

# SUWODAYA

## Suwodaya: *the Wellbeing of All:* Sarvodaya Response to COVID-19



## Sarvodaya Covid-19 Response

March 2020 - March 2021



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சர்வோதய  
Sarvodaya**

# Acknowledgements

**Executive Advisor:**

Dr Vinya Ariyaratne, President, Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement

**Editor:**

Udesh Fernando, Director, Sarvodaya Institute of Higher Learning

**Content:**

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# Contents

Acknowledgements	02
Abbreviations	06
Preface / Forewords	09
Executive Summary	10
An Introduction to Suwodaya: Awakening of Wellbeing	11
Purposeful Community Action	11
Suwodaya	12
Five-Pronged Holistic Engagement Approach to Suwodaya	13
COVID-19 Epidemic in Sri Lanka – One Year On	14
THE FIRST COMPONENT: A COVID READY ORGANIZATION	16
A COVID Ready Organisation	17
Overview of Immediate Internal Organisation Wide Responses	17
THE SECOND COMPONENT: NATIONAL RESPONSE	19
The National Response	20
Sarvodaya Centres as Quarantine Centres	20
The United Nations Humanitarian Country Team Mechanism	20
International and National Policy Engagements by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne - President Emeritus	21
International and National Policy Engagements by Dr Vinya Ariyaratne – President	22
Civil Society Collective for COVID-19 Response	24
THE THIRD COMPONENT: AID AND RELIEF DISTRIBUTION	26
Together We Can Feed Them All	27
Emergency Response Support to Vulnerable Groups Affected by COVID19	28
Distribution of Dry Rations and Recreational Kits: Meethotamulla, Kilinochchi and Batticaloa	29
Distribution of Relief Materials by Shanthi Sena Sansadaya	29
THE FOURTH COMPONENT: COVID READY COMMUNITIES	31
COVID Ready Communities	32
E-Iskole – Digital Studio for E-Learning collaborations	35
Information and Communication Technology Interventions at Community Level	36
#ThinkFirst Campaign	36

"We Think Digital/IT Yahamaga" Awareness Program	37
Suhuru Sara Awareness program	39
#StayHomeStory campaign	40
Strengthening Community Engagement to Address The COVID-19 Pandemic:	41
Mobilizing and engaging community leaders/ volunteers and community-based organizations (CBOs)	41
Online trainings for selected CBO members:	41
In-person training for faith leaders in identified areas:	42
In-person trainings for selected youth and women leaders:	43
In-person training for selected pre-school teachers in identified areas:	43
Engaging, sensitizing, and capacitating communities, including vulnerable community groups on COVID19 preventive measures	43
Strengthening women and girls through leadership development and meaningful participation in decision- making to address COVID-19 prevention.	44
Mental Health Promotion, Entertainment and Engagement Programme	44
Mental and General Health Assessment in partnership with Mitra Solutions	46
FIFTH COMPONENT: SOCIO-ECONOMIC RECOVERY AT COMMUNITY LEVEL	47
Socio-Economic Recovery at Community Level	48
District Based Agriculture Programme	48
Personal Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship for Undergraduates and Young Entrepreneurs	49
Children Centred Faith Based Social Action	49
Cyber safety video launch on children's day	50
Faith in Action webinar series	50
Children's Solutions Lab on IDEP	51
Risk Communication	51
COVID 19-Rapid Needs Assessment for Religious and Faith Leaders	52
Risk awareness campaign	53
Positive Parenting Manual	53
Outlook and lessons learnt	53
Awareness With Human Action – AHA	55
Launch of the National Knowledge Platform on COVID-19 and beyond	57
Next Generation Deshodaya: COVID Recovery Micro Projects	58
Implementation of COVID Recovery Micro Projects	59

Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena Sansadaya	63
Online dialogues on inter-religious and inter-ethnic harmony	63
Community Activism during Crisis – in person trainings	66
Shanthi Sena Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program	67
COVID-19 Story Book	68
RISEUP: Micro-Entrepreneurship Development Project	69
Sarvodaya Women's Movement: Immediate Response to prevent transmission of COVID19	72
Financial assistance to victims and families of chronic kidney disease of unknown aetiology (CKDU)	72
Providing hand washing facilities to clinics in selected districts supported by the UNHCR	72
Facilitation of hand washing stations.	73
Awareness Program for Community Activists	73
Conclusion	74
Our Development Partners	76
Financial Statements	77
Annexures	78
A Post-Scriptum by the Editor	80

# Abbreviations

COVID or COVID19 - Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Corona-virus 2/2019

CSO – Civil Society Organisations

HCT – Humanitarian Country Team mechanism

LJSSS – Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya (Inc.)

MOH – Ministry of Health

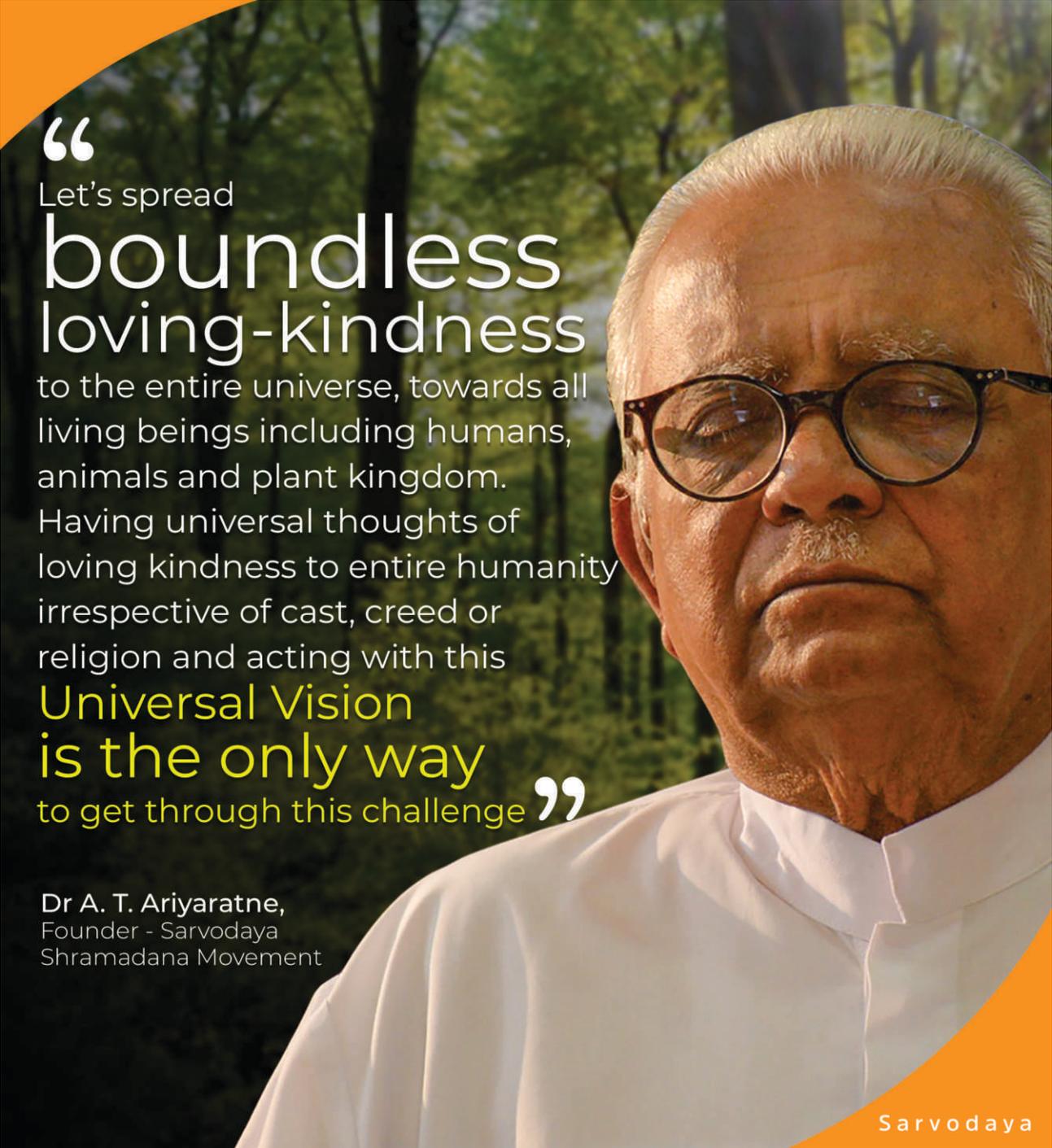
SSS – Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies

UN – United Nations

WHO – World Health Organization

SWM – Sarvodaya Women's Movement

SIHL – Sarvodaya Institute of Higher Learning

A close-up portrait of an elderly man with white hair and glasses, wearing a white shirt. He is looking slightly to the right with a thoughtful expression. The background is a blurred green forest. The image is framed by orange curved borders at the top-left and bottom-right corners.

“

Let's spread

**boundless  
loving-kindness**

to the entire universe, towards all living beings including humans, animals and plant kingdom.

Having universal thoughts of loving kindness to entire humanity irrespective of cast, creed or religion and acting with this

**Universal Vision  
is the only way  
to get through this challenge”**

**Dr A. T. Ariyaratne,**  
Founder - Sarvodaya  
Shramadana Movement

Sarvodaya



## Foreword



We are faced with the most unprecedented challenge of our lifetime. COVID-19 pandemic by now has impacted almost every human being living in this planet with only little windows of hope to its end in sight.

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement is not only the pioneering grassroots community development organization in the country, but also the premier humanitarian organization which has been at the frontlines of disaster response for over six decades in Sri Lanka. At the time of publication of this first Suwodaya Report (covering 01 March 2020 to 31 March 2021) on the Sarvodaya Movement's Response to COVID-19, Sri Lanka had to unfortunately face the third wave of COVID-19 epidemic with an exponential increase in the number of cases reported.

In these circumstances, Suwodaya, i.e., Sarvodaya response to COVID-19 continues with great vigor with the commitment of all my fellow colleagues and volunteers from national to village communities.

I wish to pay my tribute to the members of the Executive Council, the Official Committee Members of the Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya and all the Staff led by Mr. Chaminda Rajakaruna, Attorney-at-Law, and his Senior Management Team, District Coordinators and Staff members. Members of governing bodies of legally independent Sarvodaya units, their Chief Executives and Staff for their committed service during this challenging time.

There were numerous kindhearted well-wishers and development partners who supported us in our response in numerous ways. I wish to sincerely thank them all.

I wish to also extend my gratitude and appreciation to all government agencies including the Ministry of Health and the Health Promotion Bureau (HPB) and UN agencies, in particular the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Last but not least, my sincere appreciation goes to Mr. Udesha Fernando, Director - Sarvodaya Institute of Higher Learning (SIHL) for serving as the Editor of this publication.

**Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne**

President

Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement

## Executive Summary

This report lays out the public health initiatives delivered by the Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya since the inception of the COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka. Aligned by its renewed purpose, Sarvodaya launched a signature initiative coined as Suwodaya i.e., *Awakening of Wellbeing* particularly focusing on COVID-19 response initiatives. Sarvodaya has given meticulous consideration when launching Suwodaya considering the local realities of the communities they serve. The publication covers the period March 2020 to March 2021 qualifying it to be an annual report. However, the Suwodaya initiative will continue until Sri Lanka achieves satisfactory herd immunity levels and therefore Sarvodaya hopes to expand the programme in the months to come. Aiming at that long term goal, Sarvodaya has shaped Suwodaya to transform into a holistic wellbeing programme with much emphasis on COVID-19 response.

The Introduction will illustrate the genesis of Suwodaya and how it was shaped. It will elaborate in detail the five-pronged approach to Suwodaya and the COVID reality in Sri Lanka at the time of writing. It will highlight the key thought level contributions made by Sarvodaya leaders at local and international levels. The rest of the report will lay out component wise, the work carried out under five key strategic area of Suwodaya.

The *First component* will illustrate how Sarvodaya responded to the pandemic facilitating internal organisational arrangements coined 'A COVID Ready Organisation'. Geared by the internal structuring, *the Second component* will illustrate how Sarvodaya launched their national response and the diverse practical and policy action initiated. Moreover, it will illustrate how alliances were built from the grassroots to the global level fulfilling Sarvodaya's Gramodaya to Vishvodaya mandates.

Such discussion and dialogue paved way for Sarvodaya to operationalise aid and relief distribution to the most marginalised and vulnerable communities. *The Third component* therefore highlights a range of selected activities to portrait the power of community in helping others by the mere act of giving also known as '*Dana*'.

A full-blown crisis such as COVID19 demands holistic and practical solutions to the unprecedented events that unfold. In that regard, the *Fourth component* illustrates how Sarvodaya identified the long-term consequences of COVID and how they should help communities fortify their resilience at the village community level to bring about normalcy by successfully adopting the practices such as the 'new normal'. In lieu of that, Sarvodaya launched diverse awareness campaigns both onsite and off-site (virtual).

Socio-economic indicators predict that COVID effects are already felt by urban and rural communities. The *Fifth component* would therefore illustrate how Sarvodaya utilises multi-track approaches innovating plausible solutions to face the forthcoming crisis of food security, social security, as well as economic crisis. Not only those, but they have also rolled out successful programmes promoting social cohesion, interfaith dialogue, child protection as well as micro-entrepreneurship projects to help young people be hopeful as well as to reach out to other small-scale entrepreneurs helping them to sustain.

This report will therefore feature selected project activities that fulfil the mandate of 'Suwodaya – *the wellbeing of All*', a Sarvodaya response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka.

# An Introduction to Suwodaya: Awakening of Wellbeing

The Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya (LJSSS) popularly known as the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka has a long track record of over six decades in serving communities from the most rural outskirts to the greatest urban city centres of the island. Sarvodaya has adopted a unique development approach nourished by a strong philosophical foundation, operational through spiritual, moral, social, cultural, economic and governance dimensions. Sarvodaya programmatic interventions spans across the said cross-cutting area when providing services to the communities in all twenty-five administrative districts of the island.

Throughout the six decades of its existence, whenever the country faced varied catastrophes from natural disasters to complex emergencies, Sarvodaya has responded with vital support, relief, and aid, positively affecting the lives of many communities. Facing catastrophe and empowering the rebuilding processes shoulder to shoulder with communities has never been an estranged endeavour for Sarvodaya and the pandemic has also proved that Sarvodaya has not failed in that front. The COVID19 pandemic laid out a complex set of problems which required novel thinking due to the unprecedented nature of COVID-19 transmission and its effects. Unlike any other time, the humanitarians and the victims were almost on the same risk threshold due to the nature of vulnerability making interventions a lot more complex and harder to be realised. Sarvodaya's decades long experience in people mobilization evolved a fitting process in adopting to the 'new normal', to face its immediate repercussions and to empower communities to self-realise sustainable solutions. For development workers adopting to the 'new normal' was not an easy task due to the conventional nature of their diverse practice of physical engagement models in collaborating with communities. However, Sarvodaya had to take extra efforts and precautions than in ordinary times to organise and prepare deployment teams both physically and mentally. Directed by Sarvodaya's very own Public Health Specialist, Dr Vinya Ariyaratne – President of the Movement, provided critical leadership initiating an awareness campaign to disseminate vital information on the biological and social implications of the virus. The management had been organized into several committees to formulate an organisation wide primary response to lay the groundwork for Sarvodaya's COVID-19 response. Such responses included daily online briefs and preparing health and safety manuals fitting to the unprecedented first wave. Preparing its fulltime workforce and the network of volunteers remotely was yet another challenge successfully addressed by Sarvodaya using digital communication platforms. Remote engagement and training were trialled and adopted to fit the nature of the trainings while work from home was strictly enforced during the mandatory Government imposed lockdown period.

## Purposeful Community Action

Synchronous to the unfolding unprecedented events, the Sarvodaya Institute of Higher Learning (SIHL) was mandated with the task of facilitating a strategic dialogue process coined as the 'Re-Imagine Sarvodaya: A Strategic Dialogue Series'. This initiative was rolled-out before the first phase of lockdowns but continued virtually during the lockdown and in the subsequent period. The re-imagining process was a fresh call to action when the mood and ambiance was hibernation and uncertainty as the lockdowns and the extraordinary nature of the pandemic not only restricted physical engagement but also affected lifestyle and mental wellbeing. The process also gave birth to the newly re-imagined purpose of Sarvodaya and rallied the participants who were from leadership backgrounds based at the headquarters to the grassroots community leaders. Meticulous consideration was given to craft a re-imagined Purpose Statement in an inclusive process. The purpose statement calls the Sarvodaya Community and the wider world to **'build a just, sustainable and a compassionate social order that fulfils the basic human needs of the community through individual and collective awakening'**.



## Five-Pronged Holistic Engagement Approach to Suwodaya

Guided by the leadership, and as mentioned earlier, Sarvodaya put forward a five-pronged approach to mechanize the Suwodaya initiative to address community wellbeing (Figure 02). Along with its network of development partners, donors, and community leaders Suwodaya was gradually implemented with the conscious aspiration of serving communities better in times of crisis. The five key areas were identified as follows: the first and foremost priority was establishing and modelling a COVID-ready organisation. Secondly, contributing to the national COVID19 response. Thirdly, community empowerment through COVID ready villages (resilient villages) was brought in as an impactful area of operations to curb the spread of virus at community level. Fourthly, emergency aid and relief played a pivotal role in reaching out to the most vulnerable community members and target groups of beneficiaries. Fifthly, launching programmes and initiatives to address the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on the economic and social aspects. The five-pronged approach has set a guideline for operations and at times projects and initiatives could overlap in their operations or at times be operationally independent due to the different needs and requirements reflecting the unprecedentedness of reality brought forward by the pandemic. To elaborate further, the components might on the outset reflect to be a gradual step by step approach, but pragmatically overlapping or according to the requirements be even mutual yet independent, reflecting the holistic nature of Sarvodaya's development model's pragmatism and approach.

