

CATALYZING CHANGE



February 2024

Looking back at yet another amazing year!



"It is hard to believe we are into our 8th year!"

While we had the ambition to succeed, we perhaps did not expect to be where we are today – a credible, valued, impactful, and financially viable local organisation making a significant contribution to Sri Lanka's inclusive growth. The relevance of our work with women and youth across the country continues to grow amidst the socio-economic and political crisis and people's desire to build a better country. Our work to build inclusive economic models, to engage women and youth as critical voices in the process of recovery, development, and growth of the country, to prevent gender-based violence, as well as our work to embrace diversity and build resilience is critical to addressing the current and future challenges in Sri Lanka.

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As we know, Sri Lanka continues to experience the aftermath of multiple crisis. It is impacting all of us, especially those already vulnerable and marginalised. We as an organization too, are caught in the storm both from external and internal factors.

While storms can create havoc, they can also clear our pathway to rejuvenate, strategize, and define new ways of working.

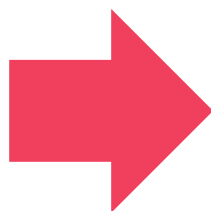
The most important factor that enabled our success is our TEAM, based across the country. Our diverse backgrounds, expertise, experience, leadership, and courage, are the envy of others in the sector. We continue to challenge ourselves and Chrysalis to be the best. I applaud my team who have worked hard and smart for the last seven years.

I also want to show my sincere appreciation to our partners from the government, private sector, civil society, and academia, who have stood by us and joined our journey, as well as donors who have invested in our work to end poverty and ensure social justice."

Ashika Gunasena
Chief Executive Officer



Chrysalis Today
7 offices
92 staff



Business Solutions offered by Chrysalis



Welcome on board, Anjana!

We are pleased to have on board a new Head of Finance, who is a highly qualified finance professional with extensive experience in the commercial sector – where she started her career – as well as the non-governmental sector. She has worked in different finance functions at the country, regional, and global levels. An Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) – U.K. – ACMA, her core skills include evaluating and implementing strong internal control mechanisms to safeguard organizational interests, developing detailed budgets to guide the organization toward its strategic goals, and ensuring adherence to budgets through the preparation of periodic monitoring reports for tactical decision-making, managing complex cashflows of an organization while ensuring optimization of financial resources as well as maintaining strong relationships with funding sources.



She is also exceptional at liaising, negotiating, monitoring, and managing relationships with external stakeholders such as donors, partners, regulatory authorities, and auditors.

We are excited to have Anjana leading and developing our finance team in Colombo and the districts, enabling them to maintain and strengthen our processes and efficiencies.

We are Chrysalis!



EMERGENCY RESPONSE



Chrysalis' Emergency Response addresses Sri Lanka's ongoing economic crises by reaching out to the most vulnerable communities affected by the worsening situation. Operating in Northern, Eastern, Central, and Uva provinces, as well as urban Colombo and 8 tea plantations, our emergency programming followed two phases: relief and recovery, while ensuring we address the gendered implications of the crisis. The main target groups are women-headed households, daily wage earners, households engaged in subsistence-level small-scale income-generating activities, families with disabled persons, tea plantation communities, and households dependent on micro, small and medium entrepreneurs through dry ration distributions, unconditional cash grants, and cash for work. Chrysalis also aims to strengthen community capacity for emergency preparedness and planning as supported by our existing long-term development programmes.

Supporting Women in the Apparel Sector

Low-wage workers in Sri Lanka's garment and apparel industry, specifically women, face urgent challenges in securing food and income and safeguarding their children's health. After a needs assessment conducted in the Free Trade Zones, 1,942 vulnerable individuals received dry ration packs and a cash grant of 5000/= in collaboration with Stand Up Movement Lanka (SUML). Additionally, 600 stationery vouchers were distributed to those with children requiring uniforms and stationery. Moreover, funding was allocated to conduct and sustain a community kitchen, ensuring SUML had the equipment to continue preparing meals beyond the project's end date. Finally, Chrysalis transformed the Well-Being Centre into a hub for psychosocial support, especially for the LGBTQIA+ community within the sector. The Centre's capacity was expanded to accommodate 8 persons comfortably, and a total of 14,092 individuals directly benefited from this intervention. Funding by **LULU LEMON** and **GAP INC.**

Helping families with food and getting children back to school

Implemented in the Jaffna district, Chrysalis exceeded expectations by helping 788 families instead of the planned 750. Dry ration packs consisting of flour, rice flour, dhal, sprats, chickpeas, cowpea, oil and soya meat were distributed to families in Point Pedro, home gardening kits were given out in Uduvil, and Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance equivalent to \$70 per family was distributed in Sandilippay.

Phase 2 consisted of 'Scaffolding Students' Safe Return to School'. This consisted of the distribution of 1000 school packs to 500 girls and 500 boys, and the establishment of 30 school nutritional gardens. Funding by **BUDDHIST GLOBAL RELIEF**.

