



World Vision celebrates International Women's Day 2015

World Vision marked International Women's Day with an event which was held on 18th March at the Sri Lanka Foundation.

This year's global theme for International Women's Day was 'Make it Happen,' calling for effective action for advancing and recognizing women. In keeping with this theme, the event focused on the importance of gender mainstreaming within organizations including the humanitarian field.

Delivering the keynote address, Prof. Maithree Wickramesinghe said "Sensitivities of gender would have to span the gamut of humanitarian response. Gender mainstreaming is an important if not essential programme strategy to ensure equality and equity." Prof. Wickramesinghe added that "It is not an end in itself, but a means to an end and that is gender justice."

The event also included a panel discussion facilitated by Prof. Carmena Gunaratne and consisted of panelists Ms. Manique Guneratne, Ms. Cyrene Siriwardhana and Rev. Lionel Peiris.

A street drama on Gender Based Violence performed by the Yathra Foundation and an art exhibition displaying

drawings by children depicting their perspective of domestic violence and gender roles, was also part of the day's programme.

The highlight of the event was the launch of the MenCare training manual for fathers, the first copy of which was presented to Prof. Wickramesinghe. MenCare is a global campaign to promote men's gender equitable involvement as caregivers in the lives of their partners and children. In collaboration with Promundo International, it was first piloted in Sri Lanka by World Vision, impacting over 1000 families in World Vision project areas in the Central Province.

World Vision also presented awards to its gender mainstreamed Area Development Programmes, projects and departments.

"At World Vision, we strive to ensure gender balance in the workplace and mainstreamed in all our programmes," said World Vision Lanka National Director Suresh Bartlett, addressing the gathering. "Gender is a cross-cutting theme in all our programmes and is at the core of everything we do. However, there is still a lot more to be done. Let us commit ourselves to women's rights and men caring about women's rights."

EDITORIAL

Vulnerability: creating connections and actions

In all of its work, World Vision's focus is on the most vulnerable. Whether in disaster or development, our attention and priority response is for them. Thus, World Vision's programmes are always found amongst the poorest of the poor and those most vulnerable.

"Vulnerability is the birthplace of connections," says Brene Brown, bestselling author of *Daring Greatly* and a research professor of Social Work. In our work among rural communities, we witness a web of connections between community, government service providers, other stakeholders and us.

This issue of Kathika brings you stories of transformation brought about by such connections. Promoting gender sensitization and equity, assistance to families affected by disaster, a new school building providing more space for children to study, income generation activities that lift people out of poverty and building a safe home for a mother with special needs are ways in which these connections have impacted our communities.

Vulnerability not only connects us but also calls us to action, in the process transforming not only those we serve, but also ourselves.

The Editorial Team

Hasanthi Jayamaha
Nadeesha Rajakaruna
Niroshini Fernando

comments: niroshini_fernando@wvi.org

World Vision and CAMID partner for emergency relief in the East



The North East monsoon caused heavy rains in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka during December 2014. 43% of the total population in the Batticaloa district was severely affected due to the flooding and subsequent displacement.

With the funding of Start Fund UK, World Vision implemented an emergency relief project in the divisions of Kiran and Eravurpattu. Through the project, dry rations were provided to 6,352 families in seven DS divisions and two GN divisions. The total cost of the distribution was Rupees 8.5 million.

Persons with disability were prioritized in the distribution and World Vision collaborated with CAMID (Center for Accessibility, Monitoring and Information on Disability) in this project. The CAMID volunteers supported World Vision staff with the distribution. The youth of the area also played a key role, providing assistance with the warehouse operations and tracking.

The Kiran Area Development Programme also integrated messaging on child protection, early marriage and malnutrition during the distributions to increase awareness about these issues amongst the community.

Help us to keep them smiling...

At World Vision we are passionate about the well being of children and ensuring them life in all its fullness.

If you are interested in learning more about our work or would like to join us in partnership in any of our programmes please email,

niroshini_fernando@wvi.org



World Vision provides new building to Moussakelle school



World Vision Lanka recently handed over a new school building to the students of N/H/Moussakelle No.1 Tamil Vidyalayam. This project was implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Education of the Central Provincial Council.

First constructed in 1979, the school had insufficient space for the growing number of students and academic activities. A building provided by the Swedish International Development Organization (SIDA) in 2003 was used for several purposes. It was the Principal's office, IT laboratory, and small auditorium. The rest of the available space was used for six classrooms accommodating 160 students.

"It was very difficult for both teachers and students with the lack of space. All six teachers were in the common hall teaching six different subjects at the same time," says Mrs. S.Susiladevi, Principal of Moussakelle No. 1 Tamil Vidyalam. "The students could not concentrate on their lessons because of the noise from the other classes or space for any group work. The children's performance was severely affected."

