

Care for God's creation: calling for one family



**Annual Report
2014-2015**

Caritas Sri Lanka



Vision:

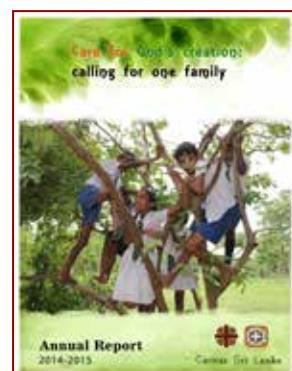
"Realization of a Just Sri Lankan Society based on the Gospel Values of Love, Forgiveness, Peace, Unity and Equality - lived, promoted and protected irrespective of Caste, Creed and Nationality".

Mission:

"Empowering people through animation and being in solidarity with their efforts for Integral Human Development".

Cover Story:

*"Father, we praise you with all your creatures,
They came forth from your all-powerful hand,
They are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love
Praise be to you!".*



(taken from a Christian Prayer for 'World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation' – 1st September)



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Director's Message

Caring for creation and acknowledging that we have to survive as one family is the essence of this Annual Report's theme. It is, in fact, a theme that will guide the work of the Caritas International Confederation over the next four years since it was adopted at this year's General Assembly in Rome. As Cardinal Oscar Maradiaga, President of Caritas Internationalis said at the opening of the General Assembly: "Let us care for the whole of creation and grow a garden where everyone has a chance to drink from its spring, witness its beauty and sit in the shade of its peace and joy".



This year saw the effects of climate change taking a heavy toll on many countries, especially those in the Asian region. Floods, droughts and landslides affected Sri Lanka, too.

This year also saw the end of the Millennium Development Goals and the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals which will hopefully motivate mankind towards the achievement of realistic targets for the sake of its own survival.

This year saw, too, the very timely release of Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter "Laudato Si" with its focus on ecology. It gives a powerful message that the protection of the environment is non-negotiable if we are to save our Common Home. This is a message which Caritas will endeavour to take to people everywhere so that all may join hands in the important task of caring for creation.

Again, this year was a blessed year for us at Caritas as we experienced God's Divine Providence in all our undertakings. In this period, many changes took place in the socio-economic arena as well as on the political front. These changes, some of them revolutionary, had an impact on our journey as a humanitarian organization. As Sri Lanka came to be declared as a Middle Income country on the global map in recent times, and as crisis situations in other parts of the world demanded the attention of our funding partners, many of them began to phase out their activities here. This was in spite of the fact that several groups of affected people still remained unsettled in various parts of the country and their needs had to be somehow addressed. Fortunately, some of our partners showed a remarkable understanding of the situation and decided to continue their support for us, and we were thus able to see the completion of nearly 2,000 permanent houses in war affected areas. In addition, we could support around 5,000 livelihoods among displaced and resettled families. Despite officially closing the rehabilitation program in the North and East, we still continue to journey with



these people until their life situations are normalized and they are back on their own feet.

This determination on our part was, and still is, translated into concrete action under the watchful guidance of our Bishop Chairman, Most Rev Dr Vianney Fernando and with the excellent cooperation of our Diocesan Directors who readily adapted their strategies to suit the changing scenarios. I would like to thank all of them as well as my staff at the National Centre who always gave of their best even under trying circumstances. I am also grateful to all our foreign and local partners for their constant accompaniment and encouragement.

We hope that the ‘Year of Mercy’ the Church has declared for the forthcoming year will give us further opportunities to demonstrate God’s mercy to poor, marginalized, vulnerable and voiceless people on whose behalf Caritas is called upon to expend its energies and its resources.

Fr George Sigamoney
National Director



Integral Human Development

Conference on Anti-Trafficking

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons provides a worldwide consensus on the phenomenon of trafficking in persons and it requires that human trafficking be criminalized under local laws. Today, trafficking occurs both across borders and within a country and it is a means by which a range of exploitative purposes are practiced, with or without the involvement of organized crime groups.



Caritas has, through its Safe Migration program implemented over many years, studied the issues of prevention of human trafficking and protection of its victims, and in pursuance of this work Caritas Sri Lanka hosted the South Asia Regional Conference on Anti Trafficking in August 2014 in Colombo. The Conference brought together nearly 40 foreign and local participants including His Lordship Bishop Isao Kikuchi, President of Caritas Asia. One of the objectives of this meeting was to map out a strategy for the entire Asian Region through close collaboration with members of the Caritas network and to develop creative approaches in preventing the unlawful activities of traffickers.

Safe Migration Training

As a reinforcement of the Caritas quest to make migration safe for potential migrant workers and to facilitate reintegration of migrant returnees, the training of volunteers was continued as in the past years. Capacity building programs were arranged in Tamil and Sinhala languages for groups of volunteers from the Dioceses of Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Mannar, Galle, Badulla, Colombo and Chilaw. This was further supplemented by an awareness-creation program on safe migration and





human trafficking for a group of 75 Women Police Constables working in Children and Women Bureaus situated in several parts of the country.

International Women's Day 2015

A group of 53 women community leaders chosen from eleven Dioceses, along with 12 Caritas Program Coordinators were felicitated at an event held on 31st March 2015 at Caritas Sri Lanka auditorium to mark International Women's Day (IWD). All the participants were awarded with mementos in recognition of their contribution to the advancement of integral human development programs implemented by Caritas over a period of many years. In addition, the 53 women leaders were given cash grants of Rupees Five Thousand each and decorated with the traditional "Golden Shawl".



During the event, they shared their experiences and the achievements of their communities as well as testimonies of their personal growth since enlisting in the various social empowerment programs promoted by Caritas at grass root level. They also expressed their dreams for the future and the role they hope to play in animating rural communities towards social transformation.



This IWD event, conducted in both Tamil and Sinhala languages, was an initiative of the female staff of Caritas Sri Lanka National Centre and the welcome address on the occasion was delivered by Rev Fr George Sigamoney, National Director of Caritas Sri Lanka.

Water Resource Management and Women's Empowerment

Under a project supported by CAFOD-UK, a total of 65 open dug wells were completed in the Dioceses of Anuradhapura, Kandy, Kurunegala, Jaffna and Mannar. These wells were handed over to the people after conscientizing them to take over the important task of maintaining the wells, monitoring water quality and keeping the environs clean.



In Jaffna, 14 existing wells were also renovated while 17 rainwater harvesting



tanks and 214 water storage tanks were made available. In Kandy Diocese, 06 water conveyors were repaired in addition.

