

# INFORMATION

# Update



## Conference on Our Sri Lanka 2025: Engaging Persons of Sri Lankan Origin Overseas

The Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies hosted a conference on the theme *Our Sri Lanka 2025: Engaging Persons of Sri Lankan Origin Overseas*, on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2015 at JAIC, Hilton Union Place, Colombo.

The conference was based around **Thematic area 1:** Contributions of persons of Sri Lankan origin overseas; achievements, challenges and recommendation for further exchanges towards an 'Open Sri Lanka' and **Thematic area 2:** Support by persons of Sri Lankan origin overseas, towards peace supportive development.



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## Meetings and Discussions on Equal Rights and Change

1. Engagement with State Minister of Education relating to extra support for exceptional students in Plantation sector post OL. Student loans to access "Higher Education" post OL.
2. A Rapid Assessment of the Justice Sector in SL with Asia Foundation and Ministry of Justice-planned.
3. Submission to Minister of Samurdhi and Housing on concepts and options for low cost housing and concept of smarter cities for urban poor.

### Nansen Initiative South Asia Civil Society Meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal

The Nansen Initiative South Asia Civil Society Meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal was held from 2-3 February 2015 and explored the issue of human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change in the region. CHA was represented by Executive Director Mr Jeevan Thiagarajah.

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The Panels consisted of Hon Minister Eran Wickramaratne (Deputy Minister of Highways & Investment Promotion), Hon Minister Ravi Karunaratne (Minister of Finance), MP Rajiva Wijesinghe (State Minister for Higher Education), Ms. Shirani de Fontgalland (Former Head of the Criminal Law Section of the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Division), Mr Vijaira Kulatilake (Director/CEO National Development Bank), Mr Suresh Shah, (Chairman, Ceylon Chamber of Commerce), Mr Anushka Wijesinghe (Economist), Ms Helen Jones (Director, Youth Affairs and Education Programmes, The Royal Commonwealth Society) with representation of diaspora organizations from ARC and VFR from the UK. The presentations and discussions focused on:

- Understanding and Analyzing the Achievements and the

role played by PSLOO in engaging with Sri Lanka.

- Possible Policy Frameworks that Provide Further Space and Positive engagement for PSLOO in regard to Social, Economic and Political Development in Sri Lanka.

- *Leveraging the Diaspora for Investment and Knowledge in Sri Lanka: Challenges and Policy Options* This conference was supported by International Alert.

**For further reading please follow the links below which will direct you to additional articles on the conference.**

<https://thecurionomist.wordpress.com/2015/03/04/smart-future-column-4-sri-lanka-must-leverage-its-diaspora-for-development-but-its-more-than-just-the-money/>

<http://www.ft.lk/2015/02/28/new-govt-woos-diaspora-back-with-welcome-home-push/>



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The meeting provided an opportunity:

- To develop a better understanding of the human mobility and displacement dynamics linked to natural hazards in South Asia
- To identify good practices, at regional, national and community levels, in establishing mechanisms for climate change adaptation, disaster preparedness, building resilience, and responding to and managing displacement risks
- To identify key protection concerns for people displaced or moving in disaster contexts, and assess the relevance and appropriateness of existing policies, strategies and normative frameworks
- To draft key messages and provide input for the Nansen Initiative inter-governmental Regional Consultation in South Asia in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 5-7 April 2015



## Needs Assessment Done in Jaffna for the Second Year CBDRR programme



*On the island of Kayts –visiting the bund created to keep sea water intrusion into rainwater at bay*

The CHA team visited the District of Jaffna from the 23rd to the 25th of February to assess the needs of the district in terms of disaster-risk. The team visited various parts of the district including the island of Kayts. They visited the CHA District Office in Jaffna which will serve as the coordinating base. Plans are underway to hire more staff and renovate the infrastructure.

The team also visited the Disaster Management Centre of Jaffna, the District Secretariat of Jaffna, the District Secretariat of the island of Kayts, the Yaarlpanum Chamber of Commerce and the Council of NGO's amongst schools and NGO's such as the World Vision District Office and the Centre for Children's Happiness during their stay there.

Through these meetings it was assessed that there was a drinking water scarcity of titanic proportions faced by certain parts in the district. Droughts were sporadically experienced while ground water pollution was faced by many, resulting in various health hazards.

CHA requested the aid of the various District Secretariats to source information with regard to various hazards and the significant areas. CHA also agreed to aid them with their various activities, one of which was to facilitate the NGO Coordination meeting scheduled to be held on the 26th of February as well as supplying water tanks to aid them in their fight against the drinking water issue.



