

JULY 2016



Information Update

Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies

Initial Meeting of Consultative Committee of workingwomen.lk

The meeting which took place on the 29th of July discussed the following matters in detail. Mentoring, contract review and checking services, providing accounting and financial services, future markets and overseas employment, maintaining international levels of economic competence, advice for work-from-home jobs, part time/free-lance, CVs and employment for professionals, business opportunities, internships/volunteer opportunities, women returning to work after a long break, job board, inviting partners

to promote female oriented events, publishing success stories, inviting partners to promote community meets for the members, inviting partners for job coaching/ training, inviting partners for leadership and growth initiative for young women in universities, and schools.

WorkingWomen seek to provide experts in specific subject areas for mentorship also to encourage the young women to take charge. Women entrepreneurs are to be equipped with technical knowledge

and understanding of the market needs and quality expected from each product through this initiative. It was suggested demographic statistics be obtained in order to decide on the target area and audience to run the pilot project as well as the possibility of running rural hubs to create motivation for high school dropouts as young as 16 years of age via internships/ volunteer activity. The target should be enhancing opportunities for the less privileged.

Victims of Civil Strife-Disappearances and Commissions of Inquiry

The Chairman of CHA and IHR complained to the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission to take action against past disappearances.

The 1994 Commissions of Inquiry into Involuntary Removals and Disappearances (Central, North Western, North Central and Uva Provinces/Northern and Eastern Provinces/Western Province, Southern Province and the Sabaragamuwa Province) appointed on November

30, 1994 reported in September 1997. These three Commissions investigated a total of 27,526 complaints out of which 16,800 cases were established to amount to enforced disappearances.

Out of 8,739 cases, 1,296 cases concerned the involuntary removal of children aged below 19 years. Another 2,451 were from the 20-24 age group. Thus 3,747 (43 percent) of disappearances reported to the Commission were of persons aged

24 and below; 63% of those who disappeared were below the age of 30. Women were also intensely victimized.

We requested from Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission to take necessary legal action against the responsible personnel using the powers of the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission.

Collaborative Initiative for Methsevana

CHA and IHR will partner Brandix in assisting the Women's Half Way Home – Methsevana. Staff from the three institutions toured the facility, met with the Director of Methsevana and his staff and discussed urgent needs of the inmates and the centre. The initiative will look at repairing damaged buildings; improved facilities for children of the inmates, enhancement of vocational training staff and teachers for the inmates, Possibility of providing cut pieces

of fabrics for sewing and preparing carpets, Monthly remuneration for sewing teacher, Teacher for general education (basic English and Sinhala), Counseling & Combined six month training/exposure in counseling, sewing and general basic education. Currently there are 180 inmates of which majority are mentally affected. This also includes 9 children below 5 years. Three women are employed at the Ministry of Social Services We take this opportunity to thank Brandix for their support of this

initiative.

Chairman attended a meeting at Ministry of Social Services on 20th with regard to the Vagrance Ordinance and the following are the developments.

1. Vagrance ordinance to be repealed.
2. A new Social care policy to be developed including for those homeless or unaccompanied.
3. Brothels Ordinance to be revised.



Strengthening Relationships & Co-existence -Eid Festival Get-together

Anually, the Welfare Association of Islamic Traders (WAIT), Batticaloa arranges a Ramadan Festival Get Together bringing together the public and the private partners and individuals to a common place at a banquet. It ensures the inter-religious, inter-ethnic relationship and co-existence in the district of Batticaloa.

Thus, the Ramadan Festival Get Together-2016 was organised by WAIT on 12th July, 2016 at Singing Fish

Hotel, Batticaloa. The get together was also attended by the Additional GA Mr. S. Giritharan, Director Planning Mr. R. Neduncheliyan, members of the Eastern Provincial Council, the Chambers of Commerce, Batticaloa, religious leaders and dignitaries of all faiths, professionals such as doctors, engineers, businessmen, NGOs, intellectuals and individuals. CHA, Batticaloa had been extended a special invitation by WAIT and the function was attended by the CHA Members of staff.

All who participated were seen interacting with each other cordially and involved in discussions. Special addresses were done by the religious leaders and dignitaries on the significance of the event and appreciation on organizing events of this nature which unites all the communities and religions and respecting each other's community and religion.

The function ended with a dinner.

CHA Disaster Risk Reduction Activities

For further reading on our Disaster Risk Reduction and Management projects please refer

to the A-PAD Bulletin, our bi-monthly publication which carries an expanded overview of all disaster manage-

ment activity at the CHA. (Also visit us at our DRR programme website <http://www.apadsl.org/>)



Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction

- Nine workshops were carried out in Trincomalee District on Water Management, Disaster Risk Reduction Planning, Creating Disaster Resilient Communities and Community based First Aid.
- In Batticaloa, 6 community workshops were conducted on Disaster Preparedness and Community First Aid.
- Two Community First Aid trainings were conducted for Community Based Volunteers in Jaffna district. Also a workshop on Rain Water Harvesting was conducted in Melinchimunai, Kayts as a follow-up after implementing the Rainwater Harvesting Systems for the beneficiaries.

