



# SEWALANKA FOUNDATION

## Children driving community development

**Sewalanka Foundation’s Ampara Office has partnered with Save the Children Sri Lanka to create a better environment for children’s development in Mangalagama. This project is unique as it enables children to be facilitators for development within their own community.**

Mangalagama, a village located 25km from Ampara along the boundary between Ampara and Batticaloa district, was severely affected by the conflict. Over the last decade, more than 200 people from the village and surrounding areas were killed due to violence. Many children lost their parents and were forced to become the family’s primary income-earner or live with extended families. During conflict times, villagers including children spent nights in the forest because of the fear of regular incursions.

The *Community Development through Children’s Participation at Mangalagama* project aims to simultaneously build the capacity of a Children’s Club and Mothers’ Club and provide basic infrastructure. The project was informed by three needs assessments carried out during July 2003 with three separate groups including a children’s group, a youth (between 18 and 25 years old) group, and a parents’ group.

### ‘Bright star Children’s Club’

As the Project Team states “the Children’s Club aims to provide a place for children, who are affected by the conflict, to get together and socialize with each other. The project is happy if children can enjoy themselves singing, drawing and playing with friends during the weekend.” As well as providing music and art classes, children can attend Tamil and English classes held by a local resource person – the kids are excited by the Tamil classes as it will enable them to talk with their peers in the next village. As part of the program, children’s

enjoyment is paramount, so the teaching style is very different to normal school. For instance, children learn English by talking with their friends and singing English songs rather than by rote learning.

The Children’s Club activities also encourage a sense of community through developing skills in Leadership, First Aid, and Communication and Relationship Management. Thirty-two children attended Leadership training in August 2003 and the First Aid training was conducted by a local doctor. Sewalanka also conducts institutional development training for the club. Trained children are now more active and determined to carry on their activities.

All the activities of the club are discussed in the weekly meetings held every Saturday afternoon. The children have elected their own Chairperson and Secretary who guide the meeting with advice given on the process of decision making by a Sewalanka Field Officer and male and female volunteers. The club’s chairman, Chaminda states that, “..through the club’s activities, we including our friends are more confident to speak in front of friends, teachers and even visitors.”

