



SEWALANKA FOUNDATION

Entering a new decade

In 1993, Sewalanka was established as a development NGO with a very clear mandate: to address the needs of the most vulnerable communities in the most neglected and disadvantaged regions of Sri Lanka. At the time, conflict was raging in the North and East of the country. The communities caught in the middle of this war were clearly among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. They had lost everything; their homes, their friends and relatives, their access to food, their sense of security, and their voice in society. Although Sewalanka was founded as a development organisation, it entered into the North and East as a relief agency, providing humanitarian assistance to meet the immediate day-to-day needs of these conflict-affected communities. As conditions in the North and East have changed over the years, we have shifted to strategies that will address the long-term needs of these communities. Many of our programs in the region are now focused on strengthening civil society organisations in order to contribute to the stability and future development of the region.

As we reach 2003 and the ten-year anniversary of the organisation, it is an ideal time to reflect on its accomplishments, the challenges it still faces, and how these challenges can be best addressed in the future. In the past ten years, Sewalanka has become nationally and internationally recognised for its work in the field of development. We have developed a strategy that takes communities from the relief aid of a conflict situation to a long-term program of sustainable development, we have created a decentralised organisational structure covering the majority of the most disadvantaged areas of the country, and we have built up a team of professionals—men and women, Sinhala and Tamil, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, and Christian—responsible for everything from the conceptualisation of projects to village level implementation.

Historically, civil society organisations have formed in response to conditions in a given environment. As conditions continue to change, most organisations are not flexible enough to adapt to the new environ-

ment, and their contribution and influence begin to fall. The rise and fall of other NGOs and the evidence of the weaknesses within our current structure are signals that we, as an organisation, need to discuss and identify options to reconceptualise, restructure, and restructure Sewalanka to face the new challenges of the coming decade. Over the next three months, Sewalanka Foundation will be conducting a series of internal and external dialogues in order to reach a consensus on an appropriate path beyond 2003.

With the Sewalanka bi-monthly newsletter we hope to share with you our evolving vision for sustainable development, updates on our new and existing projects, and some insights into how our organisation operates. This first newsletter launches our new Sewalanka logo, which symbolises the process of social change that Sewalanka hopes to initiate. Sewalanka plants a seed and nurtures it as it grows and flowers into a self-sufficient community organisation. This flower holds within it the seeds and future flowers of the next generation.

May you all enjoy a prosperous and fulfilling 2003.

Harsha Kumara Navaratne
Chairman

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Managing Mangrove Eco-Systems with local Communities

Mangrove ecosystems are found in estuaries and lagoons along Sri Lanka's coastline. Mangrove environments are incredibly productive, supporting fishing communities and a wealth of wildlife. However they are increasingly under threat not only in Sri Lanka, but around the world and in turn so are the livelihoods of local fisher folk.

Healthy mangroves and lagoons are inextricably linked to healthy fisheries. The roots of mangrove plants provide essential nursery grounds for young fish, prawns and crabs, which grow in the sheltered and nutrient rich environment and are later caught by fishermen – both for food and for sale to market.

In June 2002 Sewalanka Foundation (SLF) started work on two new projects in Ampara District, working with local fishing communities to restore degraded mangrove habitats. Located in Pottuvil (funded by IUCN – The World Conservation Union) and Thirukkivil (funded by UNDP Global Environmental Facility Small Grants Program), both projects are working with local Fisheries Cooperative Societies (FCS) to replant mangroves in Pottuvil and Palukada Lagoons where mangrove forests have been partially deforested over the past ten years.

When mangroves are removed, so too are the nursery grounds for fish, prawns and crabs. In both Pottuvil and Palukada Lagoons the fish catch of local fishermen has seen a drastic decline as mangroves have been removed for development, farm land, firewood and building products

Managing resources for the future
SLF staff are working with members of FCSs in Palukada and the Pottuvil to identify areas in the lagoons to replant and rebuild some of this essential mangrove habitat. Members from these societies attended a three day training course in August, held in conjunction with the Small Fishers Federation, Chilaw to learn about techniques and requirements for replanting and

managing mangroves. Since then FCS members have begun to identify areas to replant with the dominant mangrove plant – *Rhizophora mucronata*, which in time will provide new habitat for fish, prawns and crabs in its characteristic prop roots.

Staff are also working with the FCSs and other organisations to develop a co-management committee for each lagoon to manage the natural resources of the two lagoons in the future.

Ecotourism meets mangrove conservation

The location of Pottuvil Lagoon next to the popular East Coast tourist resort of Arugam Bay, presents a unique opportunity to incorporate tourism into the project. The fishermen had noticed an increasing number of tourists coming to the area and identified the potential for tourism in the lagoon. SLF has been working with the Hidayapuram FCS to develop a two hour ecotour of the lagoon. The result is the 'Pottuvil Lagoon Ecotour'. Using traditional fishing canoes, the tour winds through the mangroves, taking in the rich wildlife of Pottuvil Lagoon, spotting sea eagles, storks, egrets, pelicans, monkeys and the occasional elephant.

SLF staff have developed promotional posters and road signs, erected around Arugam Bay and Pottuvil to promote the ecotour to tourists locally. A small education centre has also been constructed and will provide a focus for ongoing community education initiatives. A brochure highlighting some of the wildlife and features of the mangroves and the lagoon has also been developed for tourists to read on the ecotour.