SUPOSHI - Supporting the University of Colombo to provide a nutritious meal to under-graduates

The Suposhi lunch programme, provided subsidised lunches to students of the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo for 4 months. The lunches were provided four days a week and subsidised by Rs. 120 per lunch packet. This enabled the canteen to provide a fish lunch (with additional protein) for a cost of Rs. 100.00 and a vegetable lunch with yoghurt for Rs.100.00. The project was implemented using a QR code formulated for the project by Innovative-e Pvt. Ltd. The project was monitored by the Department of Sociology, the Dean's Office and the Youth Wellness Centre. 21,877 subsidised higher protein lunches were funded under the project. Funding from **WEINBERG FAMILY** through **CARE USA**.

Ensuring long term food security – Collaboration with the University of Peradeniya

During the second phase of the Suposhi project, Chrysalis collaborated with the University of Peradeniya's Alumni Association (AG00) in the Central Province, due to how their Faculty of Agriculture is leading the agricultural research on crop management with focus on the growing issue of food security in Sri Lanka amidst the economic crisis. The Faculty of Agriculture needed to expand its Tissue Culture and Micropropagation Laboratory to produce genetically identical plants for research, commercial purposes, and conservation. They will use the funding from the Weinberg donation to expand the training and production lab belonging to the existing laboratory facility. This investment aims to benefit individual agriculture students, enhance food security, elevate Peradeniya University's standing in plant biotechnology, and contribute significantly to Sri Lanka's sustainable development. Chrysalis' agreement with the University of Peradeniya was signed in Kandy on December 13th. Funding from **WEINBERG FAMILY** through **CARE USA**.

Emergency Preparedness Planning (EPP) Workshop

Supported by the CARE Regional Humanitarian Coordinator, the Chrysalis Emergency Response team was guided through potential risks, preparing for various scenarios, prioritizing Chrysalis' response strategy and ensuring that we found cohesion as an Emergency Response Team. The workshop was attended by emergency response staff based in Killinochchi, Kandy, Batticaloa, and Puttalam, as well as finance, administration, IT staff, programme heads and staff based in Colombo. The latest version of the EPP Workbook which outlines new roles and responsibilities for the Emergency Task Force (ETF) as decided at the EPP Workshop has been shared with the staff. Additionally, this helps us better understand Chrysalis' role in diverse emergencies, depending on their typology.

TRANSFORM: Transforming Social Norms to Promote Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in Northern Sri Lanka



Implemented from January 2020 to April 2023, TRANSFORM aimed to enhance democracy and human rights in Northern Sri Lanka by promoting gender equality, human rights, fundamental freedoms, and justice. The project was implemented with funding support from the European Union and in partnership with the Law and Society Trust (LST). The project sought to achieve its aim by enhancing the capacities of 300 women and 100 men, as well as strengthening 18 shared platforms in 5 districts in Northern Sri Lanka to challenge discriminatory social norms and structural barriers that continue to perpetuate gender-based discrimination and violate human rights and fundamental freedoms.

More than 350,000 individuals in the northern region of Sri Lanka benefitted indirectly from the project reach. During implementation, the project collaborated with a number of stakeholders including the Northern Provincial Council and Local Government, District Secretariats, Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL), Praja Mandala, Association for the Relatives of the Enforced Disappearing (ARED), Northern Province Consortium of Organizations for the Differently Abled (NPCODA), Journalist and Academics, Institution for Participatory Interaction in Development (IPID), and the Nucleus Foundation (NF). Diverse actors directly participated in the initiative including community leaders, Civil Society members (CSO), non-elected candidates, journalists, human rights defenders, Members of Parliament, etc.



TRANSFORM builds on Chrysalis's previous initiatives that promoted the capacity of women leaders to participate in local governance and promote human rights and gender equality. It is fully aligned with our overall goal of Inclusive Governance that recognizes the leadership and contribution of women and youth on Sri Lanka's socio-economic well-being, growth and development.

Key Outcomes of TRANSFORM:

1. Enhanced Agency of 300 women and 100 men to promote and protect gender equality, human rights, fundamental freedoms, and justice. 75.2% of participants reported increased capacity to engage in meaningful participation and decision-making at the local level through shared platforms. The project's agency-building initiatives empowered women to break barriers and become confident community leaders. The participants designed and implemented 15 initiatives that addressed local issues, including 05 advocacy-specific initiatives. Trained women leaders have become vocal on human rights issues and many are willing to contest for upcoming elections. Women and men leaders gained recognition at higher-level decision-making platforms owing to their proactive engagement in community development programmes. Advocacy and locally led initiatives have created tangible benefits to the broader population of Northern province such as awareness of LGBTIQIA+, social norm changes, etc.