*Visiting the Holy Family Convent in Jaffna*



*Meeting with Deputy Director Disaster Management, Mr Sangarapillai*



*Meeting with Yaarlpanum Chambers*

### Networking in Jaffna –Creating a Platform

CHA met with several actors of the humanitarian sector, inclusive of government agents and the private sector to instigate a network platform in Jaffna in aid of disaster management and mitigation. The Yaarlpanum Chambers as well as the GA Jaffna and the Disaster Management Centre in Jaffna received the idea with positivity. The notion was accepted as

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being a necessity and plans are underway to conduct network meetings in the near future to help facilitate disaster response and mitigation activities in Jaffna.

## A-PAD Support Given in Jaffna

Following a request from the Deputy Director Disaster Management Jaffna, Mr Ravi Sangarapillai, A-Pad was successful in supplying 20 water tanks to several villages in Jaffna such as Uduvil, Thellipalai, Changaanai and Sandilippai which were affected by ground water contamination. 30 more tanks have been approved and are scheduled to be delivered in early March.



## A-PAD Core-Member Meeting

A Core Member Group comprising 8 representatives of the A-PAD met at CHA on Feb 26<sup>th</sup> (Minutes circulated) in order to structure and formalize the activities for 2015. The group proposed relevant steps for CHA to take up A-PAD's mission in a more constructive manner. The proposed actions will be looked into by CHA and an outline will be presented to the Members by end March.

## Assessment of Disaster Damages and Responses in Sri Lanka and Policy Recommendation to Government of Sri Lanka and Relevant Ministries

A meeting co-chaired by CHA and CCC was held on January 30<sup>th</sup> (Minutes Circulated) in order to put together a working document on effects on climate change, disaster resilient crops, carbon footprint, strengthening community and plantation sector resilience to disasters. Engaging Key stake holders and working in collaboration to take up above matters further and meetings will be scheduled.

## National Psychosocial Forum Meeting

The psychosocial forum meeting is planned to be held on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March or the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2015, at the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies auditorium, from 10.00 Am – 12.00 Pm. Due to unavailability of a date and many other external factor, it was not possible to hold a forum meeting in February and January.

The newly appointed officials at the National Child Protection Authority, on the new action plan, will present at the March forum.

**If you are interested in joining future forums and receiving updates of previous forums please contact our Psychosocial Coordinator Ms. Nishadhi Cruz on 114626100 or [psfcoord@cha.lk](mailto:psfcoord@cha.lk)**

## Koslanda Initiative – Providing psychosocial interventions to the adult victims

The Psychosocial program of the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies has initiated a work plan and a working group with the intention of



*The above pictures were taken during the initial visit in the Koslanda Camp*

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providing psychosocial assistance to those adults affected by the Koslanda landslides. Due to Government procedures and protocols, the program had to be held still until the families were transferred to a well-organized camp.

The initial visit was made on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December, with the support of the Rotary Club. The working group consisted of mental health professionals who conducted a needs assessment by conducting sessions with a sample of each age and gender. The working group also focused on the families who had lost a loved one and conducted personalized sessions with each one of them. Through this the working group was able to understand the status of the people living in the camp. A work report has been finalized and CHA is in the process of planning the interventions and psychological aid that needs to be provided to the people who are residing in the camp.

The Psychosocial Program will make a presentation at the Rotary club meeting on the Koslanda project initiative. Once the Rotary Club provides technical assistance, the working group will make the second visit and commence the sessions.

***If there, are any other organizations interested to support this initiative or interested to be a part of this meeting. Please contact our psychosocial Coordinator on 0114626100 or [psfcoord@cha.lk](mailto:psfcoord@cha.lk)***

## Youth forum

### ***Pre School donations***

The youth forum of CHA initiated donating materialistic goods to less fortunate children and schools. The forum visited four underprivileged pre-schools in the Gampaha area on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2015. The materials provided to the children included the following:

Pencils, Toys, Color Marker, Glue.

**The following are the details of the four preschools visited by the Forum:**

Name of Pre School	Details
Nisansala Preschool , Asgiriya, Gampaha	35 children
Pubudu Pre School, Asgiriya, Gampaha	5 Children
Asgiriya Vijitha Pre School	4 Children
Sanasa Pre School	15 Children

A total number of 59 Children received this preschool donation.

### ***Anuradhapura Pre School building construction***

The Psychosocial Coordinator of CHA made a second visit to the preschool located in rural Anuradhapura on the **8<sup>th</sup> of February 2015**. The coordinator had a meeting with the President of the Ayurveda Association, Mr. Gamini Epa, who has been CHA's coordinator pertaining to this construction and the principle of the Samadhi preschool

Mrs. Puswallege. Together the coordinator made a visit to the school and the land, which will be used, for the construction.