### Suwodaya Sarvodaya Response to COVID - 19



Figure 2, Suwodaya: The Five-Pronged Approach to Sarvodaya COVID-19 Response

## COVID-19 Epidemic in Sri Lanka – One year on...

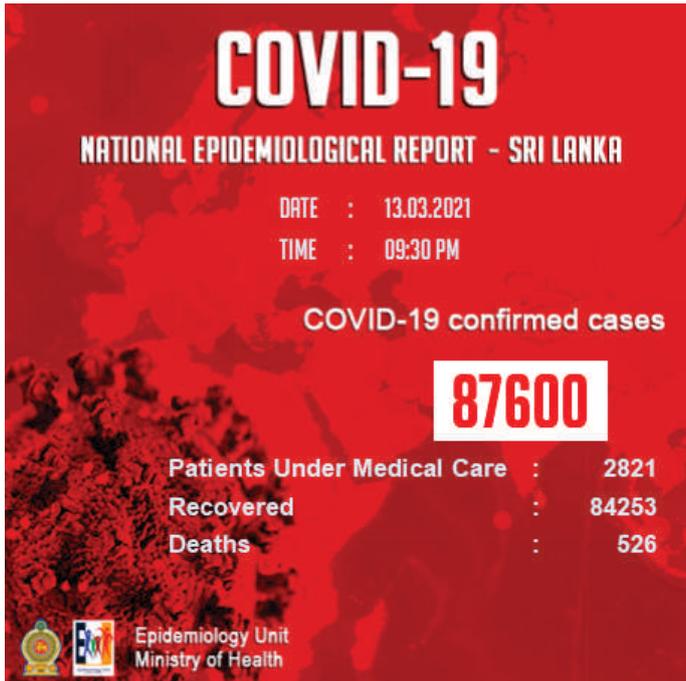


Figure 3, COVID-19 Statistics as of March 2021

At the time of writing, Sri Lanka completed one year grappling with the pandemic. As of 13 March 2021, the island reported 87,600 cumulative number of COVID cases with 526 reported deaths, and 84,253 or 96.2% recovering from the disease. Based on the statistics, it can be concluded that Sri Lanka has so far contained the disease effectively as substantiated by the comparative rates provided in Figure 04 below.

Country	Cumulative Cases per 1 million population	Covid - 19 deaths per 1 million population
Sri Lanka	4003	23
India	8124	114
Singapore	10259	5
Australia	1138	36
South East Asian Region	6770	104

Figure 4, Cumulative Cases per 1Mil population, Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health Source: [http://www.epid.gov.lk/web/images/pdf/corona\\_virus\\_report/sitrep-sl-en-13-03\\_10\\_21.pdf](http://www.epid.gov.lk/web/images/pdf/corona_virus_report/sitrep-sl-en-13-03_10_21.pdf)

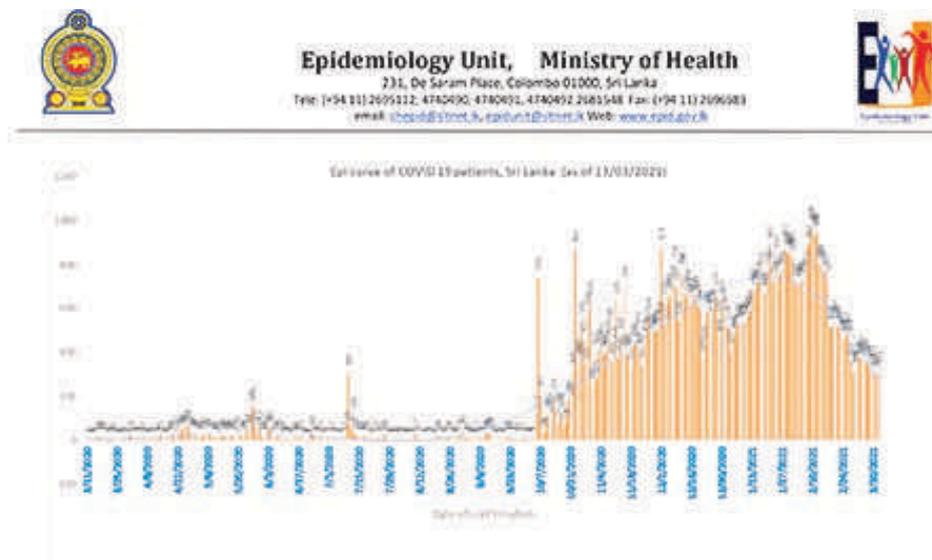


Figure 5, Epi curve of COVID-19 Patients, Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health Sri Lanka (Source: [http://www.epid.gov.lk/web/images/pdf/Circulars/Corona\\_virus/epi-curve\\_13\\_03\\_2021\\_2.jpg](http://www.epid.gov.lk/web/images/pdf/Circulars/Corona_virus/epi-curve_13_03_2021_2.jpg))

Although the statistics are favourable the threat is still at large. Despite the declining prevalence of cases, the potential of new clusters being formed is still at large due to the daily numbers reported over hundred cases a day. Moreover, the devastating psycho-social-economic impact on lives and livelihoods of people has highly impacted personal and communal relations. The upcoming Sri Lankan New Year season in April could bring about another outbreak if people take precautions lightly and if health regulations are loosened.

In that light Sarvodaya plans to extend their awareness work as well as its ongoing long-term impact work related to COVID-19 by partnering with donors on entrepreneurial ventures to discover sustainable solutions to address the aftermath and consequences of prolonged lockdowns and rising unemployment due to the negative effects of COVID-19. Focus will be on much required sustainable programmes and initiatives to address unemployment and other long-term impacts of COVID19. Sarvodaya's five-pronged programme to address impacts of COVID-19 (Figure 02) will be further strengthened to reinforce mitigation activities and to discover plausible long-term solutions. In that regard, Sarvodaya warmly extends their support to partners and welcomes development partnerships to affect new programmes for constructive engagement with individuals, donors and partnering organisations to uplift the wellbeing of Sri Lankan communities and to leave no one behind in that process.

The First Component:

**A COVID Ready Organization**

## A COVID READY ORGANIZATION

Despite Sarvodaya Movement's decades of rich experience in responding to disasters – both natural or human induced armed conflict, COVID-19 has been an entirely distinctive and an unprecedented challenge. Given the very nature and unpredictability of the immediate threat posed by the transmission of the virus, coupled with immediate lockdowns and curfews, mobility and access to affected individuals and communities were literally non-existent. Notwithstanding this enormous challenge, Sarvodaya was well prepared to move forward cautiously as the leadership was following the developments very closely from early January when the Corona outbreak was reported from Wuhan-China in early January and especially after it was declared as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2020.

On Saturday the 13<sup>th</sup> of March, two days after the first local case of COVID-19 was reported in Sri Lanka (on 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2021) and six days before the island wide curfew was declared, an emergency meeting was convened by the President of Sarvodaya to discuss and plan the immediate response. This meeting provided the impetus to launch a comprehensive Sarvodaya response to COVID-19 which is still being carried out under the Suwodaya mandate.



### Overview of immediate internal organisation wide responses

Given the vulnerability of all individuals to COVID-19, a key priority for the Movement was to protect its own fulltime staff and volunteers. Sarvodaya and the affiliated legally independent organisations employ over one thousand two hundred fulltime staff and involve an extensive network of volunteers. Abiding by local regulations paid leave was granted to all our employees on the very first week, as social distancing and isolation was identified as one of the most effective behaviours in preventing transmission. Just before Government-imposed lockdowns, Sarvodaya administration took urgent steps to ensure preventive measures by extending the existing hand washing and sanitizing facilities at the Headquarters, District Centres, and other Sarvodaya institutions. Staff were trained on the basic preventive measures related to COVID-19 such as respiratory etiquette and other practices of hygiene and sanitation. A work-from-home policy (WFH) was rolled-out to staff based in the headquarters as well as districts. Sarvodaya's top initial priority was the health, safety, and the wellbeing of its own work force, and therefore health information and situational updates were consistently disseminated through different medium to keep them safe and

engaged. This was a preliminary step in anchoring the awareness programs before such programmes were rolled out methodically at the community level reaching the grassroots based Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies (SSSs). Sarvodaya internal staff awareness programmes continuously multiplies and trickles down to their extended families as well as the wider urban and rural communities they live and Sarvodaya has always routed and invested in staff awareness programs beginning at home.

In complying with local regulations, all national and grassroots training programmes, projects, activities, community gatherings and meetings were postponed until further notice as a preventive measure. All Sarvodaya residential and training facilities have been shutdown to prevent any possible risk of COVID-19 contact and transmission. The programme staff adopted a work from home policy, while essential front-line responders and volunteers were carefully selected and trained for relief and deployment work.

### **Monitoring the ongoing situation and planning unique responses:**

Led by Dr Vinya Ariyaratne, regular discussions and evaluations of the national and district level developments were conducted online. The nationally based twenty-five District Coordinators (representing the twenty-five administrative districts of the island) connected via online platforms enabling bi and multi-lateral communication between the headquarters and district centres on a needs-basis around the clock. These series of regular meetings helped staff to engage and share their community wisdom and to sustain planning and engagement efforts keeping Sarvodaya in check with the ground reality. To date the essence and strength of Sarvodaya efforts have been this wealth of information gathered from the ground and the know-how of ground reality which strongly anchors Sarvodaya programmes to the causes it engages in.

The District Staff played a pivotal role in liaising with government agents, officials, district and divisional secretaries, medical officers of health (MOHs), health officials including public health inspectors and law enforcement agents. Apart from that, Sarvodaya District Representatives constantly communicate with their respective Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies (villages), and adjacent communities to address public health concerns by providing necessary awareness material and most importantly to offer them solace in this time of crisis tending to immediate needs of relief. The first few weeks of lockdown meant that those who implemented essential services had to train service providers to safely deliver their services as mishaps of social distancing and respiratory etiquette were frequent. In such circumstances Sarvodaya districts coordinators played a pivotal role in organising their own residing communities and the communities they serve to coordinate essential services. In some circumstances they provided leadership in launching immediate relief drives because not every household could afford to source goods for continuous sustenance due to their income backgrounds and the nature of their employment.

### **Sarvodaya Suwa Setha Sewa Care Homes**

Sarvodaya Suwasetha extended additional precautionary measures to safeguard the Sarvodaya Suwa Setha Care Homes (elderly, children, and teenage mothers' homes) island wide. Their safety, sustenance, and medical needs during the crisis were given special attention. Physical security of these premises had been increased and strict health regulations were put in place to protect the care giving staff and the respective vulnerable groups they cared for. Relevant District Coordinators were specially alerted about the special circumstances and regulations in place so they could maintain constant contact with the management of care homes to assure and guarantee there smooth and safe operations.

The Second Component:

**National Response**

## The National Response

### Sarvodaya Centres as Quarantine Centres

Sarvodaya recognised the requirement to set a precedence in humanitarian action by handing over residential facilities of the organisation for quarantine purposes. Like many other organisations that took steps to give away their property as temporary shelters, Sarvodaya extended their support and cooperation to the Government led COVID-19 response to enhance the quarantine capabilities. Upon the request of the Ministry of Health, Sarvodaya released residential facilities at its Development Education Institute at Anuradhapura of the North Central Province to accommodate patients who are on dialysis due to chronic kidney disease of Unknown aetiology (CKDu), as the special care centre dedicated to this purpose has been converted to a Quarantine Centre. At least a minimum of twenty-five patients attended this facility. Upon the request of the Divisional Secretary of Bandaragama, Sarvodaya released the Sarvodaya Institute of Higher Learning, Bandaragama of the Kalutara District to establish a quarantine centre for Kalutara District. The Residential block of the Sarvodaya Hambantota District Centre had been released as a quarantine Centre. Sarvodaya ECD Training residential centre based in Moratuwa had been released to the Sri Lanka Army for urgent quarantine care. Sarvodaya service staff based at these centres received sufficient training and precautions from Sarvodaya and Government authorities when providing services to rollout those much-required facilities when the transfer of centres occurred.

### The United Nations Humanitarian Country Team Mechanism

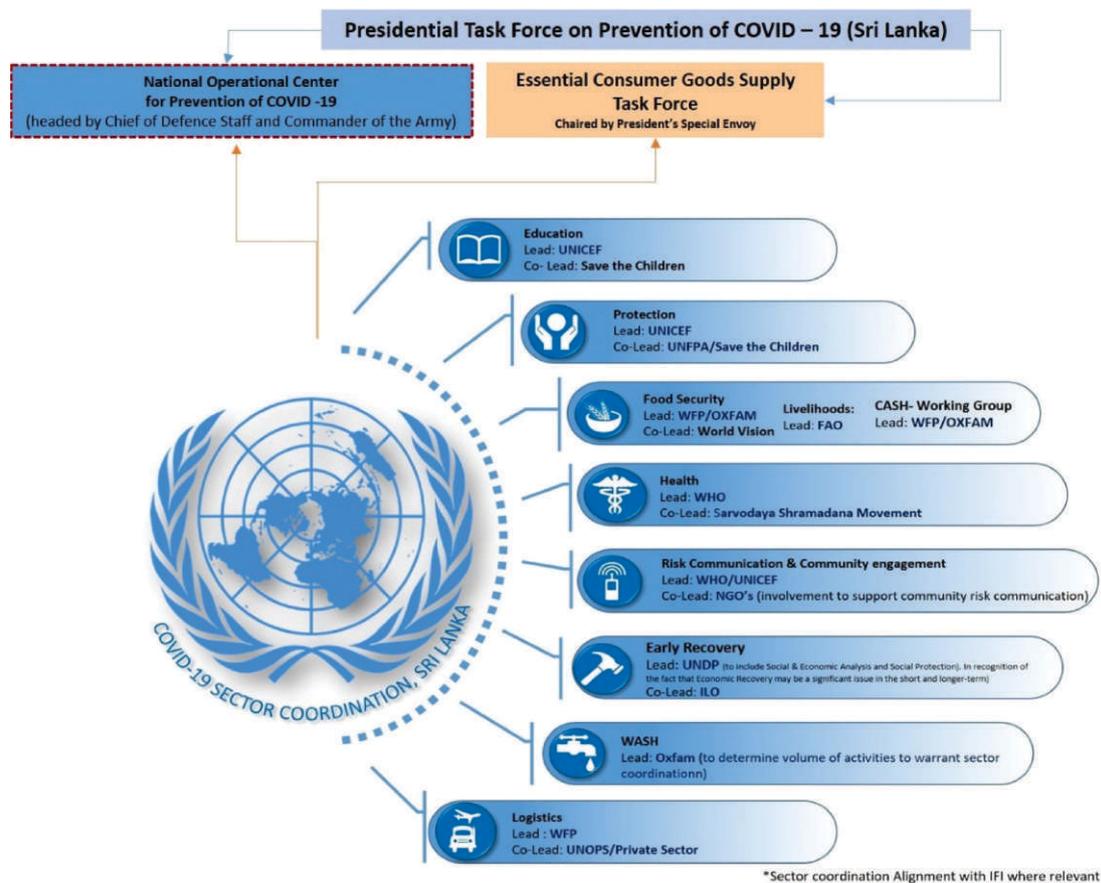


Figure 6, UN-HCT COVID19 Response Clusters

The United Nations HCT mechanism was a major response approach to mobilise support in terms of a national response. The humanitarian organizations operating in Sri Lanka, have been maintaining a very close working relationship with the UN system during emergencies and disasters. The purpose of the UN sectoral meeting was to ensure that stakeholders shared resources and collaborated in their efforts in responding to the COVID-19 crisis. From the first wave onwards, the UN convened the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) mechanism and invited key local and international CSOs to be a part of this mechanism in successfully responding to the precarious needs that arise during a calamity. Several clusters were formed and Sarvodaya was invited and subsequently appointed as a co-chair along with the Ministry of Health in the Health Cluster, chaired by the WHO Representative in Sri Lanka and the President of Sarvodaya. Subsequently Sarvodaya representatives were appointed to other non-health related clusters to amplify the HCT response and to feed into collective decision-making mechanisms. Some clusters were convened regularly according to the needs assessed by the UN and partners and employees appointed to those have played an active role to amplify delivery.

Apart from the said initiatives Sarvodaya has been engaging with the Ministry of Health and related authorities on a regular basis to assess the health-related impact of the pandemic. Sarvodaya has been invited to key forums and meetings conducted by the Government and Civil Society members both local and international to contribute into thought and policy decision making procedures.

Sarvodaya has also been pioneering in risk communication as well as contributing to local and international thought leadership since the inception of the first lockdowns. President Emeritus of Sarvodaya – Dr A.T. Ariyaratne as well as the incumbent President – Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne has played a key role on contributing to risk awareness as well as policy making initiatives during the times of calamity. The table below will lay out their contributions in that regard.

