

Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya's

# Comprehensive Social Development Programme (CSDP)

## Independent Mid-Term Assessment

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Sarvodaya interfaith dialogue in Badulla

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## **Executive Summary: Assessment, Conclusions, Recommendations**

Widespread poverty and the conflict between the Sinhala and Tamil populations are the key **challenges** of development in Sri Lanka. The ceasefire of 2001 has not yet been transformed into a lasting peace agreement. The great majority of the 18 million people live in rural areas but urbanisation is growing. Economic liberalisation is increasing social disparities between rich and poor.

The **response** by the Sarvodaya Movement to these challenges is deeply rooted in the culture of the villages. Sarvodaya offers a comprehensive vision – an alternative to mainstream values – and a corresponding life cycle chain of activities from the children to elderly people. Equally important, the benefits of Sarvodaya projects are basically open to the entire community, not only to Sarvodaya members.

Sarvodaya has a **country-wide network**. No other organisation on the island can even dream of being so well linked to the people all over Sri Lanka. This strength and its potential are underutilised due to the lack of human and financial resources. What matters most is that the Sri Lanka-wide presence is appreciated by, and gives access to, all ethnic and religious groups.

The Sarvodaya Movement is based on an **exceptional leadership**. The popularity of the founder and chairman, combined with the organisational capacity of the new management, was mentioned many times during the mission's discussions as the major strength of the Sarvodaya movement.

### ***The Comprehensive Social Development Programme (CSDP)***

The Comprehensive Social Development Programme (CSDP) **at a glance**: It targets 1032 villages in a multi-ethnic environment of 12 Sarvodaya districts. These villages are supposed to undergo a process of empowerment, with 844 of them reaching stage four of Sarvodaya graduation. The CSDP covers the period from April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2005. Novartis Foundation agreed to make available a maximum of US\$2 666 376.

The CSDP **programme design** incorporates the lessons learnt from the 45 years' experience of the Sarvodaya Movement, the skills of the Sarvodaya staff, and the potential of the Sarvodaya philosophy to unleash the spirit of community engagement. The procedure for selecting Novartis districts and villages was appropriate and adapted to the local circumstances and the institutional environment.

The advanced 100% **funding** of the CSDP by Novartis Foundation facilitates a smooth start into the new financial year. This rather unusual procedure enabled Sarvodaya to implement the CSDP according to plan. The internal and external auditors confirm that they had not come across any misuse of funds. It should be noted that the available funding does not allow for covering all villages requesting assistance even within Novartis districts.

Overall, CSDP **implementation** is on track. The projected output of the CSDP was to develop strong Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies at the village level as a prerequisite of their social, spiritual and economic development. The transition from stage 3 to stage 4 villages is a crucial indicator of success. The level of achievement, compared to CSDP planning, is 95% over three years (2000/01 – 2002/03) which is extremely high considering the ambitiousness of the plan.

Sarvodaya **management** provides guidance and support to its staff involved in the CSDP. If the monitoring system highlights a discrepancy between plans and implementation, it tries to solve the problem. In an ongoing effort to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the CSDP, innovative steps have been taken, e.g. in the fields of training and resource mobilisation.

A landmark development since the signature of the Novartis-Sarvodaya agreement in 2000 was the agreed **ceasefire** in February 2002. Sarvodaya activities in conflict zones were severely affected and burdened by the ongoing war that impeded and delayed progress, necessitated relief and rehabilitation activities, and caused a temporary shift of Novartis funds from Padaviya District to Polonnaruwa District. There is still a long road to a peace agreement. A reappearance of war is the largest single risk for a reduced success rate of CSDP.

### **CSDP Sector Issues**

Sarvodaya has been pioneering the **pre-school** concept very successfully across Sri Lanka and has earned credibility from the people, policy makers and donors. At present, 12 803 pre-schools are functioning in Sri Lanka; 6199 of them are run by Sarvodaya<sup>1</sup>. Obviously, this is a major quantitative achievement but Sarvodaya pre-schools are also leading qualitatively. Non-Sarvodaya pre-schools based on private initiative can be found in a growing number of places. The Government plans to introduce policy on pre-school education. Sarvodaya should be open to an evolving role from an implementer to a facilitator making sure that pre-schools are available in all villages, that minimum quality standards are observed and that pre-schools also remain accessible for poor people but without necessarily running them itself.

Sarvodaya's **community health** programme is under review, taking the holistic understanding of health as a concern all through the life cycle as the starting point. The reorientation should provide for Sarvodaya's health activities at village, divisional and district level to be placed in a national context. The Anuradhapura district was selected to start with a new centre set-up. After a pilot phase key questions to be answered are in how many villages Suwadana Centres will be started, how many districts are included, and what are the priority villages, districts and areas of intervention.

Sarvodaya draws on a rich experience in **peace building** at the grassroots. It emphasises the inner peace of people as a prerequisite for peace in social relations. Sarvodaya's mass meditations for peace were also political signals through their

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<sup>1</sup> Sarvodaya, Assessment of the Quantitative and Qualitative Value of the Social, Economic and Spiritual Progress Achieved by the Village with the Inflow of the Sarvodaya Philosophy into the Rural Society, Moratuwa 2003 ("Sarvodaya Impact Study 2003")

sheer size of up to 650000 people<sup>2</sup>. Sarvodaya should also consider a more active role in the political peace process, including another mass meditation underlining the people's support for peace, and decentralised governance dialogues to discuss options for how the political and administrative set up of Government could be structured in future. Such steps could be made by forming civil society alliances with other NGOs.

Mobilisation by the Social Empowerment Division (SED) did not always correspond with the expectations of the **Sarvodaya Rural Technical Service (SRTS)**. Internal coordination and cooperation among the social and technical services should be ensured for the sake of the beneficiaries. The part played by the limitations of institutional capacity should also be examined.

The range of issues taken up by the **biodiversity** unit is too broad to ensure professional attention. On the one hand, the enthusiasm of individuals is encouraging; on the other, the programme offers weak direct benefits and ex-trainees leave for other employment opportunities. The already ongoing refocusing process should provide a convincing answer to the question of whether biodiversity should be outsourced or left to other specialised NGOs.

Appropriate models for **development communication** are a priority. Sarvodaya started pilot activities back in 1998 and is today a leading NGO regarding the application of IT in rural areas. The strategy is based on a gradual approach, promoting village level communication (media literacy), leading to an information culture at the grassroots first and providing training before eventually introducing sophisticated equipment. The poor infrastructure in rural areas, the weak computer literacy, and the costs are barriers to be overcome. The way for using "ICTs as a short cut to development" (Sarvodaya) relies mainly on the three vehicles of village information centres, telecentres, and computer education.

The quality of **development education** has been enhanced during the last two years. Standardisation of programmes, formulation of modules, and the securing of a conducive training environment contributed to increased effectiveness. Despite progress, there is still room for further improvement:

- (1) local resources should be taken into account when designing training content;
- (2) the selection of participants should be done more professionally;
- (3) the follow-up to trainings should be systematically organised.

### **General Key Issues**

CSDP's **sustainability** prospects at the village level are good. Institutional sustainability will be improved by a comprehensive effort for mobilising local and internal resources, based on selling services and income generating projects. Much also depends on an expanded endowment fund. However, even then a budgetary deficit from 2005/06 is part of the financial perspective up to 2010/11.

Sarvodaya does not have an explicit **gender** policy. However, awareness is there and gender concerns come up when discussing replacements and vacancies. Important steps have been taken and by 2005 a gender policy is expected to be in

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<sup>2</sup> In Anuradhapura on March 15, 2002

place. Treating gender balance in a systematic way and as a priority concern will be another major step. It is essential that the proposed gender policy should be implemented within an explicit time schedule. Gender concerns should become part of future impact evaluations.

The Sarvodaya approach is **cost-efficient**. Mobilisation of local resources (cash, kind, labour) is the key to the Sarvodaya's approach to development. External contributions have a mobilising effect as they are matched by a larger volume of local resources. Only small amounts are required to arrive at major improvements of the livelihoods of people. Sarvodaya's pragmatic, open cooperation strategy at the district and local levels allows it to tap those resources that are available on the spot. This reduces Sarvodaya's own costs and extends the outreach of the activities for the benefit of the people.

The **corporate culture** of Sarvodaya relies heavily on monitoring quantitative outputs. Sarvodaya is working for empowerment of, and change in, the villages. In this spirit, Sarvodaya, while keeping a focus on achieving quantitative targets, should focus as much on the quality of its programmes at the grassroots level. Statistical successes on paper must not become the most important consideration. Sarvodaya senior management has, since 2002, placed a major emphasis on quality improvement.

**Employment conditions** are considerably below market level, in particular for those with specialised qualifications and at the management level. Thus, Sarvodaya makes large savings in costs. On the other hand, effectiveness is threatened as it becomes increasingly difficult to recruit people with the high professional qualifications required. Motivation matters but, if it rules out professional know-how, Sarvodaya will run into problems in the longer term. As a step towards reform, Sarvodaya should consider introducing annual performance reviews with management and specialist staff and offering performance allowances as incentives.

The Sarvodaya internal research unit has completed an **impact evaluation** based on 15 successful grade four villages in five districts, including three Novartis districts. Key results are referred to in various chapters of this report. It would be advisable to have a broader CSDP impact evaluation, based on randomly selected villages and including gender aspects, as well as a comparison with Samurdhi efforts. Moreover, Sarvodaya should install a formal mechanism to ensure a management statement and a follow-up to research findings and recommendations.

Status and credibility of research could be enhanced by creating an **independent research unit** within the Sarvodaya family. There is an untapped potential to carry out research projects for third parties, as Sarvodaya has a unique selling point with its nation-wide access to the grassroots. Doing such research projects is a potential source of income and influence.

The Sarvodaya Movement is approaching its 50 years. Today's world is very different from 1958. While acknowledging that there has been a continued endeavour to adapt to change, a major effort of '**Re-inventing Sarvodaya**' may be called for to find valid answers for the coming decades. The fast unfolding economic liberalisation policies and the Sarvodaya vision of 'no poverty, no affluence' are to a large extent in contradiction. New poverty areas in the urban environment are increasing, along

with the new wealth of middle and upper classes. The ongoing social change in villages reflects globalisation and westernisation, both leading to processes of social disintegration related to emigration, industrial employment and the breakdown of extended families. What is Sarvodaya's conceptual response to these new challenges?

## ***Recommendations***

### ***Sarvodaya: CSDP-related Corrective Measures***

- Evolve flexibly from a pre-school implementer to a facilitator;
- Develop a new concept and appropriate health activities by 31 March 2004;
- Contribute actively to the political peace process by mobilising people for mass meditation and governance dialogues;
- Ensure coordination between social and technical empowerment services;
- Conclude the refocusing process of the biodiversity area by 31 March 2004;
- When improving access to development communication rely on service combinations with banks, school, etc.;
- Enhance development education effectiveness by a better selection of trainees and systematic training follow-up;
- Ensure follow-up to findings and recommendations of internal research;
- Have an independent evaluation of CSDP's impact made by the end of 2004.

### ***Sarvodaya-related Recommendations***

- Mobilise adequate own resources (including Vishva Lekha printing press) to cover recurrent SED expenditure and make it sustainable;
- Improve staff management (annual feed back meetings, performance allowance);
- Create an independent research unit by 31 December 2004;
- Re-inventing Sarvodaya: Launch an organisation-wide process of re-orientation in a changing world with the following key questions:
  - (1) How do we see ourselves? How do others perceive us?
  - (2) Where will Sri Lanka be in 2015? What is Sarvodaya's vision and response?
  - (3) What are Sarvodaya's strategies and policies for implementing that vision and response?