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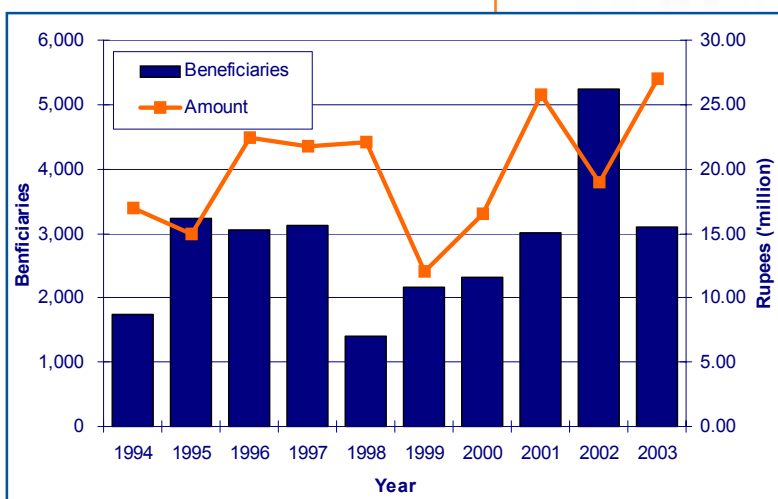
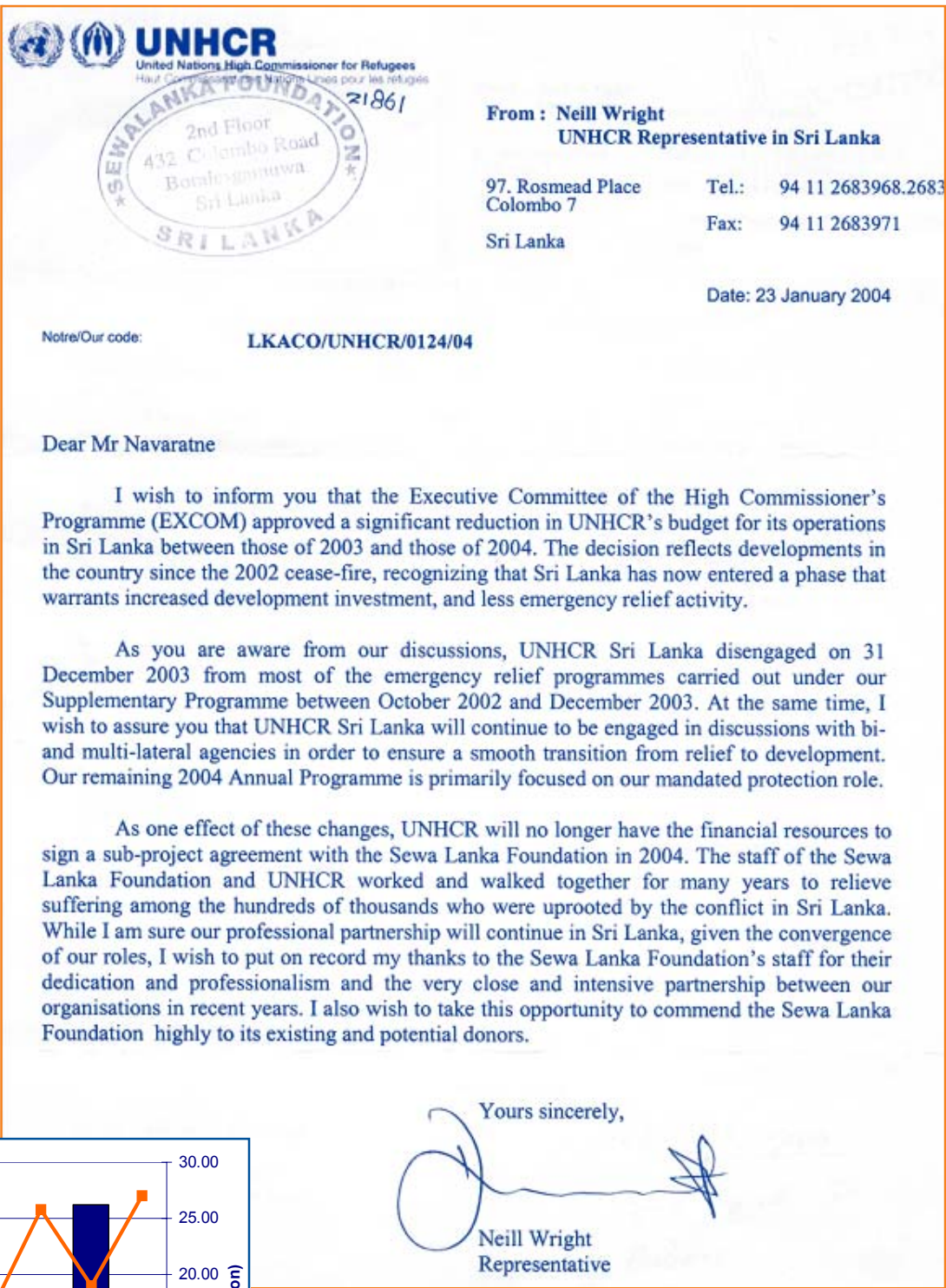
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# Thank you for the partnership

Sewalanka Foundation would like to thank the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) for a professional and productive partnership that began in 1994.

Over the past ten years, the partnership has implemented Rs.198 million in Micro Projects for resettling communities in Government-controlled and LTTE-controlled areas.