2. 18 participant-led shared platforms were strengthened to promote human rights, fundamental freedom, and justice. The platforms enabled, for example, human rights defenders and leaders to report 131 human rights and fundamental violation cases through referral networks. The targeted platforms were strengthened through a series of capacity and knowledge-building workshops. 05 District Level Action Committees (DLACs) were established in the northern province, to support locally led initiatives addressing human rights, fundamental freedom and justice. Establishment of a community Governance Platform (CGP) enabled, enhanced engagement of people in governance, and to enhance the capacities of members in participatory governance, including the Right to Information (RTI) and political leadership of women to deal communities socio, economic, human rights, political issues. Referral networks established supporting human right defenders and others to refer and support those who's rights had been denied or violated.










"In meetings and forums where I usually participate, I have no fear and hesitance to open up to talk about gender-normative patriarchal malpractices that continue to hinder women from participating in the decision-making process. Before the TRANSFORM project, we were very reluctant to discuss many patriarchal social discriminatory practices in the forums openly." - An active participant of the forum



3. National-level discourse on gendered implications of rights, fundamental freedoms and thought, conscience, and religion was promoted to raise awareness and shift harmful norm practices. LST's participatory formative research on gendered discriminative norms was widely shared and discussed at the national and district level using different mediums such published materials, forum theatre, etc. LST's research on "Gender discriminatory social norms and their impacts on the rights and freedoms of women in the northern province", has developed new knowledge on discriminative social norms and their impacts on human rights and fundamental freedoms, highlighting the impact on women. LST had organized several sessions to disseminate the findings and issues a number of publication to create wider awareness among diverse stakeholders, including government officials, young people, community members etc.

Key social norms prevalent in the Northern Province	
1	Women should not talk in public places.
2	Wives should sustain their family lives at any cost.
3	Only men should engage in labour-intensive work.
4	Childcare is mainly the duty of women.
5	Cooking and household chores are mainly women's work.
6	Women should not go to police stations.
7	Women should not complain about their husbands.
8	Family members should not let women complain against sexual violence.
9	Female victims of sexual violence are unchaste.
10	Women should not complain against sexual violence.

Social practices that violate the religious freedoms of women	
Women/girls should not go to temple while they are menstruating.	ॐ
Women/girls should not play auspicious musical instruments.	
Women/girls should not be priests in the temples.	
Nuns should not conduct mass.	+
Reverend sisters cannot baptise.	
Women/girls should not pray when they are menstruating.	☾★
Women should not go to temples when they are menstruating.	☸
Women who go to temples should not touch the feet of the priests while prostrating.	
Women are not permitted to enter the upper floor of the Sri Maha Bodhi Temple, where the sacred tooth relic is kept.	
Women should cover their entire body when they go to the temple.	

General root causes for such social norms		
Male dominance /the patriarchal system 	Cultural norms 	Religious principles /traditions 
Security concerns 	Cultural values attached to the concept of chastity 	Concept of family honour 
Increased use of drugs 	Increased violence against women and girls 	Effects of war 

Icons by Freepik

“Those in power now listen to what I have to say.”

Ranisla Uthayakumar is a young, elected local council member of the Maritime Pattu Pradeshya Sabha of Mullaitivu district from the local government election held in 2018. She is an active member in the Mullaitivu district women's caucus and has participated in several capacity-building initiatives organized by Chrysalis. She observed, *“Starting from the previous Chrysalis projects, NET and SDGAP, I have learned a lot about leadership and the importance of women's participation in politics”*.



She had raised funds through crowdfunding initiatives to provide for girls' empowerment and reproductive issues. Ranisla is tirelessly engaged in creating awareness among women about the 25% quota for women and other political rights of women. *“Without the initiatives engagement and encouragement of women's political participation, I would not have been able to ingrain those skills”*.

Among her achievements, key are her being instrumental in passing a resolution to improve the welfare of women and children in the Maritime Pattu Pradeshya Shaba, engaging with the additional district secretary to create wider awareness on issues affecting communities such as advocating for the right landless families to 110 Acres of land in Andankulam G.N. division, her facilitating Arumuhathankulam village to obtain bus service from Mullaitivu town, and liaising with the Sri Lanka Electricity Board to provide electricity and street lights to the above.

She bravely said, *“Now I am capable of voicing against those injustices if they happen within my sights. I am not afraid of anyone and any forces I might encounter in addressing those issues. The power holders now listen to what I want them to listen to and take the necessary actions.*





"While engagement with other NGOs has improved my economy and the sustainability of my family, engaging in this work has equipped me with the skills and knowledge necessary to transform myself and my society."

"This action played a pivotal role for me to establish myself as a women leader and change maker in society. It has improved my political engagement and reinforced my rational thinking about why and how women play an important role in community transformation."

Kalaivany Srikanthan

Local Councilor, Karachchi Pradeshiya Shaba, Kilinochchi.



"I was not used to cooking and sharing household chores. After becoming a participant of TRANSFORM, I have started to share household chores with my wife. Though I work with various non-government agencies and humanitarian organizations, this process transformed my personal attitude towards equality for all. Nowadays I have started introducing myself by mentioning my wife's name first and then my surname."