### ***Recommendations for Novartis Foundation***

- Contribute to the ongoing CSDP as agreed and planned;
- Fund the proposed independent CSDP impact evaluation and assist in establishing an independent research unit;
- Negotiate a long term (2005-2010) package of support for comprehensive community health (80%) plus mobilisation of resources at district level (20%).



## 1 Introduction

**Lanka Jatika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya Inc.** ('Sarvodaya Movement') is by far the largest people's development organisation in Sri Lanka. From its beginnings in a village back in 1958, it has grown to a non-governmental organisation (NGO) covering some 15,000 out of Sri Lanka's 27,000 villages. Sarvodaya's vision is a no-poverty, no-affluence society, based on the sharing of resources. Its methods to uplift the poor in the country are designed to preserve the traditional Sri Lankan values and culture while simultaneously promoting national peace.

The commitment of the **Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development** ('Novartis Foundation') to development can be traced back (through the two companies that later merged to form the Novartis Group) to the 1960s. The commitment to disadvantaged people is one way in which this multinational company is meeting its global social responsibility as a corporate citizen. The Novartis Foundation is willing to collaborate with all forces in society working in good faith at the local level to secure basic needs and to improve economic, social, and environmental living conditions among the world's poorest people. The philosophy of the Foundation is based on the conviction that only autonomous development can constitute sustainable development. Accordingly, efforts made by poor people themselves to satisfy their basic needs are supported.

The Sarvodaya Movement and Novartis Foundation made a **cooperation agreement** for the five year period April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2005, based on a project document outlining the Comprehensive Social Development Programme (CSDP). The CSDP is part of their overall development effort, the foundations of which are contained in a five-year comprehensive plan, 2000–2005, of the Sarvodaya Movement. This fourth strategic plan, is the first one covering a five-year period.

From this background, the two cooperation partners agreed to launch an independent mid-term **assessment** in 2003. The Terms of Reference for the assessment mission are attached (Annex 1). Both partners had consensus on the format of the assessment and jointly asked Richard Gerster, Director of Gerster Consulting, Switzerland ([www.gersterconsulting.ch](http://www.gersterconsulting.ch)) to execute that mandate. The Sarvodaya Movement had been familiar with him when he served in the 1970s as Asian programme coordinator at the head office of Helvetas, Swiss Association for Development and Cooperation. The assessment mission took place from October 15 – 31, 2003. The mission itinerary is in Annex 2.

Such an assessment is always the result of an effort of many people to whom **acknowledgements** are due. They have invested a lot of time and energy in headquarters discussions and/or during field visits. To name but a few: Vinya Ariyaratne, Executive Director Sarvodaya; Harsha Liyanage, Deputy Executive Director/Social Programmes; Ms Udani Mendis, Deputy Executive Director/Technological Programmes; Ravindra S. Ariyawickrema, Senior Executive Assistant/Programmes; Subasena De Silva, Senior Executive Assistant/Field; J. D. Gunasena, Senior Executive Assistant/International Unit; and Ms Vajira Samanthi, Coordinator Research Unit. In addition, Ravindra S. Ariyawickrama contributed drafts for chapters 4.1, 4.2 and 5 of this report. I also highly appreciated the services of Poojitha

Goowenardena, external translator. A complete list of the persons met and other sources consulted by the mission are shown in Annex 3. It is needless but a pleasure to confirm that the merits of this report are attributable to this large number of people, whereas all errors and omissions remain the author's responsibility.

## **2 Assessment Objectives and Methodology**

The fundamental document for the assessment is Sarvodaya's Comprehensive Social Development Programme proposal 2000 – 2005, which secured the agreement of Novartis Foundation. Following the terms of reference (Annex 1), the assessment has three **objectives**:

- Assessment of the management and implementation of the CSDP;
- Proposal of corrective measures for ongoing cooperation;
- Recommendations for future cooperation until 2005 and beyond.

The very limited time and team resources did not permit quantitative impact research and evaluation. Instead, the assessment focused more on qualitative aspects.



Sarvodaya meeting in Jayanthi Gama

In view of these objectives, the mission applied a process and feedback oriented **methodology**. It relied on a number of different but complementary instruments:

- A number of **meetings with senior management** at the start of the assessment, at midterm and towards the end of the mission.
- The opportunity of a regular, monthly Sarvodaya **District Coordinators' meeting** at the headquarters was used to present preliminary observations and to get feedback and to answer questions.
- The CSDP consists of nine different areas. A summary **SWOT-analysis** (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) with each area head was held. In some cases further staff members attended as well.
- Among the 34 Sarvodaya districts all over Sri Lanka, 12 are considered as 'Novartis districts'. The mission had **individual discussions** with all 12 Novartis district coordinators and some of their district or divisional staff.
- The mission had the opportunity to make a **field visit** to a number of jointly selected districts and villages (see Annex 2), including participation in Sarvodaya Societies' gatherings as focus group discussions;
- During the field visits, a number of **in depth interviews** with individual Sarvodaya members and beneficiaries were held (see Annex 5);
- In addition to the contacts with the Sarvodaya family, a (limited) number of independent but informed **third voices** were contacted and interviewed.
- The mission took into account the **documentation** available in English, in particular the project paper, the annual progress reports. and Sarvodaya's impact analysis.

It should be noted that Novartis Foundation aims to strengthen the Sarvodaya Movement overall and its perspective is not limited to the 12 CSDP districts. It was legitimate, therefore, to consider not only the Novartis funded programme experience as relevant but to include all Sarvodaya experience.

### **3 Background**

#### **3.1 Challenges of Sri Lanka's Development**

Sri Lanka ranks relatively high<sup>3</sup> on the human development index, despite a per capita income of not more than US\$ 840 or US\$ 3,390 in PPP terms (2002). This success in human development is the result of a universal access policy and investment in health and education over decades. These social achievements, however, are under pressure since, in 1977, Sri Lanka embarked on a strongly economic oriented liberalisation policy. Unemployment remained the biggest problem in rural areas. The age structure of the population is fast changing. Now 7.5% are aged 60 or above, in 2020 it will be 20% of the population. An average rate of economic growth of 5% during the 1990s was neither brilliant nor bad but the achievements in economic terms did not trickle down to the poor.

**Poverty** is still a major challenge for Sri Lanka.<sup>4</sup> Taking a dollar a day as the poverty line, 7% of the population are poor. At a poverty line of two dollars a day, the rate

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<sup>3</sup> Number 99 of 175 classified countries. See UNDP, Human Development Report 2003, New York & Oxford 2003, p. 238

<sup>4</sup> See Government, Regaining Sri Lanka, Annex 2, pp. 113 - 139

increases to 45%, demonstrating the vulnerability of a large number of people. Conflict areas were excluded from the surveys. As around 600,000 people have been displaced by the conflict, poverty will be higher if the conflict areas were included. The poverty analysis identified the following groups of poor people:

- Rural poor: workers and self-employed individuals in remote regions, landless workers, farmers cultivating low value crops on small holdings;
- Plantation workers;
- Fishing and livestock communities;
- Squatter settlers on marginal lands and urban shanty dwellers;
- Petty traders, individual craftsmen, outcasts, pensioners;
- Internally displaced persons.

With a view to access to concessional multilateral funding, Sri Lanka, like other low income countries, has prepared — a **Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)**<sup>5</sup>. The Bretton Woods Institutions require NGO consultation as part of the elaborate process. Sarvodaya leaders were consulted but this was obviously just a rubber stamping exercise, as NGO contributions were not taken up at all. From a Sarvodaya perspective, the PRSP is economically biased and neglects social and cultural values. The considerable progress in health and education until the 1970s has come to an end since then, due to the war and inappropriate policies. Standard privatisation recipes are not the answer to regaining the lost territory. The poverty alleviation programmes of Government (e.g. Samurdhi) struggle to maintain credibility at all levels, from community to donor agencies.

The **conflict** between the Sinhala majority and the Tamil minority is another key challenge for Sri Lanka. After two decades of civil war, the Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) agreed to a cease fire on December 5, 2001. Norway was invited to broker peace negotiations, which have not yet started. The human and economic costs<sup>6</sup> of the war are dramatic. 65,000 people are estimated to have been killed, while approximately 1,200,000 Tamils, Muslim and Sinhalese were forced to leave their homes, a quarter of them emigrating to India and the West. The total economic burden of the war is estimated at over Rs 2,000 billion - for military expenditure, public order and safety, internally displaced persons, in damage to physical assets and property, loss of tourism and foreign investment and loss of output in the North and East. This burden deprived Sri Lanka of the prosperity, that other Asian countries experienced during the last decades.

The positive aspects of Sri Lanka's development achievements in the fields of human development have already been mentioned. They are backed by strong cultural values and a rich tradition. The unresolved challenges of poverty and conflict and the mainstream economic policy orientation negative effects on society that add to the challenges:

- Increasing inequities, also in villages;
- Growing alcoholism;
- An extremely high suicide rate;
- Rising crime rates;
- Rapid urbanisation and emigration;
- Breakdown of the extended family;

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<sup>5</sup> Government, Regaining Sri Lanka, December 2002

<sup>6</sup> National Peace Council 2003

- A rising number of conflicts in villages;
- Devaluation of the cultural heritage.

### 3.2 Conceptual Response by Sarvodaya

The Sarvodaya Movement provides an answer to these challenges. It offers an alternative **vision** of a 'no poverty, no affluence' society. It is based on the Gandhian values of truth, non-violence and self-sacrifice, rooted in indigenous cultural and religious traditions and governed by the ideals of participatory democracy. The 'awakening of all' ('Sarvodaya') comprises a spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political dimension and addresses the individual, family, village, national and global levels. The awakening incorporates ten basic needs that must be satisfied for all individuals in a just society. They are (1) a clean and beautiful environment, (2) a clean and adequate supply of water, (3) basic clothing requirements, (4) a balanced diet, (5) a simple house to live in, (6) basic health care, (7) simple communication facilities, (8) basic energy requirements, (9) total education, (10) cultural and spiritual needs. Spiritual development matters as much as material progress.

The **village** is the learning and working ground of Sarvodaya. Villages pass through a five-stage model: In stages 1 and 2, social empowerment takes place by social capital development and establishment. In stage 3, technical empowerment follows with village institutional capacity development. Stage 4 focuses on economic empowerment and stage 5 on political empowerment ('good governance) including sharing experiences with other villages. As a strategy, 'pioneering' villages are supposed, firstly, to assist the 'intermediary' villages and then the 'peripheral' villages on their way to 'awakening'; 'intermediary' villages are in transition to pioneering status. This development philosophy, based on empowerment, is underpinned by a comprehensive package of activities following the life cycle from children to elder people. These activities complement and reinforce each other. The Novartis supported Comprehensive Social Development Programme (CSDP) is a key part of these activities.



A Sarvodaya micro credit for the village shop in Sangattikulama

The Sarvodaya **Movement** has 34 district<sup>7</sup> centres all over the country, 345 divisional centres and is present in 14,000 villages. 4087 Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies are registered<sup>8</sup>. 7000 villages are in stages 1 and 2, 4049 in stage 3, and 3059 in stages 4 and 5. 1140 villages have reached the pioneering village status. 4560 are considered as intermediary, and 5700 as peripheral villages. At present,, the Social and the Technical Empowerment divisions have some 600 core staff members: 140 at the headquarter, 300 at the district level, and 160 at the divisional level. The restructuring exercise cut the 1200 staff in 1992 by half and was accompanied by a strategy of giving more power to the villages. 95,000 volunteers, including 5000 pre-school teachers in the villages, are part of the Sarvodaya Movement. The Sarvodaya movement, through SEEDS, encourages people to undertake self-employment activities to combat unemployment and provides training. SEEDS, as an independent unit for economic empowerment, employs another 600 staff.