Sewalanka's Chairman, Mr. Harsha Navaratne explains that the essential work provided by Sewalanka Foundation was only possible with the commitment of UNHCR. "When Sewalanka began, UNHCR were one of our first partners – together we were able to provide humanitarian assistance to meet the immediate day-to-day needs of conflict-affected communities. The aim of all support was to restore livelihoods of people who were displaced, often more than once, by the conflict. The core component of the partnership was the promotion of civil society participation in all project development and implementation through the strengthening of new or existing community-based



organisations. Sewalanka will continue its commitment to these communities as our programmes shift from emergency relief to sustainable development; the impact of UNHCR projects has established the basis for these new projects and partnerships." ■

Above Letter by Mr. N. Wright, UNHCR Representative in Sri Lanka  
 << Graph outlines the funding received from UNHCR and the number of beneficiaries

# Supporting the Resettlement of Returnees

**The cessation of violence between the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) and the LTTE resulted in the spontaneous return of 335,656 internally displaced persons between January 2002 and December 2003 to their own lands. These communities faced the enormous task of rebuilding their lives after the devastating effects of the conflict resulted in the loss of all their assets and facilities essential for basic living.**

During June 2003 to January 2004, German Agro Action and Sewalanka Foundation partnered to implement two major projects in the north which provided 3,200 returning families with the basic living facilities.

The first project was supported through humanitarian assistance extended by the European Commission Humanitarian Commission (ECHO) to assist 703 families return to the Pallai area in Kilinochchi District and 997 families to the Vavuniya District. The second project was funded through the German Government's Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and assisted 1500 families returning to the recently cleared high security zone of the Government controlled areas of Vavuniya, LTTE controlled areas and returning Muslim communities to Mannar.

Both projects aimed to restore the normal life of the returnees by providing the basic requirements of shelter, water, food security and establishing education facilities in the most needed areas. Following are the key project outcomes achieved:

- Building materials were provided to all families to assist in building temporary shelters
- Renovation of 122 wells (87 wells funded by ECHO, 35 wells by BMZ) provided water for at least 942 families
- Emergency food aid was provided to 1000 families as dry rations for one month
- Agriculture inputs specialising in paddy cultivation was provided to 3200 returned families to them in securing their own food source
- Six rain water in Vavuniya tanks and 10 ponds in the Kilinochchi District were restored to assist agricultural development
- Basic kitchen and tool sets were provided
- Two major school buildings in Omanthai and in Padikudirruppu, Vavuniya were constructed through BMZ support thus enabling approximately 500 students to return to schools.

Social mobilisation was a significant feature of this assistance as the active participation of the communities was sought in all development activities. Small self-help groups were formed consisting of five families and a special effort was made to involve the existing community-based-organisations.

Sewalanka is pleased to have worked with German Agro Action and the communities to complete these projects and looks forward to a continuing relationship. ■

## Returnee Sustainable Development

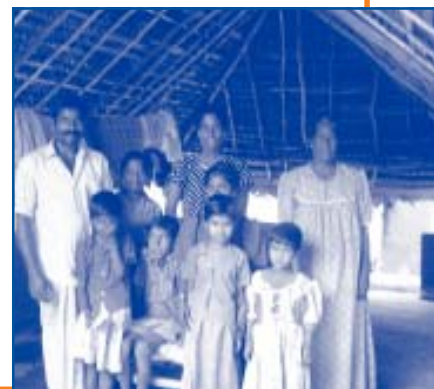
Coir production is the key income-generation activity for many women in the Jaffna D.S. Region as husks from coconuts are soaked to produce ropes and brooms. However, displacement from their homes and restricted access to the sea – so vital in coir production – is making this traditional practice difficult.

This problem was discussed with Sewalanka staff from the Women's Empowerment Project Unit, Colombo, and the Jaffna District Office during a visit in March. The purpose of the visit was to discuss the upcoming Women's Empowerment Project to be implemented in their village.

Difficulties as a result of displacement mean that women must now travel longer distances to retrieve coconuts – with access to soaking coconuts strictly denied in many areas.