The principle requested for a constructor to provide a estimate to CHA including the expenditure to construct the building. The preschool will have one entrance (opening to the classroom / Hall),

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***The above pictures were taken during the preschool donations***



**Below are the pictures of the Anuradhapura Preschool:**

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and there will be another door included inside the building which will separate the storeroom and the classroom. The storeroom will have completed walls with one window, whereas the walls surrounding the classroom will be built as half walls. Instead of windows, the constructor suggested nets to be fixed, which will prevent monkeys from entering and protect the inside of the school from wind and rain. The total length of the building will be 40 ft. and the width would be 20 ft. The storeroom will have the length of 10 ft. and a width of 20 ft.



The land which would be used to build the new proposed pre-school:

## DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

### Hambantota

## DRR project Monitoring and Evaluation.

CIVIC Force Japan along with the CHA Head Office conducted a monitoring and evaluation on the DRR project on 09<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> February at selected locations in Hambantota district. Under this evaluation plans were made to meet certain government officers to conduct some interviews; they were as follows:

1. Hambantota district NGO coordinator
2. DMC officers
3. District Counseling officer
4. OIC of National Child Protection Authority ( NCPA )
5. District Media Officer
6. CEO of Hambantota Chamber of commences.
7. Member-businessmen of the Hambantota Trade Association

Additionally, a follow up was conducted in the village of Dimuthugama where the team met beneficiaries of ration packs from CIVIC Force & A-PAD of Japan during the drought season. The DMC and the villagers of Dimuthugama had organized a meeting to share ideas for both parties under the guidance of the NGO coordinator and DMC officers. Economic Development officer and GS officer also attended the function. At the meeting, ideas were discussed and shared among beneficiaries and the CIVIC Force team in a very successfully manner. Some common issues which the people have had to face in the village were identified and referred to the GA and relevant authorities through the NGO coordinator and DMC officer.



## Monitoring and Evaluation on DRR School Awareness Program

School-level awareness programs on disaster risk reduction were conducted under the DRR project at H/Therapuththa National School, Ambalantota late last year and

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therefore this school was selected as a subject for monitoring and evaluation. A small meeting was conducted with the school's principal, the Geography teacher and 5 select students who had attended this awareness program. Feedback and ideas were acquired from the students on their knowledge and opinions of the DRR program. It was very fruitful meeting for both parties wherein ideas and suggestions were successfully shared.

## Certificate Awarding Ceremony for the SPHERE Standards for Youth Leaders in the Hambantota District



The CHA District Office in Hambantota conducted a training program on SPHERE Standards for youth leaders in July of 2014 at the National Youth Service Council, Tangalle. Under this training 75 participants representing youth, such as leaders of federations and of youth clubs and youth service officers benefitted.

The CIVIC Force Japan team attended the certificate awarding ceremony following which a small meeting was conducted to facilitate a monitoring and evaluation on the training that was given. Youth & YSO officers participated. Valuable feedback was acquired from the youth present.

## Displaying banners on awareness on disaster risk reduction at community level

Under the DRR project, knowledge-based banners were disseminated to be displayed at various places such as the Hambantota DMC, the Ambalantota Agrarian Service Centre, Federation of Youth Clubs, Samadhigama Village Community Centre. It has been decided that the banners would be displayed in same manner in the future as well.



## Information Dissemination

CHA and DRC has provided information for 28 clients who had requested it from the CHA this month.

## Official Visits and Meetings Held

Hambantota GA office, DMC, Ambalantota DS office, National Child Protection Authority, Schools, Agrarian Service Office, Samadhigama village and Federation of Youth Clubs.

## MEETINGS ATTENDED

A meeting was held on 26.02.2015 at the NGO Council in Jaffna. The meeting commenced at 10.20 with 16 participants. Present were members of the NGO Council, namely, The Secretary, Ms M Vanathy, Mr T Thevananth, Treasurer and Mr K M Rajenthiran, Finance and Administrative Officer. Mr Kesavan, The Vice President of the NGO council presided over the meeting due to the absence of the President, Mr Thatparan. Ms Kilita Sriranganathan of CHA and Mr A R Shaielendrakumar of the Centre for child and youth empowerment participated in the meeting.



Monthly financial statements and the reports were circulated amongst the members of the NGO council and discussed further in addition to other administrative matters.

## DRB MEETING AT DISTRICT SECRETARIAT, JAFFNA AT

The District Review Board meeting was held on 26.02.2015 at 2.00 pm at District Secretariat, Jaffna. 10 NGO's participated in the meeting. The GA presided over the meeting. CHA, Jaffna sponsored the program. Miss Sharuka Selvarajah, Project Officer, participated in the program.

## FREE LEGAL SERVICES AT IHR, URELU

The free legal services being provided by the CHA in collaboration with IHR are going on smoothly. 2 clients have reportedly required for free legal advice and assistance from the IHR office in Urelu in the month of February 2015.

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*The Information Update is also available on the CHA website:*

<http://www.humanitarian-srilanka.org>

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