A further dimension of the project was the mobilization of the people through the formation of 112 self help groups whose members participated in 82 trainings in water, sanitation and hygiene as well as 94 sessions on gender awareness. In fact, Gender Mainstreaming was identified as a need in the early stages of the project and the services of a Gender Consultant obtained in providing suitable trainings to Diocesan Caritas staff so that they may implement the overall project with gender sensitivity.



World Water Day

Events to mark World Water Week (22nd-29th March) were held in Vavuniya and Polonnaruwa on 28th and 29th March 2015 under the "Water Resource Management and Women's Empowerment" Project supported by CAFOD-UK.

In the village of Nedunkerni in Vavuniya District, 5 open dug wells constructed by Caritas were handed over to the Chairmen of Nedunkerni and Vavuniya North Divisional Secretariats for upkeep so that families who faced hardships in finding water for their daily needs may have access to a steady supply of safe water. The Self Help Groups formed in the area under the Caritas program will play a supportive role in the maintenance of the wells. The Diocesan Director of Caritas Mannar Valvuthayam, Rev Fr M Jeyabalan was present at this event along with several Local Government officials and members of beneficiary families. The mementos were presented to two Divisional Secretaries and an Assistant Divisional Secretary in appreciation of their public service.



In the village of Meegaswewa in Polonnaruwa District, the Diocesan Director of Caritas Anuradhapura Sethsaviya, Rev Fr Paris Jayamaha participated in an event to hand over a well constructed by Caritas to the community along with additional water facilities donated by Deutsche Bank at the request of Sethsaviya. Among those present on the occasion were Dr Asanka Ranasinghe, Epidemiologist and Head of the Kidney Unit in North Central Province, Mr Nuwan Tilekeratne, Geologist and Regional Coordinator of the National Water Supply and Drainage Board and Mr H M Karunaratne, Public Health



Inspector and Area Coordinator for Renal Diseases. These officials were presented with mementos and cash awards of Rupees Five Thousand each in recognition of the services rendered by them in providing safe drinking water for the people. Members of Self Help Groups and Buddhist monks of the area were also in attendance at the handing over event.

Capacity building on sustainable agriculture

A group of 50 farmers from all parts of the country and 30 Caritas Diocesan field officers attended a 3-day Capacity Building program on Sustainable Agriculture hosted by Caritas Kurunegala and held at Janasetha Centre, Kurunegala from 22nd to 24th March 2015.

The program, held in Tamil and Sinhala languages, was aimed at bringing about attitudinal changes on the part of farmers to retain traditional farming methods and to avoid usage of harmful chemicals in fertilizers and pesticides which destroy natural resources and pollute the environment.



The facilities available at the Janasetha Model Farm maintained by Caritas Kurunegala were utilized for the practical sessions of this workshop which was facilitated by resource persons from State agricultural centres. An exposure visit to the Mahakadura Agricultural Development Centre was also arranged as part of the training program.



Plantation Program

Under a Misereor-funded project titled "Green Gold Harvesters", a programme is being implemented in 08 tea estates in the Dioceses of Galle, Ratnapura, Badulla and Kandy where trained Vigilant Committee Members are actively functioning with the cooperation of Estate Managements to identify existing and emerging issues facing the plantation communities, especially those relating to housing, health, education and infrastructure facilities. The trainings given to Vigilant Committee Members have served to enhance their capacity to address or handle the relevant issues in a prudent and strategic manner while maintaining cordial relationships with Estate Managements.



Social Justice and Sustainable Peace

Our movement towards reconciliation took an added impetus in the period under review, with a special focus being placed on the potential for young people to be bridge builders. Twenty three village level youth groups were formed in all the Dioceses with the aim of empowering them as Ambassadors of Peace under a project to Promote Healing and Reconciliation, supported by Caritas Australia.



Several of these youth groups visited remote-area schools attended by children of an ethnic group different to that of the youth themselves. This gave them the opportunity to meet and interact with children across all ethnic and religious barriers, and to befriend them by carrying small gifts as well as by joining them in several hours of activities, fun and games.

These gestures were used as stepping stones to reconciliation and building bridges of understanding, trust and mutual respect. Thirteen Sinhala and ten Tamil medium schools were identified for this exercise and the approval of Educational Authorities in the respective areas was obtained for the youth encounters.

During these visits, the Peace Ambassadors also made it a point to meet other youth in the villages where the host schools are





situated. A notable feature in this program was the warm welcome and support given to the visiting youth by the Principals and teachers of the relevant schools.

A group of 80 Peace Ambassadors from several Dioceses had previously gathered in Bandarawela for a 3-day Caritas Youth Camp, as a follow-up of the healing and reconciliation work implemented in 24 villages.

These young people are themselves from marginalized and underprivileged communities in 12 villages of Tamil-speaking areas and 12 of Sinhala-speaking areas. The villages had been linked through a Program to Promote Healing and Reconciliation, and a number of the residents had undertaken exposure visits to each other's localities where they had "live-in" experiences by staying with host families.

They also learnt one another's languages for better communication, and this had facilitated easy interactions through which they were able to build bridges of understanding and trust. There were also noticeable attitudinal changes among those who participated in these exchange visits.

The Youth Camp in Bandarawela was aimed at empowering youth to become agents of peace so that they may, first and foremost, help to create harmonious environments in their areas of dwelling. While the Camp provided opportunities for the youth to reinforce friendship and cordiality through joint activities, fun and games, they also attended several awareness sessions and group work on the Role of Youth in Modern Society, Dreams and Aspirations of Youth, Challenges Faced by Young People and the Principles of Youth Ambassadorship.





Inter religious Coexistence

Nearly 50 Interreligious Forums were formed in various parts of the country under a program aimed at advocacy to build respect for the rights of religious minorities and to create mutual understanding needed for the prevention of discrimination. Meantime, a Survey on Interreligious Harmony was initiated in association with the University of Kelaniya and the Open University of Sri Lanka, its outcome being a Study Report on Religious Tensions produced by a team of academics.

Another feature was a dialogue session held with a group of Catholic clergy and Buddhist Prelates where the participants emphasized the need for all religious leaders to come together and speak with one voice on important issues facing the country.

Training on Human Dignity

Basing on the belief that respect for human dignity is the bedrock of all human rights, a special program was launched under which more than 600 teachers belonging to Christian, Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim faiths were familiarized with this concept and its importance. Nearly 450 of them were females, and the indirect beneficiaries of this program number more than 30,000 children.

Child Friendly Education Program

A series of advocacy level exhibitions to showcase the hidden talents of children were held under a grass root level program initiated in the Dioceses of Anuradhapura, Galle, Ratnapura, Chilaw, Batticaloa and Trincomalee. It targeted two selected



villages in each Diocese where neglected children in those areas were enlisted into a scheme aimed at identifying and developing their skills and abilities. The program is designed to tap their future potential for good citizenship and it demonstrates respect for their dignity as children.