Local women asked for Sewalanka's assistance to expand the products range made from coir production and to learn new skills in alternative income generation activities that ensures they are not dependant on coir production. ■

- >> Mrs Kala bashing coconut husks against the ground to loosen strands as part of coir production
- >> An assisted family with shelter in Maligai Village



# Major food and nutrition problems in Wannii

**In September 2003 Sewalanka Foundation (SLF) and German Agro Action (GAA) started the Integrated Food Security Program (IFSP) in Vavuniya. This project is a new stage in the cooperation between the governmental administration, LTTE and SLF/GAA which started in 1996 targeting basic survival needs of Wannii communities.**

The new program financed by the German Government's Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), aims to improve food security and basic infrastructure for resettling people in Vavuniya North Division and the northern part of Vavuniya Division. The main activities of the project will be road construction and repair, rehabilitation of wells and tanks, distribution

of agricultural inputs, agricultural storage, mobilisation of community based organisations (CBO) and training on farming techniques, nutrition, hygiene and small business practices. The first phase of the project is planned over a two year period with continuation of future phases depending on progress.

The results of a nutrition survey – carried out in November 2003 by a team of the International

Nutrition Unit of the University of Giessen, Germany – were presented in Colombo on 13 February 2004 and in Vavuniya on 16 February 2004. Attendees at the Vavuniya presentation included the Vavuniya Government Agent, Nedunkerni Assistant Government Agent and representatives from LTTE-administration,

Health Department, World Food Program (WFP), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and UNICEF.

The survey – carried out with the help of local health authorities – included an interview about the livelihoods of the families, weighing and measuring of all family members, and an assessment of food availability. Important findings included:

- November, December and January are the main months of food shortage
- 30% of women and men were malnourished and almost 50% of the children were underweight
- families diets are somewhat monotonous and mainly based on rice (42%), wheat flour (19%), coconut milk (9%), sugar (7%) – equalling a mean total calorie intake of less than 1600 kcal per person daily
- food aid is still a major source of food, and consequently food aid practices were also discussed.

In addition to food shortage, the additional needs identified included the continuation of road construction and repair, rehabilitation of schools as well as health services. The IFSP program focuses on construction of wells for clean drinking water, agrowells and latrines. Education on nutrition and hygiene will reduce the burden of malnutrition and disease and thereby improve the situation of the families.

Copies of the completed Nutrition Report can be obtained through the IFSP Project Team based at Sewalanka Vavuniya Office, phone: +94 (0)24 222 0490 or email: [gaavavvniya@sltnet.lk](mailto:gaavavvniya@sltnet.lk) or visit [www.sewalanka.org](http://www.sewalanka.org). ■

## Psychosocial Training in Wannii!

Funded by IFSP, Sewalanka Vavuniya Psychosocial Staff held three one-day-workshops in Tamil for all 64 Sewalanka Vavuniya North field staff and volunteers from 27-29 January 04. The training provided an introduction to a holistic-based development approach and sensitise staff to beneficiaries' psychosocial needs – mental, physical, environment and social needs. The workshop focused on communication skills and identified and explored pressing issues through improvised drama – issues included unemployment, alcoholism, domestic violence, emotional insecurity, lack of community cooperation and memories of shelling. The day ended with relaxation exercises. The participants said they found the workshop extremely useful and requested more advanced training. ■



**Top** Baby being weighed in Nedunkerni North, Wannii  
**<<** Height being measured in Unchalkaddi Maruthodai, Wannii  
**>>** Participants role-playing during Wannii training

# Planning for Tomorrow

**Sewalanka Foundation has completed the *Pilot Research on Agricultural and Rural Rehabilitation in the North-East and North-Central Provinces* for the Koei Research Institute of Japan. The Koei Institute was conducting the research study on behalf of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).**

The study's purpose was to collect primary data for the development of a comprehensive program for the war-affected areas in the northeast and north-central provinces.

The study took 4 months (Oct 03 – Jan 04) to complete and focused on 16 major and medium irrigation schemes in Ampara, Batticaloa, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi, Trincomalee, Vavuniya, Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. The activities undertaken through this comprehensive research included:

- Completing baseline surveys,
- Preparing Village Social Profiles,
- Establishing Scheme Development Committees,
- Completing Participatory Needs Analysis,
- Preparing Local Frame Works for 16 selected schemes,
- Preparing Village Development Plans,
- Institutional analysis of CBOs and preparing CBO profiles
- Analysis of institutional development needs in the public services sector.

