and response to the cause has been remarkable.

The money is supporting Plan, a child-centered international organisation in their education programme. The funds raised have already been successfully used to finance school projects in Indonesia, Benin and Brazil. Further plans for a fourth school are underway, with possible locations including China and Sri Lanka.

Arvid Petersen, Executive Chairman of Study Group, was delighted the fund has hit the £100,000 milestone: "We believe that education is a right and when we started the Building Futures Fund, we hoped to go some way towards providing a long-term, sustainable commitment to educational projects in developing regions. With three schools already complete, and a fourth on the way, I am extremely pleased we are meeting this goal and have helped improve the lives of some of the many children who live in desperate circumstances across the world."

The Building Futures fund forms a core strand of Study Group's wider Corporate Social Responsibility strategy, alongside their environmental initiatives, which include a carbon offset scheme, strict recycling and waste management policies and the use of environmentally friendly heating, cooling and ventilation systems in all new Study Group buildings worldwide.

Marie Staunton, Chief Executive of Plan UK, commented: "Contributions from organisations such as Study Group help us to ensure that children around the world have the opportunity to fulfill their potential, regardless of their social or economic circumstances. For example, we are working to create a better learning environment for pupils in Benin and Brazil who were studying in cramped classrooms of up to 55 and those in Indonesia who had seen their whole schools wrecked by the Tsunami."

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Notes to Editors:

About Study Group

Spanning five continents, Study Group is a global leader in international education, providing the highest quality educational opportunities for students from over 120 countries. Beginning in 1994 with 7000 students per year, Study Group now has an enrolment base of 40,000 around the world.

Through Study Group's leading set of partnerships with top universities, it is able to provide on and off-campus preparation courses for international students that ensure academic success and entry into some of the most prestigious educational institutions in the world. The quality of its teaching is confirmed by independent accreditation bodies worldwide including: English UK, Ofsted, British Council, NEAS, Accet, English Australia and New Zealand Qualification Authority.

Through the Bellerbys brand in the UK, Study Group provides academic preparation for international students wanting to study at English-speaking universities. Courses include GCSEs, A-Levels, specifically designed Foundation courses to gain entry into universities, a degree course and pre-masters qualifications.

Study Group offers English language courses for international students in 18 locations in all of the main Anglophone destinations through its Embassy CES brand. Courses include short-term general English, one-year academic programmes and specialist English preparation for public English language qualifications, or for degree programmes at English-speaking universities. Study Group also runs youth summer vacation courses in the UK, Ireland and the USA, combining English language training with both academic and extra-curricular activities.

The biggest intake of international students into Study Group's UK programmes is from countries with emerging economies such as China, and other South East Asian economies.

About Plan UK

Plan was founded by British journalist John Langdon-Davies in 1937 to rescue children orphaned by the Spanish Civil War, and now works in 49 of the poorest countries in the world, across Africa, Asia and South America.

Plan's projects, which include schools and health centres, are geared to working with children and their communities to help them fulfill their potential.

Funds are raised through grants, donations and child sponsorship, which starts at £12-a-month and, rather than going to individual children and their families, this money funds projects to improve schooling, health, nutrition and livelihoods across communities. They have over 115,000 sponsors in the UK and one million sponsored children worldwide