

EVALUATION REPORT

UNDEF supported Project in Sri Lanka ***'Civil Society Empowerment Project to Promote Democracy'***

Commissioned by
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
Regional Office for South Asia
New Delhi

Implementing Agency
Saviya Development Foundation
Southern Province Sri Lanka

Fortunatica Consultancy Agency
New Delhi

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Fortunatica Infosolutions (P) Ltd.

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List of Acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHA	Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies
ECOSOC	Economic Council
EA	Executing Agency
IC	Information Centre
IEC	Information and Education Communication
IM	Implementing Agency
HIV	Humano Immune Virus
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
SAARC	South Asia Alliance of Regional Countries
SDF	Saviya Development Foundation
SHG	Self-Help Group
SL	Sri Lanka
ToT	Training of Trainers
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDEF	United Nations Fund for Democracy
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VAW	Violence Against Women

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It was possible to carry out this evaluation due to the full hearted support and participation of the people living in the three districts of Galle, Hambantota and Matara in Sri Lanka. We thank them for their participation in different participatory exercises. They had shown an overwhelming response and extended their whole hearted cooperation in making the entire evaluation a success.

Director Fortunatica Infosolutions (P) Ltd.
Meena Jha

SUMMARY MATRIX OF FINDINGS

Key Activities	Outputs	Targets Achieved	Field observations
Baseline survey to identify CBOs	60 CBOs identified	Galle - 20 Matara – 16 Habanatota - 24	Well defined strategy used to identify the right CBOs for this project, which helped in building partnership and cooperation with various stakeholders. Partnering government officials helped in setting up of ICs
Leadership trainings for CBOs	4 trainings for 120 leaders identified	80 women and 44 men trained as leaders to promote Democracy and Governance	Awareness on political participation has increased and has motivated especially women to participate in politics but denied tickets to contest. Retention of information imparted found to be low as there were no follow-up trainings.
Awareness Generation	300 camps held To cover 10,250 individuals	8712 women and 1538 men attended the camps. Identified good and potential leaders. Awareness created on the importance of exercising their votes	Created space for various stakeholders to come on a single platform to discuss issues of democracy and governance
Preparation and dissemination of IEC material	i. Community education handbook ii. Posters on election violence iii) Setting up 47 information centres iv).Display of information related to IEC at Information	40 IEC materials prepared. Widely disseminated across the community. Reached the elected representatives, students, practitioners and community leaders who are potential candidates in the elections.	40 IEC materials prepared included publications, manuals, handbooks, posters etc on the issues pertaining to democracy and governance, gender, VAW. IEC material developed in simple language has helped the community at large, particularly elected representatives, practitioners, students, community leaders. This was a new learning to the readers about their democratic rights and how to seek accountability and transparency from the elected leaders. Awareness level increased.

	centres v) Gender and Democracy manual		
Conducted Multi-stakeholder meetings on Democracy and Good Governance	3 meetings conducted	Electorates, elected leaders, officials from government and private, CBOs and SHGs shared a single platform to discuss about democracy and good governance	Enabled to create a platform where different stakeholders came together to share and learn about democracy and good governance. It also provided an interface between the electorate and their elected leaders
Developing and strengthening SHGs	250 SHGs formed	Created a pool of politically aware persons, largely women in the community and encouraged them to exercise their political rights and address cases of VAW in their area	Women got aware about where to file cases about VAW. They felt the need to build pressure groups to negotiate for tickets to contest election.
Educational trainings on gender and equality for government and private sector	30 trainings held covering 844 government and private sector functionaries	Helped to gender sensitise 616 females and 228 males so that they would be able to discharge their duties properly. They would help in ensuring democracy and good governance.	Helped women to vote the right candidate on their own. Demand for more trainings with continuity. Too many topics covered in short duration thus, nullifying the effect
Prepared 30 sec TV messages to create awareness on election in Sinhala and Tamil languages for telecast	Telecast over a month, 4 times a day	Wider coverage, creating awareness on voting rights	Helped the community to participate in voting irrespective of the fear of violence and to identify a right candidate as their leader.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Saviya Development Foundation (SDF) is a community based organization In Sri Lanka founded in 1991. It is approved by the Sri Lankan Government as a charitable organization. Committed to humanitarian social services, its vision is: 'An empowered community enjoying quality of life". This is expected to be achieved through its mission'- to improve equal opportunity to achieve economic, health and well-being.

SDF works in the three districts of Galle, Matara and Hambantota of the Southern Province of Sri Lanka. The organization works among the rural poor and vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities with focus on women.

SDF has previously worked on several UN projects. This project on 'Civil Society Empowerment Programme on Democracy and Good Governance' it embarked on with the objective of promoting democratic rights among women and vulnerable sections of the society. The project was initiated in 2009 in partnership with UNODC serving as the executing agency and supported by UNDEF. The project was operationalised in the three Southern Province districts of Galle, Matara and Habanatota.

The thrust of the project was to facilitate promotion of inclusive democracy in the Southern Province of SL which would enhance effectiveness of governance.

Relevance and context of the project

The rationale for the project is the poor participation of women in the elected democracy in Sri Lanka. Although Sri Lanka has a favourable gender ratio of over 51%, the representation of women in representative institutions is abysmally low.

Although the structures for a democratic state such as the legislative, executive, administrative and the judiciary are in place, the situation prevailing in the country before and after the conflict with the LTTE has not been conducive to democratic processes. Large sections of the population, largely women, did not participate in the election processes. Furthermore, the rural and powerless sections as also the marginalized and vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities too were by and large were left out of the electoral process due to violence, unfair practices and money and muscle power surrounding the election.

In the post-conflict period, hope that the democratic processes will prevail has been belied. In the recently held elections starting from the Presidential one in 2010, General, Provincial and local government elections held through 2011, despite efforts were made by both government and NGOs to generate awareness among the people to vote judiciously the percentage of invalid votes was considerably high, around 30%.

It is observed that although women are found in decision-making positions in all sectors, such as in bureaucracy, private sector and academia, in the political field, their presence is abysmally as low as 5%. Of the 225 Parliamentarians, only 12 are women. The Parliament has thwarted efforts to introduce a quota system for women of up to 20% in local governing bodies.

It is in the backdrop of such an environment that the project for enhancing and promoting Democracy and Good Governance was embarked upon. Launched in October 2009, for 18 months, the project was extended to 24 months, till 2011, for completion of planned activities.

Objectives of the project

The project was expected to achieve help in achieving the following:

- Reducing corruption
- Reducing human rights violations against women and other vulnerable sections of the society, and
- Reduction of electoral malpractices that include corruption and criminal offences related to polls.

Executing Modalities

The project is supported by United Nations Democracy Fund, (UNDEF) with UNODC the Executing Agency responsible for the management of the project, including contracts with the implementing agencies and managing the financial disbursements as per the implementation schedules agreed to. In November 2011, an end-of-project evaluation was commissioned by UNODC. Fortunatica Development Agency, New Delhi was to be the evaluation agency. Ms Aasha Ramesh, a development and gender expert, was the evaluator.

Objectives of Evaluation

- To review and assess the relevance, quality and impact of the programme compared to the vision and mission as well as objectives of the project.
- To assess the organizational capacity and programme management systems.
- To assess the need for innovation in the role of the organisation and in programme design considering the changing environment and to provide a feedback to the organisation for further improvement of work.

Approach and Methodology

The Evaluation adopted a participatory approach through a combination of processes including desk review, site visits and interviews with relevant stakeholders of the project.

Limitations to the Evaluation

Considering the geographical spread of the project, scope and breadth of the project objectives and activities, the number of stakeholders; the duration of the field study was

felt to be short to do a detailed and exhaustive analysis within the given timeframe of this evaluation study. In addition, the following factors constrained the evaluation:

- Negligible preparatory time
- Inappropriate logistical arrangements for the evaluator
- The person days allocated for report writing time were grossly inadequate to prepare a comprehensive report for the kind of analysis expected for such initiatives

Salient Observations

Key issues that emerged as a result of the project are:

- Increase in awareness about democracy and governance
- Interest among women in engaging in political processes
- Reduction in election-time violence
- Government functionaries evincing interest in learning about new issues and its application as part of their official duties
- Partnership of civil society and government has enabled important information dissemination to empower people exercise their voting rights
- The opening of ICs at the Pradeshiya Sabha level has helped information reach out to village based communities
- Developed partnerships with government, private, media, academicians etc who contributed in different ways to promote the aim of the initiative.

The project facilitated active participation of women in the awareness generation campaigns. Through formation of 250 SHGs, women have been motivated and informed about the importance of their democratic rights, including the need for them to enter politics.

In Galle and in Matara, there is evidence of women in CBOs and SHG members coming forward to contest elections, although political parties refused them tickets, or they lost elections through manipulation of the established parties. But, trainings and awareness imparted through the project has, to some extent, motivated a few women to enter politics and contest elections.