Consalves Thayalarajan

Human Rights Activist and Treasurer of the Mannar Civil Society Organization Forum

"I was invited to a meeting at the Northern Provincial Council Governor's Secretariat to discuss the human rights issues in the region. I was able to fearlessly talk about gender inequality and rights issues that prevailed in the Mullaithivu district."

Suntharalingam Kalaichelvi

Non-elected member and community activist



How a community in Eastern Sri Lanka resolved a four-decade-old water problem!



In the heart of Nasivanthivu, a lagoon island tucked away in the Batticaloa district, an extraordinary transformation is underway. This is the compelling story of how a Praja Mandala, or Community Centre, emerged as the driving force for change within an isolated community, inspiring its residents to work towards equal access to resources in its wake.

Nasivanthivu has long been plagued by environmental resource-based conflicts, as highlighted in an assessment by UNDP and IUCN. The 510 families on the island are a geographically isolated Tamil community, that faced an arduous journey of 2 kilometres to the mainland in search of drinking water every day.



"We had good water way back, but due to excessive sand mining, our water resources became salty and caused a lot of dental issues among our children. This has caused us to rely on other communities for water, which wasn't easy. Transportation is a big issue; We have to rely on someone or their vehicle to travel there since there is no public transportation. We struggled a lot."

-Community member from Nasivanthivu

Funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Enhance Community Engagement project worked to solve environmental resource-based conflicts within the Batticaloa district. Primarily focused on supporting women's roles in resolving environmental resource-based conflicts, the project adopted an intersectional approach to understanding the unique challenges women face in the region. Additionally, the project focused on mobilising local leaders and communities to analyse the root causes of conflicts, lead these initiatives and develop essential skills to address these challenges effectively. Nasivanthivu in the Batticaloa district was selected as one of the locations, given its history of disputes between diverse communities.

The alternative was waiting for the infrequent water bowser dispatched by the Pradeshiya Sabha or paying Rs. 600 for a three wheeler to bring them 10 litres of water that last for just a few days. On the mainland, while there are one or two common water sources, they are situated just outside religious premises. This chronic struggle not only bred dependence but also strained relations between the island and mainland communities due to the specific locations of the limited water supplies, often fueled by ethnic divisions.

Countless politicians, even a former President, had come to the island, promising to solve this water crisis. However, with each visit and unfulfilled pledge, the community's trust in outsiders waned. Scepticism had taken root, and they had lost faith in political promises. Yet, this close-knit community was able to embark upon a remarkable journey of restoring trust and rekindling community spirit, all in pursuit of their shared, vital goal.

"In the past 18 months, the Community Center has helped us identify and understand the essential needs of our community. Among them, one of the most important issues we face is the water issue in our village. However, now that we are able to solve our water issue, we can focus on approaching other stakeholders to help us solve other issues that we face. It is the Community Centre that has empowered us to make this change in our lives". –

Community member from Nasivanthivu

A turning point arrived when the National Water Supply and Drainage Board (NWSDB) acknowledged the water supply challenge but agreed to provide a limited-hour water supply connection. Although the initial cost of supplying water was high, a heartening display of commitment followed as they revised the cost estimate from Rs. 8.07 million to Rs. 5.6 million – and provided free pipes along with this change.

Chrysalis secured Rs. 2 million from the UNDECE project, Rs. 1.6 million from the Women in Inclusive Governance project funded by BMZ, and an additional Rs. 1.5 million through a partnership with East Lanka Polysack, a private sector company. Notably, the Praja Mandala was able to rally the diasporic community to contribute over Rs. 500,000, marking a pivotal moment in the project's journey.

What are Community Centers?

'Praja Mandala (PM)', also known as 'Community Centers', are a community governance model that Chrysalis has chosen as a platform for marginalized and often excluded groups to become active and empowered citizens. The PMs are mandated to be inclusive of all the Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in a Grama Niladhari division, thereby representing all community segments i.e. women, youth, differently abled, poor, and different castes. A PM brings a village together as it has a representation of CBOs of a village. It is a legal entity recognized under the Pradeshiya Sabha (Village Council) Act of 1987. PMs are registered under the office of Assistant Commissioner of Local Government. They are legally recognized by the Sri Lankan Local Government system and come under the purview of Pradeshiya Sabhas.





Despite overcoming the financial hurdle, the path to resolving Nasivanthivu's water crisis was riddled with formidable challenges. Bidding issues, budget constraints, and an unexpected contract termination by a contractor tested the resolve of the project team and trust built with the community. Together with the NWSDB, Praja Mandala, and other stakeholders, they were able to navigate these hurdles.

After numerous delays and obstacles, the Pradeshiya Sabha is now actively constructing the vital water connection that will bring hope and relief to the residents of Nasivanthivu. This success extends beyond water; it is a testament to the transformative power of community-led initiatives. Leadership training has emboldened community members to tackle long-standing issues, including improving education opportunities.