Special educational support for vulnerable children

Under a special program to support vulnerable children in the Dioceses of Jaffna and Chilaw with support from Caritas Korea, 265 pre-school children in Chilaw were provided with monthly nutrition packs while 18 Pre-school teachers were paid a monthly allowance of Rs. 2,000.00 each. In addition, 12 Preschools were given needed furniture and equipment. In Jaffna, 200 children in six under-developed schools are also being provided with monthly nutrition packs as well as educational materials and support for extra classes.



Child Protection

Two capacity-building training programs on Child Abuse and Child Trafficking were conducted for a total of 180 Prison officials from different parts of the country as an extension of the Caritas Child Protection Policy.





Disaster Risk Management

Undoubtedly, the period 2014-2015 could be marked as a period of extreme climatic conditions, leaving their impact on almost all regions in the country. A prolonged drought that began in the middle of 2013 continued right into the early months of 2014 and affected the farm regions of the country. This was later followed by a drastic change in the weather, leading to short but intensive floods and landslides beginning from about October 2014 which continued right up to the early months of 2015.

In October and November 2014, short but intensive rain spells led to a series of landslides mainly in the hill country districts of Sri Lanka, including Badulla, Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Kegalle and Ratnapura. The National Building Research Organization (NBRO) issued warnings from time to time about possible disasters in these Districts. The most publicized of these incidents was the one that occurred in Meeriyabedde in the Haldemulla DS Division of the Badulla District, where a few people died and about 75 families were displaced.

Following these incidents, in the third week of December 2014, torrential monsoon rains inundated almost the entire country. 22 of the 25 Districts of the country were affected. The rains continued into the first week of January 2015. The impact of this disaster added further burdens on the resettled communities in the North and East and increased the vulnerability of the women-headed families, with their incomes declining further.

Response of Caritas Sri Lanka

Caritas Sri Lanka along with the Diocesan Centres in the affected areas responded to these calamities. During the period of drought where several thousands of families in the Anuradhapura District were affected, Caritas Anuradhapura provided dry rations for the affected families. During the period October - November 2014, responding to the landslides and gale force winds that occurred in the Badulla District, Caritas Sri Lanka provided assistance for the purchase of dry rations, non-food items and shelter materials for those affected. Caritas Badulla provided blankets, mats and clothing for children and adults and other relief goods for the affected families. In a spontaneous gesture of solidarity, non-affected Dioceses collected relief goods for the affected people and had them delivered to Caritas Badulla.

The floods in December 2014 required a major response, and on the 30th of December 2014 Caritas Sri Lanka forwarded a situation report to Caritas International about the calamity. A project proposal to support 7,258 families with relief assistance and 14,570 children with educational needs was prepared with the guidance of CI and circulated in January 2015. Several partners responded to this appeal, including Caritas Member Organisations in Belgium, Korea, Japan, Singapore and Australia as well as Misereor-Germany. The



project was for a period of three months beginning on the 12th of January 2015. With the available funds we were able to support a total of 12,154 families for relief items and 15,350 children with educational material. Further, under the guidance of CAFOD -UK, Caritas Sri Lanka was able to source funding from the START Network to address the needs of the flood-affected families in the Anuradhapura, Batticaloa and Trincomalee Districts. 1,750 families were supported under this funding in all three Districts, one of the donor stipulations being that all activities had to be completed in 45 days. So, the project response which commenced on 8th January 2015 was completed on 22nd February 2015.

The START Fund consists of a consortium of international humanitarian agencies which aims its assistance on small and medium scale disasters . A notable feature of this project was that the National Centre staff was mobilised to purchase and pack the relief goods to the respective regions. The entire flood response initiative was done in consultation with the respective district and local officials of the affected regions. At the local level, support of community based organizations and the representatives of Religious Orders were involved in the selection of beneficiaries and distribution of relief assistance. This strategy enhanced the transparency and accountability of the entire process.

As per the requirement of the START project, an external evaluation was carried out by an international consultant. A 'lessons learnt workshop' with the participation of three local agencies who were involved in



the START project response in Sri Lanka was also scheduled to take place later.

Resettlement activities

As of 31st March 2015, the Ministry of Resettlement announced that 233,970 families consisting of 794,069 persons had returned to their places of origin in the North and East. 156,672 families consisting of 522,765 persons returned to the Northern Province while 77,298 families consisting of 271,304 persons returned to the Eastern Province. There were approximately 13,480 families consisting of 44,973 persons still living in camps in both these Provinces. During the period under review, Caritas continued to focus on the rehabilitation and reconstruction needs of those returning for resettlement. But with donor interest to support such efforts declining in the context of more severe man-made and natural disasters occurring in other parts of the world, Caritas had to prioritize its limited funds to the neediest.

Construction of houses

Caritas continued to support the construction and repair of houses and toilets in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and during the period 2014/15, 242 houses with toilets were planned to be built, of which 233 have been constructed. At the same time, 22 houses were planned to be repaired, of which work on 09 have been completed. Our policy is to support the most vulnerable war affected communities and more than 60 percent of the beneficiaries selected are widow families, families with more female children and families with disabled members.





The owner -driven model of construction continues to be the preferred choice and has been found to provide very good results. The beneficiaries take more responsibility in the construction work and have been able to save funds and add value to their houses in the process.

Livelihood development

Livelihood assistance is continuing to be provided at the rate of Rs. 40,000.00 per family and, considering constraints in funding and with a view to support as many families as possible, the assistance is provided with the involvement of Self Help Groups (SHGs) so that as many members of these SHGs could also benefit from this grant. This has been made possible by the SHGs deciding that the beneficiary of the assistance repay 50 percent of the grant so as to create a revolving fund. The support of the Women Rural Development Society (WRDS) in this scheme has been valuable to make it a success as most of these SHGs operate under the guidance and supervision of the WRDS. Livelihood assistance has been given for home gardening cultivation, animal husbandry, small -scale fishing, poultry -keeping and retail business.

Appropriate capacity building trainings in relevant fields have been given along with the grant in order to ensure the sustainability of the assistance given. During the period under review, Caritas provided 475 livelihood grants to deserving families in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Since the post war Relief and reconstruction program commenced in 2010, Caritas has given over 10,000 livelihood grants to deserving families.

Working with Women's Rural Development Societies

The WRDS, being an organization consisting of the local women and working for the welfare of the community, is well integrated into the local community. All members of the SHGs are also members of the WRDS. They function under the supervision of local government bodies and, in addition to the trainings given to individual members, the officials of the WRDS too have been given capacity building trainings in fields such as basic project management skills, resource management, financial management and gender issues. This has strengthened the institutional capacities of these local organizations to independently carry out development projects. Caritas has given support to several WRDS to commence community development projects and many of them are today functioning successfully. Among these are service-oriented and income generating projects such as construction and renovation of community buildings, libraries, rice mill and hiring of furniture and cooking utensils.