Discussions with the different stakeholders, CBOs, SHGs, Government and private sector functionaries revealed that in recent elections at the Province and local government levels, the incidence of election violence reduced, resulting in more women casting their vote.

SDF's strategy design in introducing training as a key component of the project led to several hundred government functionaries becoming aware about their duties and responsibilities.

It was also observed that through legal information imparted both through trainings and information dissemination packs, awareness on gender rights has improved.

By virtue of its relevance and appropriate interventions, the project has been able, within a short period of time, to reach out to a number of the key stakeholders - women, communities, public and private sector, and has been able to raise their awareness of their democratic rights and persuade them to address gender discrimination, particularly on domestic violence.

The project has also sensitized a wide range of stakeholders on gender justice, voter education, democracy and good governance through awareness campaigns, trainings and information dissemination. It has been able to form an alliance of youth, which is a noteworthy achievement as a result of the various interventions.

It has also been able to motivate women to realize the importance of political participation. The intervention has made efforts to reach out to vulnerable sections such as minority groups and people with disability, but this is still very limited, and there is need to address this section in a more concerted way in the future.

The project's impact in making women gaining better understanding of their situation is laudable, but it has made limited interventions in the area of advocacy and alliance building.

Sustainability

The evaluation has tried to analyze the sustainability aspect of the project by taking into consideration the components, around which the basic interventions are being made. But it would be expecting too much to expect that the project can become sustainable in a period of two years, in a climate where the subject being addressed is new. The beginnings have been made, but there is much to be done still for sustainability to actually be achieved.

Strengths of the project

- The project has a well-designed strategy reaching out to different key stakeholders like women, CBOs, Government and Private Sector functionaries
- SDF is a recognised and credible organisation, with a good track record of two decades of work. As part of its work, it has engaged closely with key policymakers, government functionaries, politicians, media, private sector etc.
- It has built partnership and cooperation with the Government for information dissemination
- It has developed useful IEC material with new and relevant information
- It has Involved government officers as partners, facilitating the setting up of 47 ICs
- It has provided a platform for different stakeholders to come together and

discuss issues of Democracy and Governance

- The project has helped in bringing many youth together on a common platform which led to the formation of the Saviya Youth Alliance
- It has provided an interface between grassroots level women and elected leaders, promoting accountability and transparency

Challenges

- The project duration is inadequate as the issues of Democracy, Gender Rights and Governance in Southern Province were new and more time is required to understand them to translate them into action
- Retention of information imparted in trainings low, as no follow-up training is planned
- Training module covered several topics in the one-day trainings such HIV/AIDS and Child Rights that are important, but as democracy was the key subject and relatively new to many, it was not easily absorbed
- The initiative is spread too thin in an effort to cover all the three districts of Southern province
- Outreach among the rural women was limited and needs more networking with local CBOs working in those areas
- There is no clear plan drawn up for the 124 community leaders developed through this project as to how they in turn will take the issues forward.

Key Recommendations and Actions Suggested

Donor

- UNDEF primarily supports projects only for two years and this is often done in a different country each year with an effort to pilot an innovation. Perhaps, there is need to revisit and review the policy and ways of promoting the project sustainability.
- To be eligible for UNDEF grant, the implementing partner seeks a UN partner. The role of the UN partner, in this case UNODC which served as the executing agency, also had the responsibility of monitoring and overseeing the project. To be able to technical oversight effectively, adequate resource provisioning is required, as monitoring involves periodic travel which is limited with the funding currently allocated, limiting the executing agency's ability to support the implementing organisation.
- As UNDEF's focus is to enhance women's political participation, it is necessary to develop a long-term initiative to promote women's participation in politics, including a strong advocacy initiative to demand for reservation of seats for women

Donor and SDF

- If UNDEF cannot continue to fund the SDF project, it should facilitate the project to explore alternative funding by identifying donors and enabling the NGO to link with them
- The project focus should shift to advocacy with policy makers, ToTs of selected

- leaders and concerted awareness campaigns at the grassroots level
- It is advisable to extend the project for another phase to consolidate the gains made and create an enabling environment for advocating women's reservation in local, regional and national elected bodies
 - SDF has facilitated in the development of a Youth Alliance, whose capacities should be developed to become partners in:
 - i) promoting women's participation and
 - ii) combating gender based violence
 - Enhancing women's political participation intervention should be implemented at two Levels:
 - a) Policy makers and
 - b) Community
 - Advocacy requires a two-pronged thrust:
 - b) Policy advocacy aimed at policy makers and legislators
 - a) Community-led advocacy to strengthen grassroots democracy, identify good leaders and encourage women to enter politics.

Conclusion

In its two years, the project has kindled interest among the women and the community on issues affecting women and the marginalized people, and the community. It has identified rural women leaders who have evinced interest in entering the portals of local governance. It is critical that such interest is promoted and honed to reach another level, through promoting and supporting another phase focusing on women demanding their rights as equal citizens of Sri Lanka.

The project is a good example of promoting a climate to spread the importance of democracy and good governance, but also of creating interest among women to take active interest in securing their political rights.

SDF very aptly identified Government as its partner. Their 20-year-long track record in the civil society sector was instrumental in getting the support of the Chief Minister, senior politicians and government officers to collaborate in this initiative.

The project should be supported, to enable it to build alliances across the country in the next phase and develop an action-research effort of ensuring women's entry into politics through affirmative action.

Having initiated such a project, and recognizing the high relevance of the project, the evaluation strongly recommends the continuation and replication of the project, for reaching out to a wider mass, to make the impact more visible and measurable.

It is strongly recommended that support for a further phase of the project be strongly considered in order to enable SDF to consolidate, deepen and take forward the achievements.

DETAILED REPORT

1. A. Introduction and Background

Sri Lanka, known as the Pearl of the Indian Ocean with its palm-fringed beaches and diverse landscapes is a beautiful island country. It has a population of 20.859 million (World Bank 2010). Women comprise 51.5% of the population. The literacy levels are as high as 90%, and literacy among women is 87%.

There are three main ethnic groups, the dominant Sinhala population, the Muslims and Tamil Minorities, who are significant players in Sri Lankan politics. The historical differences between the Sinhalas and the Tamils on issues of discrimination over share in power and education and employment opportunities led to a conflict and an ongoing war between the two ethnic groups since 1983. The war with the secessionist LTTE ended in May 2009, but post-conflict problems of reconciliation with the Tamil minority persist. The most-affected conflict zones are the Northern and Eastern Provinces of SL. The Southern Province however, was not affected, but the consequences of the conflict situation left its mark on this province as well, affecting governance and development.

The reasons for the conflict, as articulated by many academicians, politicians, activists and laypersons providing the perspective from the south are:

1. Iniquitous sharing of opportunities and resources
2. Cultural identity
3. Share of power in the State, governance and politics

Of the three issues mentioned above, the last perhaps is one of the most important aspects in the current context, particularly when addressing the issue of exercising democratic rights.

Current political scenario

Sri Lanka became independent from the British colonial rule in 1948. However, the differences between the Sinhala majority and the Tamils surface during the drafting of the constitution. Even before independence, the Sinhala majority politicians' attempt to replace English with Sinhala as the official language distanced the Tamils and the relations between the two communities worsened after the Sinhala Only Act passed in 1956. Such developments led to the disillusionment and despair of the Tamil community and led to the rise of the LTTE and later a long war that ended in 2009 with the defeat of LTTE.

Since independence, Sri Lanka has been a democracy. But despite the experience of seven decades of a democratic system of governance, universal franchise, equal participation of women in voting at elections, high percentage of education and empowerment among women, and despite women elected to the highest seats of

political power (President or Prime Minister), the percentage of women in Parliament and in local assemblies has been abysmally low. In the national Parliament, their presence has never exceeded 5%, and this low percentage even declined to around 4% during the General Election in 2001. Representation in provincial and local assemblies has been unacceptably low. Provincial councils have around 2% women members and one Minister. Municipal councils and Pradeshiya (divisional) councils have around the same proportion of women¹.

Studies indicate four major factors responsible for the low participation of women and the reluctance of women to enter politics—the gendered norm of male leadership; time constraints as women already combine employment, domestic tasks, and child care; lack of adequate financial resources; and the prevailing climate of political violence. Political parties have made little effort to groom women members for election to assemblies. Trade union leadership is male dominant.

In the elections to Parliament that took place in April 2010, the voter turnout was 61%, although much lower in some areas, including the north. In the Southern Province, district Galle, only 63% voted, with 4% votes were rejected as invalid. In Matara, 59% voted and 4% votes rejected. In Habantota, 68% voted and close to 4% votes were invalid.²

In the Southern Province, only 6 women have been elected in the local government. One woman was elected to Parliament from the province, and one to the provincial council.