With their biggest challenge, clean drinking water, on the path to resolution, the community now turns its attention to other pressing issues. "We have a pre-school, but there are a lot of problems there. As a Community Centre, we are looking forward to solving this issue, as we think education is a necessity. Among the 510 families here, almost 1/3rd of them are currently struggling with their livelihood. There are no job opportunities in the public sector. We want to change that from the roots. Since our biggest issue (clean drinking water) will be solved, this is what we consider our biggest problem right now." – A villager from Nasivanthivu.

The story of Nasivanthivu highlights the significance of collaboration, perseverance, and the shared determination to uplift lives. It serves as a testament to the potential for positive change when a community unites across historical divides for the greater good, underscoring the enduring power of grassroots, community-driven initiatives.

YOUTH Govern

Engaging young individuals in democratic processes and leadership development

The YOUTH Govern project, funded by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, aimed to address challenges faced by marginalised communities by promoting the leadership of youth and women leaders and CSOs which operate at the grassroots level. **Chrysalis worked with the Youth Task Forces, grassroots level Community Centers (Praja Mandalas), and District level Caucuses of Local Government Women Councilors.** To empower and strengthen these entities, we customised capacity-building training programmes and demand-driven coaching and mentoring exercises, providing them with the knowledge and skills required to fully exercise their rights and entitlements. The project was implemented in close collaboration with the Department of Local Government-Northwestern Province, Women Caucuses of Local Councilors, Inter-religious Groups and Civil Society Organizations.

IMPACT

Improved Leadership and Competencies of Youth:

Youth members of the Youth Task Forces developed enhanced leadership skills and competencies. They are now better equipped to represent their communities effectively and advocate for positive change (Gender Equality, Conflict Sensitivity, Transparency, Accountability and Governance).

Efficient Community Scorecard System:

A community scorecard system was established by the targeted local authorities. This allows for accountability and transparency in these areas, including regular scorecard assessments and public access to information on government performance.

Participatory Platforms at the Local Authority Level:

The successful establishment and operation of shared platforms at the Local Authority (LA) level to identify critical issues and implement community initiatives, allowing for community members to participate in finding solutions to local challenges.

Social Media Literacy and Storytelling Skills:

Enhanced digital ICT skills among Youth Task Force members, particularly in social media literacy and storytelling has enabled them to create a broader dialogue on thematic areas through community videos, contributing to the project's goals.

District and Divisional Campaigns:

District and divisional campaigns were successfully organized to promote gender equality and raise awareness about sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

Overall, the project had a positive impact on the project beneficiaries, including marginalized communities, youth, and women leaders. The project's completion demonstrated a tangible improvement in their empowerment, capacity, and their ability to exercise their rights and entitlements.



THOSE WHO MAKE TEA!

In partnership with CARE UK, Chrysalis implemented the Twinings-funded project in eight tea estates over 45 months (October 2019 - June 2023) in the Central and Uva provinces. Implementation in five estates, Nayabedda, Dambetenna, Uva Highlands, Lethenty, and Bogawan, continued from the previous phase of the project. Meanwhile, Balmoral, Strathspey, and Aislaby estates were added to the second phase. While originally planned for a shorter period of 36 months, the project was extended to support the delays that occurred as a result of the island-wide lockdowns imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic crisis that immediately followed.

While the entire nation suffered from an acute shortage of food, cooking gas, fuel, electricity, medicine, fertiliser, and other essentials needed for daily life, the situation left the project participants even worse off. The Community Development Forum (CDF) members and youths who assisted the project left the estate seeking better income opportunities, such as migrating to foreign countries, seeking jobs in the capital city of Colombo, as well as engaging in additional income-earning ventures outside the estate or doing multiple odd jobs. These circumstances led the project to lose its momentum significantly.

Withstanding all these unfavourable circumstances, the project achieved significant milestones, notably in transforming worker-management relationships. The CDF played a crucial role in creating an environment conducive to collective decision-making with mutual trust that amicably addresses social welfare and productivity concerns.

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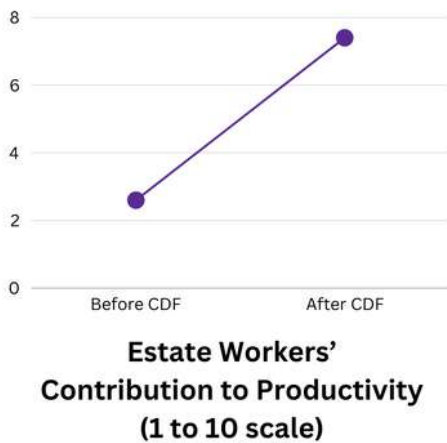
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Through the CDF, 266 estate community members, representing 30,424 residents across eight estates (8,000 families), met regularly with the management and addressed social and productivity issues in mutual consultation. Impressively, 81% of 462 productivity and social matters were collectively resolved.