### International and National Policy Engagements by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne - President Emeritus

	Date	Title	Organizer / Institution	QR code
01.	21.03.2020	An interview with Dr A.T Ariyaratne	Heller: Global Development and Sustainability	
02.	07.04.2020	A special message from Dr Ariyaratne on facing challenges brought forward by COVID (Trilingual with subtitles)	Sarvodaya Social Media channels	
03.	13.04.2020	The dawn of a new era	Deshodaya	
04.	22.04.2020	Interfaith prayer with Children during the Global COVID-19 Pandemic A "Statement of Solidarity"	Arigatou International	
05.	08.05.2020	Special Wesak Poya day message	Deshodaya	
06.	13.05.2020	Interfaith Prayer with Children: Digital Interaction	Arigatou International	
07.	26.05.2020	Our roles and responsibilities in the fight against COVID	Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena	
08.	08.11.2020	Facing COVID-19 positively and special message for children	Sarvodaya Social Media	

09.	28.05.2020	Special Message to Lockdown stories initiative	Lockdown Stories	
10.	01.06.2020	From a lockdown mind to a liberated mindA message at the launch of Vishva Niketan Youtube channel	Vishva Niketan	
11.	18.07.2020	Virtual gathering of Holistic Centres addressed by Dr A.T Ariyaratne and Dr Charika Marasinghe	Holistic Centres Network	
12.	25.07.2020	A special interview by NEWS FIRST	Sirasa TV	
13.	08.11.2020	Facing the pandemic positively, a special address to children	Sarvodaya Social Media Pages	
14.	14.11.2020	The spiritual dynamics of crisis on the path to global cooperation	World Goodwill Seminar	
15.	04.12.2020	A special address at the launch of Home for Humanity - Geneva	Home for Humanity	
16.	13.11.2020	Celebrating Ari's 89th Birthday	Sarvodaya USA	
17.	04.12.2020	On the Power of Homes for Humanity: by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, Founder, Sarvodaya Movement, Sri Lanka	Home for Humanity	
18.	18.12.2020	Special Contribution by Dr. A.T.Ariyaratne	Vishvaniketan Peace center	

## International and National Policy Engagements by Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne - President

No.	Date	Title	Organizer / Institution and QR code
01.	23.04.2020	Navigating the "New Normal" for Sustainable Socio-Economic Recovery	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
02.	03.05.2020	Analysis of COVID-19 Your Health & Your Role as a Responsible Citizen (English) Analysis of COVID-19 Your Health & Your Role as a Responsible Citizen (English) Analysis of COVID-19 Your Health & Your Role as a Responsible Citizen (Sinhala/Tamil)	Global Unites  Sri Lanka Unites 
03.	05.04.2020	Leading Resilience: Preparing for a post Pandemic World	Impact Voices
04.	23.04.2020	Counter –cyclical support facility to support government to respond to impacts of COVID-19 and strengthen social protection programs	ADB Resident Mission, Sri Lanka
05.	06.05.2020	Oxford Talks Transformative Justice for the Post-COVID Transition: Insights from leaders of transitional countries	Oxford University 

06.	10.05.2020	Voices of Humans: Sarvodaya's COVID Response (Sinhala)	Voices of Humans	
07.	22.05.2020	"The Role of South Asian Civil Society in the Times of COVID-19 Pandemic".	PRIA International Academy (PIA) and Asia Democracy Network	
08.	28.05.2020	Talk for Peace Panel Discussion II	Rotary Club	
09.	10.06.2020	COVID-19 Asian Recovery Stories'	UN Sri Lanka	
10.	15.06.2020	How faith inspired organizations in Asia are supporting, protecting, and empowering children during the COVID-19 pandemic	Arigatou International –Nairobi	
11.	03.07.2020	Co-creative roundtable at the humanity rising summit	University of Oxford	
12.	24.08.2020	Covid -19 situation in Sri Lanka: Strengths and Challenges	Berkley Centre WDC	
13.	30.07.2020	60 years of struggle for regeneration: the Sarvodaya experience in Sri Lanka	BEconomy Partners	
14.	16.09.2020	Community Engagement in COVID-19	CCPSL 25th Anniversary Annual Academic Sessions	
15.	13.10.2020	Panel Discussion on "Countering hate speech and the use of social media as a space for dialogue G20 interfaith Forum	KAICIID Dialogue Centre	
16.	23.10.2020	Shaping our future together: Multilateralism and the youth in the new normal	UN 75th Anniversary	
17.	03.12.2020	Live Event on "Volunteering, Mental Health and Community Engagement" Dr. Vinya (Panellist) - Safety and self-care when engaging in community work during times of COVID	WHO- UNV	
18.	17.12.2020	Transformation Dialogues based on publication 'Localising the Transformation in the New Normal: A Domestic Resource Mobilisation Framework for the Sustainable Development Goals in Sri Lanka'	Global Sustainability Solutions (GLOSS)	
19.	20.12.2020	The online event: Home for Humanity - UN International Day for Human Solidarity	Home for Humanity	
20.	12.01.2021	Virtual Workshop: COVID-19 and Beyond: Multilateral Cooperation to Enhance Resiliency	DKI APCSS	
21.	02.02.2021	Panellist - Faith Inspired Organizations & Covid-19 Response	Ahimsa Renaissance Movement	
22.	17.02.2021	"Ethics in COVID-19; Are we concerned?" at the Symposium on "Ethics in COVID-19"	Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA)	
23.	27th -28th Jan 2021	Importance of community engagement in combatting COVID-19" at the conference on "COVID -19"	The National Science Foundation	

## Civil Society Collective for COVID-19 Response

Sarvodaya initiated discussions with the larger Civil Society representatives and organisations to rollout collective initiatives related to COVID prevention. The Collective not only wanted to execute plans on their own but also to extend their fullest cooperation to the Government mechanism particularly to the Ministry of Health in COVID prevention work. In its first instance, the Government of Sri Lanka was not keen in obtaining CSO assistance in COVID-19 national response and none of the decision-making bodies established to address the challenges included civil society, non-governmental nor humanitarian organizations although they had been in the forefront of emergency response in any previous events of national disaster and catastrophes.

However, by the second week into the lockdown the “Presidential Task Force for directing, coordinating and monitoring of essential public services” (PTF) requested the support of the CSOs to help coordinate and aid care homes around the country. This gave an opportunity for civil society actors in all twenty-five districts to work with relevant government officials and address the urgent food security, hygiene, and medical needs of identified vulnerable groups in Sri Lanka. Pursuant to the government circular No. PTF/01/Circular/02 of 29 March 2020, CSO organisations led by Sarvodaya extended their support in contributing to this initiative. Sarvodaya played a central role in providing leadership to the CSO initiative coordinating and managing its operations. The beneficiaries were residents living in government and non-government run centres comprised of:

- Government and Private children's homes
- Government and Private elder's homes
- Centres for people with special needs Rehabilitation centres
- Safe houses for women
- Rehabilitation centres
- Probation centres

Lockdowns (curfews) posed severe hardships for the government and private institutions providing care for children, elders, the differently abled and other vulnerable groups included in the mandate. This initiative has been an immediate response to a critical need due to care homes being identified as highly vulnerable places due to their nature of reliance on *dāna* (giving of alms, mostly cooked meals, and other utensils) offerings by well-wishers to sustain their daily operations. Since well-wishers couldn't keep up to their promises due to travel restrictions, the beneficiaries of care homes were at grave risk and required regular care where the Collective of CSO organisations large and small stepped into their identified roles and assumed overseeing of care homes in the districts where they had a strong presence.

The CSOs involved voluntarily organized themselves by district and established contact with the relevant centres and corresponding government officials. A virtual office was set up at the national level to coordinate the response and a core group constituted to support the two national level representatives. The district representatives began contacting the centres and quickly assessed the urgent needs and began responding to them. First, they utilized local resources available in the district from various CSOs and when necessary, reached out for support from national level organizations.

As of 30 June 2020, this initiative has ministered to approximately 525 centres island wide and 15,600 individuals, across all twenty-five administrative districts (Annex 01). The total amount spent on the initiative had been a sum of Rs. 50 million. Assistance provided to the centres had been two-fold. First, emergency relief and secondly, restoring service gaps such as facilitating medical visits, health, and psychosocial wellbeing. The district representatives in

several instances have also facilitated transport and other logistical arrangements to ensure that those centres are replenished in due time. Emergency relief had been provided to cover two types of needs – food rations, and cleaning, and hygiene items.

Relief efforts had been largely facilitated by Sarvodaya, PAFREL, National Peace Council (NPC) and MSI-IDEA. Funds had been raised through public appeals by private philanthropists, and international donors such as Sarvodaya USA, Embassies and High Commissions of Switzerland, Germany, and Canada. Development arms such as Misereor, USAID and Open Society Foundation (OSF) has been of assistance in sourcing the funds required for the operation and at times technical expertise to assure the quality of delivery of such services.

### **Programmatic response**

When engaging with these institutions, CSOs took care of the needs more holistically including physical wellbeing and mental wellbeing of the beneficiaries. This was considered and executed as a time bound emergency assistance initiative with a decentralized structure with priority given to responding to needs within existing local government and CSO structures and where necessary, through provincial and central government and CSO networks and mechanisms established in that sphere. The relief assistance was coordinated by a group of 25 district coordinators selected through a rapid open selection process among civil society networks and NGOs. Those district coordinators, under the direction of their respective District Secretariats, coordinated with relevant government officers in districts, and worked alongside social services, probation, elder's rights promotion, and women development officers. In addition to this, the Collective had also identified concerns related to protection, psychosocial wellbeing, and mental health which have been brought to the attention of the authorities in their periodic updates to government authorities.

The Third Component:

# Aid And Relief Distribution

## Aid and Relief Distribution

Relief and aid play a key role in times of calamity and de-stress. In fulfilling the complex mandate of Suwodaya, Sarvodaya's aid and relief drive has played a key role since the implementation of Government lockdowns. Especially during the first lock down Sarvodaya reached out to the most vulnerable non-affluent communities in urban settlements and other vulnerable groups in selected districts carefully identifying the requirements through rapid needs assessments. Responding to the needs of the said groups were vital as proper mechanisms to distribute essential supplies in the very first few weeks were extremely difficult, due to supply chains and distribution lines coming into a standstill in the wake of lockdowns. In deploying relief and aid, Sarvodaya not only mechanised their own operations but also renewed partnerships as well as built new ones in fulfilling the undertakings. One such significant partnership had been 'We Build Colombo together' - a group of young professionals and community activists who put forward a proposal and implemented it successfully with Sarvodaya in these trying times.

Are you happy to be home during the curfew? Do you have enough stocks of food for a week or two? If yes, you are luckier than you think.

In Colombo's poorest urban neighborhoods, there are so many who cannot afford to feed their families because their daily income is completely barred by the Covid19 chaos. However their hunger cannot be postponed until the pandemic ends!

We are raising funds for **1500** packs containing,

Rice (6kg)	Sugar
Atta four	Tea
Rice flour	Milk powder
Dhal (lentils)	Chillie powder
Dried fish	Curry powder
Salt	Canned fish
Big onions	Soya-meat
Potatoes	Soap
Coconut milk	Sanitary napkins

The cost of a pack is **3000LKR** and given the nature of how Covid19 is spreading, we are advised not to collect goods. We will therefore only accept cash transfers to,

ACCT NO.:1190028395  
BANK: COMMERCIAL BANK  
BRANCH: BORELLA BRANCH  
ACCOUNT HOLDER: LANKA JATHIKA SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA SANGAMAYA

TYPE: CURRENT  
SWIFT CODE: CCEYLKXXXX  
HTTP://WWW.SARVODAYAUSA.ORG/DONATE.HTML

Please send deposit confirmations to +94776808887 via SMS or WhatsApp.

**HUNGER CAN NOT BE POSTPONED;**

**TOGETHER WE CAN FEED THEM ALL**

WBCT in partnership with

MOBIL JOURNALIST Sarvodaya

Figure 7, A flyer for the WBCT-Sarvodaya Relief Drive

The Sarvodaya District Centre network have been engaging with their respective communities to call upon philanthropists and well-wishers to contribute to different funding initiatives and relief distribution drives. District Centres in partnership with Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies based in Colombo, Anuradhapura, Galle, Ratnapura, Kegalle, Monaragala, Puttalam, Kalutara, Jaffna, Gampaha, Kandy, Nuwaraeliya, Matale, Trincomalee, Vavuniya, Batticaloa, Kilinochchi have played a significant role in coordinating and dispersing essential supplies and relief packages to vulnerable communities, daily waged workers, and poverty-stricken communities.

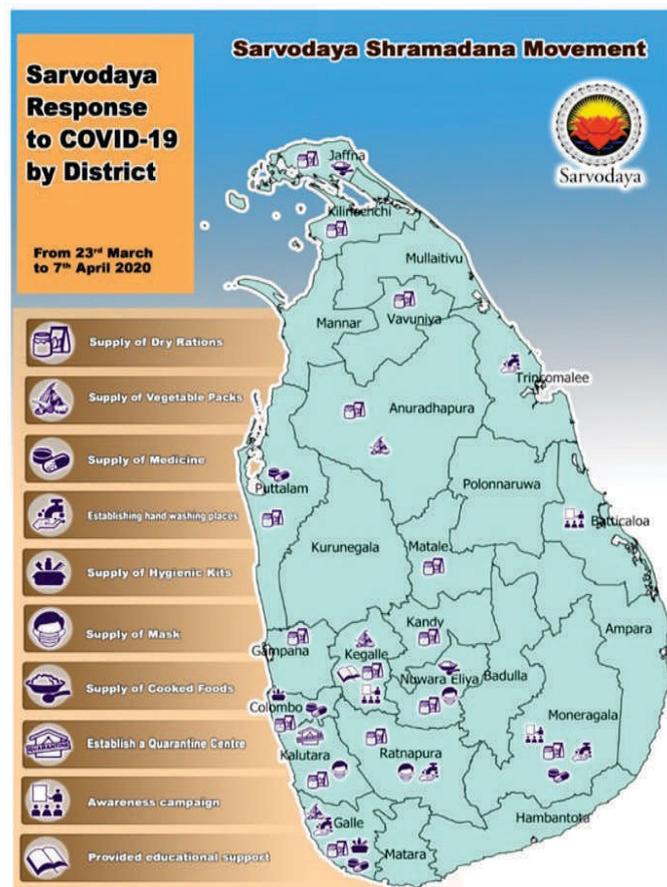


Figure 8, Sarvodaya Relief Response

### Emergency Response Support to Vulnerable Groups Affected by COVID19 and Targeted Risk Communication

Sarvodaya identified the urgent requirements of communities affected by lockdowns and re-aligned its existing project scope in delivering relief to vulnerable groups. Partnered with the British Asian Trust, distribution of relief items along with a risk communication programme has been satisfactorily executed. In terms of risk communication, the project raised awareness through social media, displaying of physical material such as banners and posters, and to help combat fake news and misinformation in the current context. Demarcation of safe distance markers was a secondary task successfully carried out by the project team. Such markers were placed at public locations such as drug stores, groceries, markets, supermarkets, and public transport. The initiative catered to the demands of Colombo, Hambantota, Matale, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Polonnaruwa and Kegalle districts.

#### Specific activities of the project:

- Distributed cleaning and hygiene packs among identified vulnerable groups (The pack included number of items such as cleaning kits, personal hygiene items, cleaning paraphernalia, diapers, and primary medical care related items).
- Displayed awareness banners in public places on the importance of social distancing to prevent virus transmission. The first component was to display 150 banners in public places on importance of social distancing in preventing the further spread of COVID 19 in all 25 districts (messages were sighted through the WHO and MOH).

- Demarcated 'Safe distance' indicators in selected public places to promote social distancing as a practice in transitioning to the new normal. The project identified 250 locations to conduct this task.
- Conducted a social media campaign to create awareness on preventing COVID–19. The final component was to generate 500 posts within a time frame - creating content and sharing messages through communications on social media platforms on public safety and related etiquettes.

Apart from the project related activities, the initiative had been able to strengthen different parties and actors who were involved in the process. Strengthening capacities of the Civil Society Collective had been a key achievement where different organisations be them national, regional or grassroots organisations had the ability to engage in one platform, share their challenges and find solutions together. The initiative also had the ability to network and work hand in hand with Government authorities creating a good rapport to engage in future work.



### **Distribution of Dry Rations and Recreational Kits: Meethotamulla, Kilinochchi and Batticaloa.**

The Arigatou International : End Poverty Knowledge Centre based at the Sarvodaya headquarters, partnered with the Sarvodaya Colombo District Centre, to support the Meethotamulla community (an urban non-affluent community where the knowledge centre established a children's empowerment centre) by providing dry ration packs to 160 families, and in addition to this, the Knowledge Centre collaborated with Sarvodaya and D bindu Collective (grassroots women's organization) to coordinate the distribution of dry ration packs to 180 female headed households in Killinochchi (conflict affected region in the Northern province). Similarly, the Knowledge Centre in collaboration with the Batticaloa District (Eastern province), Government Child Protection Officers and the Sarvodaya Batticaloa Centre supported the distribution of COVID-19 awareness recreational kits to 350 children from underprivileged households.

### **Distribution of Relief Materials by Shanthi Sena Sansadaya**

Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena has been actively contributing to relief distribution since the first lockdown which lasted for three months in some districts. Considering the urgency of the situation and to strengthen the Sarvodaya Movement's

relief efforts, Shanthi Sena Sansadaya initiated several relief programmes at district level with the assistance of Shanthi Sena district leaders. Thus, affected families were provided with dry ration packs and financial assistance for urgent medical care. The relief rounds catered to communities in Batticaloa, Jaffna, Trincomalee and Matale. Not only in the first wave, but also in the second wave, Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena Sansadaya along with Shanthi Sena district leaders led a program to provide dry rations packs to affected families. Their district members directly contributed to these activities and supported to distribute dry rations packs in several districts and especially in places where people were advised to self-quarantine. Each dry ration pack consisted of food items enough for a family to survive for few weeks. Relief activities had been carried out adhering to health protocols and guidelines given by health authorities and with the support of police and civil society leaders in the affected area. In addition to distribution of relief, some district teams distributed face masks and hand sanitizers to those who couldn't afford those. They also provided washing facilities such as sinks to schools, MOH offices and religious places (temples, churches, kovils and mosques) to support the health authorities to control the rapid spread of COVID19.

The Fourth Component:

# COVID Ready Communities

## COVID READY COMMUNITIES

From the investigation of the first case in the island, Sarvodaya assumed a leading role in providing vital information to the public in local languages (Sinhala and Tamil). Creative social media posts amplified key health messages provided by the Health Promotion Bureau of the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO). Dr Vinya Ariyaratne, took the lead in disseminating vital health information to the public via digital and social media which went viral in communication channels. Sarvodaya Social Media channels (Youtube, Facebook, Twitter continuously amplified key COVID-19 related health information and reached a significantly larger audience. Community awareness and knowledge sharing has been a key area of focus for the larger Suwodaya programme. Apart from that, Sarvodaya has always emphasised, that communities must prepare themselves for the new normal, changing and adopting to simple yet new lifestyle patterns.

The COVID Ready Communities Programme covers five key area to curb the spread of virus at community level. It further creates awareness on active community involvement in case there is a community outbreak of COVID-19.