The ecotour will bring extra income to the local community, creating a financial resource to fund the continuing replanting of the lagoon. It will also provide a financial incentive for conservation; tourists will go on the tour to appreciate the natural beauty of the lagoon,

something that will need to be maintained for ecotourism to continue.

The role of community education

To reach a wider audience with the mangrove conservation message Sewalanka are also working with schools to educate school children and in turn their families about the importance of mangroves. Teachers from Pottuvil and Thirukkivil joined fishermen on the three day mangrove training course. An education pack has been produced comprising existing and new material about mangroves and will be distributed to senior school teachers to assist them in teaching about mangroves.

In Thirukkivil, Vinayapuram Maha Vidyalaya has developed a mangrove drama; a short 20 minute performance about mangroves prepared and presented by Year 7 and 8 students. The play will be performed at local primary schools in Thirukkivil accompanied by a colouring-in competition. In Pottuvil, SLF will work with schools to develop educational banners to place in the newly constructed education centre.



Enjoying the Pottuvil Lagoon Eco-Tour

The future of mangrove conservation

The project will continue over the next few months, with the development of mangrove nurseries in both lagoons to cater for ongoing replanting programs. In Pottuvil the ecotour will be officially launched in time for the East Coast tourism season in March 2003. The project in Thirukkivil will continue until May 2004.

By working directly with local communities these projects aim to improve both the health of mangrove ecosystems and the livelihoods of lagoon fishing communities. ■

SLF VISION for the NORTH

Since 1995 Sewalanka has been involved in many relief, rehabilitation and development projects in the conflict affected northern parts of the country. Our target populations have ranged from families and communities displaced due to intense fighting to families reoccupying their lands when the situation became relatively calm to those who needed institutional and economic support to improve their livelihoods. The physical environment, lifestyles and the psyche of these different target communities not only varied but also continued to change as did the situation. Added to the complexity of these needs is the trust and confidence that was required to enable Sewalanka to work simultaneously in both LTTE and government controlled areas. Hence it was a challenging assignment for Sewalanka to fulfill the diverse needs of different target groups in the North during the last eight years.

Since the declaration of a ceasefire agreement and the subsequent peace building dialogue between the government and the LTTE the situation in the conflict-affected north and east of Sri Lanka is fast regaining normalcy. Removal of travel and transport restrictions has already resulted not only in a heavy influx of the displaced back to their villages but also greater interaction between people as well as the exchange of goods between the north and the south. Within this post-conflict situation, Sewalanka has begun to shift its focus from short-term relief assistance to long-term development interventions and already our development project portfolio has begun to expand. However there is an immediate need for relief assistance by large numbers of internally displaced people who are returning to reoccupy their original lands and Sewalanka is doing its best to supplement the efforts of the government and other agencies to fulfill their relief needs.

The policy agenda of Sewa Lanka for the north and the east will have two overarching principles: enhancing the capacity of local groups and institutions and; focusing on poor and vulnerable groups. This agenda will be addressed using four main strategies.

Firstly, in regards to the consolidation of the current peace initiative, our task will be to expand the current peace initiatives at the grassroots level. Sewalanka already works with networks of village based societies in the north and east as well as in the south. In the immediate future we look towards a greater level of cooperation between the north and the south through interactive social and economic programs among community based organisations. Women will play a key role in these intercommunity social, cultural and

economic activities. During the last decade several successful women based socio-economic development initiatives have emerged in the south that could be replicated in the north with very short gestation periods.

Secondly, Sewalanka will work towards harnessing the potential of the agriculture and fisheries sectors in the north to improve the economic conditions of its people. Before the outbreak of the war, agricultural output in the north and east made a significant contribution to the national economy. During the Maha 1984/85 season the paddy output in the north and the east accounted for nearly 30 per cent of the national output. During 1985, 50 per cent of the country's chilli production came from Jaffna and Killinochchi farmers. Similarly 50 per cent of the country's black gram production came from Vavuniya farmers. The value of total fish production in the north during 1990 was approximately Rs.1.3 Billion. In spite of the continued destruction and damage caused by the war, the northeast economy has remained resilient. The key factor responsible for such economic robustness, particularly in the agricultural sector, is the unstoppable determination of the farmers who have the capacity to increase their agricultural output by many folds under normal situations. Sewalanka will work with farmer groups and organisations to provide them with access to environmentally sustainable farming systems and to improve subsistence level farming practices to commercially viable scales. This will involve linking farmers to information and technologies related to production, processing and marketing.

Thirdly, Sewa Lanka plans to focus on the non-farm sector to offer income and employment opportunities not only to women, who to a great extent are marginalised in the control of income from traditional agricultural activities, but also to many youth who are reluctant to take on agriculture as their livelihood activity. Entrepreneurship enhancement and skill development, coupled with regular counseling, will be the strategy of Sewalanka to promote prospective entrepreneurs to start non-farm enterprises. GTZ/CEFE (Competency Based Economies through formation of Enterprises) and ILO/SIYB (Start and Improve Your Business) trained cadres of Sewalanka are well prepared to take on this task.