Sarvodaya has the vision and the organisational strength to present a credible **response** to the dominant model that is seen as part of the problem. The founder and president of Sarvodaya, A.T. Ariyaratne, said “The worst thing that happened to former colonies like Sri Lanka, was the non-use of indigenous thinking and practices on development, which had evolved over twenty-five centuries, and the continued dominance of alien thinking on development even after 50 years of freedom from the foreign powers.”<sup>9</sup> And a recent planning document notes: ‘While Sarvodaya cannot and should not be totally opposed to [liberalisation and globalisation], it is clear to us that we must work to develop those aspects of a balanced society that the global

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<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that the 34 Sarvodaya and the ?? Government districts differ. In this report, “districts” refer to Sarvodaya districts unless explicitly mentioned.

<sup>8</sup> Up to March 31, 2003

<sup>9</sup> Ariyaratne 1999, p. 2

market economy ignores.<sup>10</sup> Due to its vision, size and track record Sarvodaya gets attention and recognition from Governments as well as the private sector.

### **3.3 The Partnership Sarvodaya – Novartis Foundation**

The philosophy of Novartis Foundation is based on the conviction that only autonomous development can constitute sustainable development. Fostering sustainable development in the poor countries of the South through programme support for sustainable agriculture, health and social development was defined as the mission of Novartis Foundation<sup>11</sup>. The background of the Sarvodaya Movement and its conceptual response to the challenges of Sri Lanka were, therefore, perfectly in line with the objectives of Novartis Foundation.

After an effort at serious restructuring during the 1990s, the Sarvodaya Movement developed a **5-year comprehensive plan for the years 2000 – 2005**, summarising the strategies for the movement as a whole and focusing on the programme activities of the Social and Technological Empowerment Sectors. This 5-year plan is the basis for the collaboration between the Sarvodaya Movement and Novartis Foundation. An agreement was signed for the period from April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2005. Based on a detailed project document, Novartis Foundation agreed to make available a maximum of US\$ 2,666,376 over the period of co-operation.

## **4 Project Objectives and Design**

### **4.1 Objectives**

The objective of the project is to conduct a Comprehensive Social Development Programme in 1032 selected, underprivileged communities in 10 administrative districts (12 Sarvodaya districts) in Sri Lanka and to develop strong Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies as an outcome of the programme, leading to a process of economic empowerment. More specifically, an objective of the CSDP is to bring 844 villages (out of 1032) into stage 4, in accordance with the five-stage village development model: 103 in year 1, 147 in year 2, 147 in year 3, 147 in year 4 and 300 in year 5.

In more detail, the CSDP is expected to

- contribute to the satisfaction of the basic human needs of different age groups
- Facilitate leadership development in the target villages
- Provide management training to the Shramadana Samithi youth leaders (i.e. Village institutional capacity building).
- Organise health camps and preschools
- Upgrade techniques in existing preschools

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<sup>10</sup> Sarvodaya, 5-Year Plan 200-2005, Moratuwa 2000, p. 10

<sup>11</sup> It should be noted, that the mission will be more focused in future on health, see below chapter 7.

- Develop a sustainable and effective community health system in the village that meets its minimum basic health needs
- Organise relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, reconciliation and re-awakening activities.
- Provide infrastructure development facilities
- Develop awareness programmes and participatory action work on biodiversity conservation and promotion.
- Introduce new techniques of ICT (IT and mass media communication) to the village community, and to develop curricular and training modules
- Conduct surveys research, case studies and formulation of project proposals to upgrade programmes in SED
- Facilitate peace activities and promote peace at the community level.
- To assess and evaluate the programmes continuously.

## 4.2 Project Design

The ultimate **beneficiaries** of the project are the children, youth, mothers and farmers in the project villages. In order to improve the meeting of their basic needs, children's, mothers', and farmers' groups and Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies were formed. Spiritual development programmes, capacity building, awareness creation and economic development enabled the beneficiaries to arrive at their own targets.

In its **strategy**, the CSDP addresses many of the key issues of over 1000 communities distributed over a wide geographical region with diverse cultural, ethnic, environmental and infrastructural resources. Given the magnitude of the issues it addresses, the linkages between inputs, activities, outputs and objectives are crucial. The CSDP incorporates the lessons learnt from the 45 year long organisational experience of the Sarvodaya Movement, the skills of the Sarvodaya staff, and the potential of the Sarvodaya philosophy to unleash the spirit of community participation.





A Shramadana camp in Wahalkada

Sarvodaya has made a special effort to maintain precise descriptions of project **outputs**. Clarity of the planned activities and realism in scheduling are adequately met. However, in certain programmes/ activities such as biodiversity, community health and Information Technology, it may be necessary to revisit the original proposal in order to make some adjustments. This is mainly due to the fact that these three programmes are relatively new to Sarvodaya.

The **input** of the project activities was designed for a five-year period, of time having considered the situation on the ground at that time. Owing, however, to fluctuation in the value of the rupee every year, Sarvodaya had to revise its allocations to make the project inputs realistic in order to maintain the legitimacy of the project.

It is one of the strengths of the Sarvodaya – Novartis cooperation that it does not add a parallel structure to the existing set-up. Instead, Sarvodaya uses its existing **management** structure for the implementation of CSDP. This consists of:

- Executive Director – the programme director and responsible the person responsible for the CSDP;
- Deputy Executive Director – responsible for the entire operation of the project;
- Deputy Executive Director Technological Programmes – responsible for infrastructure development (SRTS);
- Social Empowerment Division (SED) – responsible for co-ordination, fund disbursement, donor reporting, monitoring and evaluation;
- Specialised Units – responsible arms for implementing project activities in accordance with the project proposal, while giving guidance and advice to the district and divisional staff in their particular fields of expertise;
- District and divisional staff - responsible for implementing CSDP at village level;
- Villagers – the beneficiaries and implementers of the CSDP in their respective village communities.

As major **risks** explicit or implicit in the project design (risks which could be effectively handled by Sarvodaya) can be mentioned

- The situation in some of the project districts in the north and east was unstable (eg. Padaviya/Kantalai) due to the ongoing war at the time of the project comment and for another two years;
- To implement an ambitious and complex program with a reduced number of staff.

Major **assumptions** explicit or implicit in the project design are:

- Overall security to be normal to implement activities;
- The Sarvodaya staff member capacity was adequate to do all the project work;
- Sarvodaya can manage the ground level fluctuations created by the volatile social climate (i.e. ethnic conflict and peace process);
- There would not be a conflict with or negative pressure from the existing Government policies of Sri Lanka;
- Sarvodaya can effectively compete (if necessary) with the parallel mega projects on similar concerns (e.g. Samurahi program);
- Sarvodaya can effectively mitigate any negative pressure created by outside elements (e.g. NGO and Media).

### 4.3 Identification

Ways and means of identifying districts and projects most important once the CSDP objectives have been set, and the CSDP strategy has been designed. The procedure applied to select “Novartis” districts<sup>12</sup> followed this line:

- (1) As the first step, 10 Sarvodaya districts receiving funding from other sources (Japan, etc.) were excluded .
- (2) In a second step, the 24 remaining Sarvodaya districts were evaluated. Four selection criteria were applied:
  - Location of the district geographically , remoteness
  - Funding received during the last three years
  - District progress over the last three years (own activities, innovations, participation in national programmes, co-operation with Sarvodaya’s independent units)
  - District response to headquarters’ requirements.
- (3) Based on this rating, the best 12 districts were selected for the Novartis funded programme.

The following procedure<sup>13</sup> took place to select Novartis projects within a chosen district:

- (1) The Sarvodaya Headquarters informed the districts of the components of the Novartis supported CSDP.
- (2) This information was passed on to Divisional Co-ordinators, asking them to submit proposals.

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<sup>12</sup> It is jargon within Sarvodaya to speak of „Novartis“ district or „Novartis“ programmes. In substance, Novartis never tried to intervene in operational affairs. Therefore, the difference between “Novartis” and “Non-Novartis” districts is just the source of funding.

<sup>13</sup> Based on the detailed description by the District Coordinator in Nuwara Eliya.

- (3) The Divisional Co-ordinators came up with more proposals than were 'digestible'; and the divisional co-ordinators, together with the social development co-ordinator, visited all villages proposed often for several days.
- (4) The most deserving villages were selected, not only on the basis of poverty but also because of initiative and interest..

The Project Document stipulates that the CSDP is focused on the 'poorest communities in predominantly rural districts of Sri Lanka'<sup>14</sup>. Obviously, other considerations besides poverty were taken into consideration – such as there being no other assistance available for the village, or rewarding the village performance. A promising track record was on at least an equal footing with poverty and remoteness. The poorest villages often first need preparatory training for selected individuals to understand the potential of Sarvodaya support, or they may not be co-operative for other reasons. In the light of these considerations, the selection procedure was appropriate and adapted to the local circumstances and institutional environment.

## **5 Assessment of Project Implementation, Efficiency and Management**

### **5.1 Project Budget and Expenditure**

In accordance with the project document, Novartis Foundation has agreed to fund CSDP for a period of five years, beginning from April 1, 2000. To facilitate a smooth start, Novartis Foundation advances the full amount allocated early in the financial year. This rather unusual procedure enabled Sarvodaya to implement the CSDP according to plan during the last three years. The annual transfers fixed in the agreement:

Year 2000/01	US\$ 521,555
Year 2001/02	US\$ 532,815
Year 2002/03	US\$ 533,877
Year 2003/04	US\$ 535,980
Year 2004/05	US\$ 542,177 (due 04/2004)

It may be noted that Novartis Foundation is largest single donor for the Sarvodaya Movement. Similarly, the partnership with Sarvodaya is the largest single programme commitment for Novartis Foundation.

The Sarvodaya accounts are thoroughly checked twice. First, the internal auditor, each year, systematically visits four of the 12 Novartis districts for 7 – 10 days to check all the vouchers and books. He confirms that he has not come across any misuse of funds. Second, the external auditor and his team visit all districts and carry out detailed audit checks, including field visits and interviews with community members. They do not only check the books but also examine whether the physical output (e.g. the number of latrines) corresponds to the financial statements. They

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<sup>14</sup> Sarvodaya 2000, p. 1

cover all Novartis districts in this way within a two-year period. The external auditor has not come across any serious<sup>15</sup> problems.

## 5.2 Activities and Outputs

The annual progress reports account in a very detailed manner for the project performance, describing activities and outputs. We mention here just few aspects in a summary manner.

### **Activities**

All project activities described in the project document were designed in accordance with CSDP objectives. However, while implementing the CSDP, Sarvodaya in some cases identified a need to adapt the content - to remove or include activities in order to maximise the impact and benefit to the local people. These changes were mentioned in the annual progress reports. Such changes occurred in the following components of the CSDP (see the progress reports for more details):

- Community capacity building
- Early childhood development
- Community health
- Biodiversity
- Development communication
- Rural infrastructure development.



The pre-school in Jayanthi Gama

<sup>15</sup> Minor problems met were (1) advances were repaid but with delays, (2) unutilised funds on bank accounts.

## Outputs

The projected output of the CSDP was to develop strong Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies as a prerequisite for economic development. The transition from stage 3 to stage 4 villages is a crucial indicator of success. The following table illustrates the achievements against planning over the last three years:

Successful transition to stage 4:

Year	Target	Achieved	%
2000/01	103	100	97%
2001/02	147	144	98%
2002/03	147	132	90%
2003/04	147		
2004/05	300		

Please see the progress reports for more details. The level of achievement, with 90% and more, is extremely high. The impact study made by the Sarvodaya research unit, covering 15 Sarvodaya villages plus three non-Sarvodaya villages for control purposes, provides a clear message: in villages, there is a very low level of activity if Sarvodaya is not present. In particular, the Government seems to be rather absent. There is no doubt that the positive figures portray a true picture of successful operations at an admirably high level.