Though Sri Lanka is a signatory to all six core human rights instruments, its HR record has been far from satisfactory. The country government has taken steps to improve its poor human rights record of the 1980's and 1990's. While improvements have been made, problems do remain. Reports of disappearances of persons, arbitrary arrests, extra-judicial killings and a restriction on political space for free expression continue.

The insecure environment despite the war having ceased, remains a deterrent for people to exercise their franchise. This is with specific reference to women and vulnerable groups, who continue to lag behind in exercising their franchise. Thus, democracy and effective governance are a concern in SL.

Executing Agency

Saviya Development Foundation (SDF) is a community based organization founded in 1991 committed to Humanitarian social services and approved by the Government as a charitable organization. Its vision is, 'An empowered community enjoying quality of life.'

¹ <http://www.scribd.com/doc/36954969/CGA-Women-SriLanka>

² Parliamentary Elections 2010

This is expected to be achieved through its 'Mission'- to improve equal opportunity to achieve economic, health and well-being.

SDF works in the Southern Province of Sri Lanka in the three districts of Galle, Matara and Hambantota. The organization works among the rural poor and vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities with a focus on women.

Their work is guided by the following principles:

- Respect for gender equality
- Creating equal opportunity
- Promoting human rights
- Participatory approach
- Respect for human dignity

SDF has worked on several UN projects in partnership with UNFAO (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation) and UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), implementing projects on Tele Food Special Fund Project and Prevention of HIV among drug users in SAARC countries, respectively.

SDF has an UN-ECOSOC status and has made efforts to promote democracy and gender justice in Sri Lanka.

In keeping with its vision, SDF embarked on the project, '**Civil Society Empowerment Programme on Democracy and Good Governance,**' with the objective of promoting democratic rights among women and vulnerable sections of society.

The project was initiated in 2009 with UNODC as the executing agency in partnership with UNDEF, and SDF as the implementing organisation.

B. Scope and Purpose

SDF works in the Southern Province and Galle, Matara and Habantota districts where the project on, 'Civil Society Empowerment Programme on Democracy and Good Governance' was operationalised.

The thrust of the project was to facilitate 'promotion of inclusive democracy in the Southern Province of SL which would enhance effectiveness of governance'.

It was expected that through the active and effective participation of the targeted stakeholders, the following would be achieved:

- * Reducing corruption
- * Reducing human rights violations against women and other vulnerable sections of society, and

* Reduction of electoral malpractices that include corruption and criminal offences related to polls.

The project was initially for a period of 18 months. Through a no-cost revision, it was extended to 24 months, concluding in October 2011.

C. Executing Modalities

The project is supported by United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF). UNODC is the Executing Agency, responsible for the management of the project, including contracts with the implementing agencies and managing the financial disbursements as per the implementation schedules agreed to.

The EA received two tranches of the grant for disbursement to the implementing agency for implementation of the project. The financial disbursements were made based on receipt of the mid-term report and the financial statements and updates. A 7% fee of the total project cost was provided to the EA as a fee for administrative overheads and for overseeing the project implementation, providing financial, contractual, reporting and evaluation services to UNDEF.

Initially, there were two implementing partners, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA) and Saviya Development Foundation, with SDF having the sole responsibility as the implementation agency, but finally SDF remained the sole implementing partner.

To manage, implement and monitor the project, a project steering committee was set up comprising of the SDF chairperson, the project Manager, project Coordinator, the designated UNODC focal counterpart and a government representative, who is a member of the Sri Lanka Presidential Media Unit. The committee met every six months to guide and review the progress of the project.

To implement the project, a project office was set up with a 15 member team. This included the following; project manager, project coordinator, project accountant, program officers, field officers, administrative assistants and consultants.

Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

UNODC was responsible for monitoring the key activities of the project. This was done through periodic review of the monitoring committee meeting minutes, half yearly submissions for onsite inspection of activities, including review of publications/IEC material. Mr. Venkat Rama Sastry, Anti Corruption and Crime Prevention Expert, UNODC Regional Office South Asia served as the project focal point for the EA. He was to receive the mid-term/annual report, final narrative report and certified financial reports.

At the implementing agency level, a monitoring committee was constituted by SDF comprising of a six member team under the chairpersonship of the SDF Chairperson.

A field officer each monitored Galle, Matara and Habantota districts, in collaboration with the grassroots partners CBOs and SHGs, through their respective representatives. The team was responsible for programme coordination and provision of periodic progress reports to the Project Coordinator and the Project Manager. In addition, the Project Manager (PM) made site visits and was responsible to report the project progress to the monitoring committee headed by the Director and to the executive committee of SDF. The Director, Monitoring, reported the project progress to UNODC.

The project period concluded on October 3, 2011 and as per UNODC norms, (as a CSOP+ EA project), an external evaluation to be conducted in consultation with UNDEF was mandatory to review project implementation and to improve programme quality and its support to the partner organizations.

In accordance with this requirement, an external evaluation was commissioned by UNODC through a Consulting Agency Fortunatica, located in New Delhi. The evaluator was Ms Aasha Ramesh, a gender and development expert.

D. Evaluation Methodology

Objectives of Evaluation

1. To review and assess the relevance, quality and impact of the programme compared to the vision and mission as well as objectives of the project.
2. To assess the organizational capacity and programme management systems.
3. To assess how far there is a need for innovation in the role of the organisation and in programme design considering the changing environment and to provide a feedback to the organisation for further improvement of work.

Approach and Methodology

The Evaluation adopted a participatory approach through a combination of processes including desk review, selected site visits and interviews involving executing civil society agencies, implementing partners as well as the community, including government officers, private sector representatives, partner CBOs and SHG members, Resource persons and beneficiaries of the project.

The project canvas: 3 districts of the Southern Province of SL- Galle, Matara and Habantota.

The specific tools used in the process were:

- Review of available project documents (proposal, interim and final progress reports, IEC material, news clippings etc)
- Guiding questionnaires developed to facilitate FGDs and interviews with different stakeholders
- Identifying field sites in consultation with the SDF for field observations, selected key actors involved in the project for case study and interviews.
- Meeting with the SDF team prior to the field visits
- Conducting FGDs and interviews with 6 CBOs, 5 SHGs, 2 Resource Trainers, identified government officers, private officers and other selected beneficiaries covering the three districts of the Southern Province, where the project was implemented.
- Debriefing with the SDF team after the field visits, to share the salient findings emerging from the field interactions and observations.

The methodology covered collection of data both from the primary and secondary sources, the former through interactions with different stakeholders and actors involved in the project, and the latter through desk review of documents provided by the EA and the IA. (*Annexure 6*)

E. Limitations to the Evaluation

Considering the geographical spread of the project, scope and breadth of the project objectives and activities, and the number of stakeholders, the duration of the field study was too short to enable a detailed and exhaustive analysis within the timeframe of the evaluation.

In addition, the following factors constrained the evaluation:

- Preparatory time available for the evaluation was almost negligible
- Non-availability of relevant project related documents well in advance of the SL field visit
- Inappropriate logistical arrangement made for the evaluator in SL
- The person days worked out for writing the report were grossly inadequate for producing a comprehensive report with the kind of analysis expected for such initiatives
- The evaluation was conducted by one expert, while the ToR indicated a two-member team which would have been advisable.

Profile of the Evaluator

***Ms Aasha Ramesh** has wide experience in the field of women's rights. She has nearly three decades of experience in the development sector. She has worked on issues related to women in political participation. She was subject matter specialist on the issue in the Coordination Unit set up for preparations in India for the 4th World Conference on Women 1995. She has published a study on women in local governance titled, '33 and 1/3% reservation towards women's political empowerment'. During her stint as faculty in the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, she was involved in a longitudinal study on 'Women in local Governance'. She is proficient in English and is equipped with good writing skills. She has conducted several evaluations for UN agencies, including UNDEF, INGOs and NGOs and government agencies. She is conversant in Hindi, Kannada and Tamil and understands other Indian languages. She has worked with NGO's and INGOs and therefore has gained through the years valuable learnings and insights.*

2. ANALYSIS AND MAJOR FINDINGS

A. Relevance of the Project

Context

The people in Sri Lanka expected that the ending of the war with the LTTE would lead to a more representative, transparent and effective political process. The SL governance system is federal. The President, Members of Parliament, members of the Provincial Council and the local authorities are elected through exercise of adult franchise.

Although the basic structures of a democracy such as the legislative, executive, and the judiciary are in place, the conflict situation that prevailed in the country was not conducive to promote democratic processes. Therefore, large sections of the population did not participate in the election processes. They included largely the women, the rural and powerless sections as also the marginalized and vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities. Election-related violence, unfair practices and use of money and muscle power intimidated the marginalized sections, keeping large sections of them out of the electoral process.