When World Vision's Ambagamuwa Area Development Programme was approached for assistance, help was on the way. A brand new building of 1250 sqft was constructed at a cost of 4 million rupees. The building houses three classrooms for grades 3 to 5 and 84 students are currently using the building.

The evaluation, design and technical supervision for the building construction were carried out by the Ministry of Education of the Central Province.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, World Vision Lanka National Director Suresh Bartlett said, "When World Vision transits from the Ambagamuwa area after 19 years, I hope our programmes have ensured the wellbeing of all children through our interventions in education, economic development, health and nutrition, water and sanitation and livelihood development. I believe that the community of Ambagamuwa is now empowered to continue and sustain this development and all the progress made together over these many years."

A helping hand for a successful future

Sinnathambi Yoganathan (38) and his wife Jegatheeswary (32) are no strangers to hardship. Paralyzed during the civil war and being displaced from their home in Mullaitivu, life was not easy.

When they settled in the village of Jeevapuram in the east of the country, the couple had to start all over again. Yoganathan was confined to a wheelchair and was unable to find work. “We had to live with my sister,” explains Yoganathan. “As time passed, I felt we were a burden to them.”

However, Yoganathan was determined not to be defeated. With the little savings that they had, the couple bought a small piece of land and built a small hut in which to live but they struggled to make ends meet.

Yoganathan’s life was about to change when one day a World Vision community volunteer approached him. “She invited us to attend a CBO meeting where there was a training on livelihood development,” says Yoganathan. “My wife attended this meeting as I could not.”

Jegatheeswary was encouraged at this initial meeting and continued to attend the trainings on business development under the Generate Your Business (GYB) and Start Your Business (SYB) programmes. At the end of the training, the participants were given the option of selecting a business activity to engage in. “My wife and I discussed about this opportunity, and we thought it will be good to start a small grocery shop for our livelihood,” Yoganathan says.

World Vision then assisted the couple with grocery items to the value of Rupees 23,000 and they started the shop at their premises. “We have a turnover of Rupees 5,000 a day with a profit of Rupees 700 per day,” says a smiling Yoganathan. “We generally sell the goods at the market price which is the same as the shops on the main street or town area.”

The hardworking couple is very particular about maintaining their books, diligently recording their income, expenditure and savings. “Recently, we even bought a refrigerator with our savings from this business,” explains Jegatheeswary with pride.



World Vision continues to assist the family and has provided a well for drinking water and training for cultivating a home garden.

On their part, Yoganathan and Jegatheeswary believe in giving back. Jegatheeswary is also involved in community development work and attends meetings of the CBO for the betterment of her community.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partners of World Vision bring hope for Thanojani



The initiative has been a success and on this occasion three partners, Vet World (Pvt) Ltd, Analytical Instruments and the manager of Union Assurance PLC - Negombo Branch, came forward to assist World Vision with funding to build a new home for Thanojani.

“With this kind of collaboration, we can do so much in our communities,” says Dilranjan Jacob, Chief Operating Officer of Analytical Instruments. “It is wonderful that we can get together for something that is more than just business and that makes a difference to someone’s life.”

The total contribution from the partners was 342,000 rupees (2617 USD) while labour and other raw material costs amounting to 100,000 rupees (752 USD) was sourced from the village.

The little house is freshly painted and swept clean. Just at the entrance, Thanojani (25) stands with her husband and baby, beaming happily. This is Thanojani’s new home, and she is looking forward to moving in with her little family.

Life has never been easy for the young woman. She lived in a tiny wattle and daub house with her mother, two sisters, husband and new baby. Being disabled, Thanojani faced limited opportunities for employment, but her spirit could not be crushed. She was a very enthusiastic village volunteer for the World Vision Area Development Programme in Horowpathana.

When she received a land from her mother, Thanojani really desired a home to call her own, a place to raise her little son in a secure environment; but with the limited income from her husband’s job at a bakery, a house was just a dream.

That is, until World Vision intervened, and brought with them some friends to help. “Two years ago, we began to implement the ‘Our Children Our Future’ initiative, with the intention of raising awareness amongst our stakeholders about World Vision’s work,” explains Sumeda Rowel, Regional Director Supply Chain Management. “Some of our suppliers did not know what World Vision’s core work was, despite being our partners for decades. So we thought of this initiative as a way to connect them with the communities we work in.”



The simple housewarming ceremony was complete as the pot of milk boiled over. Thanojani’s heart too was overflowing with joy. “How can I thank you all?” says Thanojani, her voice heavy with emotion. “World Vision and their partners built this home for me as if it were their own. Because of you, I have a home for a lifetime.”