A note of caution needs to be added here. The Sarvodaya Movement has reached a high level of planning and monitoring standards, most of them quantitatively defined. This is essential for success, sustainability and learning. Sarvodaya has to maintain professional planning and monitoring mechanisms for its own progress but also for reasons of its accountability to donors. There is, however, an inherent danger that must not be overlooked: activity programmes dominate the perception and work. The number of training sessions and trainees is one thing, what, if anything, they have learned, and how they use their new knowledge is another. To focus just on quantitative figures would be an entirely misleading attitude. I note a tremendous amount of paper work (not accessible to me) and a heavy reliance on sometimes overly accurate figures. Statistical successes on paper may become more important than anything else. Sarvodaya, however, is working for change in the villages. The statistics on paper are of secondary importance compared to the primary grassroots level. In the same way the CSDP Progress Reports of 2001/02 and 2002/03 identified as a common problem 'a focus on completing targets rather than considering the quality of programmes'. Qualitative aspects of the CSDP implementation are dealt with in chapter 6.

### 5.3 Project Management

Local institutions and people are usually given maximum responsibility for project management. In accordance with the project implementation structure, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Society in the village is the local counterpart, which is responsible for planning and implementing project activities that are part of the work

plan. In order to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the local project management, the following steps were taken:

- Awareness and training programmes for leading and responsible members in the Sarvodaya Shramadana Society of the village;
- From stage 3 onwards, project funds are directly transferred to the Society's bank accounts in order to enhance their capacity in keeping records and handling finances properly;
- Strengthening decision making on project activities by the beneficiaries, trainees, etc. themselves.

Co-ordination problems among different Sarvodaya units may occur. Communication links are firmly established vertically within units. Inter-unit communication is well co-ordinated at the management level but much weaker at the lower level, in particular in the field among CSDP and SRTS<sup>16</sup>.

#### **5.4 Technical and Operational Back-up**

In order to maintain effective and efficient management of the project, the following steps were taken, right from the beginning:

- (a) The project staff at district, divisional and national level were given a comprehensive orientation about the project, including its objectives, areas and activities;
- (b) Progress review meetings are conducted at district and national level once a month<sup>17</sup>;
- (c) Project progress review meetings are conducted every three months at national level with the participation of District Social Programme Co-ordinators;
- (d) Periodically, awareness raising workshops were conducted at national level;
- (e) The specialised units closely guide and support staff in implementing project activities;
- (f) Staff have the opportunity to make exchange visits among project districts;
- (g) Conducting management training programmes
- (h) Reporting and monitoring.

Based on these mechanisms, Sarvodaya management has provided technical and back-up support to the respective project staff in overcoming problems or difficulties in the project implementation. If the monitoring report highlights any discrepancy between plans and implementation, Sarvodaya management tries to rectify the discrepancy and solve the problem. E.g. the transfer of Novartis funds from Padaviya to Polonnaruwa was based on repeated alarming information received through the above mentioned mechanisms. As an ongoing effort to improve the quality of the programmes and activities, the following steps were taken, during the project period.

- Venues of the long-term programmes were carefully selected
- Modules and curricular for the programmes were developed
- Outside hire of competent people as resource persons
- Systemisation of teaching patterns

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<sup>16</sup> See chapter 6.1.1

<sup>17</sup> The quality of these meetings is unsatisfactory according to the Progress Reports 2001/02 and 2002/03.

- Upgrade of facilities of the development education and district centres
- Design and implementation of micro hydro power projects<sup>18</sup> are under way.
- The areas of biodiversity, health and development communication are closely observed and in constant evolution from pilot activities to revised concepts.

However, there is still room for improvement in the areas of accessibility to the monitoring and evaluation based information at all levels of management, in order to improve the decision making process. Further, specific programme-based monitoring needs to be improved.

## **5.5 Applied Research**

Applied research is an important activity for evaluating achievements from a more objective point of view. Research results can be the departure point for redirecting ongoing activities. It was a wise decision by the Sarvodaya Movement to establish a Research Unit, as provided for in the project document. Activities started with the assistance of outside specialists.

The first major completed research project is an impact evaluation<sup>19</sup> based on 15 grade four villages in five districts. Three of them (Badulla, Puttalam, Mahiyanganaya) figure among the Novartis districts. In each district, villages with no Sarvodaya involvement were included as controls. The methodology consisted of social mapping, interviews, focus group discussions and direct observations. Key results of the impact study are referred to in various chapters of this report. There is no formal mechanism so far to ensure a management statement and a follow-up to the research conclusions.

In addition to that internal research project, the unit is conducting a national level survey on behalf of UNICEF. Another, Malaria related, research project is going on in parts of the North-East of Sri Lanka for the Global Fund (GFATM). The objectives are to identify local plants used to keep mosquitos away, and to survey sleeping patterns and the use of mosquito nets. There is an untapped potential for carrying out further research projects for third parties, as Sarvodaya has a unique selling point, with its preferential nation-wide access to the grassroots. Doing such research projects is a potential source of income and influence. Credibility could be enhanced by creating an independent research unit within the Sarvodaya family.

Sarvodaya believes it would be worthwhile, in a future CSDP related impact research project, to compare Sarvodaya's performance and cost-efficiency with the Government poverty alleviation projects, such as Samurdhi.

## **6 Assessment of Results and Effectiveness**

<sup>18</sup> See CSDP Annual Report 2002/03, p.29

<sup>19</sup> Sarvodaya Impact Study 2003

## 6.1 Effects and Impact

### 6.1.1 General considerations

As a preliminary remark on **methodology**, it should be repeated here that the assessment resources did not allow for quantitative impact research. Quantitative aspects, mainly at the output level, are part of chapter 5 and are contained in the three CSDP Annual Progress Reports. In chapter 6, there is qualitative information, often illustrated by mission experiences. In Annex 5, we portray a day in the life of five people whom the mission met during the village visits. They show in an exemplary manner how the Sarvodaya approach can enter into the life of the people Sarvodaya co-operates with. Annex 5 is based on in-depth interviews with the people concerned and general discussion with members of the local Sarvodaya Society.

A landmark development since the signature of the Novartis-Sarvodaya agreement in 2000 was the **ceasefire** after December 5, 2001. Sarvodaya activities in conflict zones was severely affected and burdened by the on-going war that impeded progress, necessitated relief and rehabilitation activities, and caused a temporary shift of Novartis funds from Padaviya District to Polonnaruwa District. Though there is obviously still a long road to a peace agreement, the ceasefire for two years now has had a positive influence on Sarvodaya activities. Internally displaced persons are moving back to their homes. Villagers' commitment to Shramadana and other development work has increased, facilitating a high degree of compliance of implementation with planning.

In the CSDP, we focus on the Social Empowerment and Technical Empowerment promoted by Sarvodaya. It should be kept in mind, however, that in the **Sarvodaya family** nine<sup>20</sup> legally independent units provide complementary services in special areas of development. Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services (SEEDS) for economic empowerment is of particular importance. The economic programme is most important and can be considered as one of the major innovations for alleviating rural unemployment. In several villages, the mission gained an instructive insight into the ongoing SEEDS programme, in particular in the Banking sector. However, as it is not part of the CSDP covered by Novartis Foundation, we do not deal with it in more detail<sup>21</sup>.

### 6.1.2 Community Capacity Building

Community capacity building starts with sharing labour (**'Shramadana'**). A considerable part of the village works together for three days to achieve a self-

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<sup>20</sup> See Sarvodaya, 5-year plan, 2000, p. 4

<sup>21</sup> There is a normal working relationship between Sarvodaya and SEEDS. This has not always been the case and the different approaches remain a potential source of conflict. As a staff member put it into a nutshell: "In the early stages of village development, we are working for the welfare of the people. After handing the villages over to SEEDS, we potentially have to take legal action against these people in case they are not fulfilling their commitments." Another voice: "Whereas SEEDS has the option of sanctions, the Sarvodaya technical service cannot get its financial assistance for toilets back in case the construction is delayed."



determined objective, such as the clearing of a road. Shramadana, however, is much more than just labour. People cook and eat together, they sing around the campfire, there is joint worshipping despite different faiths, and there may also be a cultural programme. Such commonalities lay the foundation for their future empowerment.

**Leadership** training of village people is key to making village organising sustainable. Young people, usually 18 – 30 years of age, participate in a two-weeks training programme at a Sarvodaya district centre and, for a practical part, in a village. The participants are jointly selected by the village, volunteers, and the divisional coordinator.

### **6.1.3 Early Childhood Development**

According to the village graduation concept, the establishment of **pre-schools** are part of stage 2. It is not surprising, therefore, that on most of its visits to villages the mission encountered Sarvodaya pre-schools. The concept is based on the strong support and mobilisation of local resources by the benefiting village: the pre-school teacher usually has grown up in the village, undergone Sarvodaya training, and is maintained by the parents sending their children to the pre-school. They usually pay 100 Rp per month. In some villages, 50 Rp have been agreed. If parents are poor and cannot pay, the children are accepted anyway. The pre-schools are open to all the population. We have come across several cases where Sarvodaya non-members sent their children to the pre-school. Mothers supply lunch to the pre-school children on a rotating basis, clean the premises, provide the uniforms, and organise sports festivals and educational tours.

At present, there are 12,803 pre-schools in Sri Lanka, 6,199 of them run by Sarvodaya<sup>22</sup>. 145,519 children attend Sarvodaya pre-schools, representing 48% of the total in Sri Lanka. Obviously, this is a major quantitative achievement. A comparison of Sarvodaya pre-school children with other pre-school children showed a higher capacity development of the Sarvodaya pre-school children and the parents had more confidence in Sarvodaya's elementary education and school admission of their children. The Sarvodaya pre-schools are, therefore also leading qualitatively.

#### ***The Kings of Switzerland, Norway and Sri Lanka ...***

... met on October 25, 2003, in Meepakadawewa (Mahiyangana District). The village children's group performed a theatre play written for the occasion of the mission's visit. The three Kings discussed how to use the Novartis surplus funds and decided to invest in Meepakadawewa. This was greatly applauded and appreciated by the people!!

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<sup>22</sup> Sarvodaya Impact Study 2003



The Kings of Switzerland, Norway and Sri Lanka

#### **6.1.4 Community Health**

Sarvodaya has a holistic understanding and approach to health that goes beyond medical care to encompass social, environmental, economic, emotional and spiritual aspects. The project document lists a wide range of health related activities. Health aspects are built into the activities of other Sarvodaya units, in particular pre-schools, SRTS (water, sanitation, housing), biodiversity and development education. For that reason, there are no health programme co-ordinators at district level. Pre-schools and related mothers' groups play a key role in awareness creation. Every two months children are weighed. Those underweight are referred to the family health worker visiting the village. The Department of Provision and Child Care is providing portions of soya beans ('Thri Posha') and a balanced diet plan for mothers. Children bring food items from home and food is prepared in the pre-school with the participation of the mothers. The Nagarodaya Centre in Colombo City hosts, among other facilities, the Sarvodaya health resource centre (including library, website, educational material, exhibitions, etc.), a Reproductive Health Counselling Centre, and Sarvodaya's secretariat of the Global Fund against Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM).