In recent years, hope that democratic processes will prevail has been belied. Democratic rights are being openly violated as evidenced by the Parliament defeating the Opposition bill for the right to access information. The ruling coalition delayed introducing the bill in Parliament, did not allow debate on it, and finally when it was introduced, voted it out.

Another instance of violation of democratic norms is the rushing through of a bill to take over private profitable projects/companies, many of which belong to the members of the Opposition party. The ruling party used its power to get the bill passed despite two coalition parties that are part of the government, opposing its passage.

In the recently held elections, starting from the Presidential poll in 2010, and General, Provincial and local government elections held through 2011, efforts were made by both government and non-government organizations to generate awareness among the people to vote and do so judiciously. But the program was urban-centered and rural population had very little access, resulting in a high percentage of invalid votes, around 30%.

In Sri Lanka, the presence of women in decision-making positions, be it the government, bureaucracy, private, academia etc, is significant. However, in politics is it quite the contrary. Of the 225 Parliamentarians there are only 12 women.

There were demands between 1998 and 2000 for reservation of up to 20% in local governing bodies for women, but this was not accepted by the Parliament. It is in the

backdrop of such an environment that this project on enhancing and promoting Democracy and Good Governance was embarked upon.

B. Attainment of Project Objectives

Project Objectives

I. To promote inclusive democracy in the Southern Province of SL which in turn would enhance effectiveness of governance for:

- ◆ Reducing corruption
- ◆ Reducing human rights violations against women and other vulnerable sections of society, and
- ◆ Reduction of electoral malpractices that include corruption and criminal offences related to polls.

II. Human Rights violence against women and other vulnerable sections of society reduced

Short term Objectives

- Participation and leadership of rural, marginalized and vulnerable communities is enhanced
- Persons in authority in Southern Province of SL will adhere to the principles of gender and uphold values of democracy and Gender Equality and rural people's accessibility to information is promoted

Project Duration

Initially 18 months, with extension to 24 months to enable completion of activities planned. Started October 2009 and concluded October 2011.

Project Strategy

A two-pronged approach

Salient findings and observations from the project areas

Objectives of the project

- To promote inclusive democracy in the Southern Province of SL to enhance effective governance
- To reduce Human Rights violations - violence against women and other vulnerable sections of society

Strategies adopted

- I. Empowerment of Community Based Organizations and using them as vehicles for awareness building, promotion of right to information, grooming of local leadership
- II. Sensitization on gender and democracy issues among public-private sector officials for ensuring equity and justice

Key Activities	Outputs	Targets Achieved	Field observations
Baseline survey to identify CBOs	60 CBOs identified	Galle - 20 Matara – 16 Habanatota - 24	Well defined strategy used to identify the right CBOs for this project, which helped in building partnership and cooperation with various stakeholders. Partnering government officials helped in setting up of ICs
Leadership trainings for CBOs	4 trainings for 120 leaders identified	80 women and 44 men trained as leaders to promote Democracy and Governance	Awareness on political participation has increased and has motivated especially women to participate in politics but denied tickets to contest. Retention of information imparted found to be low as there were no follow-up trainings.
Awareness Generation	300 camps held	8712 women and 1538 men attended the camps. Identified good and potential leaders. Awareness created on the	Created space for various stakeholders to come on a single platform to discuss issues of democracy and governance

	To cover 10,250 individuals	importance of exercising their votes	
Preparation and dissemination of IEC material	i. Community education handbook ii. Posters on election violence iii) Setting up 47 information centres iv).Display of information related to IEC at Information centres v) Gender and Democracy manual	40 IEC materials prepared. Widely disseminated across the community. Reached the elected representatives, students, practitioners and community leaders who are potential candidates in the elections.	40 IEC materials prepared included publications, manuals, handbooks, posters etc on the issues pertaining to democracy and governance, gender, VAW. IEC material developed in simple language has helped the community at large, particularly elected representatives, practitioners, students, community leaders. This was a new learning to the readers about their democratic rights and how to seek accountability and transparency from the elected leaders. Awareness level increased.
Conducted Multi-stakeholder meetings on Democracy and Good Governance	3 meetings conducted	Electorates, elected leaders, officials from government and private, CBOs and SHGs shared a single platform to discuss about democracy and good governance	Enabled to create a platform where different stakeholders came together to share and learn about democracy and good governance. It also provided an interface between the electorate and their elected leaders
Developing and strengthening SHGs	250 SHGs formed	Created a pool of politically aware persons, largely women in the community and encouraged them to exercise their political rights and address cases of VAW in their area	Women got aware about where to file cases about VAW. They felt the need to build pressure groups to negotiate for tickets to contest election.
Educational trainings on gender and equality for government and private sector	30 trainings held covering 844	Helped to gender sensitise 616 females and 228 males so that they would be able to discharge their duties properly. They would	Helped women to vote the right candidate on their own. Demand for more trainings with continuity.

	government and private sector functionaries	help in ensuring democracy and good governance.	Too many topics covered in short duration thus, nullifying the effect
Prepared 30 sec TV messages to create awareness on election in Sinhala and Tamil languages for telecast	Telecast over a month, 4 times a day	Wider coverage, creating awareness on voting rights	Helped the community to participate in voting irrespective of the fear of violence and to identify a right candidate as their leader.

Analysis

The IA has completed the project work as per the proposal and the outcome of the activities is evidenced through the discussions with the different stakeholders of the project.

Salient observations on the project:

- Awareness about Democracy and Governance increased
- Women evincing interest to enter political processes
- Violence during election reduced
- Government functionaries evincing interest in learning about new issues and its application as part of their official duties
- Partnership of civil society and government has enabled important information dissemination to empower people exercise their voting rights
- Opening of ICs at the Pradeshiya Sabha level has helped information reach out to village based communities
- Selection of candidates in recent elections was through informed choice
- Selecting educated candidates and new comers who had worked for the community, such as:
 - Mr. Nishantha Muthuhettigamma - Galle
 - Mr. Sanath Jayasuriya - Matara
 - Mr. Namal Rajapaksha - Hambantota
- Grassroots level awareness camps facilitated mobilization of women and with knowledge about laws for women, several women broke their silence and spoke about domestic violence and sought avenues for recourse
- Developed partnerships with government, private, media, academicians etc, who contributed in different ways to promote the aim of the initiative - Democracy and Good Governance.

C. Achievement of Project Outputs

The key stakeholders of the project were:

- Community Based Organisations
- Self Help Groups
- Government functionaries
- Private sector representatives
- Media practitioners
- Women and vulnerable groups

I. Interaction with 6 CBOs brought forth the following insights

- Many CBOs were associated with SDF even before the launch of this Project, and were formalized as partners for this project through the process of the baseline survey, and new CBOs were identified based on the criteria developed
- CBO members who had undergone training expressed the utility of the training, as new issues were discussed and the importance of voting was emphasised.
- Efforts to spread the message in the community have been initiated, but the feedback from the majority was that holding just one or two Community Awareness Programmes with a duration of about two and half hours was not sufficient to create awareness.



CBO meeting in Galle

- Several CBO members supported a quota for women on the lines of the 35% quota provision in the elections for youth, to facilitate women's entry into politics
- According to the CBO members, more women had exercised their vote in the recent elections compared to earlier, as election violence was less and there was more awareness among women on the need to cast their vote.
- There was an unanimous demand for continuing the programme as it had begun to generate interest in the community, in promoting women's participation in politics

- There is need for more women to enter politics, since only then women's concerns will get attention and addressed through which a gender perspective can be introduced for Democratic Governance

(Report of meeting Annexure2)

II. Discussions with Government and Private sector functionaries brought forth the following issues:

- ◆ Entering politics continues to be a huge challenge for women.
- ◆ The need for follow-up trainings to keep up the interest generated was strongly articulated
- ◆ Government functionaries found the training useful as it provided them information about their rights that they lacked as citizens, and responsibilities as government servants
- ◆ More information on Democracy and Gender Rights, as also more copies of the SDF material to be kept in the information centres, was sought, to enable people to read and acquire knowledge about democracy, governance and gender rights.
- ◆ The project is well timed and a much needed democratic rights are openly violated
- ◆ It has helped in conveying the importance of voting and selection of better candidates. *(Report of meeting Annexure1)*

III. Points emerging from FGDs held with 5 SHGs

- It was useful awareness and information for the community
 - SHG members expressed the need for more such awareness programmes to reach out to the community at large and women in particular
 - Information on women's rights and where to file complaints against domestic violence was found to be extremely useful, as this is a major problem in the region
 - Potential women leaders are not given tickets to contest elections
 - Fear of election violence and other forms of coercion prevented people, more so women, from casting their vote. But this time, women not only voted but also did so out of their own will.
 - Earlier, people were not aware that every ballot paper has a number.
 - Women requested for regular legal literacy inputs to make them aware of their legal rights
 - Women supported advocacy programmes seeking seat quota in elections
 - The project has flagged key issues for promoting democracy and needs to be continued for a longer duration
 - There is need for developing a long-term initiative to promote women's Participation, including advocacy for demanding a quota system
 - Exposure to neighbouring countries like India, where women's reservation has enabled thousands of women enter the local government is recommended.
- (Report of meeting Annexure3)*