Over 200 field staff were employed from the villages where the data was being collected for the duration of the study and Sewalanka provided training in how to undertake the above activities. The project was coordinated from the Sewalanka's Social Development Division, Head Office and conducted with the assistance of the 9

**Top** Elder in Akkarayankulam Tank, Kilinochchi explaining the Village Map for Study  
**>>** Women discussing their problems in Akkarayankulam Tank, Kilinochchi for study

District Offices. Also Sewalanka received the fullest cooperation from the Government Agents, District and Divisional Secretaries and officials from the Departments of Irrigation, Agrarian Services and Agriculture.

Whilst the results are yet to be finalized by Koei Institute, Mr. Tapan Barman, Social Development Division anecdotally suggests that "The survey results may highlight the gravity of social and economic development issues present in the North-East and North-Central provinces and the necessity for a holistic project approach". The Japanese Bank for International Cooperation plans to develop the study's findings into a major project to be implemented in 2005. ■

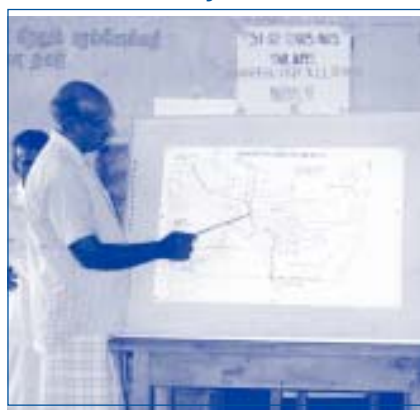
## New project to start in Batticaloa

**Sewalanka Foundation has received funding from the Japanese Government for the *Project for Livelihood Enhancement of the Poor Families in Batticaloa District*. The one-year project will provide direct agricultural assistance to resettled people in 11 villages.**

The people in these selected villages have been displaced for more than a decade due to the prolong conflict. Having lost their houses, property and livelihood, the people in these areas are faced with unstable food security situation, malnutrition of children and unemployment. Since their primary livelihood is agriculture, they are suffering serve hardship due to a lack of facilities to recommence this profession.

The *Project for Livelihood Enhancement's* strategy is providing basic assistance for villages to earn a living to ensure sustainable human development, poverty alleviation and economic recovery. The support will include facilities to recommence the traditional employment for the area, paddy cultivation including the rehabilitation of four small-scale irrigation tanks, construction of paddy storage, provision of agricultural equipment, tractors, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. In addition, training programs will be provided to provide alternative skills and knowledge in environmentally friendly agricultural practices and to identify and harness potential income generation opportunities.

The projects budget is R7.2million and is provided through Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project. The Food and Agricultural Organisation will provide technical assistance to the project. ■



# Addressing Environmental Concerns

**Sewalanka Foundation, in partnership with the border communities of the Sinharaja Rainforest, implemented two fuel-efficient stove projects targeting local small-scale industry and individual families in November 2003 and January 2004 respectively.**

Sinharaja Rainforest, an UNESCO World Heritage Site and the communities living in the border zone walk a fine line between conservational concerns and survival. These programs aimed to reduce the negative environmental and health impacts caused by the use of traditional stoves. The projects were supported through the Global Environmental Facilitate Small Grant Project, United Nations Development Program and technical support provided by Integrated Development Associate (IDEA).

The community identified that traditional stoves produce too much smoke and heat, uncontrollable flames, and require large amounts of fuel. Therefore, Sewalanka sourced two different types of stoves for the community, to address these problems. The first stove is ready-made and appropriate for domestic use. The second one is a new design that can easily be made by local craftsmen using readily available materials that is ideal for home-based kithul and jaggery producers.

Sewalanka and IDEA then devised a program that trained community members to be resource persons to assist

other villagers in installing and using the stoves. The three-day program involved general training on the usefulness and technical components of improved stoves and incorporated cooking/ installation demonstrations.