Fourthly, Sewalanka looks towards enhancing organisational capacities of the community, through social and economic institutions active at the grassroots level. Community based organisations (CBOs) at the village level that are directly linked to Sewalanka's project activities will receive priority. The capacity of these CBOs to mobilize their membership, objectively analyse their needs and to plan and implement needs based activities is the key to their existence and sustainability. Sewalanka has a trained and experienced cadre of social mobilisers who have the competency to handle this task. At the next level Sewalanka would maintain lateral linkages with other government, private and NGO sector institutions in sharing information and experience. ■

Tank Eco-System Conservation Project

Anuradhapura

Mrs U.B Kumarihami, from the village of Kokpetiyawa, began a small home-garden to feed her family six years ago. Isolated by the conflict, her village, located on the fringes of Anuradhapura's Willpattu National Park, had few income earning opportunities. Today, with the support of a Sewalanka project, Mrs Kumarihami has been able to transform her small home garden into a successful income earner for her family.

"We got so many trees from the Sewalanka project" said Mrs Kumarihami. "Before we did not have the knowledge to grow these things really successfully but these new methods we have been taught are really good and they have brought us together to do common work on our gardens and paddy fields...We are stronger in a group than we are alone."

The Sewalanka Foundation (SLF) project working with Mrs Kumarihami and her community, has been funded by The Community Environmental Initiatives Facility (CEIF). CEIF is a

five year project administered by the Ministry of Forestry & Environment and funded by a World Bank loan. SLF has implemented three CEIF projects in Anuradhapura since the project commenced in 1997, two of which have been completed.

The objective of the CEIF project is to promote environmental management in both rural and urban environments for the communities most vulnerable to environmental degradation. By targeting low income areas, the CEIF project aims to ensure that funds reach those areas where the impact of environmental degradation on the health and living conditions of the poor is most severe.



Mr K.B Bandara and his son

Mr Ivar Serejski, World Bank Task Manager for the project, said that the project is the first stage in a long-term program of World Bank support to help the Sri Lankan government meet its environmental challenges, "through proper institutional and policy changes, as well as through investments in environmental protection and conservation activities at the local level".

The focus of the three Sewalanka Foundation projects funded by

CEIF, is the conservation and rehabilitation of tank ecosystems. Activities include: soil erosion prevention through the construction of tank 'cascade systems'; the

planting of trees around the tanks; the provision of energy saving clay stoves that minimize wood use; the development of highlands or 'bunds' to prevent soil erosion and maximize water usage; the introduction of organic Farming methods;

provision of latrines; tank renovation; and community environmental awareness.

As with all SLF projects, the Tank Conservation projects began with a process of Social Mobilisation. Community Groups were formed into an 'Environmental Action Group' and a 'Sewa Society' to make people aware of the project and to enable them to coordinate the projects implementation.

Mr K.B Bandara, Chairman of the Farmers Society in the village of Kuda Siyambalagaswewa, 22kms North West of Anuradhapura, explained that the community's major role in this project was to grow and plant trees around the tank. "We collected seeds from the local plants and then Sewalanka paid some money for our plants", he explained.

The drought that hit the area during the planting of the trees highlights the major water issues the area faces. "We planted the trees during the dry season thinking it would soon rain but it didn't rain and we didn't have enough water" said Mr Bandara. "Some of the plants have now died but still there are one third to one half – more than one thousand and we will keep growing and planting trees until we reach our target".

Mr Bandara said that SLF were the first NGO to assist his poor remote village. SLF first assisted the village two years ago with the North East Irrigated Agriculture



Mrs U.B Kumarihami and her daughter in front of her successful home garden



Mr.T.G Ranasinghe with his son:
Ready to plant Chillies

Project (NEIAP) when a road and drinking wells were constructed and the tank rehabilitated. Now the community are benefiting from the CEIF/SLF project which is improving soil conditions and water management.

“We learnt cultivation methods through this project and then some experts came to check

our individual gardens and crops to see what the problems were”, said Mr Bandara. “We were also able to save some money by growing and selling the trees and we will be able to use this in the future”.

A kilometer away, T.G Ranasinghe had previously been clearing the common forest area around the tank to grow crops. His family is one of the poorest in the village and he has little land of his own. The Farmers Organisation quickly approached him and told him he could no longer use this land as the forest was to be replanted. For this reason, he explained, he was initially not very happy when the project came to his village.

“The community now know what their rights are and what they can get assistance with. In this village there are even a few people who are doing public speeches. They say that is because of the training they received through the program”

SLF recognized his families’ dilemma however and gave him additional training and perennial trees such as Coconut, Mango and Jackfruit. Using new methods, Mr Ranasinghe was able to increase profits on his small plot by minimizing soil toxication and erosion and maximizing water retention.

Like all of the community members involved in the project, Mr Rajasinghe is now regularly attending meetings and has a community bank account. “I think it’s a very good system for us”, he said. “We are working together now through the meetings”.

The community at Kokpetiyawa, which began working with the CIEF- SLF project almost two years ago, was also able to save money from growing and selling plants to the project. They are now using these funds to build a small temple and Community Center.

Mr Lionel Dassanayake, Director of SLF’s Anuradhapura Office, said he has been able to see significant change in Kokpetiyawa since the project began. One of the major changes he has seen has been the confidence of the community to vocalize their problems. Representatives from the village now visit the Sewalanka office and government offices to discuss their problems.

“The community now know what their rights are and what they can get assistance with” said Mr Dassanayake. “In this village there are even a few people who are doing public speeches. They say that is because of the training they received through the program”.

