

Annex 8: Stories of Change and Photographs of the Project Activities

Fruits of a Training

Assisting Community Centers in the Northern Province as part of the CDLG Project

The road to Point Pedro, the Northernmost tip of Sri Lanka is connected by multiple man-made bridges stretching across the dry landscape, with a speckle of migratory birds dotting the skyline. Travelling along the road, Rekha, a social mobilizer of the Jaffna Social Action Center visits remote areas of the Northern Province on her scooter and begins her fieldwork. “When we plan social engagements, we expect 2-3 persons from the area to attend, however in reality, only 5 people actually turn up”, she says.

Over the past year, Rekha has worked with four Local Authorities in the Point Pedro area and attended multiple



Rekha proudly posing in the community centre wearing the t-shirt given to her during the training

workshops by the UNDP Sri Lanka’s Capacity Development of Local Governance(CDLG) project. She takes a moment to reflect on her training, and the valuable insight and exposure she has received in the field as a result. Formerly self-employed Rajinthan Gangalakshmi, fondly known as ‘Rekha’ by all in the locality, maintains strong relationships with people in her community. Soon after attending the training programme conducted by the CDLG project last year, Rekha was contracted by JSAC as a social mobilizer.

The Jaffna Social Action Center (JSAC), a Civil Society Organisation (CSO) and partner of the CDLG project, has launched multiple initiatives to assist Community Centres in the Northern Province to increase their democratic

engagement and voice. One such initiative is the provision of training to build and strengthen their social accountability skills. As a steppingstone to achieving this, the institutional framework of CSOs in the area was strengthened, followed by training programmes for CSO members on good governance, project cycle management, communication, and the right to information. To further develop their skills, participants were also encouraged to write proposals with the hope that going forward, they will be capable of developing their own proposals to be submitted to their Local Authorities. The CSOs are also provided with the support to establish participatory platforms that include Local Authorities, which in turn increases their accountability in Governance.

Today, the functions of the centre have expanded, with members of the community using the premises for meetings and essential administrative activities, with a noticeably higher percentage of women present at community meetings. The evidence of the success of the training programmes that were conducted lies in the outcomes of the meetings: the piles of proposals for their latest ventures that are now forwarded to Local Authorities shows that the knowledge imparted by the CDLG project has been successfully passed down to the community leaders through JSAC.

Through the CDLG project, advocacy and learning programmes for CSOs such as JSAC are conducted around the island to train members of local communities, including those like Rekha, to become social mobilizers of change. They assist staff members of Local Authorities and CSOs to further their careers while increasing their efficiency and productivity. The training takes place on the job, at workshops, and through practical sessions - learning by doing, where administrators are guided through the processes of participatory project planning, prioritisation, budgeting, design, implementation and supervision, as well as monitoring and reporting.

Asanka's Community Development Photo Story

Asanka Jayasiry is a Community Development Officer (CDO) working in North Central Province

The CDLG Project of UNDP with the funding from @euSriLanka conducts Training-of-Trainer(ToT) workshops to strengthen people and community groups that will encourage Local Authorities to #DeliverBetter.



“During the fuel crisis, I walked long distances to reach the remote communities I work with. Sometimes people dropped me. But somehow we were able to share our knowledge with the people. Now I mostly get around on my bike.” explains Asanka who has worked as a Community Development Officer for 15 years.

Asanka speaking to women in the community during one of the trainings

Asanka believes “There are members from local community centers (Praja Mandalaya) who have good vision for their people. However, their skills needed to be developed further. Today with the help of our training they are able to slowly start their own projects.”



Asanka making learning fun for the community members



Asanka was inspired after attending a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop conducted by the CDLG project in 2021. It covered a range of subjects such as disaster management planning, communal sustainability, domestic management, project management, auditing, accounting, & reporting.

CDLG training for Community Development Officers

Skills and knowledge is passed on to the local community, through officers like Asanka. Strengthening local community networks such as these, will empower communities to hold Local Authorities accountable to #DeliverBetter.



In Pathiraja Gama, as a result of training programs conducted by Asanka, a Praja mandala group decided to generate revenue for the community center through the sale of locally sourced produce such as honey and coir products.

"Our words are powerful tools that can motivate and drive people towards social development and change."

-Asanka-



Catching a Dream

Leadership Development Diploma Course for Women Councillors – Uva Province

Although the Local Government Act ensures a representation of 25% women councillors, there are challenges when it comes to highlighting their leadership capabilities. The Leadership Development Diploma was initiated to fulfil this gap. Till date 86 women councillors have graduated under this leadership programme initiated and supported by CDLG.

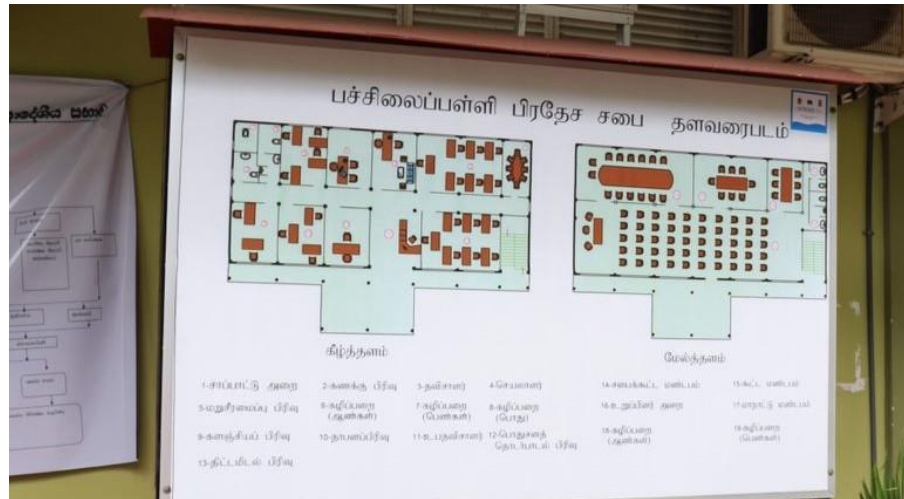


Premalatha Rathnayake, who is a councillor in the Badulla Pradeshiya Saba, says she was “afraid to visit the Uva Provincial Council offices, speak or get things done. But we gained the confidence to do all that through this leadership programme. At age 60, I am glad I obtained a Diploma.” The biggest takeaway for her personally, she says, is learning to prepare project proposals. This is something she enjoyed learning. She has already developed a project and received funding approvals as well. She wants to take

this back to her village as a revenue generation project.

As Prof. Wasana Maithree Herath, who is a lecturer at the Uva Wellassa University emphasises, “Women are not weak. She has a journey of her own. Its not a competition. Education is very important for a woman, as nobody can ever take it away from her.”

Front Office Development – Northern Province



One stop service -front offices developed with support from CDLG



Providing easy access to services to the people in the community

Gender Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme – Northern Province



The training was conducted for District level focal points in the Province. The training focused on understanding gender related concepts, gender in local Governments, gender mainstreaming, gender responsive budgeting, gender inclusive community engagement etc.



The Chairperson of the Pradeshiya Sabha, Mr. Maritimpattru was quoted saying “I am sure that you will see an inclusive budget for 2023”

Idea Generation Trainings



Idea generation training for women councillors in the Northern Province.

Training on Conflict Sensitivity



Youth from action groups participated in training programmes on Conflict Sensitivity