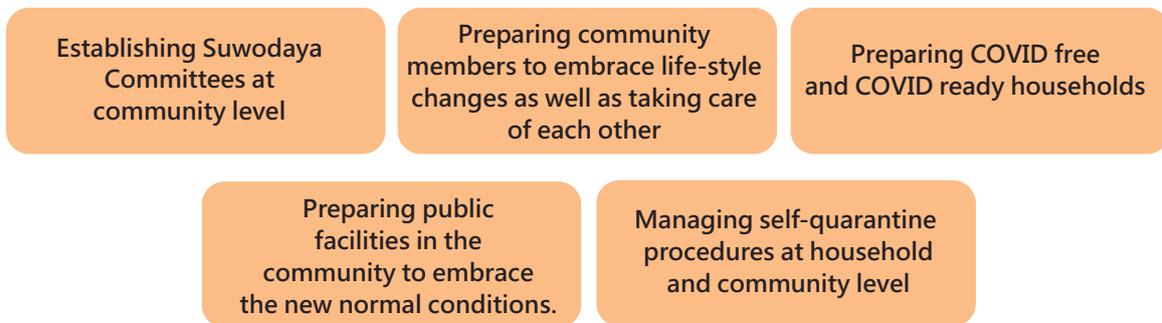


Diagram 1, COVID Ready Communities Framework

## Suwodaya Mobile Unit

To amplify awareness related initiatives, Sarvodaya designed and launched a mobile unit that could reach all corners of the country. A large digital display was affixed, and relevant material were digitized for appropriate screening. The mobile unit screened awareness messages (mainly video messages in trilingual format) at public spaces such as markets, public transport terminals, places of worship, selected government run venues and schools. The Fourteen project Districts have been chosen due to the nature of vulnerability, carefully analysing transmission patterns. It also paved the way for the advocacy team to operate in a bubble in high transmission areas yet disseminate vital health information among the public.



The project team also mobilised relevant health representatives from the regional and the respective local MOH areas to join the initiative furthering the knowledge of the public by live awareness activities. That way Medical Officers from the area had the opportunity to disseminate area specific information and related special social concerns and targeted instructions. This localised approach is one key element Sarvodaya always emphasise in its programmatic action. Sarvodaya is grateful to all officers who joined the initiative to make this mass public awareness drive a success. Apart from the screening, posters, banners, and leaflets have been distributed as appropriate. The Mobile Unit will be utilised in the days to come according to the changing ground reality to further awareness activities. Below is a list of locations and approximate advocacy reach out of the mobile unit.

District	Days	Volume of Programmes	Approximate number of viewers	Details
Colombo	8	12	8875	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Four programmes and live performances were conducted in flats that were locked down in the Colombo Municipality area.</li> <li>- Four programmes in Kolonnawa and Moratuwa Flats. - One in Meethotamulla area.</li> <li>- One at Meegoda Economic Centre</li> <li>- Homagama and Kosgama Town area.</li> </ul>
Kegalle	3	13	2760	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies (SSS) and Sarvodaya Village Health Committee Level</li> <li>- At selected plantations</li> <li>- Schools, Ayurveda clinic and Sunday School level</li> </ul>
Kandy	4	18	489	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10 Programmes conducted in Municipal and Urban Councilareas. Others at SSS level.</li> </ul>
Ratnapura	3	18	873	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reached out to nine divisions</li> <li>- Thirteen programmes conducted at main towns.</li> <li>- Five programmes conducted at SSS level.</li> </ul>
Puttalam	1	6	475	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two Divisions along with Chillaw Town.</li> </ul>
Kalutara	3	15	1615	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Covered six divisions.</li> <li>- 02 programme conducted at Garment factories.</li> <li>- One programme organised at a plantation.</li> </ul>

Nuwaraeliya	3	11	7700	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Covered Hatton, Nuwaraeliya and Walapane Divisions.</li> <li>- Three School programmes and</li> <li>- One at a Plantation.</li> </ul>
Galle	3	14	1820	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Most of programmes were organized at</li> <li>- Government run institutions and Divisional Secretariats.</li> <li>- Eight Schools</li> <li>- Two Government offices were covered</li> </ul>
Gampaha	3	17	913	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Six programmes conducted at Sewa Piyasa Offices and garment factories.</li> <li>- Ten programmes conducted at towns.</li> </ul>
Monaragala	3	16	1156	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Covered eight divisions. .</li> <li>- Also, covered main cities of the district</li> </ul>
Badulla	3	18	2095	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Covered eight divisions.</li> <li>- Seven programmes in main towns and adjacent villages.</li> </ul>
Ampara	3	13	5170	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Covered six divisions</li> <li>- Conducted five programmes in main towns including Akkaraipattu and Pottuvil</li> </ul>
Jaffna	4	21	12030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Covered public places and markets.</li> <li>- Bus stands, Churches, Kovils, and Schools.</li> </ul>
Mullaitivu	2	10	1063	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Covered three divisions.</li> <li>- Three Programmes conducted in three key schools with highest student populations.</li> </ul>



Figure 10, Suwodaya Mobile Unit

### E-Iskole – Digital Studio for E-Learning collaborations

Sarvodaya launched and introduced a studio for e-learning on the 24<sup>th</sup> of July 2020. Coined as 'e-iskole' (literally meaning e-school), this studio will be able to reach communities who were facing concerns to educate their children, youth, and adults. Essentially the e-school is an audio-visual recording studio with modern accessories and amenities including green-screens, audio/video recording and editing facilities needed to create and conduct live webinars, live chat, documentaries, virtual training programs etc. This platform was created to disseminate quality educational content to target audiences. The e-iskole, or e-school, is an interactive form of knowledge production giving participants an active role to play instead of just watching a pre-recorded production. Sarvodaya aims to address

practical as well as philosophical issues faced by society today to widen their knowledge, skill sets, and understanding of current events, outlooks, and attitudes. Sarvodaya has planned exciting new programs through e-iskole, targeting different groups while giving a special focus to children and youth. Considering the current COVID19 crisis, restricting adults and children to stay within the confines of their homes, platforms such as e-Iskole can surpass these issues and connect with their audiences and support them during these trying times.



Figure 11, Launch of Sarvodaya E-School

### Sarvodaya Fusion : Information and Communication Technology Interventions at Community Level.

Sarvodaya-Fusion is the information and communication technology arm of Sarvodaya providing services to mostly a beneficiary base of rural children and youth. Since March 2020, Fusion has been investigating on reaching out to their beneficiaries in an innovative and effective manner by enhancing their existing mandate that is to 'e-empowering citizens'. Unlike any other time, Fusion's interventions were identified to be much more relevant when lockdowns were imposed, and schools had to shut down and children had to opt-into their studies and other activities online. However, Fusion did not deliver the traditional services it had to offer but came up with fresh plans along with their partner organisations. In so doing, they had a line-up of activities and initiatives which addressed different concerns of society providing a positive ambiance to the negatively perceived digital age. Like Sarvodaya, Fusion re-aligned some of their existing programmes to fit the unprecedented environment created by the pandemic.

### #ThinkFirst Campaign





With the first outbreak, digital spaces, particularly social media were overwhelmed with confusion, fear and anxiety reacting to the changes brought about by the restrictions and the pandemic. In Sri Lanka, mass media as well as social media have been merely communicating the number of infected persons and the death tolls. The demand for digital platforms has increased gradually to the extent where network traffic has also increased. This upsurge did not positively influence but rather negatively overwhelmed the digital spaces due to the sudden increase of uncontrolled information, fake news, propaganda and even racism largely impacting the toll on mental wellbeing of individuals and communities. Identifying this need, Sarvodaya-Fusion in collaboration with Facebook, implemented a campaign '#නොමගනොයමු' under their parent campaign '#ThinkFirst', with the aim to enhance digital media literacy among the public. The initiative projected to create and to engage digital audiences on the legitimate sources of information, ways and means to identify fake news, misinformation, and fair use of social media platforms. The initiative was funded by Facebook as means of Facebook ad-credits.

Outcomes of this initiative had been multi-fold, Fusion successfully reached to an audience of approximately 750,000. They were able to increase awareness and engagement on the legitimate sources of information such as official statistics endorsed by the Government ministries of Health and Mass Media. Fusion's campaign in making awareness on spotting fake news had been a useful engagement and had been welcomed widely by their audiences. Apart from the said campaign they were able to make awareness on the complexities related to public concerns and most importantly identifying and dignifying the importance of frontline essential workers in this time of crisis.

**“We Think Digital/ IT Yahamaga” Awareness Program**

The 'new normal' meant that communities would require an extra edge in IT literacy where they would require knowledge to efficiently use IT platforms to facilitate activities such as working-from-home, online learning, and purchasing medicine and groceries through e-services. The new normal in this light also meant that there is a higher need to penetrate digital spaces to impart new knowledge and awareness on safe, ethical, and efficient use of internet and social media due to the higher frequency of use.

"We Think Digital" global program was therefore launched in Sri Lanka by Facebook, with the collaboration of Sarvodaya-Fusion's "IT Yahamaga" program, and in partnership with ICTA and Ministry of Education. The programme was virtually launched in June 2020, followed by a panel discussion of the partnering stakeholders. "We Think Digital/ IT Yahamaga" program comprises of three editions which are: The School Edition, University Edition, and the Family Edition. This project began in June 2020 and will span across March 2021. Number of beneficiaries: School Edition – 1,900 students (Webinar series), University Edition – 208 students (webinar series), Family Edition – 1,069 (in-person).

## School Edition



Fusion implied and identified a trend in the negative use of the internet and digital platforms among children due to prolonged hours of use. Traditionally the Sri Lankan school system is largely based on physical learning experiences. Children and youth have been using digital spaces solely for habits such as entertainment and as a getaway from their day-to-day activities. When schools rolled out online classes, students gained access to devices and applications beyond their allowed hours. Observing this trend, to positively change their digital behaviours, Fusion identified the urgent need to educate children on the beneficial ways of using digital tools for education, while ensuring their safety. The programme particularly focused on how they could keep their digital identity safe, and on how to secure their online profiles, information and fair and ethical use of the internet, communication, and digital platforms. Several key outcomes had been achieved as below:

- Children became more aware of online crimes and issues such as spam, phishing and fraud and know how to deal with such issues efficiently and effectively.
- Children use social media and stay connected ethically, without causing harm to another, avoiding hate speech and cyberbullying.
- Children learned how to use digital tools for their education and for its advancement.

## University Edition



Like school children, Sri Lankan University system was mostly no different to the use of digital spaces for educational activities. Apart from that, batches of students completing their studies preparing themselves to step into their careers were devastated due to losing jobs in a largely volatile job market where staff layoffs were the norm. Through the University Edition, "IT Yahamaga" encouraged these students by advising them on the various opportunities that

they could unravel through digital means on how they could earn an extra income, start off a digital business, improve their academic knowledge, and how they could tap into the digital job market.

Key outcomes of the University programme:

- Awareness on diverse opportunities available in the digital world for their education, career development and entrepreneurial aspirations.
- Awareness on effective use of various tools efficiently without idling and only basing their digital life on entertainment.
- Skills to keep their digital identity secure.
- Knowledge on how to spot misinformation and fake news by being a critical thinker.

### Family Edition



Workplaces gradually opened and this meant that most parents would not stay at home with their children due to schools being closed. With the transformation of traditional learning to e-learning, parents have provided the necessary tools and devices to support their children's education. Now that there is no one to guide them at home, parents had been doubting the use of digital spaces for educational requirements. In responding to this atmosphere, Fusion introduced the "Family Edition" to educate parents on digital spaces and ways and means of being aware of their child's digital life and safety. It was important for the parents to be aware of their own role in their child's digital life and positive feedback had been received on that front. These programs were conducted in-person, by the Fusion team visiting selected workplaces.

Key outcomes

- Parents learnt the benefits of using digital services, information, and tools.
- Awareness on how to keep their information safe and secure.
- Awareness on how they could be a part of their child's digital life, guiding them and making sure they are safe online while engaging in learning and entertainment.
- Learnt how to improve their knowledge – vocational skills and further academic aspirations for career development.

### Suhuru Sara Awareness program

"Suhuru Sara" an awareness program, that was initiated by LK Domain Registry, had been implemented by Sarvodaya-Fusion in collaboration with the Ministry of Education since 2019. These programs were carried out as in-person workshops, reaching out to school students and conducting them at different schools in many districts. The in-

person nature of the programme was problematic due to COVID, hence the project had to re-align its scope and mandate to continue the “Suhuru Sara” awareness sessions utilising webinars. Fusion was able to illustrate the many opportunities and developments that deemed beneficial to high school children. They were able to promote ethical and positive use of digital tools to e-empower their beneficiaries. The project achieved the following outcomes reaching out to 1,529 students, through July 2020 consecutively till February 2021.

Key outcomes:

- Participants used technology and social media efficiently and safely.
- Awareness of furthering education despite the restrictions imposed by the pandemic.
- Participants were empowered to find means of income despite the demotivation and disregard caused by the ongoing pandemic.
- Participants became aware of government and other sources for jobs, trainings and courses for their progression and development

### #StayHomeStory campaign



Sarvodaya-Fusion in collaboration with ICTA & Facebook, initiated the #StayHomeStory Campaign, to address the mundanity and frustrations brought about by the implementation of lockdowns. Fusion realised that children need to engage better digitally and that their digital experiences cannot be boring but purposeful and in return that their positive experiences could be used to communicate strong positive messages to the public. Engaging children actively to expand their digital experiences had been a key strategy in implementing this campaign.

The campaign featured a competition, to spark creativity and productivity of all communities regardless of their age. This was aimed at giving the public an opportunity to engage and express their solutions and activities they adopted at their households, to overcome various difficulties. The other aim being to reach the offline community and to onboard them to familiarise them on the use of digital means to communicate by sharing their stay-at-home experiences. Fusion achieved their end goal by successfully creating a more positive and engaged digitalized community of citizens, competent in using digital technologies to carry out their routine tasks.

The #StayHomeStory generated an audience of 10,000 within 20 days and nearly 1,000 entries, with 60,316 post engagements, totalling to a reach of 432,000. This campaign achieved the following outcomes.

- Positive behavioural change – the competition sparked creativity and positiveness in the minds of individuals and their families, while making their time productive and useful during the lockdown.
- This initiative provided a platform to unveil talents of innovators, artists, singers, as well as creative minds to empower them to make a positive community engagement.
- NTIP (New to Internet people) became familiar with digital applications and platforms.

### **Strengthening Community Engagement to address the COVID-19 Pandemic:**

The sheer size and the community dynamics of low-income urban settlements pose a great challenge to address prevention of COVID-19. This project had been running since November 2020 focusing on strengthening community engagement in COVID-19 response in selected high-risk districts of the Northern and Eastern provinces; namely, Jaffna, Mannar, Batticaloa, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi and Trincomalee. The project is operated in a way to gather the momentum of community based civil society action and to engage community level key personnel in attempts beyond mere awareness. The project aims at promoting standard hygiene etiquette, and its praxis. A key objective is also to address COVID related social stigma and discrimination as the pandemic aggravated existing tensions between community groups and was used by opportunists to further their hardcore anti-cohesion propaganda.

A multi-tier approach had been utilized as a successful mechanism to ensure risk communication and praxis is effectively communicated to the grassroots level by those who are already actively involved in related work. The diverse audiences not only receive basic training on awareness methods but also on aspects such as how they could effectively and efficiently manage their services and relief efforts adapting to the ground reality and the local context of operation.

### **Mobilizing and engaging community leaders/ volunteers and community-based organizations (CBOs)**

The project team initially mapped the best CBOs and CSOs to initiate COVID19 prevention amongst their respective communities to sustain the effects of the project. Active CBOs and CSOs at the district level were categorized according to MOH areas with the guidance provided by the district MOH office. Project targeted a total reach of 150 CBOs/CSOs, i.e., 25 per district, to provide necessary tools and awareness on COVID prevention.

### **Online trainings for selected CBO members:**

The Health Promotion Bureau, RDHS and relevant health educational officers were selected as key resource personnel to educate the participants. The trainings were tailor made to inspire participants to find their own solutions as spread of COVID in their localities would differ from others. The participants had the ability to interact with the resource

personnel on unique case by case situations where they would require advice on swift and prudent community level action.

Topics such as: the nature of the virus, its transmission, high-risk group identification, the global context and local context, preventive methods and tools that could be utilised for community participation was covered to make the initiative a success.

**In-person training for faith leaders in identified areas:**

Faith leaders play a critical role, in their residing communities in ordinary times and tough ones during disasters, emergencies, crisis, and conflict. In that regard, faith leaders are equipped with unique skills to support communities during adversities be them moral guidance or physically demanding needs. Equipping faith leaders with necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes are crucial in community resilience and COVID-19 has only proved this thus far. Faith leaders could play a crucial role in risk communication if they are sufficiently empowered. In that regard, training faith leaders had been a success, mainly to spread messages of care, focusing on hygiene and infection prevention, social distancing, and how to benefit from each other's religious learnings. Five one-day training programs were successfully implemented to fulfil this endeavour. The project team has also considered a tertiary phase to extend the project to encompass faith-based risk communication and engagement that would ensure inter-community and inter-religious participation in activities.

District	Date	No. of participants
Trincomalee	2020.12.20	27
Mannar	2020.12.27	35
Kilinochchi	2020.12.15	35
Batticaloa	2020.11.28	37
Jaffna	2020.11.27	35

Table 5, In-person trainings of faith-leaders

**District level in person trainings**



Figure 1:

### In-person trainings for selected youth and women leaders:

A youth inclusive and focused awareness initiative was identified as a requirement in terms of responding to COVID-19 related preparedness, response, and praxis as it is the future of youth which is largely being impacted due to the adverse effects of COVID. A series of trainings were conducted with the intention of forming an active women's group and a youth led crisis response group that promotes community-based humanitarian action: which is data driven, participatory and resourceful in responding not only to COVID but also to many other emergency circumstances.

District	Date	No. of participants
Trincomalee	2020.11.26	35
Mannar	2020.11.27	35
Kilinochchi	2020.12.04	35
Batticaloa	2020.12.05	37
Vavuniya	2020.12.01	25
Jaffna	2020.11.26	35

Table 6, In-person trainings for selected youth and women leaders

District	Date	No. of participants
Trincomalee	2020.12.20	56
Mannar	2020.12.02	27
Kilinochchi	2020.12.11	30
Batticaloa	2020.12.10	27
Vavuniya	2020.12.11	25
Jaffna	2020.11.27	53

### In-person training for selected pre-school teachers in identified areas:

In a context where students have missed a year long duration of schooling where diverse discrepancies in virtual education delivery had been felt the most fitting delivery for education still holds ground in its physical form. Re-opening schools meant teachers had to assume an active role in guiding students to follow proper health etiquette. Unlike secondary school children, pre-schoolers find it most difficult to adopt into the situation. Identifying this complex situation Sarvodaya chose to train pre-school teachers to raise their awareness and to brainstorm on a working-model to operate pre-schools. The Health Promotion Bureau and MOH offices had greater interest in supporting this initiative to model a pragmatic approach to re-open schools. In that regard 218 pre-school teachers had the opportunity to engage and receive training under this component of the BAT project.