Although the project at Kokpetiyawa is officially completed, Mr Lionel said that SLF will continue working with the local Sewa Society. “Now the Sewa Society and other groups are there we will continue working with this village” he said. “The next stage here is to set up a Credit Fund and provide some Enterprise Training”. ■

FACT BOX

SRI LANKA

Total Population – 18.9 Million

Growth Rate – 1.3%

Per capita Income – US\$820

Unemployment Rate – 8.8%

Population living below income line of \$2 a day– 45%

Population living below National Poverty line– 25%

Internally Displaced People (Refugees)– 707,000

Undernourished people– 23%

Adult Literacy Rate– 92%

NGOs IN SRI LANKA

Non Government Organisations (NGOs) in Sri Lanka

– Approximately 4000

Registered NGOs – 550

International NGOs – 110

No. of NGOs active in the conflict areas – 80

Sources: UNDP Human Development Report 2002, World Bank Country Brief 2002, Sri Lanka NGO Secretariat

Can you stop the SHOOTING?

Trauma Healing Projects in the North and East

“Can you stop the shooting?”

The woman looks at us with tired eyes. The shooting has gone on for too long and she desperately wants it to stop.

“No, we cannot stop the shooting”, we reply.

“...but we can help you relax in between the shooting.”

She steps forward and clearly says: “Then come”.

The need for trauma healing in development work in the North

We were sitting on the floor of the pre-school in one of the villages. It was our first orientation tour to see if we could develop a special program in trauma healing for communities in the North and East of Sri Lanka. Sewalanka Foundation had asked us to develop such a program because their development work had become increasingly hampered by the repeated displacements that made the villagers numb and apathetic.

Two resource people from Meth Medura, a small NGO in the Netherlands, were consulted to see if something could be done to heal the wounds of war. For the past 10 years, Meth Medura had focused their research and therapeutic work on the effects of trauma. During this time, they had developed an integrated approach to work with traumatic events on a communal level.

SLF's Trauma Healing Approach

This approach, the Panasori Approach, is built on tapping into the resources of the people. Like Sewalanka, Meth Medura aims at empowering people instead of victimising them. As the Chairman of Sewalanka puts it: “The villagers are the experts. They have gone through all the devastating events and they survived. We should learn

from them”.

The Panasori Approach offered by Meth Medura is an integrated program built on four pillars:

- The physical aspect, directed at balancing the body
- The emotional aspect, related to strengthening the identity
- The mental aspect, aiming at healing the memories
- The spiritual and social aspect, re-connecting to the roots



Support Network Volunteers receive training

Clear exercises and techniques are selected to support the villagers in finding more balance.

The trauma-healing project started as a Pilot Project for one year. Only part of the integrated approach that Meth Medura developed was offered during this pilot phase. The physical aspect was the focus during this project.

The Effects of Trauma on health

Traumatic events leave traces deeply in the body. All kinds of after-effects occur: headaches, heart problems, stomach problems, speech problems, sleeping disorders, ongoing fatigue and many others.

For most of these problems people

go to a doctor and receive medicines. But often these pills can only help temporarily, because the cause of the problem lies somewhere else. In more than 80 per cent of these cases stress is an underlying cause. To find physical and mental balance is another healing method available.

SLF Trauma Healing Training

In April 2002 the trainers from Meth Medura instructed a group of 22 young people selected by Sewalanka from relocation and resettlement villages in the Vavuniya District. The trainees were taught different stress-release techniques. These Support Network Volunteers (SNV's), as the trainees are called, were then supported to teach these skills to the villagers.

The skills are basic and the techniques can be used within a family, a woman's group or a school. Even children can learn how to release stress and teachers can also apply it.

In 2002 the Meth Medura trainers came two times for training: in April and September. Both times they gave a 5-day classroom based training and afterwards accompanied the SNV's to different villages to supervise their work.

After the April training it was not yet clear if the trainees had enough confidence to work with the stress-release skills, since they only had 5 days of training themselves. The Meth Medura trainers had urged them not to start too quickly with the release techniques, since some techniques require touching. Before introducing these an atmosphere of trust should be built.

Results of the Pilot Project

During the Pilot Project Sri Lankan trainers had taught the SNV's how to build trust, give counseling and how to approach the people. When the Meth Medura trainers came back in September they found a highly motivated group that had started to introduce the new skills in their communities. It was surprising and moving, how well they sensed which methods they

Traumatic events leave traces deeply in the body. All kinds of after-effects occur.

could use and which ones not yet.

The SNV's reported success stories and also situations they did not know how to handle. The September classroom based training was dedicated to role playing these difficult situations. During the field trips the SNV's took the trainers to families with deeply traumatised people. This gave the trainers and trainees a chance to see what could be done to support these traumatised persons. It has now become clear that this Pilot Project has had more impact than could have been imagined during the planning stages.

As an outgrowth of the PilotProject, Sewalanka organized a Training for Trainers (T.O.T), in which the Meth Medura trainers introduced their integrated approach to trauma healing, based on all four levels.

This T.O.T. included trainers and health educators from the national level. The five day training was well received. Every participant stressed the point, that this approach for the first time integrates the resources of their own culture. They asked for a follow-up that could be given in special modules, where each of the four pillars could be further explored.



Training of the Trainers Workshop in Vavuniya

Looking to a future without trauma wounds

Sewalanka is one of the first development organizations to combine development work and trauma healing. This is a strong concept for enhancing the effectiveness of their work.

