

Water for Peace; Reflections from Sri Lanka

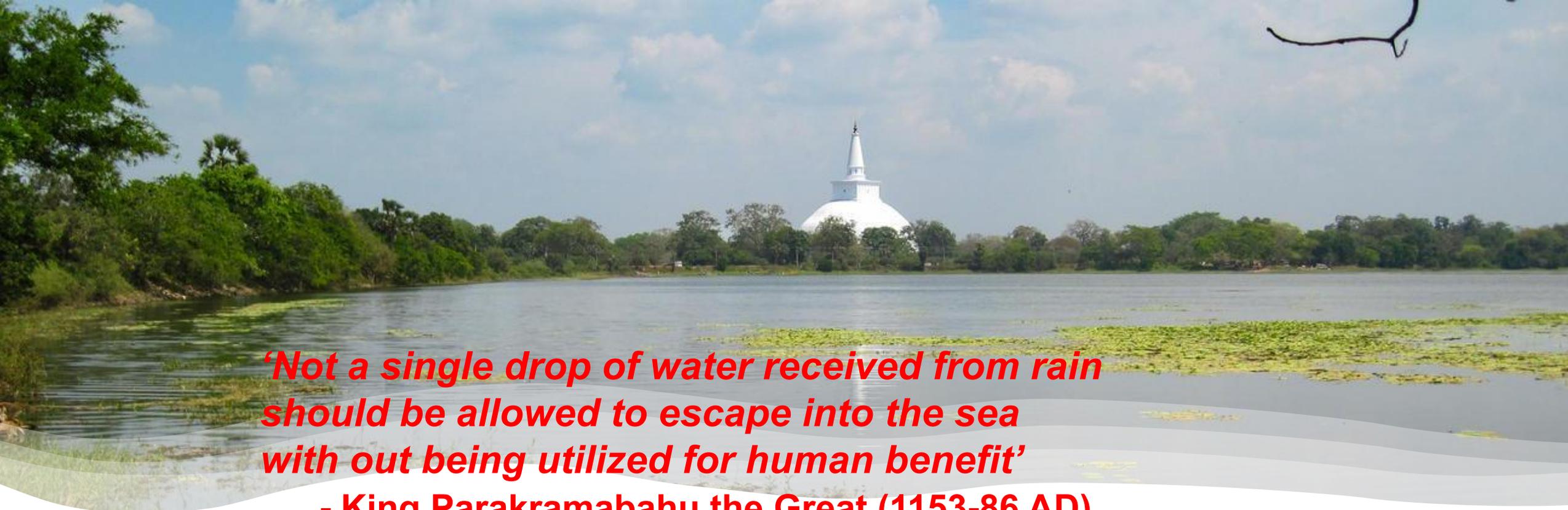
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Movement

Sri Lanka





‘Not a single drop of water received from rain should be allowed to escape into the sea with out being utilized for human benefit’

- King Parakramabahu the Great (1153-86 AD)

- Sri Lanka - A Nation with a history of a hydraulic civilization extending to 500 B.C.
- Water resource management was a “Royal Duty” of the Kings who ruled the country until the Colonial invasion in the 16th Century.

The concept of –
wewai (tank/reservoir)
dagabayi (stupa)
gamayi (village)
pansalayi (the temple)

Water in Culture

- Sri Lanka has a tradition of a culture in which, water is regarded as a purifier, a life giver, a destroyer of evil, and a symbol of fertility.
- Cooperation to share water for all purposes have been the tradition.
- Sri Lanka has performed well in terms of increasing access to safe drinking water from 76% in 2006 to 93.2% in 2020



Rural water supply



Despite having an ancient very sophisticated and advanced system of irrigation for cultivation, clean and adequate supply of clean drinking water has been a perennial problem.

Rural water supply

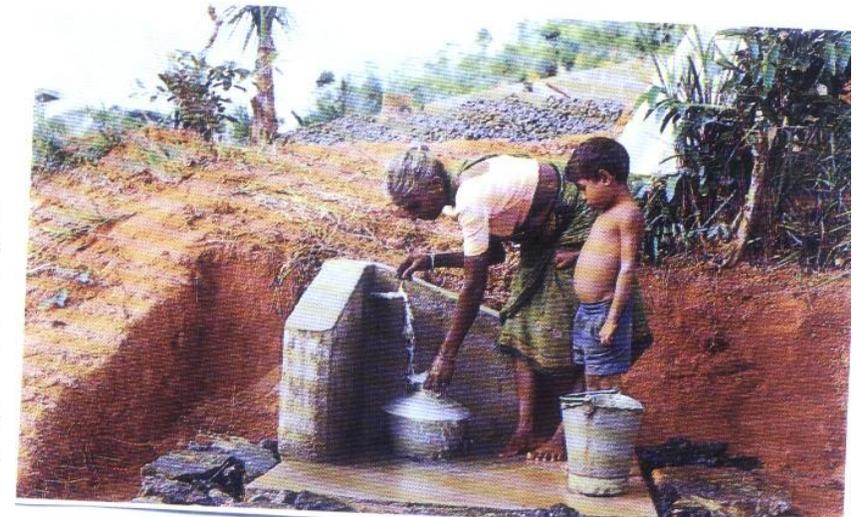


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Sarvodaya has been in the forefront in provision of clean drinking water to marginalized and poverty-stricken rural communities in Sri Lanka for over 6 decades.

Sarvodaya Rural Technical Services



Introducing and building community capacity on use of appropriate technology for water management and conservation



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Competition and water shortages (Water Stress) are increasing because of rapid economic growth, high variability in rain fall due to climate change and pollution.

Hydrometeorological disasters

Being a tropical island in the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka has consistently been placed among the top ten countries at risk of extreme weather events by the Global Climate Risk Index.



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Impact on agriculture production, food security and nutrition

Water conflicts

- Up until recent times, there hasn't been major conflicts related to water.
- However, during the time of the civil war (2006), a major conflict flared up with the militant group LTTE closing the sluice gates depriving many farmers of water to irrigate their paddy lands. This marked the beginning of the last phase of the war which ended in 2009.
- However, increasing water scarcity, contamination of water, increasing demand for industrial use, tourism, hydro-power generation, are now leading to local conflicts.



Water for Peace

- Awareness and education
 - Water as a precious natural resource/water cycle
 - Inter-dependency
 - Water/waste water management
 - Climate change
 - Watershed management
- Preventive action
 - Collective community action to meet water needs
 - Role of CBOs
 - Community dispute resolution mechanisms
- Governance
 - Role of the State and Local Government bodies
 - Community based organizations CBOs





Water for Peace
Prevention of conflicts through community actions

Sharing and Caring

Tree planting – watershed management



Shanthi sena – Sarvodaya Peace Brigade





**We did it together!
Thank you!**