Previously, the estate community were never allowed direct contact with the management; they had to go through the mediation of trade unions. However, due to a shift in mindset, there was a change in power structures and attitudinal changes in the management and community members. Before the project, only 2.91% of the community had directly accessed the estate management to discuss any work, social/community, and personal issues. But after the project, it increased up to 27.4%.

Community Development Forum

To improve the relationship between the estate management and the estate communities for a strengthened collaboration towards a viable tea business, Chrysalis has created a structure within the tea estates called the 'Community Development Forum (CDF)'. It is an all-inclusive collective decision-making forum comprising all stakeholder categories: workers, non-workers, youth, women, estate management, estate staff, trade unions, and governmental, non-governmental, and private organisations. As a team, they work together to address issues connected to the community's well-being and the estate's productivity.



As a result of these efforts, there has been a noticeable shift in workers' attitudes towards management and project activities. The positive change is also attributed to the management's proactive support of various initiatives aimed at elevating the status and well-being of the communities. In all eight estates, not a single incidence of worker-management confrontation has been heard of since the formation of CDFs.

The CDF has also played a crucial role in supporting management initiatives to create an environment that enables the estates communities to work harmoniously and enhance estate productivity.

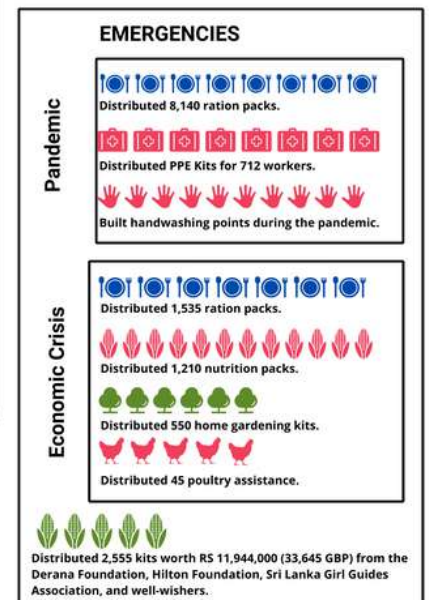
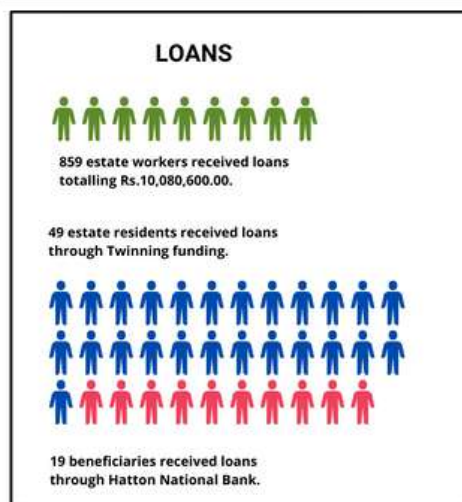
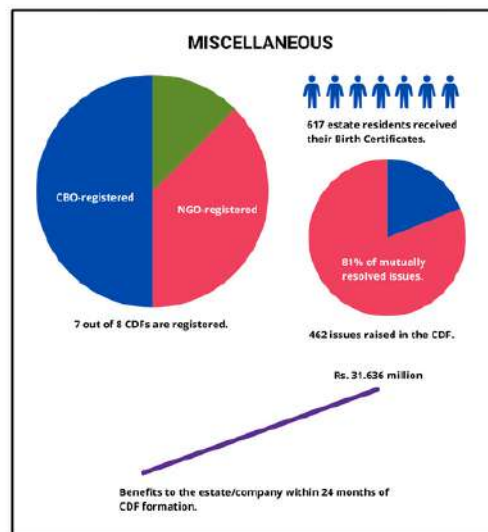
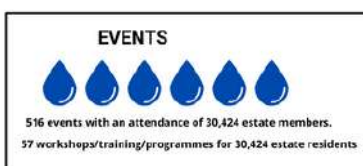
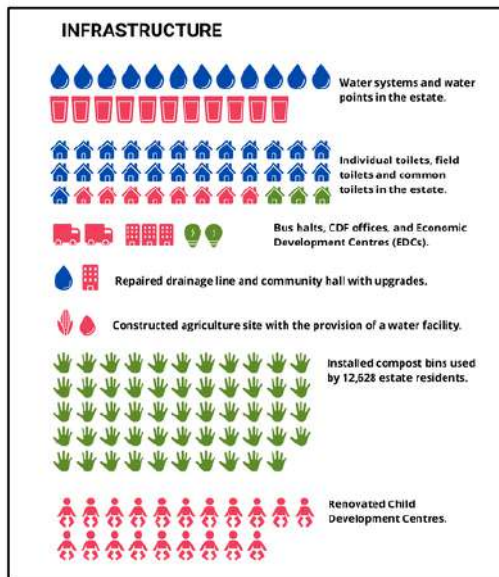


Key Achievements

The CDF functions under a critical programming principle, namely gender equality.