Community Based Organisations such as the WRDS have over the years have displayed their skills in running many successful community projects with the participation of their own local community members. Caritas considers supporting the WRDS in such efforts as a good method to promote the independent functioning of such organizations and even as part of a good exit strategy as these organizations become self-reliant over a period of time.

Psychosocial support

In the aftermath of conflict, displaced families have had difficulties in readjusting and rebuilding their lives. In such a context, psychosocial programmes to support the war affected are continuing to be addressed in some Dioceses. In Mannar District, Caritas Mannar has been conducting psychosocial programmes to address the needs of war affected communities in Manthai West AGA Division and Madhu DS Division. One hundred families who have been resettled in these two areas, including children and adults, as well as other members of the community have been supported under this programme. There are families who have lost their kith and kin, apart from other issues relating to poverty, alcoholism, migration of adults for employment and ensuing breakdown in family relationships that have caused severe damage to family harmony. These issues are being addressed under this programme. Counseling programmes have been designed for family groups, individual members and other adult groups and conducted with the support of two resource persons.

In the Kilinochchi District, Caritas HUDEC Vanni has implemented a programme to support children with disabilities. They are being provided with assistance to attend a special centre for the disabled where trained personnel are teaching essential life skills so that they could become more independent and more active. Transport facilities are being provided for them to come to this centre and also return to their homes. Besides, their parents are being provided with livelihood support to obtain a stable income so that they could support their children in a sustainable manner. Caritas has implemented its psychosocial programmes in consultation with the Mental Health Units of the District Hospitals and this has added value by ensuring the long-term healing of those receiving treatment.

Food Security

- A project to ensure food security of the people is being implemented in the Dioceses of Kurunegala, Batticaloa and Anuradhapura where 3,300 farmer families have already been mobilized, with a Domestic Economic Unit being established in each one of them. In addition, several unproductive home gardens and paddy lands





have been upgraded while the cultivators have been motivated to switch over to organic farming methods instead of using agro chemicals. Information on the relevant techniques such as compost and liquid fertiliser preparation, vermi- culture etc. have been disseminated among the target farming community, along with information on how to set up a domestic economic unit comprising different aspects such as vegetable and fruit production, small-scale livestock production, inland fisheries, herbal plants, bee-keeping etc. Training in marketing of agricultural products has given the farmers a good knowledge of customer needs, promotional strategies and selection of distribution channels.

Community mobilization was done through the formation of small groups where women have played a major role in striving towards the sustainability of livelihoods. The level of savings made by members of these groups has increased and, in fact, a recent evaluation found that each of these families could save up to Rupees One Hundred per day by consuming the

food grown in their own home gardens, which is also healthy and chemical-free. This alone could help to build up a large savings base among the beneficiaries of the Caritas food security project.

- Under the Caritas Norway-funded project titled “Substantiation of Community Institutions for Sustainable Agriculture To Ensure Food Security”, a series of workshops were held in the Dioceses of Kurunegala, Anuradhapura and Batticaloa during the month of February 2015.

In Anuradhapura, 45 persons belonging to 07 Self Help Groups (SHGs) of Medawachchiya area participated, while the workshop in Amabagaswewa, Polonnaruwa saw an attendance of 60 persons. A Community Based Organization (CBO) has been started here.



In Batticaloa, 62 persons who are mostly engaged in agriculture and inland fisheries participated in the workshop held at Rajadurainagar, Vavunatheevu (Manmunai West DS Division). Here, too, a CBO has been formed. Meantime, in Nediyamadu (Adithiyamalai West), 60 persons were present at the workshop.

In Kurunegala, 52 farmers including 35 males and 17 females participated in the village of Pothanegama, while in Ambagaswewa, Mahawa 40 females belonging to a CBO named Yasodhara Women's Society were present.

The general scope of all the above village -level workshops covered important aspects of sustainable agriculture such as "Compost Preparation Techniques", "Liquid Fertilizer Preparation", "Vermi-culture", "Preparation of Pest Repellants", "Methods of Forming and Strengthening Small Groups" and "Establishment of Domestic Economic Units.

- A group of 50 farmers from all parts of the country and 30 Caritas Diocesan field officers attended a 3-day Capacity Building program on Sustainable Agriculture hosted by Caritas Kurunegala and held at Janasetha



Centre, Kurunegala in March 2015. The program, held in Tamil and Sinhala languages, was aimed at bringing about attitudinal changes on the part of farmers to retain traditional farming methods and to avoid usage of harmful chemicals in fertilizers and pesticides which destroy natural resources and pollute the environment.





The facilities available at the Janasetha Model Farm maintained by Caritas Kurunegala were utilized for the practical sessions of this workshop which was facilitated by resource persons from State agricultural centres. An exposure visit to the Mahakadura Agricultural Development Centre was also arranged as part of the training program.

'Zero Poverty' programme

The objective of this programme is to address several issues that continue to have a bearing on poverty, and to implement programmes with a view to reducing the impact of poverty, thereby improving the quality of life of the low-income communities. The programme is being implemented in all Dioceses and the main focus is on increasing family incomes as well as reducing the cost of living and medical expenses in the longer term.

Therefore, most of the Dioceses have selected activities to promote organic farming methods and establish home gardens in every home. The other areas being addressed include health, education, human rights, mental health, alcoholism,





etc. Particularly in the health sector, special attention is being given for the “Thalasemia Prevention” programme in Kurunegala and Batticaloa as well as the “Chronic Kidney Disease Prevention” programme in Anuradhapura.

Apart from the above, a series of programmes to empower local communities to address these same issues are also being conducted, namely:

- Awareness programmes on special issues
- Skills trainings for individuals
- Vocational training for unemployed youth
- Self-employment projects
- Training on micro finance
- Mobile medical screening clinics at village level for Thalassaemia and Kidney diseases
- Distribution of organic home garden kits/seeds/plants etc
- Revolving loan systems for domestic small industries
- Value education programmes for family members and selected youth
- Psychosocial camps and counseling sessions for the needy
- Animal husbandry programme, including training by veterinary team



Programme Coordination

The Programme Coordination Unit mainly focuses on the concept and design of viable project proposals for submission to donors for funding, in addition to providing capacity enhancement to staff of National and Diocesan Centres on Project Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER).

In the period under review, proposals were submitted to several funding sources including Caritas international partners, UN Agencies, the European Union, the Commonwealth, some foreign Missions in Colombo and other funding organizations abroad.