Sarvodaya's community health programme is based on **close co-operation with the Government**. Sarvodaya avoids duplicating government services but creates health awareness and assists people in calling upon the government services available. The Sarvodaya Impact Evaluation portrays the effectiveness of this approach in involving Government health services at the village level. In places without Sarvodaya activities only weighing of children took place. In the Sarvodaya villages, quite a number of health related activities were reported: dental and eye clinics, instructions on venereal diseases<sup>23</sup>, on reproductive health, on nutrition of children,

<sup>23</sup> Programmes on venereal diseases and on reproductive health were rather the exception than the rule and the impact study recommends to lay more emphasis on it in future.

on elders' health problems, weighing of children and blood donations. The following are some experiences of using Government services that the mission came across:

- Sarvodaya publicises immunisation programmes and encourages parents to bring children for immunisation. In Puttalam District it was said to be 60% successful in the case of filaria, whereas 40% do not adhere.
- In Jayanthi Gama (Kantale District) the public health worker visits the village once a month, at the request of Sarvodaya, to discuss health problems with pregnant mothers;
- Sarvodaya arranges vocational health programmes, e.g. for garment workers, drivers, mechanics or other trades. The doctor, public health inspector and other competent health authorities present their experiences and concerns (Badulla District).
- In Nuwara Eliya District the District Co-ordination Committee, headed by the Government, asked Sarvodaya for a programme on reproductive health. Thanks to Novartis assistance, they had the flexibility to offer an immediate response.

However, in general, during the mission's field visits health aspects were rarely presented by the districts. This reflects the fact that the CSDP community health programme was reduced in 2001/02. UNFPA support to Sarvodaya was increased and is covering reproductive health activities, which originally were planned as parts of the CSDP. The ongoing *review* of Sarvodaya's community health programme starts with the holistic understanding of health, being a concern all through the life cycle. The reorientation should allow for Sarvodaya's health activities at village, divisional and district level to be placed into a national context:

- Village level: The Sarvodaya Shanti Sena 'Suwadena' health centres are the focal point for health education (malaria!), first-aid and minor ailments, community disaster preparedness, and for liaison with Government health services;
- Divisional and district levels: Health resource centre (at Sarvodaya centre and/or telecentre), health education and training, disaster preparedness, advocacy;
- National level: Nagarodaya Health Resource Centre, human resource development for health (training), applied research and consultancy, Sarvodaya's management role for the GFATM, advocacy based on the 'People's Charter for Health'.

The Anuradhapura district was selected to start with a new centre set-up. After the pilot phase key questions to be answered are in how many villages Suwadena Centres will be started, how many districts are included, and what are the priority villages, districts and areas of intervention.

### **6.1.5 Relief & Rehabilitation, Peace & Youth Development**

Sarvodaya emphasises the *inner peace of people* as a prerequisite for peace in social relations. From a Sarvodaya perspective, the creation of confidence, co-operative attitudes and modesty instead of greed are primary spiritual objectives. Changing the mindset is difficult to measure; success is, therefore, often difficult to define. Participation is high, and this may serve as an indicator that Sarvodaya satisfies a felt need in that respect. Another indicator of success may be the access

Sarvodaya enjoys working with all ethnic and religious groups. In Trincomalee<sup>24</sup>, Sarvodaya has been working for, and with, the Sinhala, Tamil, and Muslim communities for years and is highly respected for that approach. For a time in the early 1990s, only Sarvodaya was able to bridge the divide between the different religious and ethnic segments of society and was admitted to all zones of disputes for humanitarian reasons. This sector embraces the complementary activities of (1) Sarvodaya's Peace Secretariat; (2) Vishwa Niketan; (3) Shanti Sena.

Beyond these three specialised units, **general Sarvodaya activities** are also relevant for peace outcomes. For example, in Sangattikulama of Puttalam District there are 289 families, 121 of them being Muslim. The village was separated along religious lines. Before Sarvodaya's intervention, the village was separated along religious lines. Now Muslims participate in Buddhist festivals and vice versa. The Sarvodaya Impact Study shows lower rates of domestic conflict in Sarvodaya villages compared to non-Sarvodaya villages. In particular, children who smoke, drunken husbands, and women being scolded by their husbands are much more frequent in a non-Sarvodaya environment. This finding may not be entirely conclusive<sup>25</sup> but it can be taken as an indicator of Sarvodaya's efforts to shape a more harmonious environment.

The Sarvodaya **Peace Secretariat** mainly targets youth and offers the districts: (1) peace dialogues, 3-days workshops; (2) conflict resolution, 3-days workshops; (3) peace meditation, 1-day workshop; (4) interfaith dialogues, 1-day workshop. In Badulla, the mission had the opportunity to attend an interfaith dialogue with the local leaders of the Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Christian communities as speakers, and a full house of participants. 'When the sun rises early in the morning, it does not make a difference between Hindus, Tamils, Christians and Buddhists.' The event was organised by Sarvodaya's Peace Secretariat to further peace building in Sri Lanka. An unresolved issue is that the follow-up to these activities is weak both by the participants and on Sarvodaya's side.

The **Vishwa Niketan** Centre in Moratuwa specialises in peace meditation and peace dialogues, mainly targeting 30-45 year old individuals of stages 4 or 5 villages. The participants take the message back to their village and, in collaboration with the district co-ordinator organise peace meditations in the area.

The Peace Brigade '**Shanti Sena**' targets young people (15 – 30 years) of stage 2 villages with the objectives of personal development, peace building, and village improvement. Shanti Sena trains leaders to start Shanti Sena groups in their villages, to organise cultural programmes and to link up ethnically different districts. In Thambalagama (Trincomalee District), people report of a recent Sarvodaya **exchange programme** where a number of Tamils of that village spent a week in Matale, a Sinhala area. "Before that experience I was afraid of Sinhala people because of the war. Now, after joint Shramadana, meditation and cultural activities, I know that they are peace loving people as we are." said Ms S. Kavida, one of the participants.

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<sup>24</sup> The mission visited Trincomalee to get a fuller picture of Sarvodaya's role in the conflict, well aware of the fact that Trincomalee District does not count among Novartis districts.

<sup>25</sup> The Sarvodaya villages are a positive selection.

The CSDP and SRTS are involved, as needed, in rehabilitation and reconstruction. Sarvodaya facilitates the **resettlement** of internally displaced persons (Thambalagama) by supplying agricultural inputs (seeds, fertiliser, etc.), providing temporary shelter (sand, cement, gravel, roofing), rehabilitating schools, offering microcredits for self-employment, giving legal advice to get access to government assistance, promoting cultural programmes to build bridges among different religious and ethnic groups, organising Shramadana work, and offering the full range of standard Sarvodaya supported training and activities.

Sarvodaya also has activities in the field of relief. In Trincomalee, Sarvodaya is involved in **refugee camps** (Alles Garden) on behalf of UNHCR<sup>26</sup>, providing infrastructure (water, shelter, toilets) and offering microcredits. Beyond the effect of immediate assistance, this support is an opportunity to establish contacts with people who, once they are resettled, will know Sarvodaya and will call on them to help to empower their village.



A hair cut in the refugee camp “Alles Garden” of Trincomalee

Regarding the **role of Sarvodaya in the peace process**, there are different opinions. It is difficult for Sarvodaya to take positions because there might be repercussions for the grassroots people. On the other hand, maintaining a low profile at all costs may also mean missing being part of a peace process of historical significance. Sarvodaya has been active in peace building at the grassroots for many years and has gained important insights and experience. Through their sheer size - up to 650,000 people<sup>27</sup> on the occasion of the peace gathering in Anuradhapura on March 15, 2002 - mass meditations for peace were also political signals. Sarvodaya's 5-year plan explicitly states: 'Sarvodaya is now in the unique position of being able to influence national policies in favour of basic human needs: peace, human rights, and

<sup>26</sup> This experience is only indirectly related to the Novartis supported programme.

<sup>27</sup> On August 29, 1999, Sarvodaya had used its organisational power, for the first time, and mobilised a mass meditation for peace in Colombo of 175'000 participants – the largest peace event Sri Lanka had ever seen at that time.

so forth. Given our goal of national awakening, it would be irresponsible of us not to do so.<sup>28</sup> The present delicate situation again requires Sarvodaya's reflections on how to strengthen the national peace process. Complementing the on-going field activities, Sarvodaya should find new forms of giving grassroots people a voice in the political peace process.

### **6.1.6 Rural Infrastructure Development**

The Sarvodaya Rural Technical Service (SRTS) facilitates the construction of gravity water supplies, wells, toilets, houses, culverts and occasionally other items<sup>29</sup>. For example:

- a well at Jayanthi Gama (Kantale District) for 10 families cost 50 – 60,000 Rp. The families supplied sand, bricks and labour by participating in Shramadana work. Sarvodaya complemented these efforts with cement, metal, iron rods, and skilled labour. In other villages also, locals sponsored cement and other ingredients.
- Toilets are constructed for public infrastructure as well as for private individuals. In Puttalam District, the Sarvodaya district budget 2003/4 provides for 22 low cost latrines. The Sarvodaya contribution covers about a quarter of total costs; the beneficiaries have to contribute in kind and cash.
- A gravity water supply in Menderipitiya (Nuwara Eliya District) provides drinking water to 576 people. The supply consists of 16 public taps and two more in schools, a tank of 10,000 litres and a spring catchment within a distance of 2.5 km.. The caretaker, trained by Sarvodaya, is paid by the villagers, who also contribute to a Sarvodaya savings fund for repairs and other expenditure.

It was obvious that achievements by the rural technical service are very popular in the villages. The material benefits are linked to spiritual satisfaction, since the projects are based on the villagers' own self-help efforts. The working method is to conclude an agreement with the local Sarvodaya Society, to transfer the funds agreed and for them to implement it, with the technical service acting as an advisor. This procedure is a deliberate and successful process to empower the village partner. Sarvodaya's Technical Service works where neither NGOs nor the World Bank nor the Asian Development Bank nor the Government is working. There is an active collaboration with local authorities in the water sector.

### **6.1.7 Environment and Biodiversity**

The biodiversity unit started 1998. In the first phase, the emphasis was on raising awareness internally and externally. Now, phase 2 is supposed to identify priority **issues**. Up to now very different issues have been tackled under the label 'biodiversity':

- Nature protection (pollution, waste reduction, etc)
- Preservation of genetic resources (e.g. seed paddy, Padaviya)
- Organic agriculture: composting, traditional storage methods

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<sup>28</sup> Sarvodaya 2000, p. 2

<sup>29</sup> In Menderipitiya (Nuwara Eliya) a micro-hydel of 12 kW is planned.

- Productive use of local resources: Tree husks for paper and cards, producing paddy mats to replace plastic items
- Traditional healing: preserving traditional knowledge, having young people trained, supplying herbs from garden

Following these broad issues, many **activities** were started: basic training by university lecturers, awareness raising by exhibitions in schools, planting different kinds of trees, plant nurseries, promotion of traditional agriculture, starting biodiversity demonstration plots, creating youth circles in villages. Three specific examples that the mission visited were:

- In Meekadawewa (Mahiyangana District) the Sarvodaya Society managed to get a 3.5 acre demonstration biodiversity plot from the Irrigation Department. Trees were named to strengthen respect, awareness and knowledge of visitors. A jungle path was cleared and two wells were built. Novartis funds only covered training and signboards. The main investment was Shramadana work and the enthusiastic leadership by the local youth.
- A biodiversity project is going on in Menderipitiya (Nuwara Eliya District) to protect the environment (trees, birds), and to produce herbal medicine for themselves. An inventory of the different local varieties has been made to raise awareness and a biodiversity circle was formed in the village, demonstrating their serious commitment.
- In Kabithigollawa (Padaviya District) Sarvodaya protected a forest of 10 acres. An eco-volunteer from Colombo collected information on birds and pelicans, butterflies, mammals, trees and plants. The plot is used for demonstration purposes, training and awareness raising.