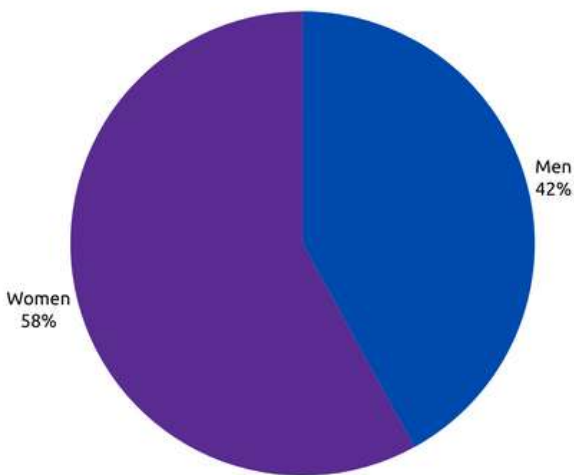
First, the CDF invested in building the agency by providing women (from the estate communities) with training that instilled confidence among female CDF members, uplifted their agency in the household and enabled them to make decisions at home. While immediate changes in a hierarchical structure are difficult, the project worked with families to get them on board and help shift some structural barriers for women at the household level to take leadership at the community level. For example, the reproductive role in the estate community is completely taken on by women. However, through interventions, engaged men realised that these roles could be shared, and this was confirmed with an increase of men taking their children to the Child Development Officers, who were men too.

Then, the **CDF created space for women to come to the forefront of leadership and raise their voices** to shape CDF decisions. These changes at the structural level motivated other women to be active in community interventions and bring out their voices. Finally, the relationships between female leaders, estate managers and government stakeholders were strengthened. For example, during the COVID period, the women leaders of CDF of Nayabedda complained to the Divisional Secretariat that there were discrepancies in selecting beneficiaries to receive the Rs. 5000.00 in government subsidies. After that, the women leaders played a crucial role in identifying the beneficiaries and selecting the most deserving people in the community with the support of the Grama Niladari and Samurdhi Development Officer.

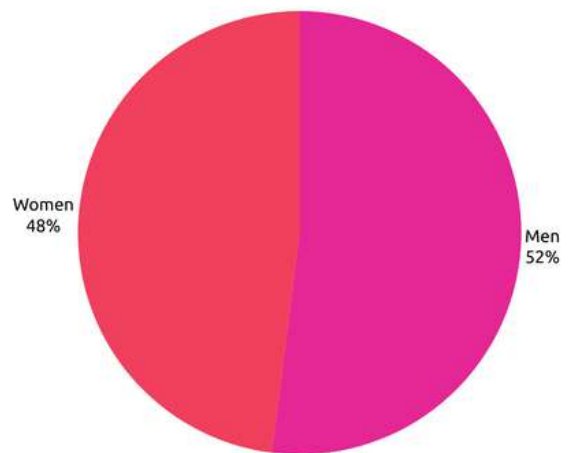


Through intentional efforts, the CDF empowered everyone within the estate communities, increasing their representation and influence. The project's comprehensive approach, resilience in the face of challenges, and transformative outcomes significantly contribute to the empowerment and development of tea estate communities. Currently, the CDF project is being replicated in several other countries.

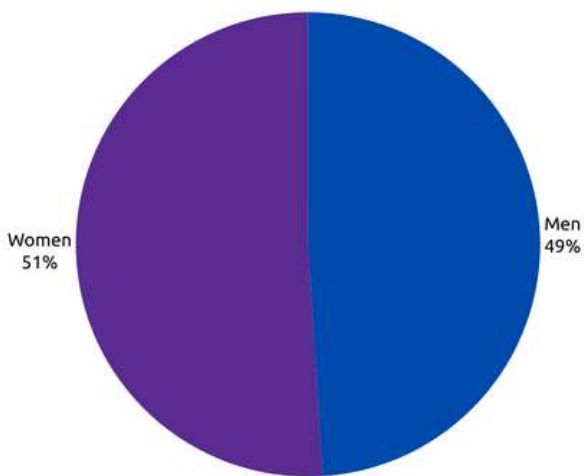
At the end of the project, the impact of these gender-inclusive actions is evident:



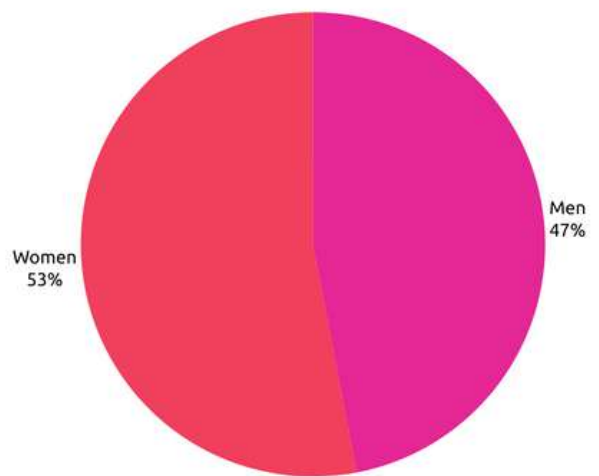
Representation in the CDF.