### Engaging, sensitizing, and capacitating communities, including vulnerable community groups on COVID19 preventive measures.

Hand washing has been identified as a globally recognised form of preventing the transmission of COVID-19 by public health bodies. Relying on scientific evidence and supported by generous donors Sarvodaya rolled out yet another hand washing initiative in publicly utilised spaces. The project ran a needs assessment to avoid duplication of supply and to map-out the most required venues and locations. Sarvodaya identified a need to provide these for Care Homes

and thirty such facilities (5 per district) were provided with the installation of necessary equipment and adequate sanitary supplies. Each hand washing station would serve approximately 2,000 beneficiaries. The project also trained caregivers in institutions on COVID19 prevention. 150 such participants who held active positions at care homes were identified as trainers so they could train their own staff in prevention of transmission. Further, the project displayed tailor made educational and risk communication messages in public spaces to increase awareness on the importance of managing transmission and prevention.

### Strengthening women and girls through leadership development and meaningful participation in decision-making to address COVID-19 prevention.

This activity will focus on women and girls with a special focus on problems they face due to COVID-19. The project plans to conduct a survey in 6 districts in Northern and Eastern provinces. Findings will be shared with stakeholders to seek their recommendations. After successful approval, they would conduct trainings for selected women leaders based in women led organizations to enhance their capacity: 03 such trainings targeting 100 women will be delivered to strengthen prevention and transmission.

### Mental Health Promotion, Entertainment and Engagement Programme

Lockdowns in Colombo had been frequent and due to high transmission, many populated areas in the Colombo district were kept in isolation to contain the situation. During this period, people living in urban under-settled areas in Colombo district were identified as one of the most high-risk populations in terms of contracting COVID-19 due to congested living spaces and their socio-cultural and behavioural patterns. However, people living in these urban under-settlement flats have been submitted to lockdowns for over two months and findings of several Focus Group Discussions and field explorations indicated that these communities were distressed and experiencing poor mental health status. Furthermore, it was identified that adapting to the new normal was a challenge to this population. Therefore, upon identifying these issues, Suwodaya has partnered with Dr. Enoka Wickramasinghe of the Ministry of Health to implement a mental health promotion, entertainment & engagement program to increase the wellbeing of the communities living in selected urban residential habitats.

The primary objective of this initiative has been to engage and empower affected communities to follow COVID-19 DReAM measures while they were given an opportunity to entertain themselves. Sarvodaya organized a mobile band and a musical programme to fulfil entertainment purposes. Along with the main objectives Sarvodaya arranged provisioning of selected basic needs for people who provided services at those settings (Hand washing stations and protective attire/PPE).

#### Activities conducted

Objective	Activity	Outcome
Promote general mental wellbeing and improve awareness on general mental health by engagement of people	Musical entertainment sessions were conducted in urban settlement flats, adhering to the lock-down rules	The mobile unit of Sarvodaya was used as a platform for a band to play live music. Sinhala and Tamil songs were played to ensure social inclusion.
	Display of simple mental health promotion video clips.	The screen of the mobile unit was used to display important videos regarding mental health promotion in a way that everyone could watch it from their home units, maintaining social distance.

<p>Engagement of children and adolescents in creative art activities while staying at home</p>	<p>The children living in these settlements were categorized under three age groups and the stationary required for each group was determined (Under 6, 6-12 years and 13-19 years)</p>
<p>Adolescents in 13-19 age category were given a COVID-19 as a theme for their creations.</p>	<p>Upon purchasing the stationary material required, they were parcelled according to the identified requirement.</p>
<p>Provided art, handwork material and confectionary for children as rewards</p>	<p>The stationary parcels had been distributed and the artwork and other creations were collected in a few days for evaluation.</p>
<p>Improved awareness of people, empowering and engaging people to follow COVID-19 protective measurements</p>	<p>During collection of artwork and other creations, every child was given a confectionary package as a token of appreciation and to encourage them</p>
<p>Display of IEC material in all the floors of selected housing blocks.</p>	<p>The IEC material was also given out to the coordinators of the flats.</p>

Figure 13, Launch of the Suwodaya Mobile Unit for Awareness and Entertainment Programmes

### Accomplishments

The musical programmes and COVID-19 awareness programs have been successfully carried out in four urban community settlements. Namely, Methsanda Sevana, Mihijaya Sevana, Sath Hiru Sevana, and Sirisanda Sevana. Children and adolescent's engagement activities were successfully carried out in two flats, Methsanda Sevana and Sath Hiru Sevana and confectionary packages were gifted to every child to encourage them. The art and drawings were collected, to appreciate them better and prizes were given to the best ones.





The Fifth Component:

# Socio-Economic Recovery at Community Level

## Socio-Economic Recovery at Community Level

In terms of mid- and long-term responses, Sarvodaya has been engaging with different project partners to launch initiatives oriented with an economic focus. In that regard, micro-entrepreneurs have been targeted as a key beneficiary group, with a special focus on youth and women micro-entrepreneurs. These initiatives have paved the way to reach out to beneficiaries to help them sustain their hard-earned micro business ventures badly impacted by the pandemic. Simultaneously, projects that were delivering on the same focus (pre-COVID) were re-aligned to purposefully engage with COVID related business and entrepreneur development opportunities.

Additionally, Sarvodaya Development Finance (SDF), the economic empowerment arm of Sarvodaya, a Central Bank regulated non-banking financial institution (NBFI), joined the more formal government sponsored schemes to ease the pressures on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) adversely affected by the prolonged lock down.

This section will highlight selected key programmes conducted considering socio-economic interventions by different units of Sarvodaya.

### District Based Agriculture Programme

Food security was a major concern during the lockdown in terms of sourcing fresh produce as well as other ingredients. While momentum was gathering around this issue, people themselves started to grow food in their home gardens as an activity for them to stay engaged amidst lockdowns. Moreover, the Government introduced a primary level boost to the said line of thought and promoted home gardening as well as mass scale farming. Sarvodaya too, identified an opportunity to revamp arable land owned by District Centres, and to diversify existing agricultural outcomes. In so doing, some key objectives were taken into consideration to launch an internal organisation wide response to address the rising food insecurity concerns and to morally boost the efforts of communities in that regard.

#### Main Objectives:

Promoting home gardening at community level.

Boosting moral capital of community to identify food security issues at community level

Identifying and diversifying existing agricultural property of Sarvodaya to expand income.

Following centres have revamped their existing agricultural programmes and focused on crop diversification.

No	District Centre	Type of Crops
1	Mahiyanganaya	Paddy, Manioc, Papaya, Maize, Mango, Coconut, Pomegranate
2	NuwaraEliya	Carrot, Cabbage
3	Vavuniya	Coconut, Banana, Guava
4	Anuradhapura	Black Gram (Undu), Banana, Coconut, Mushroom
5	Kegalle	Coconut, Banana, Pepper
6	Badulla	Banana, Mango, Jack, Pepper
7	Kandy	Carrot, Egg plant, Capsicum, Radish, Banana, Manioc, Coconut Areca nut, Anoda, Pepper
8	Wellawaya	Coconut, Banana, Pepper, Vegetable
9	Gampaha	Coconut, Pineapple, Banana, Papaya, Manioc
10	Hambantota	Coconut, Turmeric, Ginger
11	Matale	Manioc
12	Sarvodaya HQ- Moratuwa	Eggplant, Banana, Chili, Papaya, Amberella, Turmeric, Nurseries

Table 16, Sarvodaya Run Agriculture Initiatives

## Personal Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship for Undergraduates and Young Entrepreneurs



'Personal Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship for Undergraduates & Young Entrepreneurs' was launched by the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) in partnership with Sarvodaya-Fusion, to support the country's economic recovery process post-COVID-19. Due to the financial hardships and economic volatility, youth increasingly felt marginalised in launching new ventures or faced ambiguity in career aspirations. Thus, the situation will tend to affect the core youth segments i.e., fresh graduates, undergraduates and young entrepreneurs who would aspire to be the key contributors to a growing economy. Fusion realised the urgent need to equip them with the right knowledge and skills to navigate challenges while reaching out to the targets set by themselves and to unleash new opportunities. The program was conducted via Zoom webinars and reached undergraduates & young entrepreneurs across Sri Lanka from different socio-economic backgrounds, covering urban, semi-urban and rural communities. The content covered the areas of savings, investments, entrepreneurship, and budgeting for emergencies, to fit the already volatile environment. Feedback and outcome of the programme.

- Clear understanding of personal financial issues through knowledge enhancement.
- Motivation to apply skills learnt in the seminar.
- Improved attitudinal and behaviour change in participants.
- Gained ability to evaluate challenges and related risks.
- Learnt to see through challenges and explore non-traditional business opportunities.

## Children Centred Faith Based Social Action

According to UNICEF (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic's economic fallout could push up to 86 million more children into household poverty by the end of 2020, according to UNICEF. The pandemic's massive socio-economic effect has also exposed and widened the already existing and persistent inequalities among people and countries. Arigatou International's work as End Child Poverty Knowledge Centre, towards responding to the COVID-19 pandemic has been well aligned and cognizant of these vulnerable populations, especially children. Since March 2020, the knowledge centre joined fellow initiatives of Arigatou International in instituting the collective 'Faith in Action for Children' campaign that would rally religious leaders and religious communities to increase their actions in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children.

The campaign's core affirmation has been that faith plays a critical role in emergency situations, to strengthen resilience in children and young people and religious leaders can make a crucial contribution to positively influence millions of followers to protect and affirm children's dignity. The campaign's rallying call has been twelve key recommendations, providing concrete ideas for religious leaders and communities to support, protect and nurture children's physical, socio-emotional and spiritual wellbeing. One of the recommendations specifically targets vulnerable children by aiming to: 'Build Solidarity to Respond to the Needs of the Most Vulnerable Children'. This

recommendation has been the hallmark of Arigatou's response and contribution within this global campaign. (End Child Poverty, 2021)

## Goals

- Mobilizing faith-inspired resources to end child poverty and promoting multi-faith partnerships.
- Providing necessary technical and financial facilitation for capacity enhancement of religious leaders
- Building alliances and partnership, and direct implementation of programmes in support of combating COVID 19
- Campaigning to raise awareness on COVID-19 health measurements.
- Strengthening partnerships for children's wellbeing during the pandemic
- Promoting awareness on child poverty and how to address it during COVID-19
- Carrying child advocacy programs to Initiate child led community actions during the time of pandemic.

The Arigatou International works with a wide array of networks, partners, and donors both globally and in the countries where their presence is established.

- Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya
- Arigatou International
- Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC)
- End Child Poverty Knowledge Center<sup>2</sup>
- United Nations Children's Fund

## Cyber safety video launch on children's day

The Knowledge Centre collaborated in upscaling promotion of cyber safety, produced cyber safety videos for children. The video launch concluded by a panel discussion emphasized the importance of cyber safety for children during the time of pandemic. The videos are meant to educate both children and adults on how to safeguard child safety and their dignity online while presenting how to keep themselves safe in online spaces such as social media. Production of those videos were the result of previous trainings on online child safety that had been conducted in various parts of the country by the Knowledge Centre now fitting to the purpose of general COVID risk awareness.

## Faith in Action webinar series

As part of the "Faith in Action for Children" campaign, the Knowledge Centre conducted a series of webinars focusing on the impact of COVID-19. The key focus had been the socio-economic status of countries in Asia and Africa, especially in relation to Child Poverty and how governments and stakeholders can work towards supporting and improving the conditions of vulnerable communities' post COVID-19. The webinar explored the socio-economic context and implications of COVID-19, especially on Child Poverty. It viewed how stakeholders could work with their respective Governments to strengthen existing social protection systems for the well-being of their citizens and particularly to increase social protection of young people considering the COVID environment.

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<sup>2</sup>The End Child Poverty Knowledge Centre (hereafter referred to as 'The Knowledge Centre') is a global faith inspired hub for research, resource gathering; networking; experience sharing; and knowledge dissemination

### Children's Solutions Lab on IDEP<sup>3</sup>

Arigatou International, through its initiatives i.e., End Child Poverty and Ethics Education for Children launched the Children's Solutions Lab. This solutions lab was a meaningful space and a participatory process for children from different backgrounds to come together to understand, dialogue and act towards ending child poverty through solutions focused on education. Further, in collaboration with Arigatou International's Ethics Education for Children initiative, End Child Poverty Knowledge Centre organized a Children's Solution Lab, inviting children to develop responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and address child poverty and the underlying ethical challenges, through education.

### Listening to children on IDEP

A session led by children happened mid-year, initiating a campaign "Together We Can End Child Poverty Worldwide" call to action, through facilitating online engagement leading to 17<sup>th</sup> October the International Day for The Eradication of Poverty (IDEP). Session objectives were to encourage children in continuing their contribution on sustainable development goals and empowering them to develop necessary recommendations in achieving SDG's.

### Formation of religious leader's forum

The most significant initiative of the year had been the formation of religious leader's forum with a higher representation of key religious institutions in the country including numerous decision-making high impact religious leaders. The initiative was a consultative coordination meeting conducted by the UNICEF. Sarvodaya, with its years of experience and strong faith related network, launched an impactful COVID-19 campaign by mobilizing and engaging faith leaders and faith-based organizations (FBOs) in the prevention and control of COVID-19 and in addressing its health and social impact, by engaging, training and capacitating faith communities including vulnerable community groups on COVID-19 preventive measures and supporting to equip vulnerable community settings with adopting practical protective measures.

### Risk Communication

The knowledge centre partnered in risk communication efforts of Sarvodaya in communicating COVID-19 safety messages via religious networks. Moreover, stress management and psychosocial support was provided through religious and faith community networks. Non-discrimination and stigma messaging, violence against children and promoting positive parenting messages in line with religious values, development of various types of communication materials – for example, myth-buster online posters and around 30,000 community members including children were reached through this risk communication drive. The End Child Poverty initiative with Sarvodaya and UNICEF developed and disseminated COVID-19 risk communication materials in trilingual formats targeting specific faith communities and contributed to raise awareness on health measurements and child protection during the time of pandemic.

### Dos and Don'ts

Further, the Knowledge Centre supported UNICEF and Sarvodaya to develop COVID-19 Do's and Don'ts posters for all districts and local communities in trilingual formats. The Knowledge Centre represented the United Nations

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<sup>3</sup>International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

Humanitarian Country Team (UN-HCT) Protection Sector and was involved in supporting the development of the COVID-19 country response plan for the UN Protection Sector. Further support and leadership were provided to take forward Arigatou International Global campaign's response to COVID-19 by developing materials such as posters, writing related blogs and gathering the voices of religious leaders, community leaders, children and youth and heads of faith-based organisations.



## COVID 19-Rapid Needs Assessment for Religious and Faith Leaders

At its final stage, in collaboration with UNICEF, the Knowledge Centre conducted a brief study on the “impact of COVID-19: a rapid needs assessment” for religious leaders and faith leaders. The survey covered the twenty-five districts of Sri Lanka by engaging with more than 2,400 respondents. The survey results were disseminated amongst stakeholders and selected recommendations are cited as follows:

Raising awareness among religious and faith leaders in all districts about COVID-19, precautionary measures and new findings related to COVID-19 in Sinhalese and Tamil.

- Providing religious and faith leaders access to digital devices, especially computers, WIFI-routers, and dongles. Providing training and assistance to faith leaders enabling literacy on digital devices and internet-based applications to conduct virtual religious services and prayers using virtual communication platforms.
- Incentivizing religious and faith leaders to engage through online mediums to provide their followers with mental relaxation and moral support. (Special focus to be given in districts that have witnessed high percentages of increase in violence against children and women)
- Devising a national level action plan to support religious premises maintenance and other basic needs during a lockdown condition.
- Devising a national level plan to provide religious and faith leaders with protective hygiene material and other essentials.
- Devising a national level strategy for the distribution of dry rations to communities affected by COVID-19 through their religious institutions.

The survey provided insights to the needs during lockdown particularly felt by faith leaders and their followers. It helped to purposefully support and engage with faith-based communities.



Figure 14, Rapid Needs Assessment for Faith Leaders: Arigatou and UNICEF partnership

### Risk awareness campaign

Further, the Knowledge Centre contributed to raising awareness among religious leaders and communities to take necessary health measurements and encouraged to prepare and respond positively. They were instructed to avoid large gatherings and were encouraged to conduct their faith activities in virtual platforms. Also, to keep community connected and support each other, Sarvodaya developed and disseminated COVID-19 faith leaders' messages posters and developed faith based COVID-19 risk education messages, to promote hope and solidarity. Other relevant materials from Arigatou International COVID-19 campaign with faith leaders and our partners in trilingual format were shared among those audiences.

### Positive Parenting Manual

The importance of supporting and shaping children's health, educational, emotional, and developmental outcomes, as well as in supporting overall family well-being was highlighted in the manual and this was put up to fit the purposes of the COVID related lockdowns. The knowledge centre is currently being involved supporting UNICEF in developing a positive parenting manual. Moreover, the Knowledge Centre has been part of the steering committee of the UNICEF U-Report (chatbot to support COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement) committee and has been supporting the rollout of the UNICEF U-Report initiative in Sri Lanka.

### Outlook and lessons learnt

Faith based organisations and religious leaders can play an important role in times of the pandemic and can act as primary mediators, supporters, communicators, and mobilizers in faith-based communities. Efficiently empowering them meant they could support communities by providing necessary mental and spiritual support. Further, faith leaders could work as advocates as well as educators while building bridges between those who are in need and those

who are willing to fulfil those needs. Arigatou also partnered in addressing stigma and discrimination where an online campaign was designed to disseminate faith based positive messages. The Knowledge Centre believes in enhancing and strengthening their partnership with faith related partners and communities. The Knowledge Centre serves to build the capacities of organizations working to reduce child poverty in Asia and other regions of the world and will continue to evaluate their work in reaching out to the underprivileged and vulnerable communities at the grassroots level. The Knowledge centre draws upon indigenous and progressive tools for development, as well as faith-inspired resources and infrastructure and its growth very much depends on the lessons learnt and experiences gained in this process.