Only in a situation where the basic needs are met and an infrastructure of democratic decision-making is established, can trauma-healing work become part of life and be taken up by the community itself.

The wounds of the war cannot be healed quickly, but when people can find a new balance in the daily challenges of life, the future can be met with more trust and courage.

Committed people on the village level, who are trained in basic skills to support healing, can heal the epidemic of trauma in Sri Lanka.

Yvonne de Bruijn & Addy J.H.
Meth Medura Foundation

Ten Years

Working in the Wann

Severe poverty has long been a reality for the people in the Wann. Just over one year ago, three quarters of the population of 370,000 were refugees from other areas in the country. The Wann was suffering as one of the most affected war zone areas in Sri Lanka facing bombing and battles as well as an economic embargo that meant that for many years goods were difficult to obtain, and often many times the normal price. As one of the few NGO's that has been working constantly in the Wann for the past 10 years, Sewalanka has played an important role in bringing much needed assistance to the area.

Sewalanka Foundation (SLF) began implementing projects in the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) controlled areas Wann in 1993. The following year SLF became an implementing partner to United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and German Agro Action (GAA) forging strong partner relationships which continue today.

In 1995 Sewalanka faced a significant turning point in working in the LTTE controlled areas of the Wann when the GOSL military operation, "Riviresa", resulted in a massive influx of 400,000 refugees from the Jaffna peninsula. GAA initiated funding support from the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) and the German Government to assist the huge numbers of refugees with basic needs of food, shelter and agricultural inputs.

GAA, as a Sewalanka partner organisation, have not only played an important role in responding to emergencies in the Wann, but also in establishing development programs. GAA/ Sewalanka sustainable development programs have reached 15,502 families in Vavuniya concentrating on village level capacity building. GAA was also in the Wann to assist with the first displaced returnees in January 2002 where they assisted 1700 families returning to Mathai West from the Madhu welfare center by providing food and roofing materials.

Under the UNHCR partnership, since 1998 SLF has assisted 28,954 displaced families returning to resettle in Vavuniya, Trincomalea and bordering villages. Throughout these years Sewalanka, through the UNHCR partnership, has built 126kms of road, rehabilitated 76 tanks, built 71 schools and assisted 9310 farmers to begin cultivating.

With one year of peace and the economic embargo lifted, things have improved a little in the Wann. Still, there remains no electricity and no hospitals. Schools are few between and generally devoid of resources and the local economy, like the roads and other infrastructure, remains badly damaged. Sewalanka, with ten years experience of working in the NorthEast, will continue to address the severe poverty in the area through relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction programs as communities continue to return and resettle in their villages. ■

CEFE TRAINING PROGRAMS

working with entrepreneurs in Anuradhapura

High interest rates and a lack of adult education and training opportunities mean that it is difficult for low income earners to develop a good business idea. Addressing this issue in Anuradhapura, Sewalanka Foundation (SLF) have been conducting small business training programs since 1999 with funding assistance from CARE International, the Danish Refugee Council, German Agro Action and the North Central Province Rural Development Project (NCRD).

SLF use CEFE (Competency Based Economies through formation of Enterprises) training programs to develop business expertise and entrepreneurship. CEFE is based primarily on the adult learning principles of experiencing, analysing, generalising, feedback and local application.

In 2001-2002, SLF conducted 64 CEFE training programs for 1600 prospective and existing entrepreneurs making it the leading CEFE training institution in the country. These training programs aim to expand both agricultural and off-farm business opportunities and consist of: New Business Creation; Agriculture and Fisheries Training and; Business Expansion.

CEFE was developed in 1995 by the German Development Cooperation (GTZ). The approach minimises lecture teaching and instead dedicates maximum hours to action orientated learning. The ten day training program works to identify participants' strengths and determine how to make the most of them. Stimulation games and exercises are used to help identify and consolidate positive entrepre-

neurial characteristics. Role plays, case studies and experience sharing help participants capitalise on their creativities and strengths to take appropriate entrepreneurial decisions.

Ms Manoja Dahanayake, Program Coordinator for CEFE training programs for SLF Anuradhapura, explains that a they use a number of canvassing methods to invite people to be part of the program. This includes posters, radio advertisements, banners and leaflets. "We even have a 'CEFE van' that is decorated and is equipped with loudspeakers", said Ms Manoja.

During the canvassing process interested persons are asked to fill out an application form, after which they are called to an interview. In the interview a CEFE panel assess if the program would be useful to the applicant. "When they come to the interview many are saying that they are looking for motivation and encouragement" said Ms Manoja. "After the ten day training program they are highly motivated and inspired by what they have learnt. It's really interesting to watch this process".

The majority of participants in the program are engaged in industries such as rice processing, poultry farming, tailoring and the production of milk products such as yoghurt and curd. Others have been involved in furniture production, cement products, beauty products and handicrafts.

“

When they come to the interview many are saying that they are looking for motivation and encouragement.

After the ten day training program they are highly motivated and inspired by what they have learnt

”

SLF CEFE Lead Training Officer, Mr A.M.U Bandara, said the CEFE training programs' practical hands-on methodology makes it an excellent program. "Generally people over 20 don't like to learn through lectures. Through practical methods they can learn more effectively."