I

Individual Interactions

Interviews with selected Government Officers, Private sector officers, Resource persons, Practitioners and Beneficiaries largely reiterated the issues already listed above. In addition, it highlighted the following:

- ▶ There are 72 organisations in the district of Galle. And of them SDF is an organisation of high credibility, and ideally suited to take up programmes on Democracy and Governance, as this pilot initiative has proved
- ▶ Such initiatives are important to strengthen Civil Society Partnerships
- ▶ Problems during elections:
 - Candidates are mostly anti-social elements
 - Indiscriminate use of muscle and money power is common
 - Party infighting due to use of multiple votes per individual
 - Alcohol distribution and abuse increases during elections
- ▶ Need to work more at the grassroots level and in rural areas
- ▶ Need to build partnerships and alliances across different sectors for influencing policy and governance
- ▶ Setting up information centres enables public to get information on Democracy, Good Governance and Gender Rights
- ▶ Focus is on building leadership from below
- ▶ Independent and strong women face a lot more resistance for entry into politics
- ▶ Trainings provide the space for discussing personal issues and sharing solutions
- ▶ Participation of minorities in the election very low
- ▶ Families dissuade women from entering politics
- ▶ People have very minimal knowledge about local government and its functions
- ▶ Lack of a right to information law makes it much easier for politicians and people in power to misuse their office

(Interview Annexure7)

3. OUTCOMES, IMPACTS AND SUSTAINABILITY

A. Outcomes

1) Enhanced participation in democratic processes from women and marginalized sections of society results in more broad-based representation and less electoral violence

The project has facilitated active participation of women in awareness generation campaigns. With the formation of 250 SHGs, women have been motivated and informed about the importance of their democratic rights, including the need for them to enter politics.

In Galle and in Matara, there is evidence of women in CBOs and SHG members who came forward to contest elections. Ultimately, they were not given tickets by the political parties, and those who contested were defeated through manipulation by established political forces. But, the brighter side is that the trainings and awareness imparted through this project have, to some extent, motivated a few women to enter politics and contest elections, such as Nilanthi (*Case Study*).

Discussions with the different stakeholders, CBOs, SHGs, government and private sector representatives articulated that in the recently held elections particularly at the Province and local government levels, the incidence of election violence had reduced, as a result of which, more women cast their vote.

2) Sensitization of administrative apparatus will ensure reduction in gender-based discrimination and respect for rights.

SDF's strategy design in introducing training as a key component of the project led to several hundred government functionaries becoming aware about their duties and responsibilities. Awareness on Democracy and Good Governance was appreciated, as many of them lacked awareness on issues.

The training module was developed through a consultative process, with the involvement of academicians, practitioners, government officers and civil society including women's organization leaders.

The training content was aptly selected with the following subjects:

- ▶ Democracy and Good Governance with reference to the Sri Lankan Constitution
- ▶ Protection of Human Rights
- ▶ Empowerment of women to increase their participation in politics

- ▶ Election rules and regulations
- ▶ Minimising election violation

The trainings helped in sensitizing and facilitating the administrative apparatus to become a partner in dissemination of information to the people in the Southern Province. This was evidenced through the setting up of 47 information centres across the three districts of Galle, Matara and Habanatotota. Discussions with the administrative functionaries elicited demand from them for more ICs to be set up, especially in remote areas of the districts.

It was also observed that through the legal information imparted through trainings and information dissemination packs, awareness on gender rights has created a climate where issues related to gender based discrimination is being addressed. (*Best Practice of IC*)

B. Impacts

By virtue of its critical relevance and through appropriate interventions, within a short period of time, the project has been able to reach out to a good number of key stakeholders - women, community, public and private sector, who have been able to enhance their capacity to exercise their democratic rights and address gender discrimination, particularly on issues such as domestic violence.

The project has also taken into consideration a wide range of stakeholders who have been sensitized on gender justice, voter education, democracy and good governance through awareness campaigns, trainings and information dissemination. The various interventions by the project resulted in formation of an alliance of youth, a noteworthy achievement.

The project has also been able to motivate women to realize the importance of political participation. SHG members have articulated their interest in entering local governance. They also expressed the need to create women's pressure groups in the community that will strengthen and promote women's political participation.

CBOs have articulated that for reaching out to more women, networking with other CBOs in the area and developing an alliance would be required to mobilize and motivate more women for political participation.

The intervention has made efforts to reach out to vulnerable sections, such as minority groups and people with disability, but the initiative is still very limited. There is need to address this section in a more concerted and planned way in the future.

However, the impact of the project is visible with women gaining better understanding of their situation. But the project has had limited interventions in the area of advocacy and alliance-building, an area that deserves attention.

C. Sustainability

The evaluation has tried to analyse the sustainability aspect of the project by taking into consideration the components, around which the basic interventions were being made:

- a) Training to inform, provide knowledge and sensitise relevant actors on democracy, governance and gender rights
- b) Leadership training for CBOs to prepare and develop a pool of trainers
- c) Setting up information centres for easy accessibility of information for the urban and rural communities, with the support and collaboration of the government.

Information is power. Therefore, it is assumed that the first component would at least promote a cadre of individuals, particularly within the government who would respond with responsibility to the duties and tasks entrusted to them. This would in turn help in improving governance.

The second intervention would have created a pool of trainers, who would be equipped and capacitated for awareness generation. The process is expected to facilitate in developing an informed climate on issues of democracy, governance and gender rights.

The third intervention of information dissemination in fact needs to be recognized as a sustainable intervention, right from its start. Nested within the government set-up, where a government functionary, the librarian managing the centre, in itself is illustrative of such an effort towards providing stability for it to continue beyond the project period.

However, it would be presumptuous to imagine that, sustainability can be achieved as the subject being addressed is new. The beginnings have been made, but much requires to be done for sustainability to be achieved.

4. LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

A. Lessons Learned

Strengths and challenges

The report has tried to analyze the strengths and challenges of the project in terms of its strategies adopted for implementation of the project.

Strengths

- A well designed strategy reaching out to different key stakeholders like women, CBOs, Government and Private Sector functionaries (*reached out to several hundreds of people both in urban and rural areas - matrix on pg 15,16 details this*)
- SDF is a recognized and credible organization, with a good track record of two decades of work. It has as part of its work engaged closely with the government and other key actors such as policy makers, government, politicians, media, private sector etc for engagement in the project.
(*Earlier work with UN agencies on issues of HIV/AIDS etc provided SDF the opportunity for close engagement with government, facilitating government participation in the project*)
- Building partnership and cooperation with the Government for information Dissemination (*Information centres serving as a hub for information - best practice details this on pg 26*)
- Developed useful IEC material with new and relevant information (*approximately 40 materials developed with relevant information in simple language, easily understood helped in promoting new learnings*)
- Involving government officers as partners, facilitating setting up of 47 ICs
- Focusing on women as Peer Educators and Change Agents through the SHG base to reach out to women in the community by building awareness and motivating them to exercise their vote and to participate in politics.(*Formation of SHGs primarily women specific*)
- Provided a platform for different stakeholders to come together and discuss Issues of Democracy and Governance.(*Democracy Dialogues served as a good convergence base, including the trainings detailed in the matrix pg 15,16*)
- The project helped in interacting with different players as a result of which it helped in bringing many youth together on a common platform which led to the formation of Saviya Youth Alliance
- Provided an interface between grassroots level women and elected leaders promoting accountability and transparency (*Through this interface, the problem of*

the health problem of a young poor girl who required urgent treatment and had no means for it, was raised. The elected leader whose constituency she belonged to was present at this interface and he announced he would contribute his one month's salary for her treatment.)

- SDF received the support of the Chief Minister, Provincial Commissioner and his office staff, the three district secretaries of Galle, Matara and Habantota, officers of Ministry of national integration and Mayors and Chairman of municipal, urban councils and pradeshiya sabhas.

Challenges

- Retention of information imparted in the trainings was low, as no follow-up training is planned. *(The issues taken up were new and while it was very useful to stakeholders, but as most of the trainings were one off, by the end of the project, many trainees had poor retention)*
- Training module covered several topics in the one day training including important issues like HIV/AIDS and Child Rights which are important, but as Democracy was the key subject and relatively new to many, it was not easily absorbed.
- Women's Rights largely focused on Domestic Violence within the wide canvas of violence against women largely due to paucity of time and also due to the training module design.
- Initially get the support of the Government was not easy as they were unable to see the value of this initiative, particularly the officers at the lower levels.
- Project duration inadequate as the issues of Democracy, Gender Rights and Governance in Southern Province were new and more time was required to understand them before translating into action
- Initiative spread too thin in an effort to cover all the three districts of Southern province
- The outreach among rural women is limited and needs more networking with local CBOs working in those areas
- There is no clear plan drawn up for the 124 community leaders developed through the project to enable them to take the issues forward.