**Online Campaign to address stigma and discrimination related to Covid-19**

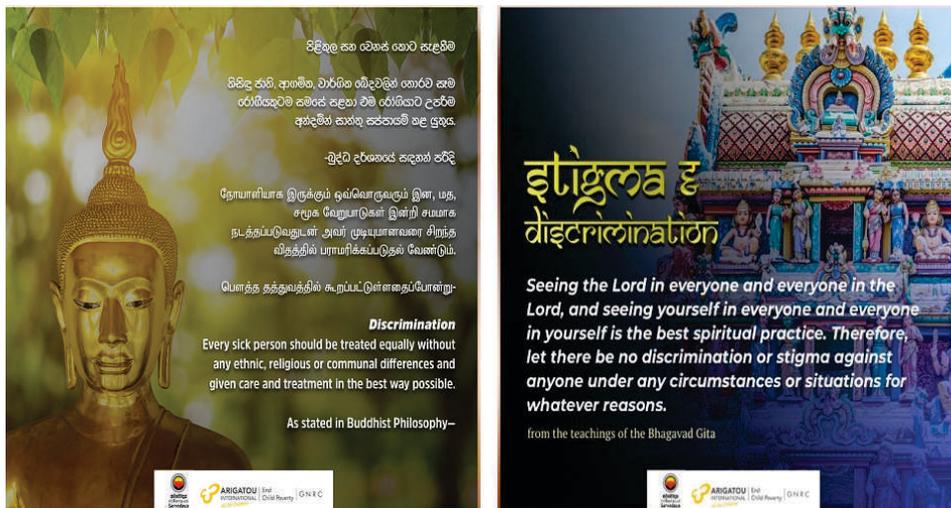


Figure 15, Online campaign to address hate speech, stigma, and discrimination

**Online Campaign to address stigma and discrimination related to Covid-19**



Figure 16, Online campaign to address hate speech, stigma, and discrimination (2)

## Awareness With Human Action – AHA

Awareness with Human Action AHA! is an eighteen-month project funded by the European Union and implemented in a consortium of partners, including: The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers/ Finn Church Aid, World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD). In Sri Lanka the project is implemented by Sarvodaya Movement. The project began in July 2020 and continues for a period of eighteen months and seeks to contribute to the response efforts of the COVID-19 pandemic by preventing conflict and building social cohesion in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and broader South Asia. Through a collaborative approach, the project will increase outreach for initiatives that promote awareness of COVID-19 and constructive narratives that reduce discrimination, hate speech, and stigmatization against specific communities, primarily targeting religious leaders, women, and youth leaders as community influencers. The project is aligned with the EU's global response to COVID-19, by mitigating the social impact of the pandemic, and has a strong focus on inclusion and gender that will contribute to the positive Gender based outcomes of Sarvodaya and the partners.

### Baseline survey

During the first phase of the project (July 2020), a baseline survey was conducted along with a gender analysis. Online surveys and key informant interviews had been utilized to gather data. The baseline assessed gendered attitudes, perceptions, and needs. Along with the availability of resources, key stakeholders including community leaders, influencers including women and young people, local networks, CSOs, local authorities, health professionals, and media personnel were consulted. A gender analysis was also conducted to understand the context-specific gender roles, access to and control over resources as well as the differentiated needs of women, men, girls, and boys that could present challenges and opportunities. The data collected for this study indicates that the pandemic had an alarming impact on the social status and wellbeing of the ethnic and religious minorities in Sri Lanka who often live close to each other in over-crowded towns, and housing conditions, where maintaining physical distancing had been a constant challenge. The said factors furnished opportunities for better in-country consultations between community level organisations, health, media professionals as well as social activists, youth and women groups engaged in peacebuilding initiatives and pandemic response and recovery that provided guidance on the direction of the project, especially on national level advocacy.



Figure 16, Gendered impact of the pandemic: AHA Project

## Virtual learning exchanges between community leaders and influencers

Sarvodaya AHA team participated in a total of three regional and led two country level learning exchanges in Sri Lanka to discuss the COVID-19 response considering hate speech, intergroup tensions including scapegoating, inclusion, and conflict prevention in the light of roles and responsibilities of youth, women, religious leaders as change agents. The first regional session was focused on informing about the project and the online campaign with expert speakers. The in-country exchanges focused on the sociological impact of the pandemic and role of Youth in pandemic situations, that were held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021 via zoom.

The use of virtual townhall learning exchanges invited and engaged participants across South Asia and representatives from the international community, peacebuilding practitioners and peacemakers across the targeted countries to share their experiences and expertise.



## In-country community mobilization and implementation of selected initiatives

In December 2020, a total of fifteen small grants, (ten individual and five organisations wide) were disbursed based on an open call and an independent evaluation. These small grant projects had been targeted at innovative, community engaged, technology-based solutions to address, contributing to the response efforts of the COVID-19 pandemic by preventing conflict and building social cohesion. This included youth, youth led, and women led organisations, working on gender transformative solutions to address multiple impacts of the pandemic.





This project is funded by the European Union



### Launch of the National Knowledge Platform on COVID-19 and beyond

As a pioneer initiative, AHA project launched a national knowledge platform on COVID-19 and beyond to build a centralized knowledge base on COVID-19 that synchronizes interventions across sectors, health-social-economic-education-safety, and security- information-media that serves as a national repository of knowledge. A group of experts from diverse fields were appointed as the advisory committee at a soft launch of the platform on 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2021 at the Sarvodaya headquarters.



## **Communication campaigns to raise awareness, counter hate speech and spread constructive narratives through social media channels as well as traditional media.**

The AHA project has a strong focus on the use of media to advance social cohesion and prevent hate speech and discrimination by developing an effective communication material package and overall strategic communication campaign for dissemination and amplification of messages. A total of twenty-two audio, video communication productions were made during the period up to March 2021.

## **Next Generation Deshodaya: COVID Recovery Micro Projects**

The Next Generation Deshodaya project was initiated to facilitate the development of a network of youth leaders who could participate in the political, economic, and social sectors to strengthen democracy in their respective communities. The project has been operating before the pandemic and the second phase was planned during the time of the second wave. A key component of the deliverables had been to motivate the Fellows to implement a 'Participatory Action Research' (PAR) project, and the project had to re-design the initiative to fit the changing context. Having re-aligned the original proposals the project team conducted a community needs assessment to understand the needs of the community they intended to serve. In so doing, the 'COVID Recovery Micro Projects' (CRMPs) were introduced and implemented in the selected Next Generation Fellowship program areas which represented a broad cross-section of Sri Lankan society. The Northern cluster included Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi and Mannar districts. The Central cluster included, Kandy, Nuwaraeliya and Matale districts. The Southern Cluster included Galle, Matara and Hambantota districts. The project is implemented in partnership with the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

## **Social Media Awareness Programme**

A peer-to-peer initiative where, fellows guided by fellows was initiated to run a social media campaign. In this activity, project team and coordinators at the district level continued their support to design and post messages to raise public awareness on COVID-19, sourcing information from approved government channels. Parallel to this process an advocacy campaign was introduced district and national wise.

COVID-19 related stickers and banners were designed and distributed in respective districts to promote awareness efforts in their communities. Fellows took the initiative in promoting posters and stickers in public spaces. These were also affixed in public transport, rickshaws, and other publicly utilized vehicles. To conduct these activities, the fellows had to partner with their local authorities such as public health officials and their local police.

## **Community Needs Assessment**

Fellows had the opportunity to conduct a community needs assessment with the guidance provided by resource personnel. The programme included three training sessions, i.e., data collection, data analysis and presentation skills. Successful completion paved way for them to earn a certificate in recognition of their learning. Digital data collection platforms such as Kobo connect had been utilised as base software for the process. They completed trainings in community needs assessment, digital tools, sampling techniques and frameworks, data analysis and report generation. Resources had been provided to present the results of the assessment. Under the guidance of the

programme team, fellows had the opportunity to use constructed questionnaires before they began data collection. Fellows collected data from their village and particularly from those who lost their livelihood or was adversely affected because of lockdowns. According to the assessment, fellows collected data, analysed them, prepared their analysis, and presented to the project team.

## Proposal Development

Based on the community needs assessment, fellows had been requested to develop proposals to propose solutions to their identified problems. They had to prioritise those issues which were directly or indirectly related to COVID. Secondary level feedback was provided on their assessments. They were advised to organize meetings with the respective communities to further confirm the identified problems in some districts. Fellows worked on finalizing their planned activities with the participation of government officers, stake holders and their local community. The finalized project templates were successfully submitted for approval.

## Implementation of COVID Recovery Micro Projects

Among many problems identified by Fellows, income generation was identified as a common priority for all districts. Therefore, the COVID Recovery Micro projects initiative focused mostly on economic and livelihood generation solutions. Apart from related work, Fellows were encouraged to consider community leadership in implementing activities to address the spread of COVID in their communities. They explored and implemented community sustenance programmes such as home-gardening initiatives, providing seeds, food preservation, coordinating medical and essential supplies delivery during lockdowns. Supporting the work of public health inspectors and authorities.

Initiatives conducted by Fellows:

- **S. Ravichandran - Promote home gardening and marketing facilities for individuals facing challenges in selling their products.**

Shaginy created a network which included 20 families that faced difficulties in reaching markets. She worked collaboratively with the Agriculture Department to source standard quality seeds and technical support. In addition, she worked together with officers attached to the Divisional Secretariat to carry out the project successfully.

- **S. Rameshkanth - Promote Palmyra products produced by widows from low-income backgrounds who lost their livelihood after the war and by COVID 19.**

Palmyra products provides space for different self-employment opportunities. Mr Rameshkanth aimed to form a network to sell palmyra products across the country. He worked towards supporting widows who were affected by the war and then the effects of COVID-19 by providing them sufficient resources to continue and/or to start up their own palmyra production lines. The objective of this project is to strengthen their economy by working closely with the Palmyra Development Board and Lasksala branches to find these workers a market to sell their products.

- **N. Muhinthan – Created a marketing network with his local community to process raw peanuts utilising machinery and selling to exporters.**

Muhinthan supported local peanut farmers by introducing and linking them with the Agriculture Department and selected exporters to ensure they have a stable income. Muhinthan aims at approaching peanut farmers in

neighbouring villages and collect their harvest to expand his initiative. Furthermore, he aims to become an active youth leader who can guide larger farmers networks in the future.

- **R. Pritha - Generated self-employment to strengthen young women's economy by supporting them to establish a sewing centre. This project selected 5 beneficiaries who were either injured/disabled by war and/or came from a low-income family.**

Pritha aims to improve her team's communication and banking skills as well as strengthening their economy by expanding their sewing work. She would be in-charge of the team and sell their products within her locality using their network and the support given by Women's Development Department of the Chavakachery Divisional Secretariat. Creating opportunities for women's self-employment ensures financial stability and to increases civic participation within this group.

- **A. Thanushan – Supported lower income families to expand poultry and home gardening.**

This project aimed to promote organic gardening with 10 selected families to strengthen their household income. The project aims to develop a model and expand this in other villages in to increase civic participation.

- **Kavishanthan – Vegetable cultivation to promote alternative occupations for youth who lost general employment opportunities due to layoffs.**

The primary objective of this project was to strengthen the household income of youth and to promote youth leadership amongst those who were affected by the COVID-19 related job lay-offs in Nuwara-Eliya. Kavishanthan will collect the harvest from farmers and transport it to Dambulla national vegetable exchanging centre. This project will encourage the youth to engage in vegetable cultivation which in turn will develop their farming, cultivating, networking and community leadership skills.

- **T. Balachandran – Vegetable cultivation with the aim of maintaining a sustainable income and promoting civic participation between ethnic groups.**

This initiative aimed to develop youth leadership skills by creating opportunities for youth to involve in farming, introduce them to the diversity of export market and primary banking. Balachandran targeted to rollout the project among two ethnic groups in-order to encourage multi-cultural business opportunities. In addition to that, development of participatory and communication skills of the youth involved was expected from the initiative.

- **K. Jashutha – Promoted poultry and egg business with an eight-women team.**

As the first step of this initiative, 08 women from women-headed families were selected as participatory beneficiaries. During this period, they coordinated with the Divisional Veterinary Department to acquire resources and technical advice and worked closely with their local economic development officer to expand their businesses. Team members contacted the Local Government body and its government officers to receive permission for their business plan. Their interactions have sharpened their skills and is of the conviction that the benefits will trickle down to their own families and their community.

- **Y. Lashani – Promoted organic home gardening with selected families.**

This initiative was rolled out to promote organic home gardening as a side income for five families in the community. The beneficiaries were encouraged to meet relevant officials to gain sufficient skills to expand their gardening know-

how and to better their ability to sell the produce in their local markets. Additionally, this project gave them an opportunity to network with government officials and other business agencies to identify niches in the organic food market.

- **K. Arjuna – Expanded businesses that maintain plant nurseries and networked them with home gardeners**

Arjuna focused in selecting youth-run plant and agri-businesses to motivate them and help them explore market opportunities. He had the ability to successfully link the two ends and to connect them to make profitable small-scale businesses. Additionally, he explored the opportunities of expanding youth led networks in his locality.

- **T. Dhananjaya – Cultivating turmeric and exporting them in partnership with government run resource centers**

This program was developed in collaboration with turmeric cultivators and local vendors. Thusitha had the opportunity to network producers with relevant authorities and resource centres to up-skill their know-how of the trade and to provide them an outlook to expand their ventures.

- **S. Manthila – Strengthen brick producers by providing micro loans**

The objective of this project was to strengthen brick producers and to increase their output. They also had the opportunity to learn more on decision making, civic participation and networking among brick workers to motivate them. They also had the opportunity to gain skills in generating a sustainable income. Additionally, she hopes to empower herself by working with local government officials.

- **N. Dilrangi – Establishing a networked market amongst coconut vendors and dry-fish producers.**

Prior to starting the project, the fellow and the team worked closely with local government bodies and Public Health inspectors (PHI) to obtain permission due to the sudden transmission of virus in fishing communities. Upon implementing the project, they created a a successful network of vendors. Due to its success participation of fisher folks in activities seemingly escalated. A special focus was given to increase the skills women participants and their level of engagement.



Figure 18, Next Generation Deshodaya, NDI



## Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena Sansadaya

Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena, (Sarvodaya Peace Brigades) is the youth empowerment arm of the Sarvodaya Movement. Founded in 1978, the main objective of Shanthi Sena is to develop youth leadership, and to help and encourage a disciplined society free of violence and suffering. Throughout its life span Shanthi Sena has launched many initiatives in peace building, promoting democracy and governance by conducting peace dialogues, inter-religious dialogues, youth exchange programmes, youth camps, leadership training programmes, sports for peace programmes and pen pal programmes to build bridges among the different ethnic and religious communities in Sri Lanka. Shanthi Sena youth are actively involved in their respective communities positively impacting the communities they belong to. Like other Sarvodaya initiatives, Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena has implemented impactful projects and activities to address identified issues brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Online dialogues on inter-religious and inter-ethnic harmony

Sixty Online dialogue sessions were facilitated by Shanthi Sena to promote inter-religious peace and inter-ethnic harmony amidst COVID-19. These dialogues were targeting potential leaders and social activists in ten administrative districts: Trincomalee, Puttalam, Kalutara, Gampaha, Colombo, Galle, Kandy, Matale, Anuradhapura and Hambantota. The project expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- Capacity building of community leaders to face unprecedented challenges at the community level and brainstorming on possible solutions.
- Address religious discrimination which aggravated with the spread of COVID-19. Promote positive attitudinal change among the participants representing diverse ethnic and religious groups.
- Create a group of committed activists who will work for communal harmony, reconciliation, and peace building.

Participants have been selected from a wider network of organisations through an open call, which included the District NGO fora, United Religious Initiative and the wider Sarvodaya network. In partnership with a wide network of stakeholders, the project team was able to select participants representing major ethnic and religious groups in the island. The participants included youth, university students, religious leaders, civil society leaders and social workers who had a special interest to expand social cohesion and religious freedoms. The sixty dialogue sessions 2.5-hours online each, were held under six phases in the 10 project districts. The initiative was reached out to a diverse audience of 1154 participants within a period of three months (May 10 – August 2, 2020). The 6 phases of online dialogue series were divided as follows.

Phase	Timeline	Dialogues
First Phase	10th – 14th May, 2020	10 dialogues (1 per district)
Second Phase	24th – 29th May, 2020	10 dialogues (1 per district)
Third Phase	7th – 14th June, 2020	10 dialogues (1 per district)
Fourth Phase	20th June – 2nd July, 2020	10 dialogues (1 per district)
Fifth Phase	7th – 21st July, 2020	10 dialogues (1 per district)
Sixth Phase	25th July – 4th August, 2020	10 dialogues (1 per district)

Table 8, The Six phases of Shanthi Sena online dialogue series

Apart from the experts who shared their expertise, informative videos and other materials were disseminated to educate the participants. The participants felt that the online dialogues were a safe space for them to express themselves. Although virtual, the meetings were facilitated to hear each participants opinion and comments. The initiative had been a remarkable success when the participants strongly bonded with each and decided to come up with follow-up plans to stay in touch with the group and to work towards improving their communities. These unfunded follow-up activities were not direct activities of the project but a by-product of fruitful efforts. Moreover, the participants believed that such follow-up activities were important for them to find solutions together to issues that arose along with the pandemic at community level. Below are some of the follow-up activities independently founded by participants of the dialogue series.