With seven years experience as a CEFE trainer, Mr Bandara has an abundance of success stories. In 1997 he had a participant in a CEFE training program who was selling fruit from a basket on his head in Matale. "Today he is



The SewaLanka CEFE Canvassing truck

importing fruits for distributors and owns his own supermarket in the Matale District" said Mr Bandara. "He has been very successful and his story is one of the many I can share with the CEFE program participants".

A major part of the ten day CEFE training program is the creation of a business plan where participants must detail a marketing, production, organisational and management plan for their business. These business plans are then discussed and analysed during a number of one-on-one consultations with trainers before being submitted to participating banks to assess the feasibility of securing a bank loan. Participating Banks offer reduced interest rates to the program participants- generally 15-16% p.a.

Not all participants may want bank loans however: this is an optional part of the program. Either way, they are able to make use of a session with a bank manager to look at their business plan.

As part of the current North Central Province Rural Development Project (NCRD) project, funded by the Asian Development Bank, SLF has recently trained 275 people in Anuradhapura using the CEFE program. This includes 150 new entrepreneurs and 125 existing entrepreneurs.



Mr Vijay discusses his Business Plan with a CEFE trainer

“
We had a man in the CEFE training program who was selling fruit in Matale. He was selling the fruit from a basket that he carried on his head. Now he is importing fruits for distributors and owns his own supermarket
”

Vijay Wardhana, from the village of Maha Iluppallams, 35 kms South East of Anuradhapura, participated in the ten day training program at the end of September 2002. Already he owned a general store and was producing Coconut Oil- a trade he had learnt from his home village. He joined the CEFE program with six years experience in small scale coconut oil production and a long-time dream of expanding his business.

According to Mr Vijay, the most valuable thing he learnt from the CEFE program was Business Management. “After this training I know how to use a management system that carefully considers all aspects of expenditure, investment and profits”, he said.

Mr Vijay now plans to expand his business through a RS 500, 000 bank loan, awarded to him by the Bank of Ceylon. “My new idea is to package the oil in sealed plastic bags that will minimize my costs so that I can sell my oil at a price lower than my competitors” he said. “With the bank loan I got through the program I have been able to expand my business so that I will soon employ two people”.

Mr Vijay’s detailed business plan shows the extensive Management training process that participants undergo in CEFE. In a survey that Mr. Vijay conducted as part of his business plan, he researched both market opportunities and his competitors. His main source for information regarding competitors were the lorry

drivers who collect all of the coconut oil produced in the region. He also conducted a household survey to assess how much coconut oil the average household consumes. Mr. Vijay plans to continue using Marketing surveys to research how he can improve his business and to assess consumers response to his product when it is launched next month.

Jayantha Hettiararchi of Vijithapura, 45kms South East of Anuradhapura, is an example

of an entrepreneur selected for the CEFE program who is working on a very small scale. Ms Jayantha’s produces painted paper mache and wood festival masks. She has been making the masks for eight years with her husband. The business was originally conceived when she was faced with a debt collector at her door demanding that she repay a small loan with exorbitant interest. She taught herself to make the masks through experimentation, trial and error.

Ms Jayantha is operating on a very small scale, producing masks out the back of her small one bedroom home that she shares with her husband and two children. She uses old newspapers, given to her by a local shop and her main selling period is in the Anuradhapura festival season December to January when she can gross RS5-6,000 per day. She now plans to engage in Market research to assess how she can branch into other markets.



Mrs Jayantha : Hopes to find new markets for her festival masks

Ms Jayantha explained that she is not interested in getting a bank loan for the time being but wanted to be involved in the CEFE program to learn how she could improve and expand her business. “My business is very small. But I have learnt a Management and Marketing system and now I hope that I can slowly work towards improving my business so that we will be better off”.

Sewalanka Foundation, Anuradhapura will now continue with the CEFE follow-up program which includes an extensive Monitoring and Evaluation system that examines all of the participant’s progress over a two year period through surveys and interviews. ■

WORKSHOPS

Gender, Monitoring & Evaluation

Two SLF staff members participated in the "Gender in program & project Monitoring and Evaluation" workshop held in Colombo, October 7th -10th. The workshop was coordinated by *The Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network of the World Bank* and included the participation of 5 South Asian Countries via video conferencing facilities.

The workshop introduced participants to tools, techniques and resources for, integrating a gender dimension into program and project Monitoring and Evaluation.

Sewa Lanka Monitoring

Sewalanka Foundation held a training workshop on Participatory Monitoring for 25 Project Management and Monitoring staff December 16th-18th in Anuradhapura. The workshop developed new Monitoring strategies for SLF which aim to make the organization more transparent, efficient and accountable.

The workshop training was led by Mr Karuna Tissa Authukorala, a Senior lecturer in Sociology at Peradeniya University.

Do No Harm

On the 29th-30th October 2002 Sewa Lanka participated in a Workshop on *Do No Harm*, conducted by one of one of their partner organizations, German Agro Action (GAA). *Do No Harm* is a methodology developed after a number of years of collaboration with NGOs through the *Local Capacities for Peace Project*. It aims to help aid workers deal with the complexities of providing assistance in areas of conflict or areas prone to conflict and provides a framework to identify how decisions aid organisations make may affect intergroup relations.

The workshop was facilitated by Mr Greg Hansen of The Collaborative for Development Action, Massachusetts and Ms. Korinna Kriedler of German Agro Action, Bonn. 26 Sewa Lanka staff from 8 District Offices participated.