Among the areas of interest covered by these proposals were promoting ethnic and religious harmony, life skills and value education for vulnerable youth, advocacy and capacity building for safe migration, empowering women for social transformation, and creating a conducive environment for religious amity.



At the same time, a concerted effort was initiated towards local fund raising in view of the decline in foreign funding. This move was both timely as well as challenging, and the initial response of potential local partners is indeed encouraging. It is hoped that over time, a strong local funding base would be established which will complement and supplement the foreign sources. It is also pertinent to mention here that while many foreign partners indicated their intention to phase out their aid due to various reasons, some showed remarkable solidarity and even renewed their commitment to support our humanitarian work.

Thus, the work of preparing and submitting quality project proposals continues to be an important endeavour. Such proposals are founded on identified needs and are well researched so that the intended Caritas interventions will respond effectively to the situation on the ground.

An updated Guidebook on "Respecting Human Dignity – Expressions from Religious Teachings" in the English language was also edited by the Programme Coordination Unit and printed in February 2015 for subsequent dissemination, while five Interns joined the Caritas Internship Program for a six-month period commencing October 2014. The guidelines for this Internship Program are formulated by the Program Coordination Unit and it is being continued for the fourth year in succession with the support of Catholic Relief Services (CRS-USA).



Special Events and Meetings

Mission accomplished, journey continues

The 10th year tsunami remembrance event hosted by Caritas Sri Lanka SEDEC was held in Colombo from 3rd to 5th December 2014 with the participation of Caritas delegates from four tsunami-affected countries, along with several funding Partners from the Caritas international



confederation and Church dignitaries from here and abroad. The event, organised under the theme "Mission accomplished, Journey continues" was aimed at commemorating those who lost their lives in the tsunami disaster, paying tribute to the survivors who bravely rebuilt their lives

and reflecting together on how we as Caritas accompanied them in that journey.

A special representation by Caritas Member Organisations from India, Thailand and Indonesia was a notable feature of this remembrance event. The inauguration held at the BMICH was preceded by a Concelebrated Eucharistic Celebration and later followed by two days of conference sessions conducted in the SEDEC auditorium. These sessions focused on an examination of the Caritas interventions during the unprecedented situation which arose in the wake of the tsunami disaster. Valuable insights were also gained into the lessons learnt, the





Special Events and Meetings



challenges faced and the best practices deployed in our work, so that such perspectives may help to sharpen our disaster preparedness and risk reduction programmes of the future.

Delivering a homily as Chief Celebrant at the inauguration Eucharistic Service, His Eminence Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo said that “true charity is profoundly human and profoundly divine: one is not against the other or without the other, because we cannot love God unless we love our neighbour profoundly and discover how to love God in that neighbour: in the same way, we cannot love our neighbour unless we love God profoundly and discover how much we ought to love our neighbour”.

His Lordship Vianney Fernando, Chairman of Caritas Sri Lanka delivered the welcome address at the official inauguration, which followed the Eucharistic Service, while His Excellency Ken Hackett T, US Ambassador to the Holy See gave the keynote address. Mr. Michel Roy, Secretary General of Caritas Internationalis and Prof. Tissa Vitharana, Senior Minister for Scientific Affairs also spoke on the occasion, and Rev. Fr. George Sigamoney, National Director of Caritas Sri Lanka SEDEC proposed the Vote of Thanks.

FOOD SECURITY, FOOD FOR ALL

To coincide with World Food Day in October 2014 and the Week of Action declared by Caritas Internationalis (CI) as part of its ONE HUMAN FAMILY, FOOD FOR ALL campaign, the Director and staff of Caritas Sri Lanka symbolically provided meals to five needy families and distributed dry rations among them. The event was preceded by a special Eucharistic Celebration presided over Rev Fr George Sigamoney, National Director of Caritas Sri Lanka. All those present took part in reciting CI's Campaign Prayer on the Right To Food. In his





Special Events and Meetings

homily, Fr Sigamoney highlighted the Biblical perspectives on the right to food and noted that the fight against hunger and poverty must be accompanied by a call to redistribute the world's resources in a just and equitable manner.

Misereor delegate visits Sri Lanka

Ms. Kesuma Saddak, Asia Desk Programme Officer of Misereor, Germany visited Sri Lanka from 8th to 11th April 2014 to review the progress of the pilot project titled 'Green Gold Harvesters' which is being implemented in the Dioceses of Galle, Ratnapura, Kandy and Badulla. The Vigilant Committees formed



in these plantation areas under this project are fully functional and are focused not only on addressing the issues faced by these populations in the areas of health, education and sanitation but also on building cordial working relationships with estate managements. At the same time, advocacy and lobbying measures are encouraged in order to ensure that privileges and social benefits available to people living in other parts of the country are enjoyed by those living in plantation areas, too.

Visit of Caritas Korea delegation

A four-member delegation of Caritas Korea officials visited Sri Lanka from 01st to 09th October 2014 in order to review the projects and programs supported by them. They held discussions with the National Director of Caritas Sri Lanka, Rev Fr George Sigamoney and undertook





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Community Activities” in Colombo and Trincomalee dioceses, “Educational Support for Children of War Victim Families” in Jaffna, and “Livelihood Assistance for War Widows” in Vanni (through the Women Rural Development Society of the area).

The Korean delegation comprised Rev Fr Simon Lee, Executive Director of Caritas Korea, Rev Fr Joseph Park, Director of Diocesan Caritas Incheon, Ms Stella Koh, Head of International Programs of Caritas Korea and Ms Lidwina Kim, Administrative Officer of Diocesan Caritas Incheon.

Visit of Caritas Swiss delegate

Ms. Regina Wenk, Technical Consultant of Caritas Swiss visited Sri Lanka from 9th to 16th September 2014 in order to assess the current progress of housing, livelihood and community grant projects supported by this Partner in Vanni, Trincomalee and Batticaloa regions.



During her stay, she undertook monitoring visits to the villages of Silvaththai, Kallapadu, Mullaitivu East and West in the Vanni, Omadiyamadu and Puchchakerni in Batticaloa, Vattam and Ilakanthai in Trincomalee.

Young Familians to the fore!

In a fitting response to the sad plight of hundreds of families affected by drought in various parts of the country, the students of Holy Family Convent, Bambalapitya which is one of the leading





Special Events and Meetings

Catholic institutions in Colombo came forward in a spontaneous gesture to donate nearly 850 bottles of drinking water on 11th September 2014 for distribution through the Caritas network. The students had also collected a stock of used clothes to be given to a group of war affected and displaced families still living under makeshift arrangements in the Eastern Province.