Key discussion points of all online dialogues	Key outcomes
Health facts related to COVID-19 and preventive measures (discussed in the 1st and 6th phases of online dialogues)	Created handouts on health guidelines and preventive measures and disseminated through social media platforms and via email. (May 2020 covering all districts)
Importance of building trust among the participants (discussed in the 1st round of online dialogues)	The project team created communication groups for each respective project district to provide a safe platform for the participants to share their challenges, feelings, and solutions so they could further their action and get to get to know each other better. The project team had the opportunity to moderate and curate such dialogue. (May 2020 in all 10 project locations)
Assure proper awareness of the pandemic and how to safeguard themselves (discussed in the 6th round of online dialogues and 1st round of face-to-face dialogues)	At the end of the second online dialogue series, Action Committees (each per district) were setup to educate their communities on COVID-19 by distributing COVID-19 information handouts. (May – June 2020 in all project locations) Organized a radio program to educate the public about the severity of COVID-19 and preventive measures (August 2020 in Puttalam)
Rising ethnic, religious, cultural, economic, and political issues aggravated by the pandemic [ DS wise] (discussed in the 2nd round of online dialogues)	Participants distributed cooked meals to needy people, notably homeless people, in their communities with the support of other organizations and individuals. (May – June 2020 in Kalutara, Gampaha and Hambantota)  Provided lunch for an elders' home with the participation and kind sponsorship of inter-religious leaders (August 2020 in Trincomalee) Held a program to mark the importance of agro-entrepreneurs and created a market space for them. (August 2020 in Anuradhapura)  Held a program related to drug abuse at village level and religious harmony with the participation of inter-religious leaders (August 2020 in Puttalam)  Arranged a training on manufacturing handwashing liquid and washing powder as a cottage industry (August 2020 in Puttalam)
Unprecedented challenges and facing them with resilience (discussed in the 1st round of online dialogues)	Successfully completed an Awareness Program (small group) related to the current situation with the participation of project team members and civil society leaders, conducted by Dr. Udaya Rathnayake – Health Director of Kalutara district (July 2020 in Kalutara)  Successfully conducted an Awareness Program to pre-school teachers and rickshaw on COVID-19 (August 2020 in Trincomalee)  One of the participants from Puttalam built a robot which could carry heavy weights. This robot is controlled by a telephone. He presented his innovation to the government authorities. (May 2020 in Puttalam)

	<p>A training programme was conducted for farmers in Anuradhapura on grass cultivation. 25 female farmers and 25 male farmers were trained in this session. (July 2020 in Anuradhapura)</p> <p>Establishment of a welfare society for Divithurwaththa area in Galle (July 2020 in Galle)</p>
Supporting government efforts controlling the pandemic (discussed in the 1st round of online dialogues)	On 27th June 2020, started to display banners related to COVID-19, provided sinks, and fixing social distancing markers in selected schools (representing all major religions) in the district (July 2020 in Colombo)
Psychosocial well-being (discussed in the 1st round of online dialogues)	<p>Counselling programs (individual and small group) for people with depression, stress, and anxiety (June – July 2020 in Kalutara and Colombo)</p> <p>Successfully conducted counselling programs to support the affected communities due to COVID: A series of awareness programs to reduce depression, stress, and anxiety (August 2020 in Puttalam)</p>
Misinformation (discussed in the 2nd round of online dialogues)	<p>The project team took the leadership to update Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena Facebook page with important messages on peace and project activities to encourage other people to help those in need and be responsible for what they share through social media. The participants too shared these messages on their personal FB profiles. (May – September 2020)</p> <p>Anuradhapura Action Committee created a FB page to share positive messages to educate the public on the importance of peace, harmony, and humanity. (July 2020 in Anuradhapura)</p>
Different types of messages shared by social media and other forms of media and the proper way of using all forms of media for the betterment of common people (discussed in the 4th round of online dialogues)	<p>Created a FB page on 20th June 2020 with the guidance of Mr. Madupawan to upload positive messages, collected stories and invaluable talks of intellectuals to educate the public (June 2020 in Kalutara)</p> <p>Created and shared positive messages on peace and harmony through social media (July 2020 in Trincomalee)</p> <p>Created 5 videos with positive messages to circulate in social media (July 2020 in Kandy)</p>
Responsibilities, behaviour, and ethics in media use (discussed in the 4th round of online dialogues)	Shared positive messages reminding the public about media ethics through FB with the intention of educating the public on use of social media (July 2020 in Trincomalee)
Say “NO” to violence (discussed in the 2nd round of online dialogues)	<p>A 2-day program with both theoretical and practical sessions on religious values, drug abuse and its negative implications, non-violence, and prevention of animal cruelty as well as environmental protection with the participation of 25 representatives from each religion (July 2020 in Galle)</p> <p>Distributed handbills related to different ways, victims of domestic abuse could get necessary support and guidance (July 2020 in Kalutara)</p>
Religious teachings during times of crisis (discussed in the 5th round of online dialogues)	Held programs related to enhancing knowledge of the public on diverse religious philosophies: Karuna Mandapa and Jeewadhana Shanthikarmaya (August 2020 in Anuradhapura)
Importance of proper communication (discussed in the 3rd round of online dialogues)	Held a communication workshop on 25th of July 2020 to educate the participants and others on the importance of proper communication (July 2020 in Kalutara)

Table 9, Key Outcomes of the Shanthi Sena Online Dialogue

## Community Activism during Crisis – in person trainings

In person sessions (20) were conducted to empower activists and leaders to prepare them for future unprecedented challenges. After the completion of online dialogue sessions, in-person dialogue sessions were conducted in all ten project locations on the current situation of the country, their duty as community activists and preparedness for a better tomorrow. More than 90% of the participants who took part in the online dialogues joined these in person dialogues. A total of 20 face-to-face dialogue sessions were conducted under two phases. The two phases of the in-person dialogue sessions were divided as follows.

Phase	No. of sessions
First Phase	10 sessions (1 per district)
Second Phase	10 sessions (1 per district)

The following chart presents the numeric details of the participants of two phases of face-face dialogue sessions.

Face-to-face Dialogues	Gender		Ethnic Representatives			Religious Representatives			Total	
	Male	Female	Sinhalese	Tamil	Muslim	Buddhist	Hindu	Islamic		Christians
01 <sup>st</sup> Phase	189	124	217	42	54	186	38	54	35	313
02 <sup>nd</sup> Phase	182	129	230	38	43	207	35	43	26	311

Table 10, two phases of in-person dialogue sessions on community leadership

In the first phase of the in-person dialogue series, medical professionals were selected as resource personnel to educate the participants on the preventive measures required for COVID-19, and these resource persons conducted their informative sessions emphasizing the requirement of adapting to the new normal. A Q&A discussion provided ample opportunity for the participants to clarify their challenges and to find possible solutions. The second phase in-person dialogue series were conducted successfully despite the challenging environment caused by the second wave of COVID-19 outbreak in Sri Lanka. During this phase, the ongoing situation of each district was discussed, and a productive discussion was held to evaluate the previous project activities. After these discussions, the District Leaders' Committees identified several required services in relation to the discussions held earlier. Due to the upsurge of the second wave, participants who intended to implement unfunded follow-up activities in each project district considered the most pertinent responses to the crisis.

- The participants from each project location created four documents with the support of resource personnel on diverse religious teachings and on how to face and act in times of crisis. This document was printed and shared with the public to educate them on the same. [August – September 2020]
- Created a short film on the values of religions and their relevance in times of crisis [August 2020 in Anuradhapura]

Even after the completion of the online and face-to-face dialogue sessions, participants have decided to continue their support in raising funds by themselves to continue their activism and community engagements.

## Shanthi Sena Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program

Shanthi Sena is not only known for its work on social cohesion and coexistence, but also providing opportunities to youth on entrepreneurship and small business development. In a recently conducted youth entrepreneurship program, Shanthi Sena disbursed financial support to hundred selected young entrepreneurs who were badly affected by the lockdowns placed in the island. The intention of this initiative was to give their businesses a boost to either continue or revamp small scale business ventures. The grantees were selected from ten administrative districts, namely: Trincomalee, Puttalam, Kalutara, Gampaha, Colombo, Galle, Kandy, Matale, Anuradhapura and Hambantota. During the selection process, the selection committee visited businesses to ensure that they selected the most deserving ones. From each district, at least fifty applicants were selected for the programme. Special consideration was given to disable candidates. Moreover, the committee gave special attention to balance off ethnic, gender and religious diversity. After the primary selection, candidates had the opportunity to attend workshops on proposal formulation. Twenty workshops were conducted in respective project locations to provide them the basic skills. The first series of workshops (business idea development training) for young entrepreneurs were successfully held in all ten districts with the participation of 156 young entrepreneurs. Seasoned trainers from Sarvodaya Development Finance (SDF) conducted these sessions imparting theoretical and practical knowledge to develop their small-scale businesses with business plans.

The second workshop series (proposal selection) was the final round of the selection process. The second series was successfully held in all ten districts with the participation of 119 young entrepreneurs. The selection committee of each district consisted of four members from the district committee, a representative from Sarvodaya Development Finance a businessperson with sufficient expertise in entrepreneurship and a Sarvodaya District Coordinator. The selection committee of each district worked hard to analyse and evaluate each business plan with special care and attention to every detail. The following is the detailed description of the second workshop series for young entrepreneurs.

### Motivational Session

In each district, a special motivation session had been organised to provide participants with inspiration. Established entrepreneurs from each district had the opportunity to share their experience. Participants had the opportunity not only to listen to a lecture but also to interact and discuss with them to clear their doubts in finding solutions to the challenges they face. Following this session participants were invited to present their proposals. Each participant was given ten minutes to present their business plans followed by a Q&A session.

### Submitting Final Recommendations:

A careful and thorough needs assessment was conducted by the selection panel before selecting the final candidates who were eligible for the grant. By December 2020, all qualified candidates received their grants to begin their business development ambitions. Shanthi Sena has not only executed this task but also has considered the sustainability of the project. In so doing, they have setup District Youth Entrepreneurs' Circles as a follow-up activity where all qualified grantees became members to peer strengthen each other with the motivation to establish leadership for similar initiatives in the future.

Face-to-face Dialogues	Gender		Ethnic Representatives			Religious Representatives				Total
	Male	Female	Sinhalese	Tamil	Muslim	Buddhist	Hindu	Islamic	Christians	
Business idea development Training	106	50	122	12	22	113	10	22	11	156
Youth entrepreneur proposal selection	71	48	92	09	18	83	07	18	11	119
Finance distributions	60	40	79	08	13	73	06	13	08	100

Table 11, Qualified young entrepreneurs - district wise

No:	District	Male	Female	Total	Financial Awards
01	Puttalam	06	03	09	738,000.00
02	Kalutara	06	03	09	695,000.00
03	Gampaha	05	02	07	595,000.00
04	Kandy	10	04	14	975,000.00
05	Hambantota	08	05	13	835,000.00
06	Galle	06	05	11	735,000.00
07	Anuradhapura	03	03	06	405,000.00
08	Matale	04	08	12	843,000.00
09	Colombo	06	04	10	780,000.00
10	Trincomalee	07	03	10	753,000.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,354,000.00</b>

Table 12, District wise Grant disbursement details

## COVID-19 Story Book: COVID-19

Believing that people in communities have a great potential to empower each other, Shanthi Sena Sansadaya launched a project to capture positive stories from the community. The story book initiative captured the ground realities during lockdowns and other challenges that impacted lives of communities. It not only captured the hardships but also the multitude of learnings from the struggles where communities successfully grappled with the limited resources and overcame challenges. The book also highlights how people teamed up at community level to address challenges which impacted their entire village or township, encouraging their community work and inspiring many others. The stories cover ten administrative districts: Trincomalee, Puttalam, Kalutara, Gampaha, Colombo, Galle, Kandy, Matale, Anuradhapura and Hambantota. From the ten districts the book features twenty-five key stories. Published in trilingual form, 4,000 copies had been printed for circulation. Shanthi Sena believes the story book would help people from diverse backgrounds to learn from each other and to inspire each other's communities in whatever work they engaged in. Moreover, it intends to emphasise that all communities face similar challenges, and that unity could lead to discovering plausible solutions to the unprecedented challenges faced by communities.

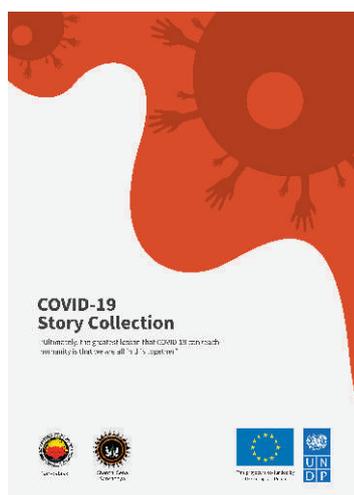


Figure 19, COVID19-Story Collection

## RISEUP: Micro-Entrepreneurship Development Project

The 'Rise Up Entrepreneurship Development' project, supported by MAS Capital (Pvt) Limited, is to provide funding as well as capacity building to micro entrepreneurs whose existing businesses were affected by the prolonged lockdown due to COVID-19. This initiative was launched in June 2020 and will be completed in February 2021. The project is being implemented in Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara and Kilinochchi districts. Except for Kilinochchi, the selected districts were locked down for a prolonged duration hence the livelihood of micro entrepreneurs being largely affected in those areas were carefully selected. In consultation with MAS Capital (Private) Limited, Sarvodaya developed a logical activity flow designed to best serve the selected beneficiaries.

Micro-entrepreneurs with limited access to finance and funding and at the same time those who had a micro-level business were filtered as beneficiaries. The applicant's age was not a deciding factor in the selection of beneficiaries. A gender balance of sixty percent of female candidates were anticipated and successfully achieved. Special attention had been given to candidates from a background of being differently abled, conflict affected, and women-headed households. This information was necessary to focus on those who had some sort of disability/disadvantage and that the project reaches out to the most vulnerable and deserving. Information was also obtained on the type of business, type of products/services, number of employees, whether their business was linked to another small business, business registration details (if any), income and net profit, adverse effects of COVID-19 etc. The application had to be certified by the Grama Niladari to confirm permanent residency in the Grama Niladari Division. The applications were distributed via the employees of MAS Strategic Business Units (SBU's) in the relevant districts.

Due to a multitude of factors, only seventy-seven applicants were selected when the call was targeting hundred candidates. The project team investigated and found out that most small business units were shut down for more than six months since March and only SBU's continuing had been specifically selected for the grant. The interviews had been conducted at the Sarvodaya Centres in relevant districts. The interview panel consisted of the Sarvodaya District Coordinator and a representative from MAS.

The selection panel strove to discover the impact of COVID-19 and their immediate financial requirements by finding out whether the applicant had a vision for future expansion and the environment impact of their business. Purposeful and environment conscious businesses were given priority leading to disqualification of some applicants. Successful candidates attended a mandatory session on entrepreneurship development. The workshop was designed to ensure that the grant would be utilised effectively to develop their businesses providing them with basic skills on how a SBU could run better and expand to the next level.

## The capacity building workshop

Two workshops were held targeting those from the Western Province and Kilinochchi. Two qualified resource personnel had conducted the workshops in an engaging manner. A diverse group of micro-entrepreneurs from different walks of life took part in the said workshops to not only receive their grants but also to gain valuable skills and know-how. The skills and experience of the resource personnel were fully utilized in modifying the workshop content to cater to the skill level of participants, their exposure, and experience. Following key areas were taken into consideration in the workshops.

- Introduction to Entrepreneurship
- Value-addition to existing products and services
- Customer service and satisfaction
- Motivation
- Sales and marketing
- Basic financial literacy
- Time management and coordination

Both workshops were successfully completed with the participation of teams from Sarvodaya and MAS. The participants were grateful for the opportunity to attend an entrepreneurship development workshop and further got advice for their personal business problems. The project team also discovered that majority of the participants had never participated in a workshop of this nature and observed that the participants were grateful for this intervention.

## Grant disbursement

Since participating in the workshop made applicants automatically eligible for funding, 28 participants received the promised grant. As per MoU between LJSSS and MAS Capital, the total grant of Rs.50,000 had been split into two instalments of Rs.30,000 and Rs.20,000 each. The first instalment had been disbursed in the week following the workshop. The second and final instalment will be disbursed in January 2021. The beneficiaries included those involved in the following types of business:

Sector	Types of Business	No. of beneficiaries
Food	Condiments, sweetmeats, pastries, catering, pickles, herbal porridge (kola kenda)	13
Animal Husbandry	Poultry, quail eggs	3
Tailoring	Ladies' garments, school uniforms	4
Other	Palmyra products, grocery shop, ladies and children's shoes, ornamental fish, production of ritual goods (pooja banda) eg. wooden book holders, joss stick holders, dagabas etc.	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>

Table 13, Types of Micro-Business, MAS RISEUP

Out of 28 beneficiaries, 22 were female and 6 males. Their ages varied from 25-64. Over 50% were differently abled or from disadvantaged backgrounds fulfilling the initial aspiration of reaching out to marginalised communities. Except in Colombo, a higher percentage of females were found to be qualified for funding. The cheques were handed over once the beneficiary signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between them and Sarvodaya. The MoU was printed in Sinhala and Tamil and contained clauses on the use of funds, and mode of engagement. Sarvodaya District Coordinators explained the content of the MoU and the beneficiaries took ample time to consent into the formalities.

## Way Forward

The candidates were monitored by Sarvodaya District Centres and remotely via telephone to verify the proper utilization of the first instalment and to ascertain whether statements made at the interview tallies with the reality on the ground. The second instalment will be disbursed after careful analysis is made whether the beneficiaries are eligible for further funding as beneficiaries do not automatically qualify for the second round of funding by the simple act of having received the first. It is anticipated that the beneficiaries will have to be reminded about what was taught at the workshop and ensure application of their learnings to their day-to-day business activities e.g., Simple book-keeping, customer service, time management etc. It is opined that a second round of workshops will further strengthen the selected beneficiaries and the guidance provided would benefit them incalculably as funding without capacity building does not produce the desired levels of impact. For Sarvodaya and MAS sustainability and continuity is key while beneficiaries are empowered towards realising self-help. In doing so, the organisations believe that the benefits of their individual merit will trickle down to the communities they live and serve in.

## Key Outcomes

- Financial Assistance - 28 beneficiaries from Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara and Kilinochchi were recipients of a grant of Rs.50,000 per beneficiary
- Over 50% of beneficiaries fell into the differently abled/disadvantaged category and the project has reached out to those who crucially need support to sustain their livelihood.
- Capacity-building - workshops proved to be effective in creating more business opportunities and supporting the small holders to expand. Some beneficiaries created employment opportunities extending their support to the respective communities they operate from.

Beneficiaries have been able to re-start their businesses (following extended periods of lockdown in some districts) resulting in increase in income levels.