PEACEBUILDING

Connecting the North and South in harmony



“The division of North and South is a boundary that cannot be marked. If we go to Hambantota we would all be from the North. Then where would our South be? We do not need boundaries for humanity,” says Ms. Yamuna Pigera, a dedicated teacher for 36 years.

The need for a national policy to integrate Social Cohesion and Peace Education (SCPE) was evident due to the lack of coherence and coordination among the various peace initiatives in the country.

Stemming from the SCPE initiatives, the ‘Senehasaka Thaksalawa’ programme was designed for schools of the North and South in an effort to create harmony and better understanding between the communities through these schools. In partnership with World Vision and the Ministry of Education, teachers from Wattala and Thennamarachchi Division schools were brought together for a three day residential workshop in Wattala. The aim of the workshop was to enhance their skills and be peace ambassadors in their schools.

“This is the first time I am taking part in a collaborative workshop like this. It is very timely and I feel that these programmes should have been started years ago,” says Ms. Yamuna, who teaches at a school in Wattala. “I believe that if there was any doubt about trust between the two communities, it has faded away after this workshop. It helped me build my personality as well. We are the first seeds to take this message to the children in our schools and carry it forward,” she explains.

The policy on SCPE was formulated after much research and consultation with key stakeholders, government officials, universities, UN agencies, NGOs and school authorities.

“There was no language barrier between the two communities here. Although they did not speak Tamil we were able to communicate and build friendships. We discussed about our schools, work and some even shared their personal stories. We laughed and joked a lot,” says Ms. Sarosadevi, a teacher from Chavakachcheri. “When we go back, we will continue to build and grow these friendships to promote social harmony in our environment as well.”



Water for a healthy community



Vidurshan (8) is vigorously washing his hands after playing with his friends nearby. His mother Parvati (48) is also washing her hands, to make sure Vidurshan follows her instruction.

It's a far cry from how the family used to do things. Washing hands all the time seemed rather pointless because they had no clean water at home. Like for many families in the village of Unawewa in Welikanda, access to clean water for drinking and daily use was a challenge for Parvati and her family as well.

"We got drinking water from the well owned by our neighbours," explains Parvati. "There were about 13 families who used the water from this well."

The owners of the well only allowed their neighbours to draw water during the rainy season. Parvati's family and others in the area had no option but to collect water from the nearby canal, walking about 1 kilometer each way carrying their heavy pots. The community would bathe in the canal as well.

When World Vision began to work in their area, Parvati and her neighbours informed them about their issue with clean water.

Relief was on the way. The community was more than happy to contribute their labour and skills, while World Vision provided the raw material. The Public Health Inspector carried out the water quality tests. The result of this partnership was 10 wells for the community, with about three families sharing each well. Water purification filters were also provided to 29 families with children under the age of 10 years and the community keeps their wells covered and surrounding area clean.

Through the programme, 36 toilets have also been built for the community. World Vision also provided hygiene and sanitation awareness. "We got good awareness about how many diseases can be prevented just by correct hand washing," explains Parvati.

The project cost a total of Rupees 3.3 million (25,200 USD), benefitting 67 families in the area. The sanitation and water protection awareness continues with message boards set up along the main paths and roadways of the village, reminding the community about the importance of conserving and protecting their precious resource and observing hygiene practices.

"Water was our biggest problem," adds Parvati. "But World Vision came and made a big difference to our lives."



**Keep your tap closed while brushing
your teeth. You can**

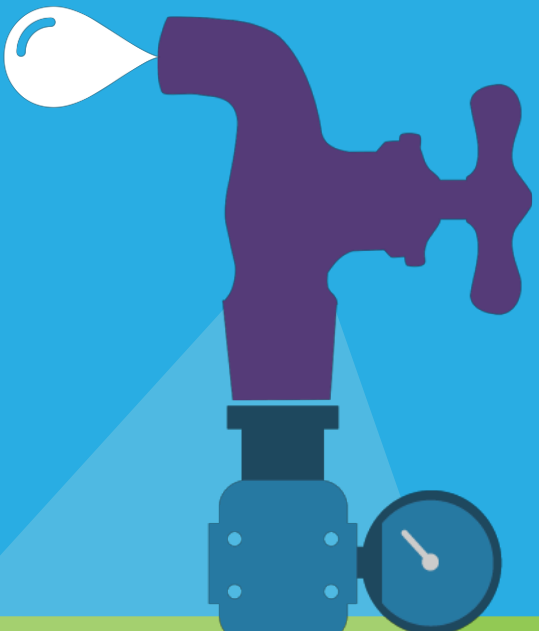
save 6 liters

per minute

**Close a tap that leaks one drip per
second. You can**

save 8 gallons

a day



You can save water. You can save the planet



World Vision®