Accepting the gifts from the children at a lively assembly convened by the Principal, Rev Sr Chandani Jayasuriya, the National Director of Caritas Sri Lanka, Rev Fr George Sigamoney expressed his deep appreciation of the wonderful gesture by the students of this school. "You have shown your genuine care and concern for those who are undergoing immense suffering in our own country", he told them. "We are taking care of these people who are our own brothers and sisters, and we are doing this in the name of Jesus. With your acts of love, you have today become part of this mission. You all are setting an example for others to follow and emulate. Apart from the North and East, there are many who are facing severe hardships even in the North Central and Southern Provinces. While we show our solidarity with them, we must also think of little things like how much water is being wasted in other parts of the country while some are struggling to find water even for their basic needs".

Fr Sigamoney had a special word of thanks for Sr Chandani who, he said, had always responded positively whenever Caritas made a request for assistance. "This time around, she herself contacted me with an offer to help, and that is really admirable", he said.

In her remarks to the assembly, Sr Chandani explained that the Confirmation Service held in the school on 5th September had been used as a point of entry to conscientize the children and their parents about the need to help the needy and affected families. As a result, the Offertory Procession in the Confirmation Service witnessed a generous contribution by all towards the purchase of drinking water bottles. The slogan used by the school was "Quench the thirst of a family – give One Hundred Rupees for a bottle of drinking water", Sr Chandani explained. "Their response was not simply a monetary contribution only. It was also an outpouring of love towards their unfortunate brothers and sisters living elsewhere. The children really

stretched their hand of friendship across all borders—geographical, ethnic and religious—and they still continue to make small group collections towards this cause. They plan to procure 500 more bottles of water and also collect some used clothes".



Shalini Anthony, a Grade 10 student who had been the prime mover of the idea, said



Special Events and Meetings

that the children in Grades 10 and 11 had initiated the collection process within the school once her suggestion was accepted. “I got this idea when I was watching TV one day. I saw how one of the TV channels was appealing to the public to donate bottles of water which they were planning to transport to the drought affected areas. That inspired me and I thought why not we do this by ourselves also?”, Shalini said with a beaming smile and with a deep sense of satisfaction.

“Caritas salutes your efforts”, Fr Sigamoney told the students in conclusion. “Keep up the good work. I invite you all to contact us whenever you come up with such initiatives. We would like to work with young people like you who can demonstrate such civic consciousness even in the midst of your studies and other activities. The encouragement given by our Principal is also immense”, he said.

Caritas relief aid for flood victims



In the immediate aftermath of the severe flood and landslide situation that prevailed in 22 out of Sri Lanka’s 25 Administrative Districts in December 2014, Caritas Sri Lanka with the help of some of its international partners rushed post-emergency relief assistance to nearly 3,000 affected families in the Dioceses of Kandy, Colombo, Ratnapura, Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Kurunegala, Jaffna/Vanni, Badulla, Chilaw and Mannar. In fact, according to the Government’s Disaster Management Center, 1.5 million persons had been badly affected, with 109,875 persons living in 599 temporary camps. 5,200 houses were destroyed while 16,290 more were partially damaged. Meanwhile, the damage caused to agriculture was enormous too, thus impacting badly on the livelihoods of many.





Special Events and Meetings

In a heart-warming response to the Emergency Appeal sent out by Caritas Sri Lanka through Caritas Internationalis, five partners within and outside the Caritas Confederation pledged over 200,000 Euros in funding support. One of its components was a special project initiated by CAFOD UK/START FUND under which nearly 1,750 affected families in Anuradhapura, Batticaloa and Trincomalee Dioceses were provided with relief aid consisting of food and non-food items. Each beneficiary family received a package of goods worth over Rs. 8,000/-. Food items such as rice, sugar, dhal, dried sprats, milk, tea leaves and condiments were provided to cover a family's two-week requirements, while the non-food items include bed sheets, towels, sarongs, sarees, plastic mats and sanitary requirements.

The distribution of relief aid were undertaken in the Districts by the respective Caritas Diocesan Centres under the guidance of the Caritas Sri Lanka National Centre.

Distribution of flood relief in three dioceses

Following the initiative taken by Caritas Sri Lanka National Centre in organizing a large quantity of food and non-food items as relief aid for hundreds of flood victims, the physical distribution of these relief goods to affected families in the Districts of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Trincomalee and Batticaloa was systematically arranged under the guidance of the respective Diocesan Directors, namely Rev Fr Paaris Jayamaha, Rev Fr G Nithidasan and Rev Fr Geron de Lima, from 13th to 16th February 2015. The recipients were deeply appreciative of the Caritas initiative taken at a time when they had suffered heavy losses as a result of the devastating floods and their livelihoods totally disrupted. This relief package was sponsored by CAFOD-UK/START FUND under special arrangement with Caritas Sri Lanka.



Rev Fr George Sigamoney, National Director of Caritas Sri Lanka, along with several members of the National Centre staff, joined the Diocesan Directors and their workers and volunteers



Special Events and Meetings

in effecting a smooth distribution of the relief goods in the villages where the affected families are living after having spent considerable time in temporary camps set up in the aftermath of the floods.

Training in Project Management

A 3-day Workshop on “Effect-based Project Management”, sponsored by Misereor, was held at the SEDEC Auditorium from 18th to 20th February 2015. Among its 35 participants were 10 Caritas staff members from the National and Diocesan Centres.

Welcoming the attendees, the National Director of Caritas Sri Lanka, Rev Fr George Sigamoney said that the Workshop was a joint effort of Misereor and Caritas, and that Project Management was a vital area of interest and concern to all participating organizations as it covered several aspects ranging from project concept, planning and design to proposal-writing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The Workshop was facilitated by a team from MDF Asia, Management Consultants.