B. Best Practices

Information Centre

SDF has initiated the setting up of 47 ICs across the three districts of the Southern Province. This was made possible through the support, cooperation and collaboration of the Government. It received legitimacy and credibility within the state establishment, as it was inaugurated by the Chief Minister, who offered complete support to SDF's initiative. It is appreciable that the government has not just limited itself to providing space for the information center, but has also extended the services of the librarian to service it, since the location of the ICs is within the government library in the three districts.

In each of the ICs a poster is exhibited in a prominent place at the entrance, providing information on Democracy, Governance and Rights and other relevant Human Rights issues. A total of 40 publications have been provided, kept in a separate cupboard in some ICs or displayed on a desk in some. This is commonly referred to as the SDF's information window. The materials here are:

- * Constitution related
- * Human Rights
- * Democracy and good governance
- * Election processes
- * Women and child rights
- * Labour laws

These are just some of the listings. There are also leaflets available on similar issues. There are handbooks and manuals for easy reading and application. Care has been taken to provide the literature in simple and easily understood language. The information is available bilingually, in Sinhala and Tamil.

On an average, about 20 persons visit the SDF information point.



Some of the responses and views on this initiative have emerged as follow:

- A mobile library was needed to reach out to rural people living in remote areas
- The small booklets and leaflets are popular
- Women visit the IC to enquire about where they can get help on VAW
- Despite the distances, rural people seeking information on the issues listed above have visited the IC, and this was due to the fact that a major publicity campaign was done to make this facility known as widely as possible.

Case Study

Ammugodege Nilanthi Chandralekha from village Brakmanawatha South, Galle district, is a 34-year-old unmarried woman. She is an active community worker and in 1995 joined the Sarvodaya Shramadan Samiti as their founder member. The organization gradually developed into Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Services focusing on issues of livelihood, leadership training, micro finance credit and thrift among the rural poor particularly among women. Currently, she is the Director of the savings programme,

Through the SDF project, she underwent training on Democracy and Good Governance. The exposure generated interest in her to enter politics in order to introduce rural issues in the governance agenda. That the UNP party had no members from her village at the local level made it easier to enter politics.



In the 2010 elections of the local government, on the public demand from her village and having read the SDF publication on 'A Democratic Initiative for Women', Nilanthi was enthused to contest the elections. She was clear that in politics, family connections and leadership qualities are a prerequisite, both of which she had. Her objective to enter politics was to address the issue of waste management, as this was a critical

concern in her area. Hers is a fishing village and she belongs to the fishing community. Nilanthi has no experience in politics, but social work is her forte and she is keen to plunge into politics.

Her experience with SLFP party was that they were willing to give her a ticket, but she would be put in the mature group as per her age. She lost out from being in the below-35 youth group. According to her, this was the result of infighting within the party as a party leader did not want to be pitted against against her as she was popular and therefore wanted her to be put in a group where her chances are slim. Ultimately, that is what happened. For Nilanthi, it was a learning.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The UNDEF project – ‘Civil Society Empowerment Project to promote Democracy’ to strengthen the voice of civil society, promote human rights, and encourage the participation of all groups in democratic processes is a project with laudable goal and objectives. The gains made by the project in Sri Lanka have been mentioned in this report.

However, it is too ambitious to hope to achieve the larger goal of effective democracy with women’s active participation in politics, in just two years. It is strongly recommended that the issues mentioned be considered while promoting the next phase of the project.

Actions Suggested

Donor

- UNDEF primarily supports projects only for two years and this is often done in a different country each year with an effort to pilot an innovation. Perhaps, there is need to revisit and review the policy and ways of promoting the project sustainability.
- To be eligible for UNDEF grant, the implementing partner seeks a UN partner. The role of the UN partner, in this case UNODC which served as the executing agency, also had the responsibility of monitoring and overseeing the project. To be able to technical oversight effectively, adequate resource provisioning is required, as monitoring involves periodic travel which is limited with the funding currently allocated, limiting the executing agency’s ability to support the implementing organisation.
- The project has been appropriately timed for SL and it has flagged key issues to promote democracy and needs to be continued for a longer duration.
- It has generated interest among women in particular and the community at large on the importance of voting and promoting democracy. SDF has sowed the seed of interest and it is necessary that it is nurtured and allowed to bloom, so that the issue does not wane.
- As UNDEF’s focus is to enhance women’s political participation, it is necessary to develop a long-term initiative to promote women’s participation in politics, including a strong advocacy initiative to demand for reservation of seats for women
- It is suggested that a component of experiential learning should be introduced in such projects, by facilitating exposure to neighbouring countries where women’s reservation has enabled thousands of women enter the local government. eg., India

- The project term should last 3-5 years and work through through a full election cycle, to actually be able to realize the objective of practicing democracy and promoting women's entry into governance

Donor and SDF

- The next phase should focus on developing a team of trainers for sustainability of the Initiative
- If UNDEF cannot continue to fund the SDF project, it should facilitate the project to explore alternative funding by identifying donors and enabling the NGO to link with them
- The project focus should shift to advocacy with policy makers, ToTs of selected leaders and concerted awareness campaigns at the grassroots level
- It is advisable to extend the project for another phase to consolidate the gains made and create an enabling environment for advocating women's reservation in local, regional and national elected bodies
- SDF has facilitated in the development of a Youth Alliance, whose capacities should be developed to become partners in:
 - i) promoting women's participation and
 - ii) combating gender based violence
- Enhancing women's political participation intervention should be implemented at two Levels:
 - a) Policy makers and
 - b) Community
- Advocacy requires a two-pronged thrust:
 - b) Policy advocacy aimed at policy makers and legislators
 - b) Community-led advocacy to strengthen grassroots democracy, identify good leaders and encourage women to enter politics.

6. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

During its two-year period, the project has kindled considerable interest among women and the community, over issues affecting women and the marginalized people in particular and the community at large. Furthermore, it has identified potential rural women leaders who have evinced interest to enter the portals of local governance. Women have been the key players in the project. Therefore, it is necessary that the interest elicited among them is promoted and honed to reach another level, by supporting another phase focusing exclusively on women, to enable them to assert their democratic rights as equal citizens of SL.

The project is a good example of not only promoting a climate to spread the importance of democracy and good governance, but also of evincing interest among women to take active interest in securing their political rights, disseminating and deepening information on ways of addressing gender-based discrimination and VAW.

The project was designed for the target constituency. SDF very aptly identified Government as its partner. Their 20-year track record in the civil society sector was instrumental in securing the support and collaboration of the Chief Minister and other senior politicians and government officers to the initiative.

The high-relevance project should be supported for an additional phase, for focusing on building alliances across the country and develop a research-policy advocacy-action design with the sole agenda of ensuring women's entry into politics, to press for affirmative action.

The evaluation strongly recommends the continuation and replication of the project on a wider canvas, to ensure that the impact is more visible and measurable.

7.

Annexure 1

Meeting with Public and Private Sector- Galle

Public here means Government, and the private sector representatives here were represented by civil society, primarily NGOs and CBOs. About 15 individuals participated in the discussion. There was just one person from the government present. There were just a couple of men and the rest were all women. All of them had attended the trainings organized by Saviya Development Foundation to promote Democracy and Good Governance. All of them felt that the trainings were useful and they got deeper insights on the following issues:

- *Importance of voting*
- *The right to complain*
- *Elected leaders should be aware of their responsibilities to promote the principles of democracy*
- *Knowledge on their Constitutional Rights to empower them to assert their rights as citizens*
- *52% of the country's population are women and their participation in the political process is much less as they are uninformed-----therefore the need to be aware, especially if they are contesting elections as informed individuals are critical to make good leaders or even if they have to guide others to promote good governance*

Some of the new learnings that these trainings provided were as cited below:

- *Civil law*
- *What are the basic rights as citizens*
- *How political pressure is interfering in the functioning of bureaucracy*
- *The importance of creating pressure groups to promote democracy*
- *The need to build alliances and create a common platform to voice the need of democratic good governance*
- *Issues that hitherto were invisible were made visible vis-à-vis people's rights*

Unanimously they agreed that the information centers set up are very useful, as they provided lot of information which many of them use as and when require. Sharing their experience about elections prior to 2009, when this project was initiated, they observed that there was:

- *Much violence*
- *Harassment and pressure to influence choice of vote*
- *Large numbers of proxy voting*
- *No manifestoes*
- *Lack of awareness among them on the importance of their vote and hence did not come forth to exercise their franchise*
- *No opportunity for women to participate in politics*
- *Lower voter turnout resulting in low voting percentage*
- *No confidence among people in democratic processes*

Post 2010, when the project was initiated with a series of multifarious activities to promote democracy and good governance, the participants in the FGD said they observed the following in the areas where SDF operated in partnership with local CBOs:

- *Women were coming forward to enter politics*
- *People were exercising informed choice in selection of the candidate*
- *There was a better understanding that political leaders fanned sectarianism creating division among people, but once elected, the leaders joined hands, leaving their electorate in the lurch*
- *Awareness is rising among women about the need for a quota in the elected offices on the line of the 35% quota for youth, and they are talking about a quota of at least 20-30 per cent*
- *Primarily, women who enter politics are relatives of political leaders*
- *Political parties giving opportunities to women is pure tokenism and strong and independent women are excluded*

Meeting in progress in Matara



Deputy Mayor Matara speaks

The participants were very vocal about the need for women to enter the political arena and they listed the following to justify women's political participation:

- *In the current political environment, women's needs are ignored*
- *Issues lack a women's perspective*
- *Women's approach will tend to be a non-conflict one*
- *Women are not adequately represented in decision-making positions, though they are the ones who are involved and are mobilised at the mass level*
- *Informed and strong women are excluded from political processes, and the poor and ignorant ones are encouraged as they can be manipulated*
- *Women have the potential to develop the country*

Finally, at the concluding the discussion, participants collectively articulated that the initiative has been extremely useful and had laid the foundation in creating an interest in the political process.

They strongly articulated that there was a need for this process to be nurtured and that it should be more grassroots-based. Some of the other suggestions for the future were:

- *To equip the information centres with new technology*
- *Strengthen the informal platform created, which provided the opportunity for participation of various sectors such as; police, media, government functionaries, private sector etc, who identified their limitations and realised the need to strengthen participation.*
- *A concerted bottom -up approach is required for the future*

Annexure 2

FGDs were conducted with the following CBOs:

Galle

Mother's Health Organisation
Navodaya Dakshina lanka

Matara

Ulara East Gram Samvardhane
Jayladgama Women's Samiti

Habanatota

Saviya Community based organisation
Dakshin Mitrat Praja Samvardhane

Meeting with CBOs- Mausaukhya Samvidhana (Mother's Health Organization)

Saviya had identified this CBO to partner in its project on Democracy and Good Governance through a baseline survey that had been conducted. The CBO has a membership of 30 women. The organization focus is to protect women's health and guide women for livelihood through self-employment opportunities. The chairperson of the organization is Lalilini Jaisekare. About 6 members were present at this meeting.

Four members of this CBO underwent the trainings conducted by Saviya. They listed the issues under as those that they got information about:

- I. CEDAW*
- II. Domestic Violence*
- III. Election Violence*
- IV. Child Abuse*
- V. Voting rights*
- VI. HIV/AIDS Prevention*

The members shared that the training had helped them in several ways:

- It increased their knowledge about election processes*
- They were motivated to work on the issue*
- Built their confidence and empowered them to also address their own family situations*
- They were encouraged and emboldened to vote independently*

They shared that since only 4 of them got the opportunity to attend the trainings they in turn shared their learnings with other members. Besides, they also introduced these issues in the youth organizations and other women's organizations working in the area and with whom MS works. Though they carried the message of importance of Democracy and good governance to

the women in the community, they shared that it was a challenge to motivate women. Due to poverty, women were willing to come only if some incentive was offered and it is a major challenge in mobilizing women. However, the CBO members felt that as they have to promote women's political empowerment. There was no question of turning back irrespective whether this project continued or not, as they are associated with other projects of SDF and will integrate this aspect into that work. They also expressed that they would like to develop more CBOs through this awareness process.



Meeting with CBO

Achievements

Despite the short period of this project, MS informed that they were able to do the following:

- *Able to check women's harassment*
- *Tackle male domination*
- *Participate in political campaigns which they were unable to do earlier*
- *Exercise their vote independently*
- *Learnt to interact with the politicians to bring to their notice community needs, demanded accountability and transparency from the politicians*

Through such interface with a local politician, the plight of a mentally challenged and ailing girl in Galle was brought to his notice and he immediately contributed a month's salary for her treatment. She is now being cared for under the guidance of the CBO.

Suggestions:

In Sri Lanka, women were in large numbers in all sectors, such as the economy, the government, academic institutions etc, but their presence was dismally low in politics, CBO members said. They feel a concerted effort was required to change this scenario and they pointed out the following:

- *The need for the effort to promote women's participation should be strengthened*
- *Importance to promote women's rights awareness to enable women become empowered to claim their rights and check VAW*
- *Need for political education to develop a cadre of leaders, particularly among women*
- *It was reiterated that the project must be continued for a period of 3-5 years to achieve real sustainability*

Annexure 3

FGD with CBO- Navodaya Dakshina Lanka Women

The CBO had membership from three villages, Kandavath, Madapathe and Gallevade. Members included Muslim, Tamil and Sinhala women. Their total membership is 100. The CBO was earlier associated with a HIV-AIDs programme of SDF and through the baseline survey was identified to partner in the Democracy and Good Governance project.

Only 2 women had the opportunity to attend the educational trainings organized by SDF. Sixty women participated in the grassroots level awareness campaign, and four of them were present at the FGD. An awareness campaign was also held among the Muslim youth, where 46 youth participated, among whom 34 were women.

It was shared that post the training and the awareness campaign; it has made them now realize:

- *The importance of their vote*
- *The need to select the right candidate*
- *To seek accountability from the elected representative*

The women shared that the campaign made them aware of issues related to the elections, but on hearing about women's rights, women in the community, including some CBO members broke their silence and articulated problems affecting them as women. These were largely related to marital issues and family issues. Some of the issues were taken up by the CBO and were addressed subsequently by providing the necessary advice with Saviya's support.

Interestingly, the CBO members identified clearly the following reasons for women hesitating to enter politics:

- *Fear of character assassination*
- *Political meetings held at timings not convenient for women*
- *Lack of conducive environment*
- *Criminalization and muscle power in politics*
- *Money power*

They said former President of the CBO had come forward to contest elections, but was denied a ticket to contest.

The trainings and awareness programmes have helped in the following ways:

- *Created awareness on women's rights*
- *Information on addressing domestic violence*
- *Importance of creating a conducive climate in the future*
- *Advocate for the right kind of candidate*

They suggested:

- *Need for more such programmes at the community level*
- *Need for more political education and political training for identified potential women leaders*
- *Awareness and motivation programmes among the youth*
- *Identifying and developing leadership among the youth*
- *Preparing the youth to face the society and take up responsibilities as citizens*
- *Long term regular training programmes to achieve the above*

Annexure 4



Meetings with CBOs and SHGs in Matara and Habantota



Annexure 5

Focus Group Discussion SHG -Village Mihindu Mamalhe, Galle

There are 6 mixed-gender SHGs in this area. Women are in the majority in the groups. Eight women and two men participated in the FDG. The total number of members of the SHG is 30, of which 6 attended the trainings. The issues that were discussed were:

- *Good Governance and how to be a responsible citizen*
- *Women's empowerment*
- *Importance and use of vote*
- *Selection of proper leader*
- *Voting independently*

During the project period, three elections were held, general, provincial and Local government. The members claimed that due to the awareness campaign held in their area, they were informed about the importance of the above mentioned issue. Thus during the local election they were able to apply some of these learnings, namely:

- *Identifying a leader who would work for the constituency*
- *Selecting a leader who is educated*
- *Exercising free choice as a voter*

The women mentioned that they are keen to elect a woman leader. One of the members was interested, but she did not get a ticket. The women articulated that it is important for women to come into politics as they have equal rights according to their Constitution and women have the capacity and should be there to represent women's rights.

Spreading the information they received on Democracy and Good Governance through the trainings and the awareness campaigns, it was first conveyed to their family members, and neighbours. As the members also participated in the programmes of other CBOs, this was used as an opportunity to share about the awareness campaign on Democracy and Good Governance.

Some of the women shared that previously they voted according to what was decided by the family, whereas this time they did it independent of the decision. Women have realized that they need to claim their rights and that it is necessary for women to become leaders so that women's issues can be focused on.