The workshop was held within the context of peace negotiations between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) that aim to put an end to the 19 year conflict waged between them.

During this significant transitional period, Sewa Lanka is re-examining its programs, structures and processes in order to ensure that it is successful in assisting the Districts in which it operates transform the conflict situation into a peacetime situation.

Sewa Lanka is now integrating the Do No Harm Methodology into project design, implementation and monitoring.



Sewa Lanka staff apply the Do-No-Harm framework to a current project

International Humanitarian Response Workshop

SLF's Director of Special Projects, Ms Lakshi Abeysekera, participated in a workshop in Nishin Nagoya, Japan 22nd October- November 1st. The workshop, *International Humanitarian Response*, was coordinated by the Regional Center for Emergency Training, known by most as the *E-Center*.

The aim of the 10 day workshop was to strengthen the capacity of humanitarian and other institutions to respond to emergencies involving population displacement. The

workshop focused on emergency responses for NGOs, Government offices and UN staff with the purpose of enhancing emergency management skills in regards to personal preparation, planning coordination, security and safety, shelter, water, sanitation, food and health.

Emergency simulations were a major part of the workshop giving the participants the opportunity to apply theories to practical situations. Mr Jim Good led the emergency simulation sessions.

This *E-Center* program was funded by the Japanese Government Trust Fund for Human Security. Thirty participants from the Asia Pacific Region participated including three from Sri Lanka.

IFAD Workshop

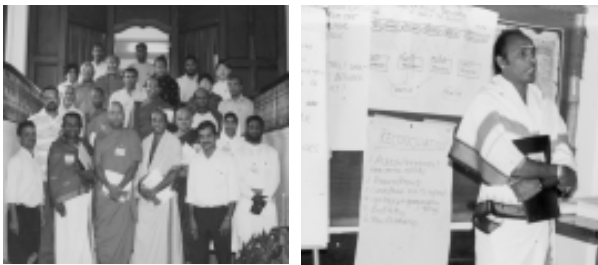
During the second week of October Sewalanka was represented at a three day workshop co-hosted by the Ministry of policy Development & Implementation and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The workshop aimed to identify strategic opportunities in Sri Lanka that will form the base for IFAD's future operations in the country.

Apart from contributing to the workshop, Sewalanka participants were able to draw upon the informative workshop in the context of the governments new National Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation (RRR) framework.

The poor in marginal uplands and the dry and arid zone, small scale fishers in coastal areas and the poor in the plantations and nearby areas were identified as key broad target groups for IFAD's future activities in Sri Lanka.

Peace Building Initiatives



Left: Participants in the 2nd SLF workshop on "coexistence and trust-building". Right: The 3rd SLF workshop held in Wattala

As a development NGO actively working in the conflict affected northern and eastern areas of the country, Sewalanka Foundation has implemented many relief, rehabilitation, and socio-economic development projects during the past ten years. Since inter-ethnic peace-building and reconciliation are the key to sustainable socio-economic development of northern and eastern areas, SLF has decided to engage in peace-building activities implemented through its' existing development platform. This process began November 2000 when SLF decided to create an understanding among all staff cadres ranging from field officers to the members of the Board of Directors about the need to integrate the principles of peace-building into ongoing rehabilitation and development activities. Following this, a number of programs were initiated:

- In November 2000, SLF invited two eminent scholars Dr. Daniel Terris, Director of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life, Brandeis University in Boston, USA and Professor Hizkias Assefa, a Nairobi based scholar and international expert in peace-building to conduct an orientation workshop to a cross section of all staff categories. The workshop was conducted for three days in Anuradhapura, followed by a visit to Trincomalee to meet representatives of grassroots communities.
- SLF has gradually developed an interactive working relationship with the Japan Center for Conflict Prevention (JCCP), who are also involved in peace-building initiatives both at the national and district level. As an outcome of that relationship, SLF, JCCP and the National Peace Council organized a three day Interfaith Peace Conference in Trincomalee in October 2001, involving grassroots community representatives and religious leaders. Ambassadors of the European Union, Germany, Japan and Norway and representatives from the United Nations and the Indian Government were present at the conference as observers.
- In November 2001, SLF conducted a four-day

workshop for thirty participants representing SLF, community organizations in Jaffna, Vavuniya and Trincomalee, and leaders representing Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Muslim religious institutions at grassroots level. The two main objectives of this workshop were (i) to familiarize the participants with the concepts and tools of peace building and (ii) to identify a suitable approach/ direction for future peace-building activities. Resource persons for the workshop were Professor Hizkias Assefa and Dr. Cynthia Cohen, Director of the Coexistence Program of Brandeis University's Ethics Center. The workshop introduced members of Sewa Lanka to key concepts and practices associated with enhancing coexistence and promoting reconciliation.

For future activity, the **Cooperation and Coexistence in Mutual Prosperity (CCMP) Program** is being planned. Based on the conventional programs of emergency relief, rehabilitation, and sustainable development, this project aims to step forward to a new phase of activities, namely networking of Community-Based Organisations (CBO's) to enhance cooperation, promote coexistence, and sustain peaceful relations among the various communities. Establishing a network of CBO's will encourage cross ethnic interaction through daily activities (such as direct trading, technical exchange, and interfaith encounters), and will contribute to their mutual understanding and coexistence. Combined with the ongoing SLF's programs, this project can achieve a greater impact on improving peoples' lives and promoting peace in the region. ■

Chronology of Peace-Building Initiatives of SEWA LANKA FOUNDATION

Year 2000

19-25 November: Field visit of a delegation from Brandeis University

21 December: Recommendation report on peace-building activity approach for SLF from Brandeis University

Year 2001

05-07 October: "Inter-faith Peace Conference in Trincomalee" jointly organized by Japan Center for Conflict Prevention, National Peace Council and SLF.