It has to be acknowledged that all the issues taken up under 'biodiversity' urgently need attention in Sri Lanka. The Government Ministry on Environment focuses mainly on forests and neglects many other issues. The enthusiasm of individuals, however, is encouraging, and about 200 NGOs are active on environmental issues. The key question is whether biodiversity really should belong to the core activities of the Sarvodaya Movement: (1) How can Sarvodaya ensure interventions with professional standards? (2) In line with refocusing, should it not rather be left to other specialised NGOs or tackled in co-operation with them? An unresolved issue is that the programme offers weak direct benefits and that a good number of trainees leave for other employment opportunities after the training. The follow-up with trainees and plots is also rather weak.

### **6.1.8 Development Communication**

Sarvodaya started pilot activities in development communication centres back in 1998. The strategy is based on a gradual approach, promoting an information culture at the grassroots first and providing training, before introducing sophisticated equipment. The poor infrastructure in rural areas, the low level of computer literacy and the costs are barriers to be dealt with. The way for using 'ICTs as a short cut to development'<sup>30</sup> mainly relies on three vehicles:

- **Village information centres:** 600 village information centres are already established. The main objective of an information centre and circle is to facilitate

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<sup>30</sup> Sarvodaya presentation

information exchange within the village, and from village to the city and vice versa, e.g. on employment opportunities, training or educational subjects. A circle of volunteers, each of them responsible for a specific issue, collects information for the village centre. Locally relevant information is assembled: when and where the doctor can be reached, village map and history, time tables of long distance buses, opening hours of regional hospital, basics on education in the region, how and where to get access to Government services (e.g. to get a birth certificate or passport), application forms for bank accounts, potential buyers of products, paddy cultivation. Before the existence of such centres, it was much more time consuming and more expensive, due to travelling or middlemen, to get hold of such information. Media literacy and library services are aimed at the grassroots level.



The Sarvodaya infocentre in Parakandeniya

- **Telecentres:** In Anuradhapura, Nuwara Eliya and Gampaha Sarvodaya, telecentres are operational. Among the links used on the internet in Gampaha are the telephone directory, educational examination results, the list of disappeared people of 1989, the weather report, foreign employment, Sri Lanka Airline. Obviously, the telecentre facilitates networking with other organisations. Again in Gampaha, the local jam factory notifies the telecentre, when they are short of fruit; the information is passed to interested villagers who supply pineapple,



papaya, etc. Visitors to the telecentre can get information on training possibilities in low cost building materials for village people.

- **Computer education:** The Telecentres are used as training infrastructure to offer low cost computer training to young people of neighbouring villages. The objective is to make them computer literate and to improve their chances on the job market. In Gampaha Telecentre, five of 20 trainees get free training because their parents live below the poverty line (3000 Rs/month), the others pay a highly competitive fee (2000 Rs.) compared to commercial courses (5-15,000 Rs). The trainer has a diploma in computer training and works as a volunteer with Sarvodaya. In the tea estate Choiciya (Nuwara Eliya District) people were very divided and Sarvodaya's work in the first instance was unsuccessful. There is now a new strategy based on educating bright children of the estate in information technology and letting them return to the estate as Sarvodaya volunteers. They will then be in a better position to mobilise the estate workers.
- **Links Information- and Telecentres:** Villagers get printouts from the telecentre, as did a teacher who asked for a population chart of Sri Lanka for his school (Nuwara Eliya). It was reported in Gampaha District, that village information centres send people for IT training to the telecentre of their region. Once a month, the technician in-charge of the telecentre visits the village information centres and gives advice or takes internet printouts along.

A telecentre website is under construction within the main Sarvodaya homepage, and sub-sites for local telecentres are planned. It is planned to link up with those Sarvodaya village banks who can afford a computer. It is a major lesson of Telecentres in Africa that financial viability can be improved if access to information technology is combined with other functions, like banking. The Government's World Bank supported Telecentre programme called for bids to provide support services to telecentres (Vishva Gnana Kendra, VGK). Sarvodaya's offer is on the shortlist and has a good chance of being accepted.

### **6.1.9 Development Education**

The strong emphasis on training mainly young people in subjects that are relevant for village life is a clear strength and a major component of Sarvodaya's intervention in villages. According to Sarvodaya's Impact Study 2003, the most frequent training programmes dealt with pre-school teaching, how to start self-employment, leadership training, management training and library management training.<sup>31</sup>

#### ***E.g. village mason training***

In Kabithigollawa (Padavia District) Sarvodaya organised training for masons from the surrounding villages. During three months, eight young masons, aged 18 – 22, years were trained. A tool box to work professionally is part of the equipment they get from Sarvodaya. With peace returning to the country, they expect a growing demand for the construction of houses, toilets and wells. They appealed to Sarvodaya to repeat such training opportunities that favour the integration of young lads into village life, instead of having them hanging around unemployed. The trainees are school drop-outs, who would not qualify as 'Home Guards' and have no other opportunity to earn their living.

<sup>31</sup> For a comprehensive review, see the CSDP Annual Progress Reports

The **Development Educational Institute** in Bandaragama is the main training centre, which is used for internal purposes as well as by external institutions. Training needs are identified through discussions with the Sarvodaya Headquarters and field staff. Participation in training is an indicator for weak or strong village activity. Curricula have been developed for standard training programmes like leadership, biodiversity, conflict resolution, etc.. Marketing the training facility to Government departments, NGOs and the private sector is supposed to make the Institute financially self-sufficient (staff salaries excluded) by end of 2004. Considerable progress has already been made. A good number of new training programmes are being implemented, as are advanced pre-school teacher training, caretaker training for gravity water supplies, masonry training.

The quality and **effectiveness** of training have been enhanced during the last two years. Standardisation of programmes, and formulation of modules, as well as securing a conducive training environment for long term trainings (two weeks or more) contributed to increased effectiveness. The impact study and the CSDP progress 2001/02 and 2002/03 reports mention that the training activities offer room for further improvement:

- (1) Local resources should be taken into account when designing the content;
- (2) The selection of participants should be done more professionally;
- (3) The follow-up to training should be systematically organised and involve trainees in project activities after training.

Sarvodaya training programmes, such as those for pre-school teachers, are scheduled nationwide. This can be unfortunate if in some regions (Ampara District) it is cultivation or harvesting time, which will mean that there there only a very weak participation. Local needs and national effectiveness are in contrast.

## 6.2 Sustainability

The prospects for the sustainability of the social and economic change effected at the **village level** are good. Sarvodaya aims at a continued presence, not moving in and out of villages. The main ingredients of the Sarvodaya approach respond to key sustainability criteria are :

- The deliberate empowerment policy of Sarvodaya, including village institution building, creates ownership and capacity for the projects at the village level;
- A pyramid of activities following the graduation model ensures a long term partnership between Sarvodaya and the village village, including the SEEDS programme;
- An emphasis on maintenance, including training by the SRTS, is an asset in relation to the sustainability of technical achievements.

Opportunities to improve the sustainability of results are to be found in relation to the follow up to training programmes<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> See chapter 6.1.9

The ***institutional dimension*** of sustainability for the Sarvodaya Movement is closely linked to resource mobilisation. It is the conviction of Sarvodaya that the internal resource base could and should be further developed to arrive at a better balance between external and internal funding. The intention is to expand the estimated income of internal resources continuously from US\$ 372,000 in 2002/03 to US\$ 1,000,000<sup>33</sup> in 2010/11. Sarvodaya's vision of how financial sustainability should be reached focuses on the district and headquarters level. At the village level, there is already a maximum mobilisation of resources, and at the divisional level no specific resource development is needed.

At the ***district level***, a variety of sources of income are already being tapped. However, a further effort to mobilise resources has to be made in order to increase the volume and diversify the sources. A reasonable resource key would look as follows: (1) District share from Sarvodaya Endowment Fund's interest income contributes 20% of funding; (2) Donor funds at district level contribute another 10%; (3) SEEDS, with its own instruments - mainly the development banks - adds 10%; (4) headquarter staff salaries account for an additional 20%; (5) new resource development efforts add 40%. The new efforts – which in some Novartis districts have started already – will concentrate on increased commercialisation of agricultural products (like plants or organic fertiliser), non-agricultural Sarvodaya products (like information services), educational services (like training, hostels). A detailed evaluation district by district is going on. This will produce an outline by the end of December 2003 and a master plan by the end of March 2004.

At the ***headquarters level***, in future a share of 20% or more of resources should come from the endowment fund. The endowment fund has reached a level of US\$ 1 mio., which yields an income of Rs 10 mio. in the current year. The longer term target is a volume of USD \$ mio. Resource development for another 40% will be based on (1) selling consultancy services, research, tourism, including idle times, as is increasingly done by Bandaragama Educational Development Institute; (2) national income generating projects (Vishva Lekha, Nagarodaya Centre, Export Division, other). The restructuring of Vishva Lekha Printing Press should increasingly cover CSDP recurrent expenditure from 2007 onwards and is said to be on track<sup>34</sup>, with a budgeted Rs 4 mio. cash contribution to Sarvodaya in 2003/04 and Rs 8 mio. in 2004/05. The export division (mainly woodwork) continues to operate, and the Nagarodaya Centre in Colombo City has just been opened in 2003. The remaining 40% is based on SEEDS' contribution, interest income, other revenues, and reduced donor funding. Despite all these efforts, a deficit of US\$ 164,000 is anticipated in the 2005/06 budget. The deficit will be reduced step by step during the following years.

### 6.3 Gender Equity

Sarvodaya does not have an explicit gender policy, stating objectives, strategies and activities. This omission may come as a surprise, given that as early as the 1980s a Women's Movement ('Sarvodaya Women's Forum') was created and is still active as an independent member of the Sarvodaya family. The discussions with management revealed that the awareness is there and gender concerns come up on

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<sup>33</sup> Including interest from the endowment fund (USD 300'000 in 2010/11).

<sup>34</sup> The envisaged meeting with Dieter Schischke, advisor to Vishva Lekha, was not possible as he was abroad while the assessment mission took place.

an *ad hoc* basis when discussing replacements and vacancies. Several important steps have been taken, and by 2005 a gender policy should be in place. Treating gender balance in a systematic way and as a priority concern will be another major step forward. It makes sense to consider the question of gender balance at three levels: Sarvodaya staff, village participation, beneficiaries.

**Sarvodaya staff:** Overall, the number of women exceeds the number of men among Sarvodaya staff. There is, however, no gender balance in the decision making process. Among the 34 district co-ordinators, there are only five women at present. The female share at the level of section heads is at one-third. At the management level, one of three Deputy Executive Directors - the head of the technical division (SRTS) – is a woman.

**Village participation:** In most of the villages visited during the assessment more women than men participated in the meetings. The explanation given was that the division of labour between women and men gives the women more flexibility. Men are usually the breadwinners in the family and work in the fields or as labourers during the day. In the local Sarvodaya Societies, the families are represented more by men than women. In Shramadana efforts it could be observed, and was noted, that both sexes participated on an equal basis.



Trainees in Sarvodaya telecentre (Gampaha)

**Beneficiaries:** As far as benefits are concerned, their distribution among women and men is very much issue oriented. The main Sarvodaya activities, like pre-schools, water supply, and health are overwhelmingly women's issues so they may get a higher share of the benefits compared to men. In the recent impact study gender of beneficiaries was not touched upon.

#### 6.4 Cost-Effectiveness

The Sarvodaya approach permits a maximum utilisation of external inputs. Mobilisation of local resources (cash, kind, labour) is the key to the Sarvodaya approach to development. External contributions have a mobilising effect, as they are matched by a larger volume of local resources:

- For example, Shramadana is one indication of the cost effectiveness of the project approach. Shramadana is a key tool for mobilising villagers, while satisfying their basic human needs. For the Shramadana work the project only provide some allocation to mobilise the villagers. However, the value of the output /outcome of the Shramadana is more than six to seven times the project contribution. Likewise, each and every programme adds significant value in the sense of the cost effectiveness of the project.
- Mobilisation of local resources is considerable with all the projects, multiplying cost-effectiveness of external resources. For example, after a pre-school teacher is trained, she is paid by the parents (often 100 Rs per child and month). The volunteer system, based on people originating from the village, allows pre-school teachers to survive even when a substantial number of parents do not pay their share.
- Also the low wages of Sarvodaya staff and the system of volunteers reduces cash costs considerably.