A-PAD Sri Lanka activity

- A-PAD Sri Lanka conducted a series of Eye Clinics for the affected populace who had misplaced their eye glasses to the floods. An Eye Clinic at the Sri Nagawanarama Temple in Wellampitiya was conducted on the 15th of July and educational equipment during the recent floods that occurred in May.
- Education kits (shoes and stationery) were distributed to students of S W R D Bandaranaike Vidyalaya, Rajagiriya with the aim of benefitting the students who had lost their stationery and other
- A platform meeting introducing A-PAD took place in Badulla congregating government officials, private sector and civil society on 8th of July at District Secretariat.



Programme focused on the upliftment of vulnerable communities in two DS divisions in the districts of Jaffna and Batticaloa

Following a visit to Jaffna and meeting with civil society, university students, farmers, the Government Agent and staff of the district secretariat in June, where discussion revolved around issues faced by vulnerable communities and ways of reducing indebtedness, enhance skills development and opportunities for youth to pursue education of their choice through collaborations of all stakeholders enabling a reduction of the high percentage of unemployment in the Peninsular. CHA will initiate a program in assisting vulnerable communities through Education, Employment and entrepreneurship. CHA will

“...discussion revolved around issues faced by vulnerable communities and ways of reducing indebtedness, enhance skills development and opportunities for youth...”

work in both Jaffna and Batticaloa in two GS divisions focusing on Social Empowerment of vulnerable persons through 3Es. DS divisions in Batticaloa have been selected by the Director Planning, District Secretariat; we are finalising details for Jaffna with Director Planning, District Secretariat.

Bi monthly articles on social, economic issues faced by people of Jaffna will be featured in the Sudar Oli newspaper. Third article has been developed on developmental issues in North. It is yet to be published. An article has also been developed on Women and Values in Kayts. It has been submitted to the DS in Kayts for her comments.

Volunteerism

The Director, Volunteer Secretariat confirmed they could consider some of the proposed activities in the National action plan submitted by us. Awaiting response.

Research on Future Markets for Labour Migrants from Sri Lanka

Following a research paper done by the CHA earlier this year, Europe was identified as one of the future markets for Sri Lankan labour migrants. One of their major demands is for healthcare workers.

The CHA is seeking to support the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) in establishing suitable educational/vocational competency standards- especially for the occupations of care givers,

“...establishing suitable educational/vocational competency standards- especially for the occupations of care givers, elderly care workers and social care workers...”

elderly care workers and social care workers- which are accepted in European countries with these labour demands. Advice from the TVEC such as information from target recipient countries National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) located by CHA would be used to deliver suitable certification at affordable rates to Sri Lankan citizens.

THE HUMANITARIAN PAGE

Healing doesn't mean the damage never existed. It means the damage never controls our lives



Free Medical Clinic in Kanchipuram, Kilinochchi

Centre for Holistic Healing - Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India

The Centre for Holistic Healing (CHH) is the psychosocial wing of the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India (JDCSI), and is headed by the director, Dr. Thaya Thiagarajah. The CHH engages in many different activities which are targeted towards creating a just, participatory and sustainable society for all peoples irrespective of religion, ethnicity, or creed. The work of the CHH is based largely in Jaffna and Vanni, with special focus on the survivors of war.

The need for medical care is paramount in many of the interior villages in the Vanni area; lack of proper medical facilities, lack of public transport, and poverty are some of the main factors that create such a need. The CHH has organized many free medical clinics over the past seven years. The free

medical clinic held on the 28th of February 2016 was at a village called Kanchipuram.

The residents of Kanchipuram are in the slow process of resettling in their village and rebuilding their lives. A single bus operates in the village, taking the children to and from school. Most villagers are farmers, and at present there are seldom other opportunities for economic survival. The field staff identified the village-dwellers as needing medical care and treatment, and thus a free medical camp was organized.

The free medical clinic treated nearly 200 people on the 28th of February. The elderly, children, amputees, and pregnant mothers were among those who sought medical aid at the clinic. Volunteer doctors, nurses, and psychosocial workers comprised the medical team. Whilst treatments for physical illnesses were promptly provided, screening for trauma,

PTSD, and clinical depression was also available. The team also visited paralysed patients in their homes.

The free medical clinic ensures that those who need further medical care are transported to the Jaffna Hospital, and their expenses are met by the CHH. Those who are diagnosed with psychological issues are followed by trained workers of the CHH.

It is vital that medical and psychosocial facilities are made available to these vulnerable communities. The CHH's initiative in providing this essential service is certainly commendable; however the need remains plenty!

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The Information Update is also available on the CHA website: <http://www.humanitarian-srilanka.org>

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