The first course held on 12-14 November 03 was attended by local craftsmen, local kithul producers and

**Top** Participants take home their new stoves, proceeds go to fund environmental projects  
**<<** Industrial-strength kithul production stove installed

selected community representatives from three villages in the Kudawa Kalawana area. Kithul treacle and jaggery is produced by the labour intensive work of boiling down the sap of the kithul palm (*caryota urens*) tree. Originally only four new stoves were planned to be built, however due to the enthusiasm of the participants ten new stoves were built.

The second course focusing on the ready-made stove for domestic use was held on 7-9 January 2004 and attended by 50 community members from four villages, including local carpenters, masonries and selected resource persons – 75% of participants were women. The project supplied 50 fuel-efficient ready-made stoves to Sinharaja Conservation Committees. Participants installed five of these stoves and thirty were distributed at a subsidised rate. The profits will contribute to ongoing conservation activities undertaken by the committees.

The participants determined that the domestic ready-made stove would cut cooking time in half from 60 to 30 minutes for cooking rice, cereal (dhal), sprats and green leaves. They also noted that when cooking the above items only ½kg fuel was required as opposed to the normal 1½ kgs.

Sewalanka project field coordinators continue to provide assistance to local resource persons. Additional training programs are planned in other border regions of Sinharaja Rainforest. ■

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## Sinharaja's home-style tourism

Increasingly local and foreign tourists are recognising the natural beauty of last viable remnant of virgin tropical rainforest, Sinharaja Forest Reserve, making it a popular tourist destination. The tourists are attracted to Sinharaja's biodiversity and high number of endemic species.

Kudawa is the main township in the immediate vicinity of the forest reserve, the Sinharaja 'buffer zone'. It is also the primary entrance into the reserve, making it an ideal resting place for visitors exploring the forest. In December 2003, Kudawa residents approached Sewalanka to seek assistance in establishing home-based tourism enterprises. Home-based tourism provides foreign visitors with an opportunity to be immersed in the rich culture and customs of a Sri Lankan home as locals convert one or two rooms in their family homes to "bed and breakfast" style accommodation.

The community's interest in providing Bed and Breakfast accommodation was sparked as foreigners walked through the township enquiring about places to stay. On December 23, Sewalanka held a community meeting to discuss the idea further. Residents expressed great enthusiasm but had questions on where to begin and on the type of accommodation that foreigners would expect.

As a result of the communities' interest and to encourage entrepreneurship, Sewalanka organised a community exchange to Unawatuna on the 8-9 January 2004. Unawatuna is a popular tourist destination on the South Coast that has many established Bed and Breakfast businesses. Eight people attended the exchange and noted with pleasure that foreign visitors do not require elaborate accommodation, just a clean room and friendly service with a smile.

Since returning to Kudawa the residents have formed a Community Development Organisation to assist each other in this new tourism endeavour. Sewalanka is committed to providing ongoing support as they face the challenges and successes of this new enterprise. ■

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### **Enhancing infrastructure**

The project has renovated an existing library building which was built by Sumurdhi Government Department. The library now owned and managed by the children is 1km from the school. It is open every Sunday, has over 50 members. In addition, a Children's Club building was constructed on two-acres of land released by Batticaloa district. This building now houses weekly meetings, lessons and training programs, the children have plans to establish volleyball and cricket courts in the grounds.

### **Exposure trips**

The Children's Club suggested exposure trips as an opportunity to visit different communities and better understand Sanskrit. So on 29 December 2003, 32 children under Grade 6 visited to Kandy to see the Dalada Maligawa (Buddhist Temple of the Tooth), Gadolatheniya (Buddhist Temple), Ambakke Dewale (Hindu Temple), Kandy Railway Station, Peredeniya Botanical Gardens and the Mahaweli Ganga (Mahaweli River). A trip is planned during March 2003 for senior students to visit Pollonnaruwa, Anuradapura, Dambulla and Colombo.

### **Mothers club: Bottom-up approach to improving impoverished economic status among mothers**

The Mangalagama Sewa Society has approximately 40 mothers and runs a saving and credit program and

business development training. The main source of income among villagers is seasonal and tends to be low and unstable, it is the cultivation of maize and beans during North-East monsoon season from November to February. In Mangalagama, 3/5 of families receive Sumurdhi (public assistance).