PROJECT OVERVIEW - 1 April 2013 to 31st March 2014 (Project Wise)

Particulars	Agency	Amount (LKR)	Total (LKR)	%
Children Programme - Vanni	Caritas Italiana	5157011.2	5,157,011	1.86
Construction of Pre Schools in Vanni	Wilde Ganzen	11,579,864	11,579,864	4.18
Creating a Conducive Environment for Religious Amity -213-332	Caritas Norway	14,363,556	14,363,556	5.19
CRS - Caritas Sri Lanka Internship Programme	Catholic Relief Services - USCCB	510,370	510,370	0.18
Education support for children with disabilities and school drop outs	Kindermission	2,940,000	2,940,000	1.06
Educational Support for most vulnerable and poor children	Caritas Korea	5,853,850	5,853,850	2.11
Empowerment of the Green Gold Harvesters by Strengthening of Workers Rights-322-900-1086	Misereor	13,221,512	13,221,512	4.78
Fostering Community Mobilization towards Conflict Transformation 2013 –105344	Cordaid	8,852,500	8,852,500	3.20
Integral Human Development – Civic Dialogue and Cross – Community Activities	Caritas Korea	7,583,191	7,583,191	2.74
Livelihood Support for War affected Women and their Children - P 11031	Caritas Swiss	1,849,770	1,849,770	0.67
Promoting , Healing and Reconciliation for Sustainable Peace	Caritas Australia	14,177,295	14,177,295	5.12
Reconstruction of Permanent Core Houses and Livelihood support for Tsunami and War affected Families in Sri Lanka - P 120141	Caritas Swiss	25,970,000	25,970,000	9.38
Relief & Rehabilitation Programme - EA 17/2012	Caritas Korea	9,193,843		
	Caritas Germany	4,321,924		
	Caritas New Zealand	1,301,000		
	Caritas Italiana	5,054,200	19,870,967	7.18
Relief Assistance for Families Affected By Floods & Landslide Victims	Caritas Australia	6,977,100		
	Caritas Belgium	722,432		
	Caritas Japan	1,326,000		
	Caritas Korea	6,624,338		
	Caritas Singapore	1,940,000	17,589,869	6.35
Relief Assistance for Families Affected By Floods & Landslide Victims 322-900-1110	Misereor	4,523,372	4,523,372	1.63



PROJECT OVERVIEW - 1 April 2013 to 31st March 2014 (Project Wise) - Cont...

Particulars	Agency	Amount (LKR)	Total (LKR)	%
Resettlement for IDPS affected by War 322-003-1022	Misereor	18,229,285	18,229,285	6.58
Resettlement for IDPS affected by War 322-009-1030/1029	Misereor	3,969,361	3,969,361	1.43
Resettlement for IDPS affected by War 322-009-1030	Misereor	17,481,497	17,481,497	6.31
Safe Migration and Prevention of Human Trafficking	Caritas Italiana	1,738,260	1,738,260	0.63
Safe Migration and Human Trafficking	Caritas Asia	1,107,781	1,107,781	0.40
South Asia Farmers Conference	Caritas Asia	1,303,326	1,303,326	0.47
Strengthening Democracy in Sri Lanka ; Exercising the Universal Franchise	IFES. INC	2,032,042	2,032,042	0.73
Sub Regional Capacity Building Programme on Human Trafficking	Caritas Asia	3,560,431	3,560,431	1.29
Substantiation of Community Institutions for Sustainable Agriculture to Ensure Food Security 113 -191	Caritas Norway	10,453,856	10,453,856	3.78
Support for Gender Mainstreaming- SLK 269	CAFOD	3,312,750	3,312,750	1.20
Support to Flood Affected Families - START Project - SLK 272	CAFOD	17,503,662	17,503,662	6.32
Tsunami 10th year remembrance	CAFOD	1,306,000		
	Catholic Relief Services - USCCB	3,381,151		
	Caritas Espanola	1,281,357		
	Caritas Germany	1,317,780		
	Caritas Italiana	3,543,953		
	Secours Catholique	1,304,480		
	Caritas Asia	1,303,326		
	Caritas Swiss	1,299,000		
	Caritas Australia	966,400		
	Caritas Belgium	515,345	16,218,792	5.86
Water Resource Management and Womens Empowerment - SLK 264	CAFOD	25,912,656	25,912,656	9.36
		276,866,825	276,866,825	100.00



PROJECT OVERVIEW - 1 April 2013 to 31st March 2014 (Agency Wise)

Agency	Particulars	Amount (LKR)	Total (LKR)	%
CAFOD	Water Resource Management and Womens Empowerment - SLK 264	25,912,656		
	Support to Flood Affected Families - START Project - SLK 272	17,503,662		
	Support for Gender Mainstreaming- SLK 269	3,312,750		
	Tsunami 10th year remembrance	1,306,000	48,035,068	17.35
Caritas Asia	Sub Regional Capacity Building Programme on Human Trafficking	3,560,431		
	South Asia Farmers Conference	1,303,326		
	Safe Migration and Human Trafficking	1,107,781		
	Tsunami 10th year remembrance	1,303,326	7,274,864	2.63
Caritas Australia	Relief Assistance for Families Affected By Floods & Landslide Victims	6,977,100		
	Promoting , Healing and Reconciliation for Sustainable Peace	14,177,295		
	Tsunami 10th year remembrance	966,400	22,120,795	7.99
Caritas Belgium	Relief Assistance for Families Affected By Floods & Landslide Victims	722,432		
	Tsunami 10th year remembrance	515,345	1,237,776	0.45
Caritas Espanola	Tsunami 10th year remembrance	1,281,357	1,281,357	0.46
Caritas Germany	Relief & Rehabilitation Programme - EA 17/2012	4,321,924		
	Tsunami 10th year remembrance	1,317,780	5,639,704	2.04
Caritas Japan	Relief Assistance for Families Affected By Floods & Landslide Victims	1,326,000	1,326,000	0.48
Caritas Korea	Relief Assistance for Families Affected By Floods & Landslide Victims	6,624,338		
	Relief & Rehabilitation Programme - EA 17/2012	9,193,843		
	Educational Support for most vulnerable and poor children	5,853,850		
	Integral Human Development – Civic Dialogue and Cross – Community Activities	7,583,191	29,255,221	10.57
Caritas Italiana	Relief & Rehabilitation Programme - EA 17/2012	5,054,200		
	Safe Migration and Prevention of Human Trafficking	1,738,260		
	Tsunami 10th year remembrance	3,543,953		
	Children Programme - Vanni	5,157,011	15,493,424	5.60
Caritas New Zealand	Relief & Rehabilitation Programme - EA 17/2012	1,301,000	1,301,000	0.47



PROJECT OVERVIEW - 1 April 2013 to 31st March 2014 (Agency Wise) Cont...