Suggestions:

- *The awareness programmes were only for two and half hours, hardly sufficient to make any real impact and therefore there is need to have more such programmes with more time like a training schedule.*
- *It was felt that a one day training at the village level would be useful*

Annexure 6 Field visits and discussion held from 7th -16th November 2011

Districts	Stakeholders	Number of persons
GALLE	<i>Government</i>	2
	<i>FGD with Government & Private</i>	15
	<i>Private</i>	1
	<i>Elected Representatives</i>	1
	<i>Individuals/ Case studies</i>	1
	<i>CBOs - 2 FGDs</i>	6 + 3
	<i>SHGs – 2 FGDs</i>	10 + 14
	<i>Information Centre</i>	1
MATARA	<i>Government</i>	2
	<i>FGD – Government & Private</i>	24
	<i>Individuals/ Case studies</i>	1
	<i>CBOs – 2 FGDs</i>	3 + 6
	<i>SHGs – 1 FGD</i>	12
	<i>Information Centre</i>	1
HABANATOTA	<i>Government</i>	2
	<i>FGD with Government & Private</i>	22
	<i>Individuals/ Case studies</i>	2
	<i>CBOs – 2 FGDs</i>	3 + 3
	<i>SHGs -2 FGDs</i>	7 + 12
	<i>Information Centre</i>	1
Project – Training Resource Persons		2
Total individuals interacted		157

Number of FGDs conducted with various stakeholders

Districts	Stakeholders	FGDs
Galle	Government & Private	1
	CBOs	2
	SHGs	2
Matara	Government & Private	1
	CBOs	2
	SHGs	1
Habanatota	Government & Private	1
	CBOs	2
	SHGs	2
TOTAL		14

In addition there were interviews conducted with individuals from the above sectors in all the three districts.

Annexure 7
Project participants Analysis

Activity 01 : 120 leaders were trained in community based organizations to promote democracy in their areas.

District	Male	Female	Total
Galle	8	23	31
Matara	22	24	46
Hambantota	14	33	47
Total	44	80	124

Activity 2

Conduct 30 educational programs for public and private sector officers

District	Male	Female	Total
Galle	82	242	324
Matara	59	221	280
Hambantota	87	153	240
Total	228	616	844

Activity3

Conduct 300 awareness programs on democracy and good governance .

District	Male	Female	Total
Galle	893	4717	5610
Matara	386	2399	2785
Hambantota	259	1596	1855
Total	1538	8712	10,250

Annexure 8

Interview with Mr. Madduma Kankanamalage Bandula Harishchandra, Additional Dist Secretary- Galle

He is the senior most government officer in the district. He is among officers who have been supportive and promotes civil society action. Despite his busy schedule, he attended a couple of the SDF programmes as Resource Person and also sat through a couple of training sessions.

His impressions about SDF were as follows:

- SDF has through this project reached out to different strata of the society, with a special focus on poor women through their partner CBOs.
- A very effective intervention for the government persons on providing information on Democracy
- Trainings on the negotiation process on rights of the people, selection of candidates etc are useful inputs.
- Giving special attention to promote women's entry into politics is laudable and this is already beginning to show some changes. Women are becoming informed about their rights and coming forward.
- Building awareness on democratic rights and he stated that there has been a slight change in the voting pattern more recently.
- A very important aspect of this project is the strengthening of civil society partnership.

He reiterated similarly as the others on the problems related to elections, such as:

- Candidates are anti-social elements
- Money and muscle power
- Previously there was a lot of violence which had reduced this time
- Party infighting
- Alcohol a major concern during elections

His suggestions were:

1. To work more concertedly with women and youth
2. Try and develop individuals as models for others to imitate and emulate as examples of exemplary behaviour
3. Develop a cadre of leaders who are people friendly and sensitive
4. Extension of the project period by another 3-5 years to ensure that it makes some visible impact on the forthcoming provincial and probably also general elections

Annexure 9

Main Political Parties in Sri Lanka

- Sri Lanka Freedom Party
- UPFA Party
- People's Alliance United National Party
- United National Front
- Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
- Sri Lanka Muslim Congress
- Tamil National Alliance
- Ceylon Workers' Congress
- EPDP Party
- Jathika Hela Urumaya
- Lanka Sama Samaja Party
- Sri Lanka leftist parties
- Liberal Party of Sri Lanka
- Mahajana Eksath Peramuna
- Sinhalaye Mahasammatha Bhoomiputra Pakshaya
- Up-Country People's Front

Annexure 10

Election Results

Local Authority Election – Galle -2011

Local Authority	Valid votes	%	Rejected Votes	%	Total polled		Registered electors
Galle M.C	42,494	97.30	1,179	2.70	43,673		64,720
Ambalangoda U.C	12,024	96.56	428	3.44	12,452	74.93	16,618
Balapitiya P.S	32,544	95.92	1,386	4.08	33,930	67.17	50,513
Ambalangoda P.S	28,321	95.94	1,200	4.06	29,521	70.18	42,064
Karandeniya P.S	29,144	95.65	1,326	4.35	30,470	65.90	46,240
Bentota P.S	26,130	96.34	994	3.66	27,124	73.45	36,930
Neluwa P.S	14,273	95.40	688	4.60	14,961	77.72	19,250
Tawalama P.S	15,695	95.25	782	4.75	16,477	72.34	22,776
Nagoda P.S	28,623	95.90	1,223	4.10	29,846	74.70	39,957
Niyagama P.S	19,687	96.12	794	3.88	20,481	74.91	27,340
Yakkalamulla P.S	23,075	95.84	1,002	4.16	24,077	73.54	32,741
Hikkaduwa U.C	14,799	96.59	522	3.41	15,321	72.50	21,131
Bope –Poddala P.S	27,313	95.99	1,142	4.01	28,455	65.58	43,388
Habaraduwa P.S	29,622	96.35	1,122	3.65	30,744	70.23	43,779
Welivitiya-Divitura	14,937	95.79	657	4.21	15,594	71.62	21,772
Rajgama PS	35,811	95.78	1,579	4.22	37,390	69.03	54,167
Imaduwa PS	21,762	96.04	898	3.96	22,660	68.63	33,017

Local Authority Election – Matara -2011

Local Authority	Valid votes	%	Rejected Votes	%	Total polled	%	Registered electors
Matara MC	35,854	97.82	798	2.18	36,652		
Weligama UC	11,403	97.53	289	2.47	11,692	74.50	15,694
Kotapola PS	23,000	94.34	1,380	5.66	24,380	60.33	40,412
Hakmana PS	16,124	96.04	664	3.96	16,788	68.28	24,586
Mulatiyana PS	25,424	95.42	1,220	4.58	26,644	70.78	37,642
PasgodaPS	25,847	94.72	1,441	5.28	27,288	65.09	41,922
Malimbada PS	17,356	96.87	560	3.13	17,916	68.41	26,191
Kamburupitiya PS	20,038	95.83	873	4.17	20,911	67.66	30,908
Thihagoda PS	16,991	96.35	644	3.65	17,635	67.43	26,152
Devinuwara PS	20,897	96.34	795	3.66	21,692	62.58	34,662
Dickwella	26,114	96.31	1,000	3.69	27,114	67.09	40,413
Matara PS	20,074	96.17	799	3.83	20,873	69.26	30,135
Weligama PS	44,293	95.76	1,962	4.24	46,255	64.00	72,278
Pitabeddara	20,696	94.98	1,094	5.02	21,790	62.21	35,024
Kirinda-Puhulwella PS	10,482	96.58	371	3.42	10,853	68.68	15,803
Aturaliya PS	14,994	95.99	627	4.01	15,621	65.77	23,752

Local Authority Election – Hambantota -2011

Local Authority	Valid votes	%	Rejected Votes	%	Total polled	%	Registered electors
Hambantota MC	11,064	97.83	245	2.17	11,309		14,616
Suriyawewa PS	20,529	95.94	868	4.06	21,397		29,894
Hambantota PS	16,488	96.51	596	3.49	17,084		23,511
Tangalle UC	4,903	97.83	109	2.17	5,012	77.91	6,433
Weeraketiya PS	38,835	95.72	1,736	4.28	40,571	65.54	61,900
Katuwana PS	32,613	95.43	1,562	4.57	34,175	66.79	51,167
Beliatte PS	29,837	96.21	1,175	3.79	31,012	71.41	43,428
Tangalle PS	29,454	96.12	1,190	3.88	30,644	68.86	44,505
Angunakolapellesa PS	23,441	95.38	1,135	4.62	24,576	69.36	35,431
Ambalantota PS	32,941	95.83	1,432	4.17	34,373	66.98	51,320
Tissamaharama PS	30,688	96.42	1,141	3.58	31,829	67.07	47,454
Lunugamvehera PS	14,917	96.38	560	3.62	15,477	72.53	21,338

NOTE :

Women representatives in Local Authorities 2011– Southern Province

1. Ambalangoda UC - 01
2. Balapitiya PS - 01
3. Weligama UC - 01
4. Kirinda-Puhulwella PS - 01
5. Kotapola PS - 01
6. Tissa Mahaamays PS - 01

**Selected Women representatives in Provincial Council 2011-
Southern Province-01**

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