#### ***Cost-effectiveness: The example of Doraliyadda village***

1805 people live in Doraliyadda, which is now a stage four village in Kandy District. Between April 1, 2001 and March 31, 2003, a total of 391,390 Rp. (US\$ 4,200) was spent. 10.4% was covered by Novartis funds, the village contributed 62.4%, Sarvodaya 24.8%, and others 2.2%. The Sarvodaya contribution includes the Doraliyadda share of staff salaries and travelling, the village contribution is mainly labour. Among the activities and achievements are:

- Formation of groups, establishment of Shramadana Society;
- Reconstruction of roads, renovation of community well and village drain system, digging garbage removal plots, clearing of environment;
- Trainings in leadership, pre-school teaching, home gardening, biodiversity, information technology;
- Community health and peace meditation activities;
- Start with SEEDS, credit and loan scheme.

Source: Data collected by Sarvodaya

Often ***extremely small amounts*** are required from the Novartis budget to achieve a major improvement in the livelihoods of people For example:

- 15,000 Rp (US\$165) for a Buddhist shrine as a first step, requested by the village in Niramisiya, Puttalam District.
- 2,000 Rp (US\$ 22) cash contribution to the building of a latrine with total costs of 8,000 Rp, including Shramadana work (valid formula in various districts).
- 12,000 Rp (US\$ 132) Sarvodaya contribution for material, such as cement, to construct a culvert costing 35,000 Rp total . In the rainy season the culvert prevents flooding and the destruction of paddy fields of 50 families and keeps the road open to transport the paddy harvest.



A latrine in Sangattikulama, facilitated by the SRTS

**Computerisation** of the district offices is just starting. In most of the districts there are no computers handwriting still dominates This unsatisfactory situation increases the workload of staff and is a missed opportunity to improve efficiency.

Sarvodaya's pragmatic, **open cooperation strategy** at the district and local levels<sup>35</sup> is very relevant also to cost-efficiency considerations. Tapping those resources that are available on the spot reduces Sarvodaya's own costs and extends the reach of the activities, ultimately very much to the benefit of the people. For example:

- In Wahalkada, Padaviya District, the Government contributes 39,000 Rp<sup>36</sup> to the reconstruction of each house when families resettle. Moreover, the government intends to allocate half an acre land per person of the second generation settling there. The World Food Programme contributes food. Roofs consisting of palm leaves for the houses are supposed to be contributed by NGOs. Sarvodaya organises Shramadana, mobilises external support and builds trust and confidence.
- To facilitate resettlement in Thambalagama (Trincomalee District), Sarvodaya provides UNHCR funded agricultural inputs (paddy seeds, fertilizer, etc.) in the amount of 10,500 Rp per family, temporary shelter costing 17,000 Rp, assistance to start self-employment activities (repair shops, retail shops, hotels, milk production, etc.), and 7,000 Rp to generate cash income beyond paddy production. The usual chain of Sarvodaya activities from Shramadana to SEEDS was launched.
- In Mahiyangana District, a broad-based Advisory Committee was formed, headed by the Divisional Secretary of Government, and including heads of government departments, the priest of the Buddhist temple, a father, etc. The Committee discusses matters of the pre-school, security in the villages, etc.

<sup>35</sup> At the national level, reluctance for various reasons on all sides to cooperate is much more a co-determining factor.

<sup>36</sup> Total costs for a house are estimated at 150'000 Rp.

## **7 Major Factors Affecting the Project Results**

### **7.1 Positive elements**

The Sarvodaya Movement is based on a **unique concept**. It is deeply rooted in the culture of the villages and it offers a comprehensive vision – an alternative to mainstream values – and a corresponding life cycle chain of activities from the children to elderly people. Equally important, the benefits of Sarvodaya projects are basically open to the entire community, not only to Sarvodaya members<sup>37</sup>.

Sarvodaya has a network that **operates all over Sri Lanka**. No other organisation on the island can even dream of being so well linked to the people all over Sri Lanka. This strength and its potential are underutilised due to the lack of resources. What matters most is that the Sri Lanka-wide presence is appreciated by, and gives access to, all ethnic and religious groups.

The Sarvodaya Movement is based on an **exceptional leadership**. The popularity of the founder and chairman, combined with organisational capacity of the new management was mentioned many times during the mission's discussions as the major strength of the Sarvodaya movement.

The **human resources** of the Sarvodaya Movement are an asset that can hardly be overrated. Committed staff, often devoting far more than just their working time and energy for the common concern, are the foundation on which Sarvodaya's success is built.

The Sarvodaya Movement has an **excellent organisational capacity**. This strength is based on the structure as well as on the huge size of its network in the villages. This organisational capacity became obvious on the occasions of mass meditations. But it is also evident in the routine work of the organisation.

The Sarvodaya Movement has proved **flexible** enough to be able to integrate new needs and tools into the programme, such as economic thinking and information technology ('From Shramadana to IT'). Also the CSDP history of the last three years demonstrates a considerable innovative capacity in adapting to a changing environment and new experiences, while keeping on track with the main lines of the CSDP programme.

The Sarvodaya Movement is working very cost-efficiently<sup>38</sup>. This **cost efficiency** is enhanced by a deliberate strategy to mobilise internal and external resources.

The Sarvodaya Movement pursues an ad hoc **co-operation strategy** in the districts and villages with all partners locally present. This pragmatic strategy to tap those

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<sup>37</sup> Parents, even non-members of a Sarvodaya village Society, who have not the cash required at hand, may despite non-payment send their children to the pre-school. Such, the fee system does not discriminate against the poor.

<sup>38</sup> See chapter 6.4

resources that are available from Government or other NGOs on the spot is very much for the benefit of the people.

## 7.2 Ambiguous elements

**Employment conditions:** Sarvodaya is a movement, made up of a limited number of full time staff and thousands of unpaid volunteers. Its staff is supposed to work professionally, while being committed to the shared vision. The staff is considered to be part of the Sarvodaya family. If somebody is in difficulties, he or she is not let down. Contracts are renewable and are renewed. Training options are an asset for many. The international environment, in addition to the national tasks, is attractive for many. Salaries paid, however, are considerably below market level, in particular at the headquarters<sup>39</sup>, for those with specialised qualifications<sup>40</sup>, and at management level<sup>41</sup>. Apart from specialised staff, Sarvodaya salaries are comparable to those paid in Government. Despite the low level no incentives are paid for a good performance. It is not Sarvodaya policy to pay market salaries; the vision 'no poverty, no affluence' goes against lavish lifestyles. A few years ago the salary scales were harmonised between staff of the Social Empowerment Division and the Technical Empowerment Division. CSDP effectiveness and efficiency are affected in two ways:

- Effectiveness is enhanced as Sarvodaya makes big economies in costs, which allows it to maintain a programme at the present large scale. If the resources were available given, a salary increase to near market level would require a serious curtailment of the programme.
- Effectiveness is hampered as it becomes difficult to recruit people with the high professional qualifications required. Motivation matters but, if it rules out professional know-how, Sarvodaya will run into problems in the longer term.

Moreover, it is well known that low salaries considered as unfair are a breeding ground for corruption. The internal and external auditors clearly denied that Sarvodaya staff engaged in any private business on the side.. This statement is most welcome. Looking at the human factor and the large number of staff, however, the danger remains that such disloyal practices may come up.

**Religious background:** The Sarvodaya movement is clearly rooted in the Buddhist religion. As Buddhism is very open and tolerant towards other religions, this is very supportive of the work done in the villages. This tolerance, however, may not be sufficient for an inclusive outreach in the villages. In particular, the Muslim community often cannot be reached. For example, in Jayanthi Gama (Kantale District) there is a Muslim minority of 20 families out of 360 who do not send their children to the pre-school and who participate poorly, if at all, in Sarvodaya activities. Also, in Gampaha District, it was reported to the mission that it is difficult to involve the Muslim communities. The mosque asks them not to join any other associations outside the religious circle. There is no tradition of community work and Shramadana proves difficult. The Muslims do not join the savings schemes because their religion forbids

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<sup>39</sup> In the field nominal salaries are extremely low but also side benefits in kind (accommodation, garden, transport) and informal social security have to be taken into account.

<sup>40</sup> A certificate in engineering plus 10 years experience entitle to a monthly payment of 6000 Rp – before joining Sarvodaya he earned several times this amount but on a non-renewable, limited contract.

<sup>41</sup> Comparable vacancies advertised in newspapers quote rates for managers far above Sarvodaya standards. In particular international NGOs even surpass private sector rates.



them to take interest. Religious and cultural patterns prevent Muslim women, in particular, from full participation. Obviously, there are a number of reasons why the inclusion of Muslims in Sarvodaya activities is not easy. Having a clear Buddhist majority in the Sarvodaya membership, it may become harder to take a mediation stand between Sinhala and Tamil groups in the ongoing peace process and to take a position accordingly instead of keeping quiet<sup>42</sup>.

### 7.3 Negative elements

**Gaps:** The Sarvodaya approach is a holistic and an inclusive one, including all groups of the population. In practice, however, gaps between the ideal and reality can be found:

- **New challenges:** The fast unfolding economic liberalisation policies and the Sarvodaya vision of 'no poverty, no affluence' are to a large extent in contradiction. New poverty areas in an urban environment are increasing, along with the new wealth of middle and upper classes. Is the conceptual response of Sarvodaya also valid for such new challenges?
- **Institutional capacity:** On the one hand, it was said that Sarvodaya could, and should, do more, sometimes even without increasing staff. On the other, it is a fact that mobilisation capacity did not always correspond to the expectations of the SRTS. Institutional capacity, as well as internal co-ordination among the social and technical services, should be ensured for the sake of the beneficiaries.



A public standpipe in Menderipitiya's water supply

**Human factor:** The human resources were mentioned as being among the major assets of the Sarvodaya movement. As in every institution, the human factor may also hamper progress:

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<sup>42</sup> This observation is not an interpretation of the author but was brought forward by observers.

- Village leadership: Usually, when entering a new village, Sarvodaya co-operates with the person who requested Sarvodaya to come. It may happen, however, that this person, despite training, is not the appropriate leader and, if not replaced, the activities will suffer. Other cases are reported of Sarvodaya Society committee members pursuing their own, personal agenda.
- It may also happen that the Sarvodaya headquarters, district or divisional staff do not perform up to standard. In a reported case action has been taken by headquarters. If a staff member does not improve his/her performance despite being given another chance, Sarvodaya has to be clear whether even disloyal behaviour by the individual merits loyalty by the movement.
- The human factor may also play a role when other NGOs do not cooperate in a functional way. This may happen with small NGOs at the village level, jealous of Sarvodaya's strength, or mass organisations at the national level which are said to sometimes disregard the Sarvodaya contribution to the peace process.
- When asking for strengths and weaknesses of Sarvodaya, the mission became aware of a certain reluctance to talk about weaknesses. Cultural barriers may play a role here, or the fact that Sarvodaya has to be optimistic and keep the positive energy. On the other hand, weaknesses and failures are an important learning ground<sup>43</sup> and should be considered as an opportunity for progress.