## Sarvodaya Women's Movement: Immediate Response to prevent transmission of COVID19

Sarvodaya Women's Movement (SWM) was established in 1987 as an offshoot independent organisation of the Sarvodaya Movement. It is specially mandated to address challenges faced by women and in that light implements programmes on livelihood development, women empowerment, and gender issues in Sri Lanka. The vision of SWM is to provide women with opportunity and direction to assume their rightful place in society to realize their aspirations, hopes and strengths. SWM contributed to COVID related relief and awareness efforts of the Movement since the first lockdown was imposed.

SWM has specifically focused in distributing health equipment and hygiene related paraphernalia based on an immediate identification of needs conducted by their field staff. Financial assistance had been provided to women headed households in selected districts to overcome the immediate hardships faced due to lockdowns. Priority had been given to women with disabilities, widows, and women with disabled family partners. The grants were disbursed among 210 women from seven districts, namely Badulla, Ratnapura, Nuwaraeliya, Mullaitivu, Galle and Monaragala.

### Financial assistance to victims and families of chronic kidney disease of unknow aetiology (CKDU)

District of RDHS /MOH Office	R.D.H.S. Address	No of Sinks
Matale	Regional Director Health Service	20
Vavuniya	MataleMOH / RDHS Office	30
Kandy	Vavuniya.Regional Director Health Service	50
Rathnapura	KandyMOH Office, Kahawatta.Regional Director Health Service	25
Badulla	Badulla.Regional Director Health Service	30
Anuradhapura	Anuradhapura.	26
	<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>

Sarvodaya Women's Movement regularly serves families living in the districts of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. These two districts record the highest concentration of CKDU patients in the island and the SWM had investigated their urgent requirements during lockdowns. Since public transportation was limited during lockdowns, the number of CKD patients that required alternative transport options have increased, leading patients requiring extra funds to make those lifesaving regular visits to hospitals. The SWM particularly chose this vulnerable group due to their highly vulnerable situation and dispersed funds among hundred deserving women providing Rs.5000 each as immediate financial relief. Thirty patients from Anuradhapura, thirty from Padaviya and forty from Polonnaruwa were selected for the disbursement.

### Providing hand washing facilities to clinics in selected districts supported by the UNHCR

The Sarvodaya Women's' Movement provided hand washing facilities in partnership with the UNHCR to selected public health clinics in multiple districts. High priority was given to venues where antenatal clinics were conducted. Apart from this programme, the UNHCR generously contributed digital thermometers that were distributed among Sarvodaya district officers and the headquarters.



## Facilitation of hand washing stations.

SWM facilitated to extend their existing hand washing initiative by partnering with the World Health Organisation (WHO). The programme had a special focus to urgently supply washing facilities to health clinics in the Western Province as the transmission predominantly occurred there. Apart from supplying necessary utensils the programme also took steps to educate the public on correct hand washing practices and other COVID related health etiquette. Galle, Matara and Hambantota districts were given special attention due to the sudden outbreak of the virus in those areas.

Areas	Number of Washing Stations
Colombo	54
Egodaayana	09
Moratuwa	09
Kalutara	72
Gampaha	170
Galle	50
Matara	25
Hambantota	21
Total	410

Table 14, Handwashing facilities, SWM

## Awareness Program for Community Activists

In times of trouble and calamity Sarvodaya heavily relies on its large pool of volunteers at the village level to extend services as well as to care for the communities in need. Due to the nature of transmission, Sarvodaya and its independent organisations had to provide special training to volunteers and community level activists to utilise their potential for awareness and prevention initiatives. Special training was provided to selected volunteers under the 'new normal' guidelines intending those trainees could be actively utilised for prevention work.

District	Date	Venue	No. of Participants
Kalutara	15 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Kalutara District Sarvodaya Center, Molligoda	45
Gampaha	27 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Pallegama Temple	55
	27 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Vidyasekara Piriwena, Bandiyamulla.	51
Matara	30 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Matara District Sarvodaya Center	48
Galle	20 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	RDHS Office, Unawatuna	45
Colombo	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Pinbima Hall, Homagama	40

Table 15, Community Activist Training: SWM



## Conclusion

Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement throughout its six decades of transformative evolution possess a track record of exemplary humanitarian action. Guided by Sarvodaya's inspirational purpose, to 'build a just, sustainable and a compassionate social order that fulfils the basic human needs of the community through individual and collective awakening', Sarvodaya leadership has acted out in humanitarian charity, understanding the very depths of the challenges COVID19 posed since its inception. Sarvodaya as an 'Organisation' has responded with purposeful action setting up realistic goals and indicators to measure the impact of the pandemic as well as the solutions they rollout to diverse communities. Sarvodaya as a 'Movement' has understood the sensitivities of the grassroots ground reality addressing not only the physical demands and needs of communities but also being extremely sensitive to the psychological, spiritual, and social requirements to mitigate consequences in the long run. This blend has brought about successful interventions to reality increasing the wellbeing of communities at this time of crisis.

The COVID19 response has also reflected the urgency of the services which Sarvodaya has already rendered and has planned to rollout in the next few phases of the Suwodaya programme. In successfully and efficiently addressing these plethora of needs, Sarvodaya's development partners have immensely contributed to a structured yet holistic humanitarian action programme reinforcing their trust in the organisation, renewing partnerships as well as building new ones. The partner organisations, assuming interchanging roles as donors or project implementation partners have therefore contributed to the efforts in a grand scale facilitating the supply of essential resources as well as technical support required to affect positive action at community level. Convivial alliances such as the Civil Society Collective has been a key strength to mobilise emergency relief and action to the most vulnerable communities while sharing resources as well as building each other's capacities in the meantime. Multiple Government Ministries,

Departments and other establishments have commended Sarvodaya's humanitarian action by providing vital support with approvals and necessary permits to mobilize effective action when extending services to the affected communities and Sarvodaya sincerely extends their gratitude to key stakeholders in the state-mechanism.

The District Coordinators and their field level staff have played a pivotal role in identifying community needs by responding to them being bridge builders with the community. The technical support and services offered by headquartered fulltime staff and Sarvodaya leadership teams have enriched those contributions by holding space and activism afloat round the clock. The ground level network of community leaders be them staff or volunteers have immensely contributed to the lifesaving efforts of this grand scale operation bringing in vital communal concerns to the many initiatives highlighted in this report.

However, therein lies multitude of challenges in addressing the public health requirements as well as realising the unfolding long-term consequences of the pandemic. Health experts suggest that the pandemic will last for few more years, meaning that we must adhere to new-behavioural patterns (new normal) which would at least help us enable and sustain human life until we see clear signs of successful prevention and control. Embracing practices of new normal would keep the communities from harm while inoculation programmes will be rolled out at community level. The risk of clusters being formed at community level is still at large. Reluctance of people seeking medical interventions scale high, contributing to exacerbation of transmission. There exists continuous pressure on the public health delivery system to trace contacts, quarantine patients, extend treatment, as well as to effectively rollout inoculation programmes. Therefore, positive community engagement is still very much a prerequisite in mitigating the transmission and in protecting the vulnerable populations. Therefore, the requirement to accelerate community awareness initiatives and praxis still holds to be a corrective action.

Since the inception of the pandemic there exists a lack of common mechanism for experts and practitioners from diverse fields (be them social or behavioural sciences) to contribute to mass scale action. Sarvodaya believes that this void must be filled and will be discovering attempts to collaborate in solidarity to affect positively, the wellbeing of Sri Lankan people. Sarvodaya identifies this need especially to rollout long-term sustainable action in terms of addressing socio-economic inequalities highlighted and exacerbated by the pandemic. Sarvodaya will voice for the marginalised, represent the grassroots reality in local and international public fora to raise matters of importance. Sarvodians have not failed to share their experience, lessons learnt, and plausible solutions be them multistakeholder committee meetings, or local and global level thought leadership contributing to public policy initiatives to better the wellbeing of both local and global populations.

Sarvodaya believes in grooming the next generation of organisational and grassroots community leaders to take the lead, in preparing them to face the unprecedented challenges faced by humanity and the planet. In that endeavour there is much to realise and mechanise and Sarvodaya wishes to join hands with partners to make this a reality. The Sarvodaya Institute of Higher Learning as well as other independent organisations and units of Sarvodaya will strive to mainstream this ideal as a core programme when delivering their diverse mandates. Sarvodaya has tirelessly operationalised the Suwodaya Programme since the inception of the pandemic and will continue throughout until the community reaches healthy targets of immunity and wellbeing.

## Our Development Partners

 <p>World Health Organization Sri Lanka</p>	 <p><b>USAID</b> FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE</p>	 <p>Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft Confédération suisse Confederazione Svizzera Confederaziun svizra</p>		
 <p>unicef</p>  <p>IOM UN MIGRATION</p>	 <p>NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS</p>	 <p><b>Australian Government</b> Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade</p>		
   				
 <p>Save the Children 100 YEARS</p>	 <p><b>FCA</b> Finn Church Aid</p>	 <p><b>RYTHM</b> FOUNDATION QI SOCIAL IMPACT INITIATIVE</p>	 <p>British Asian Trust</p>	 <p><b>MOD</b> Market-Oriented Dairy</p>
 <p><b>Kinder</b> MISSIONSWERK DIE STERNINGER</p>	 <p>Scaling up Nutrition People's Forum Civil Society Alliance - Sri Lanka</p>	 <p><b>OPEN SOCIETY</b> FOUNDATIONS</p>	 <p><b>The Asia Foundation</b></p>	 <p><b>NDI</b> NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE</p>
 <p>Sarvodaya USA</p>		 <p><b>ARIGATOU</b> INTERNATIONAL All for Children</p>		

## Financial Statement

LANKA JATHIKA SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA SANGAMAYA  
 COVID-19 RESPONSE  
 FINANCIAL STATUS UPDATE TO 31<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021

Serial No.	Partner Organization	Project	Project Value	Fund Received	Project Expenses	Balance
01	The Asia Foundation	Roll Out of Covid-19 Related Values Education Activities With Youth Leaders In The Western Province	12,934,454	7,760,672	1,930,694	5,829,978
02	World Health Organization/ DFAT	Proposal To Strengthen Community Engagement In The COVID-19 Response Through Civil Society Collective Sri Lanka	17,500,000	15,373,079	13,463,598	1,909,481
03	The Open Society Foundation	To Strengthen Community Engagement In COVID-19 Response In Selected Districts In The Northern And Eastern Provinces	6,610,679	6,610,679	5,539,740	1,070,939
04	British Asian Trust	To Strengthen Community Engagement In COVID-19 Response In Selected Districts In The Northern And Eastern Provinces	8,157,325	8,217,700	7,496,787	720,913
05	UNICEF	Building The Skill & Knowledge Of Children On Covid Safe Behavior And Their Own Protection Project	5,154,000	4,704,000	3,283,497	1,420,503
06	Sarvodaya USA/ Steve West	Entrepreneurship Development Fund for Women Who Are Affected by Covid-19 Pandemic	9,108,589	9,108,589	-	9,108,589
07	Sarvodaya USA	Immediate Responses to Covid-19 Affected Community	-	7,116,700	3,221,642	3,895,058
08	General Donation	Immediate Responses to Covid-19 Affected Community	-	1,237,400	737,400	500,000
09	ReBuild Sri Lanka	Immediate Responses to Covid-19 Affected Community	-	3,392,507	3,392,507	-
10	Embassy of Switzerland to Sri Lanka & Maldives	Covid-19 Responses - Immediate Relief Responses (Care Homes)	4,670,200	4,670,200	4,598,754	71,446
11	Embassy of Switzerland to Sri Lanka & Maldives	Covid-19 Responses -Immediate Relief Responses	2,702,730	2,699,875	2,699,875	-
12	MAS Holding	Entrepreneurship Support for Small and Medium Businesses Affected By Covid-19 Pandemic	2,618,438	2,618,438	2,554,067	64,371
13	Management Systems International Inc.	Covid-19 Responses - Increasing Youth Civic Engagement	14,381,400	13,117,963	10,018,871	3,099,092
14	KINDERMISSIONSWERK DIE STERNESI	Addressing COVID-19 related Stigma and Discrimination Through Community Engagement	10,174,958	10,923,935	2,477,000	8,446,935
15	Sarvodaya USA/ MAST Cares	COVID-19 Response	39,000,000	36,971,928	-	36,917,928
16	FINN CHURCH AID (FCA)	Awareness with Human Action	18,056,447	5,412,402	4,417,399	995,003
<b>Total</b>				<b>139,882,068</b>	<b>65,831,830</b>	<b>74,050,237</b>

## Annexure - 01

### Civil Society Collective for COVID-19 Response

Children's Homes		Elder's Homes		Special needs		Safe Houses		Rehab. Centres		Probation C.		Total	
No.	Persons	No.	Persons	No.	Persons	No.	Persons	No.	Persons	No.	Persons	No.	Persons
214	5,936	175	4,708	50	1,546	10	228	5	320	1	4	455	12,742

Table 1, Distribution of food rations until 24th June 2020 by centre

Children's Homes	Elder's Homes	Special needs	Safe Houses	Rehab. Centres	Probation C.	Total
201	140	41	3	3	1	389

Table 2, Distribution of cleaning and hygiene items until 24th June 2020 by centre\*

#	Districts	Children's Homes		Elder's Homes		Special needs		Safe Houses		Rehab. Centres		Probation C.		Total	
		No.	Persons	No.	Persons	No.	Persons	No.	Persons	No.	Persons	No.	Persons	Centres	Persons
1	Colombo	46	1,026	61	1,590	18	460	1	12	0	0	0	0	126	3,088
2	Gampaha	31	867	27	604	3	102	0	0	1	195	0	0	62	1,768
3	Kaluthara	7	282	31	1,197	6	68	0	0	0	0	0	0	44	1,547
4	Kandy	11	334	12	18	0	0	1	65	0	0	0	0	24	417
5	Matale	7	158	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	158
6	Nuwara Eliya	7	270	3	45	1	205	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	520
7	Galle	2	12	9	165	4	62	0	0	0	0	1	4	15	225
8	Matara	0	0	4	119	2	48	1	8	0	0	0	0	7	175
9	Hambanthota	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Puttalam	14	418	4	56	2	111	0	0	3	100	0	0	23	685
11	Kurunegala	15	419	3	112	1	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	543
12	Kegalle	0	0	2	30	1	88	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	118
13	Rathnapura	5	98	7	211	1	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	320
14	Trincomalee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	Batticaloa	30	444	3	57	1	19	2	23	0	0	0	0	36	543
16	Ampara	7	128	1	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	93
17	Anuradhapura	4	327	4	298	3	83	0	0	1	25	0	0	11	593
18	Polonnaruwa	6	150	1	16	2	62	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	228
19	Badulla	5	122	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	122
20	Moneragala	8	315	0	0	1	65	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	243
21	Jaffna	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	30	0	0	0	0	2	30
22	Mannar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	Vavuniya	3	352	3	155	3	119	3	90	0	0	0	0	12	716
24	Kilinochchi	1	25	0	0	1	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	46
25	Mullaithivu	5	191	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	191
	<b>Total</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>5,936</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>4,708</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>1,546</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>12,742</b>

Table 3, Distribution of food rations until 24th June 2020 by district

#	Districts	Children's Homes	Elder's Homes	Special needs	Safe Houses	Rehab. Centres	Probation C.	Total
1	Colombo	42	0	0	0	0	0	42
2	Gampaha	4	17	2	0	0	0	23
3	Kaluthara	14	23	2	0	0	0	39
4	Kandy	10	5	0	0	1	0	16
5	Matale	7	3	0	0	0	0	10
6	Nuwara Eliya	7	3	1	0	0	0	11
7	Galle	6	10	1	0	0	0	17
8	Matara	6	14	0	0	0	0	20
9	Hambanthota	5	7	0	0	0	0	12
10	Puttalam	7	4	4	0	0	0	15
11	Kurunegala	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Kegalle	6	10	7	0	0	0	23
13	Rathnapura	12	12	2	0	0	0	26
14	Trincomalee	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
15	Batticaloa	13	4	2	1	0	0	20
16	Ampara	5	2	1	0	0	0	8
17	Anuradhapura	9	3	7	1	1	0	21
18	Polonnaruwa	4	3	2	0	0	0	9
19	Badulla	10	7	3	0	1	1	22
20	Moneragala	6	2	2	0	0	0	10
21	Jaffna	6	3	0	0	0	0	9
22	Mannar	5	1	0	0	0	0	6
23	Vavuniya	4	4	0	0	0	0	8
24	Kilinochchi	6	3	4	1	0	0	14
25	Mullaithivu	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
<b>Total</b>		201	140	41	3	3	1	389

Table 4, Distribution of cleaning and hygiene items until 24th June 2020 by district\*

## A Post Scriptum by the Editor

A year on, the pandemic has led us to re-think and re-imagine our lifestyle, to raise our own potential as well as the mass consciousness of our communities. It begs that we become sensitive to the ravaging human induced environment threats, declining of our eco-systems, heightening social inequalities, scavenging economic systems, power politics, crumbling faith ideals and under-utilised education systems. While this list goes on and while the unprecedented challenges we face increase, the humanitarian action of Sarvodaya brings at least a glimpse of hope and inspiration to a distressed world.

Sarvodaya's response to the pandemic surely provides at least a drop of hope to those ordinary-unsung community-oriented youth, women, volunteers, leaders, and activists, also surely, inspiring the most seasoned humanitarians and those who are celebrated not only in the island but also abroad, bolstering their charisma. We all have much to do, to increase our quality of life, to help strongly to regenerate our eco-systems, to increase social equality and justice, to find better alternative economics that serve everyone, to embrace people centred governance and politics, to practice our own faiths truthfully and to utilise our knowledge and learnings to discover wisdom and to improve our very own communities.

Let us remember if we get together, the power of community will enable us to overcome our selfish ambitions, in order to improve life for all. Let us stand tall beyond the plethora of challenges, strengthen our alliances to engage and collaborate with effective communal initiatives identifying the urgent needs to address the challenges that may unfold. In so doing, a decentralised, holistic, resilient communal system would lead us to opulence and thriving eco-systems for all people, flora, and fauna, increasing the wellbeing of all life, leading to Sarvodaya: the Awakening of All.

**Udesh Fernando**

Director - Sarvodaya Institute of Higher Learning





# SUWODAYA

Sarvodaya Headquarters,

"Damsak Mandira"

No 98, Rawatawatta Road, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.

+94-112647159 +94-2656521

suwodaya@sarvodaya.org www.sarvodaya.org