26-30 November: "Orientation workshop on coexistence and trust building among communities" conducted in Marawila.

Year 2002

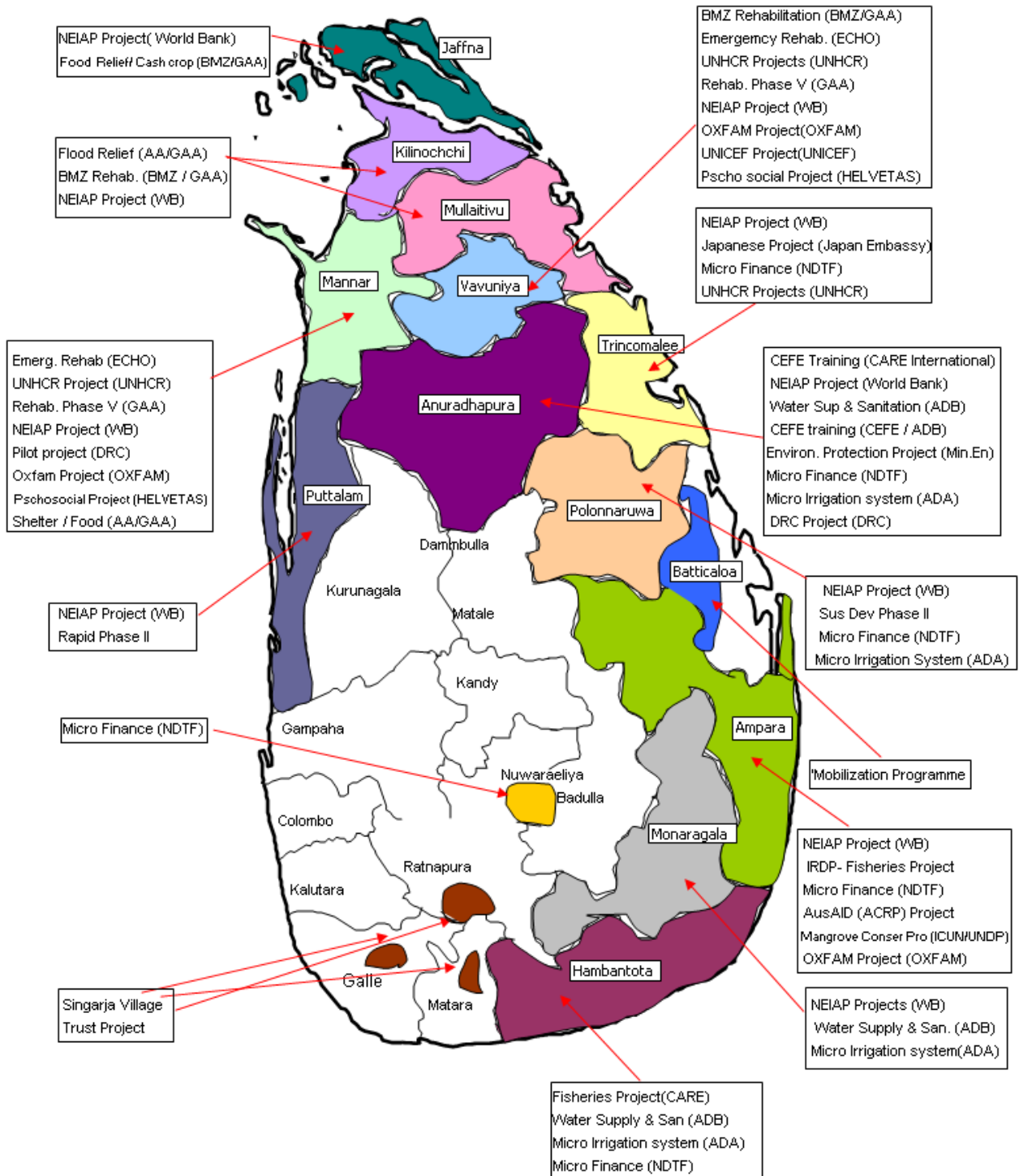
21-23 January: "SLF workshop on peace and coexistence" for community leaders conducted in Vavuniya

09-11 February: "2nd workshop on coexistence and trust-building" for religious leaders held in Kandy.

13-15 February: "3rd workshop on coexistence and trust-building" for community leaders and SLF staff held in Wattala.

08 May: SLF's request to UNDP approved and an advisor on peace-building (UN Volunteer) assigned to SLF.

SEWALANKA PROJECT ACTIVITIES 2002



Our new address:

Sewa Lanka will be moving its Head Office to Boralessgamuwa on the 31st January 2002. Until this time Head Office can be contacted on the following numbers:

Phone: 01 821 018
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SEWALANKA Newsletter

The SLF Newsletter will be published as a bi-monthly publication. To subscribe, please contact the SLF Media Department at the address provided. A donation to cover postage and printing costs would be appreciated.

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