The society's saving and credit programs form the basis for economic development in the village. It provides mothers low interest credit and an opportunity to save their money through a group meeting each week. As part of this project, seventeen mothers were trained in group saving in September 2003, and twenty-five mothers were trained in business development in January 2004. The interest produced from the credit program is used to run the Children's Club and provide a salary for the preschool teachers in the village.

### **Project to continue into 2005**

Children's Club plans for 2004 and 2005 include the continuation of language, art and music classes, library enhancement, the construction of a computer centre and classes in computers and mathematics to be started. Also a Youth Club for 18-25 year-olds will be established in 2004 – assistance in managing a CBO, credit facilities and vocational and business development training will be provided. There will also be an HIV/AIDS awareness program. In addition, the mothers group will continue to be strengthened, business development training provided and 5 drinking water wells constructed for the village.

Mangalagama community and Sewalanka are excited that Save the Children will continue to support this innovative project that adopts an whole of village approach to community development. ■



**Top** Children help each other to learn during music class  
**>>** The new library has over 50 members and is managed by the children  
**>>** The Mother's Club receiving book keeping training

## East meets west to talk fisheries management

Twelve Tamil and Muslim fishermen, four Grama Sevaka and two field officers from the Departments of Fisheries and Forestry from Ampara district took part in a Coastal Lagoon Management Awareness Program in Negombo, between 26 and 30 January 2004. The program was organised by Sewalanka Ampara in collaboration with Janodaya Sajeevana Kendraya, as part of an ongoing coastal lagoon management project sponsored by United Nations Development Program 's Environmental Facilitate Small Grant Project, in Thirukovil DS Division.

The program provided the east coast fishermen with an opportunity to discuss lagoon and fishery management issues with Negombo fishermen and share their recent experiences of the conflict. As part of the programme the Ampara fishermen met representatives from the Negombo Lagoon Management Authority, the Duwa Stake Net Fishermen's Cooperative Society, Pittipana Fish Market and National Fisheries Solidarity. The five day programme concluded with an examination of one of the potential benefits from successful management of coastal lagoon resources – ecotourism – at Mutharajawela.

## Impact Monitoring Workshop

Two Project Cycle Management Plan (PCMP) workshops conducted by Dr. Lorenz Bachmann from German Agro Action (GAA) were held at Sewalanka's Vavuniya Office for the Integrated Food Security Program (IFSP) and the European Union/ GAA. The workshops aimed to provide a clear overview of monitoring requirements for field staff, develop monitoring indicators and prepare an operational plan. The IFSP workshop was held 16-22 February 2004 and attended by 30 field staff. The EU/GAA workshop was held 23-28 February 2004 for 36 field staff.

## World Bank Delegation

Women's Empowerment Project funding body - the World Bank, and Sewalanka national and district representatives, made a special visit to project sites in the Jaffna region between February 16 -19, 2004.

Participants of Sewalanka's *Social and Economic Empowerment of Women in the North and East of Sri Lanka* (WEP) project met with four members of the World Bank, firsthand, to discuss their particular needs, desires, expectations and problems faced in implementing this project. Two members of the World Bank team travelled from Colombo, one from India and one from Washington, in order to:

- See the project sites
- Gain a greater understanding of the project beneficiaries, including the state of, and general conditions faced by women in the North
- Know what specific activities and training programs Sewalanka is planning and implementing as part of the Women's Empowerment project, and
- To assess the capacity of the CBOs to implement this project in their areas.

The long-term objective of the project is to sustainably enhance women's participation in the social and economic activities at the household and community level. *SEEW* is a World Bank initiative through the Japanese Social Development Fund and implemented by the National Development Bank and Sewalanka Foundation.

## Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria

Sewalanka Foundation has been invited membership to the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) for The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The role of CCM is develop and submit partnerships based on national Priority needs, membership includes representatives from government, multilateral and bilateral agencies, academic institutions and people living with the diseases.

**Sewalanka Foundation's Organisational Profile is now available in Japanese & German on [www.sewalanka.org](http://www.sewalanka.org)**



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