Representation of office bearer positions in the CDF.



Representation of executive committee member positions in the CDF.



Representation in actively addressing the issues discussed in the CDF.

UVE Eagle: Business expansion and impact on the Kandaketiya Community



When Priyantha Basnayake started his business of producing snacks and sweets a few decades ago, he did not imagine that he would be employing over 60 people and running almost a nationwide distribution network. While his journey did have its share of challenges, what matters is how he rose from the ashes to become what he is today.

Many years ago, Priyantha started his first business in the Gampaha district and with limited knowledge and available resources, gradually grew his company. Unfortunately, due to sudden changes in his bank management and poor customer care, his business began to suffer unexpectedly. His mental well-being suffered even more and he was compelled to move out of his hometown in Gampaha, to Kandaketiya, a very rural area in the Badulla district.

In 2002, he resurrected his sweet and snacks business under the brand 'UVE Eagle,' with just two employees. The fertile grounds of Kandaketiya village provided him with high-quality, raw materials. Learning from past mistakes, he made cautious, conscious and strict business decisions to gradually build UVE Eagle into a sizable confectionery manufacturing company.

However, the initial expansion posed logistical challenges, especially when establishing distribution networks to the main cities. While he recognised the need for updated knowledge and technology to successfully manage human resources, accounting records, manufacturing standards, and sales promotion, the early 2000s had several limitations on self-learning.

Through Chrysalis' ENTERPRISE project, Priyantha not only received the necessary financial support to further expand his business, but he also participated in skills and knowledge training sessions, which helped fill the gaps in the advancing business landscape. Moreover, his manufacturing unit received a GMP certificate through the project, allowing him to fulfil his dream of a large-scale production centre with a standard quality level.

Today, **the monthly production averages around 2000 kgs**, with a wide product range comprising coconut toffee, milk toffee, jujubes, marshmallows, musket, dodol, devilled peanuts, spicy manioc chips, and a range of other sweets and savoury snacks.

Moreover, his business operations comprise a network of local farmers supplying raw materials with dedicated sections for manufacturing, packaging, accounting and HR management and a network for marketing and distribution. Additionally, his business has recently expanded with an in-house social media, digital marketing and design team.

These employment opportunities hold significant value for the predominantly female and youth workforce in the nearby rural region, as they can contribute to their household income, reduce rural poverty and improve the well-being of his employees. Moreover, Priyantha has enabled family members of workers, especially children, to enjoy access to education and an optimum environment in their hometown.

Meanwhile, there is now a surplus demand for UVE Eagle products due to his uncompromising commitment to quality and taste. With this market opportunity, he hopes to expand the factory, increase production, and strengthen farmer supply networks to generate more employment opportunities. To ensure he doesn't repeat his past mistakes, he follows different methodologies to mitigate risks and ensure the sustainability of his business. These include avoiding bank loans, renting raw-material storage facilities based on materials for short terms, outsourcing the custody and maintenance of delivery vehicles under specific conditions, obtaining the necessary services on time for the business, and adhering to legal contract-signing processes during employee recruitment.

A socially responsible businessman, Priyantha Basnayake is also a simple man with a pleasant nature. He maintains excellent relationships with employees, suppliers, customers, fellow businessmen, and all other stakeholders. Inspired by his resilience and commitment to empowering local communities, we hope this story serves as a reminder of the impactful role enterprises, such as UVE Eagle, play in developing the local economy at different levels.



Teaser: Featuring more details in our next issue

Sri Lanka Less Travelled – off the beaten path



Sri Lanka Less Travelled aims to improve the resilience of communities by developing five community-based eco-tourism model sites. 60 women and youth will be trained as nature-based tour/travel companions and support the improvement of 20 women-led eco-tourism-based enterprises and 40 tourism-based self-employments in the districts of Matale and Nuwara Eliya. All initiatives will adopt a holistic, participatory and community-centric approach.

With consideration of their great potential for inclusive and sustainable tourism models, natural resources, unique geographic features, landforms and ecosystems, and through a participatory design process, Chrysalis has selected five signature tourism sites in the Central Province. Thereafter in consultation with stakeholders in Nuwara Eliya and Matale facilitated by the Ministry of Tourism, District Secretariat and Divisional Secretariat, in collaboration with the Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, Chrysalis will develop five locations proposed for the project:

- Kolaphana Tea Estate and Viewpoint in Kotmale
- Kadadora/Ranamure in Kothmale
- Aberdeen Waterfall in Ambagamuwa Koralaya
- Karagastenna Mountain Range in Ambanganga Korale
- Thalkote Lake and Village in Dambulla

In consultation with the Site Development Expert Team, Participatory Rural Appraisals were conducted in all five project sites to capture the perspectives of the community. The community participated actively, especially the women and youth and contributed valuable insights for site development. Through engaging dialogues and collaborative activities, they demonstrated their enthusiasm and support towards this innovative project.

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