Agency	Particulars	Amount (LKR)	Total (LKR)	%
Caritas Norway	Substantiation of Community Institutions for Sustainable Agriculture to Ensure Food Security 113 -191	10,453,856		
	Creating a Conducive Environment for Religious Amity -213-332	14,363,556	24,817,412	8.96
Caritas Singapore	Relief Assistance for Families Affected By Floods & Landslide Victims	1,940,000	1,940,000	0.70
Caritas Swiss	Reconstruction of Permanent Core Houses and Livelihood support for Tsunami and War affected Families in Sri Lanka - P 120141	25,970,000		
	Livelihood Support for War affected Women and their Children - P 11031	1,849,770		
	Tsunami 10th year remembrance	1,299,000	29,118,770	10.52
Catholic Relief Services - USCCB	CRS - Caritas Sri Lanka Internship Programme	510,370		
	Tsunami 10th year remembrance	3,381,151	3,891,520	1.41
Cordaid	Fostering Community Mobilization towards Conflict Transformation 2013 -105344	8,852,500	8,852,500	3.20
IFES. INC	Strengthening Democracy in Sri Lanka ; Exercising the Universal Franchise	2,032,042	2,032,042	0.73
Kindermision	Education support for children with disabilities and school drop outs	2,940,000	2,940,000	1.06
Misereor	Empowerment of the Green Gold Harvesters by Strengthening of Workers Rights-322-900-1086	13,221,512		
	Resettlement for IDPS affected by War 322-003-1022	18,229,285		
	Relief Assistance for Families Affected By Floods & Landslide Victims 322-900-1110	4,523,372		
	Resettlement for IDPS affected by War 322-009-1030	17,481,497		
	Resettlement for IDPS affected by War 322-009-1030/1029	3,969,361	57,425,027	20.74
Secours Catholique	Tsunami 10th year remembrance	1,304,480	1,304,480	0.47
Wilde Ganzen	Construction of Pre Schools in Vanni	11,579,864	11,579,864	4.18
		276,866,825	276,866,825	100.00



Appreciations

Caritas Sri Lanka and the Diocesan Centres appreciate the cooperation, assistance and encouragement we received from all the Partners who support our endeavours:

1. Caritas Internationalis
2. Caritas Asia
3. Caritas Aotearoa – New Zealand
4. Caritas Australia
5. Caritas Corea
6. Caritas England & Wales / CAFOD
7. Caritas Germany
8. Caritas Italiana
9. Caritas Japan
10. Caritas Norway
11. Caritas Poland
12. Caritas Portugal
13. Caritas Spain
14. Caritas Taiwan
15. Caritas Sweden
16. Caritas Switzerland
17. Johannes Paulus 11: S pastoral lentrum
18. Canada International Development Agency (CIDA)
19. Catholic Relief Services (CRS – USA)
20. CHARIS – Singapore
21. CORDAID
22. MISEREOR
23. Missio
24. Wilde Ganzen
25. Canadian High Commission in Sri Lanka
26. Kindermannwerk
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28. Sacred Convent of Assisi
29. Development & Peace – Canada
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31. Our local benefactors



Network of Caritas Sri Lanka

Anuradhapura

Rev.Fr. Paaris Jayamaha - Director, Caritas Anuradhapura - Sethsaviya Maaminiyawa Road, Maradankadawela.
Tel. no : 025-2265295, Fax no.: 025-2265295,
E-mail : caritasanp@slt.net.lk

Badulla

Rev.Fr. Priyalal Cooray OMI - Director, Caritas Badulla - USCOD Bishop Leo Technical Insititue, Peelipothagama Rd, Badulla.
Tel. no : 055 - 2222635, Fax no. : 055 - 223574,
E-mail : uscod@slt.net.lk, caritasbadulla@yahoo.com

Batticaloa

Rev.Fr. Geron De Lima - Director, Caritas Batticaloa– EHED P.O.Box 45, No.52, Webber Street, Batticaloa.
Tel. no : 065–2222125, Direct : 065-2225458, Fax no : 065–2227017,
E-mail : ehedbatti@slt.net.lk, batti@caritasehed.org

Chilaw

Rev. Fr. Roncalli de Silva - Director, Caritas Chilaw - SEDEC Kurunegala Road, Old Town, Madampe.
Tel. no : 032 - 2247638, Fax no. : 032 - 2247638,
E-mail : caritaschilaw@yahoo.com

Colombo

Rev.Fr. Rohan de Alwis - Director, Caritas Colombo - Sethsarana, Paul VI Centre, Level 8, 24, Malwatta Road, Colombo-11.
Tel.no : 011 - 2445313, 2445314, 2445315, Fax.no : 011 2445316,
E-mail : sethsaproject@slt.net.lk/ccaritas@slt.net.lk,
Web : www.caritascolombo.org

Galle

Rev.Fr. Michael Rajendram - Director, Caritas - SED Galle No: 2/1, Templers Road, Kaluwella, Galle.
Tel. no : 091 -2244138, Fax no : 091-2233710
E-mail : director@caritasgalle.org



Network of Caritas Sri Lanka

Jaffna

Rev.Fr. Fr. A. Yavis - Director, Caritas Jaffna– HUDEC
No.14, Deogu Street, Mathew's Road, Jaffna.
Tel. no : 021 - 2222571, Fax no : 021 - 2222571
E-mail : hudec@slt.net.lk, caritasja@slt.net.lk

Kandy

Rev.Fr. Desmond Perera - Director, Caritas Kandy- SETIK
255/50, Dr.C.D.L. Fernando Mawatha, Katugastota Road, Kandy.
Tel. no : 081-4471613 Fax no.: 081 - 2222775
E-mail : setik@slt.net.lk

Kurunegala

Rev.Fr. Sagara Prishantha Perera - Director, Caritas Kurunegala - Janasetha
St. Anthony's Church, Pallandeniya, Maspotha, Kurunegala.
Tel. no : 037 - 2237147, Fax no. : 037-2237147
E-mail : janasetha@slt.net.lk, janasethacaritaskurunegala@yahoo.com

Mannar

Rev.Fr. M. Jeyabalan - Director, Caritas Mannar - Valvuthayam
Main Street, Mannar.
Tel. no : 023 - 2222140, Fax no. : 023 - 2222893
E-mail : valvum@slt.net.lk, caritasmn@slt.net.lk

Ratnapura

Rev.Fr. B.A. Shriyan - Director, Caritas Ratnapura - Seth Mini
Bishop's House, Hospital Road, Eheliyagoda.
Tel. no : 036 - 2258410, Fax no : 036- 2258495
E-mail : sethmini@slt.net.lk, sethminir@yahoo.com

Trincomalee

Rev.Fr. G. Nithidasan - Director, Caritas Trincomalee – EHED
295, Dockyard Road, Trincomalee.
Tel. no : 026 – 2222204 , Fax No : 026 – 2222474
E-mail: ehedtco@slt.net.lk, ehedcaritas@yahoo.com

Vanni

Rev. Fr. M.L Thayaharan - Director, Caritas Vanni – HUDEC
HUDEC Office, Kilinochchi.
Tel. no : 021-2285805, Fax no : 021-2285805,
E-Mail : caritasvanni09@gmail.com, chudecvanni@slt.lk



Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC

133, Kynsey Road, Colombo 8.

Tel: + 94 11 2691885, 2693989, 2692474. Fax: + 94 11 2695136.

E-mail: sedec@slt.lk, sedec@caritaslk.org.

Web: www.caritaslk.org