**Politics:** Different political opinions can split villages along party lines and become a major obstacle to any common understanding. Such a situation makes Sarvodaya mobilisation of the village for the common good impossible, e.g. in some places in Kandy District. Political influence is not a rare obstacle<sup>44</sup> in Sarvodaya's experience. It may happen that political leaders try to use them to introduce measures that are not acceptable to the local people (Kegalle District). In Kurunnegala District Sarvodaya explicitly asked political leaders not to become members of the executive council, in order to keep a distance. In Melwatta (Puttalam District) people were immediately expelled from the village after the opposition won the elections in 2002.

**Conflict:** In a number of districts the civil war is a major source of (the few) failures at the village level or poor performing villages. On the boundary of Batticaloa, people were attacked, moved to refugee camps and back again several times (2000/2001) which made the usual village mobilisation impossible (Mahiyangana District). There are, reportedly, villages (Diulana, Ampara District) where it was difficult to get people together for gatherings and Shramadana, due to several attacks that induced a mindset of conflict, which has to be overcome before normal work can start. The civil war may also dry up the reservoir of local human resources as young men join the

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<sup>43</sup> A concrete example: Kuda Ratmale (Padavia District) figures among the failed villages of the district. A pre-school and a children's club were started but given up again and the leading Buddhist priest left. The reasons given to the mission for the poor performance was the exposure to conflict and LTTE attacks. During the visit and the discussion with the people it became obvious that many of the villagers present were not really informed what Sarvodaya is about, despite a said presence of Sarvodaya workers for a longer time. The conflict situation at best was only part of the picture. This incident raises the double-fold question

(1) Were Sarvodaya leaders at district and headquarters level informed about the real problems of working in Kuda Ratmale?

(2) If yes, why did they not take action, and why did they not inform the mission accordingly? If no, how can it happen that such a situation passes unchecked?

<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, positive cases were reported where the recently achieved village unity was attributed to Sarvodaya activities (Kumari Gama, Ampara District). Political parties and casts divided the village some years ago but now people see the advantage of joint efforts.

home guards or the army, with the indirect effect that they cannot be drawn upon for Sarvodaya activities. In a village (38 colony) of Puttalam District there were neither people for Shramadana work nor candidates for trainings available. In war torn areas, compliance with the internal time limits set for graduation of villages is not possible; the processes take twice or three times as long (Colony 38, Padaviya District). As a consequence, Novartis assistance to 15 villages was stopped in Padaviya District and shifted to Polonnaruwa District<sup>45</sup>.

**Poverty:** A key element of the Sarvodaya mission is to reduce poverty. However, extreme poverty in itself can be an obstacle to Sarvodaya's success. People who are desperately struggling to earn some income have little, if any, time at all to participate. People employed in the garment industry have an inflexible schedule and no free time after work and family commitments. It was also said that a lack of education – most often linked to poverty – may be a barrier to understanding the Sarvodaya message. It is difficult, if not impossible, to organise Shramadana and to find trainees for leadership courses, for the training of pre-school teachers, etc. In Gampaha District, nine out of 14 divisions are with garment factories. "To earn little money, they lost culturally everything".<sup>46</sup>

**Disintegration:** The Sarvodaya approach is based on a minimum of commonalities and the willingness of the people involved to join hands. The ongoing social change in villages reflects globalisation and westernisation, both leading to processes of social disintegration. People are busy and have other priorities without explicitly rejecting the Sarvodaya philosophy. The Sarvodaya Impact Study reveals that the idea of having mothers' groups is no longer properly functioning. Mothers are interested as long as their children attend pre-school but lose interest thereafter – the study says due to the "competitive economy and education". Similarly, children's and youth groups are often in trouble due to emigration to urban areas.

- Migration<sup>47</sup> from the rural to urban areas can be an issue but not everywhere to the same extent. In Nuwara Eliya. There is a large emigration straight to the greater Colombo area to get employment.. People trained by Sarvodaya left from several villages and a new effort is needed, resulting in a delayed project performance.
- Industrial employment, e.g. in the garments industry, is largely incompatible with the Sarvodaya approach, as it drastically reduces the flexibility of people to participate in Sarvodaya activities. At the same time, the low wage level does not solve their poverty problem.
- The western model of the core family is gaining ground against the traditional extended family system. Shramadana and other Sarvodaya activities are undermined by that major trend.

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<sup>45</sup> The District Coordinator noticed the difficulties in implementing the Novartis programme and asked to shift the support elsewhere. Sarvodaya Headquarters finally took the decision. Polonnaruwa District does not figure among the originally selected 12 districts for Novartis support.

<sup>46</sup> Gampaha District Coordinator

<sup>47</sup> How far Sarvodaya achievements in rural Sri Lanka are an effective contribution against migration to urban areas is difficult to evaluate. Theoretically it could be the case but Sarvodaya field staff only confirmed it reluctantly as weak, at best.



A Shramadana worker

**Donor dependency:** Other donors intervene with large amounts of funds so that people, even Sarvodaya Society Committee members, lose interest in Sarvodaya where they have to contribute more. (e.g. World Vision in Ratnalgasweera, Puttalam District). A similar experience of aid dependency is reported from Gampaha District in relation to the coastal belt, where people get assistance from the Catholic Church or other organisations and can hardly be mobilised along Sarvodaya self-help lines. In Kumanapanoalagama (Ampara District) the Sarvodaya approach of relying on the people's own efforts was not compatible with their own expectations of reaping instant benefits and solutions from outside. Emergency assistance in war-torn regions induces an entitlement attitude in the population, always asking for immediate benefits instead of helping and contributing themselves. Offering ideas instead of cash is a hurdle, at least in the short term.

**Lack of resources:** Last but not least it should be kept in mind that the amount of resources available co-determines the activities and output, as well as impact. While appreciating the Novartis contribution, it was also mentioned in the field that further projects could be started if there were further resources available. However, even taking into account the on-going internal resource mobilisation and the external resources committed at present a budgetary deficit from 2005/06 onwards is part of the financial perspectives up to 2010/11.

## **Annexes**

### **Annex 1      Terms of reference**

#### ***General scope***

This mid-term evaluation will assess operational aspects, such as project management and implementation of activities and also the extent to which objectives are being fulfilled. It will focus on corrective actions needed for the project to achieve impact. It will be a decisive review to evaluate whether the project should be continued.

#### ***Organisational relationships***

The evaluation team leader (Dr. Richard Gerster - RG) will be answerable to the Novartis Foundation and Sarvodaya and will work closely with the project director (Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne - VA), Sarvodaya management and the local monitoring and evaluation staff to design and undertake the review. Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne will provide key background documentation to Dr. Richard Gerster and his team (any progress reports, M&E reports and special studies, background information on the project area, etc.).

#### ***Responsibilities and tasks***

- Before starting, VA will supply RG with information about the programme (background, objectives, outputs, previous phases including previous activities, outputs, problems, budget time schedule, context, etc.).
- RG will consult with VA on how the review mission will be best conducted, how Sarvodaya, project staff and primary stakeholders will be involved, what the timetable is for fieldwork and reporting, and how feedback on the conclusions will be organised.
- RG will agree with VA and Novartis Foundation on the methodology of the review, in terms of: (1) the level of participation vis-à-vis management of the process, data collection, data analysis, drawing conclusions/supplying recommendations and giving reactions to draft conclusions and (2) the methodology to be followed (sequence of workshops, seminars, interviews, questionnaires, participatory techniques, etc.).
- Agree what the evaluation will address. The Novartis Foundation is especially interested in the relevance of the programme's components and subcomponents to local development priorities and needs; clarity and feasibility of all sub-projects' objectives (including targets); prospects for sustainability; quality and adequacy of project strategy (including logical consistency, clarity of assumptions and risks, quality of external relationships, cost-effectiveness; and the quality of participatory processes and support to strengthening local organisations.
- Per component, assess physical progress, efficiency and adequacy, in terms of delivery of project inputs and outputs.
- Per component, analyse financial progress. Assess whether the use of project funds is commensurate with the attainment of physical progress, efficacy and the timeliness of procurement and disbursement activities.
- Assess the efficiency of project organisation and management with respect to its size and composition, organisational structure, personnel management and policy, the qualifications of local staff and consultants, reporting, effectiveness of the M&E system (in defining performance indicators and collecting and analysing

monitoring data on project progress) and follow-up on primary stakeholders' reactions to project activities.

- Assess the relevance and effectiveness of technical assistance and training given to primary stakeholders and staff in relation to design objectives, and the extent to which they have been given, based on needs assessment and followed up on to determine their impact.
- Assess the quality of co-operation with local institutions and the effectiveness of coordination mechanisms, with respect to composition and membership of co-ordination committees, and contribution to timely decision making and problem solving. Changes in project design in this respect will be thoroughly assessed.
- Assess degree of compliance with grant agreement between Sarvodaya and Novartis Foundation.
- Analyse which factors and constraints have influenced project implementation, including technical, managerial, organisational, institutional and socio-economic policy issues, in addition to other external factors unforeseen during design.
- Assess project results and impacts, in terms of development outcomes, based on the project's actual and potential development impact on the primary stakeholder groups, relevant institutions and wider context. This includes identifiable benefits for primary stakeholders – including wider livelihood and capacity-building – in terms of depth, spread and gender, primary stakeholder participation and environmental concerns.
- Assess the prospects of the local primary and secondary stakeholders and host institutions for sustaining impacts after termination of the project, taking into account old and new assumptions and risks.
- Make an overall assessment of project cost effectiveness.
- Identify where project design needs adjusting/reorienting in order to increase its effectiveness in reaching the target groups. This includes proposals to adjust the project objectives and strategy, activities, budget and inputs, organisational/institutional set-up and implementation plan.
- Produce a clear set of lessons learned that can benefit the project in its remaining lifespan.

## **Annex 2 Itinerary**

- 04.10.03 Departure Zurich – Sri Lanka via Mahé (Maldives)
- 05.10.03 Arrival Colombo. Private holidays until October 13, 2003.
- 14.10.03 Mount Lavinia: Preparation of mission.
- 15.10.03 Trip to Colombo, meeting:
- Martin Stuerzinger, Adviser for Peacebuilding, Swiss Embassy
  - Andres Wiederkehr, Programme Director Helvetas Sri Lanka
  - Neil Herath, Programme Officer Development of Rural Infrastructure, Helvetas Sri Lanka
- Invitation by A.T. Ariyaratne, President Sarvodaya, and family.
- 16.10.03 Start of work at Sarvodaya headquarters, Moratuwa. Meetings with
- Vinya Ariyaratne, Executive Director Sarvodaya, and 12 other leading staff members: Introduction on Sarvodaya in general, on the Social Empowerment Division, and on the Novartis funded part
  - Ravindra S. Ariyawickrema, Senior Executive Assistant, on (1) programme monitoring and reporting, (2) ICTs for Community Development
  - Ms. Bianca Abeygooaawardana, Coordinator Early Childhood Development, & staff
  - Meneka Pathirage, Project Coordinator Biodiversity Unit
  - Ms Lalitha Pieris, Coordinator Peace Secretariat, & staff
- 17.10.03 SWOT interviews at Sarvodaya Headquarters, Moratuwa, with
- Ms Wimala Ranatunga, Co-ordinator Community Health Unit
  - Ms Udani Mendes, Coordinator Sarvodaya Rural Technical Service (SRTS), & staff
  - Ms Vajira Samanthi, Coordinator Research Unit
  - A. Senadheera, Director Vishva Niketan
  - Ravindra Kandage, Director Shanti Sena Sansadaya
  - Vinya Ariaratne, Executive Director Sarvodaya
  - J.K. Polgaspitiya, external auditor, m/s Manoharan & Sangakkara, chartered accountants
- 18.10.03 Field mission I with Subasena De Silva, Senior Executive Assistant, Ms Vajira Samanthi, Coordinator Research Unit, and Poojitha Goowenardena, external translator.
- Moratuwa – Chilaw (Sarvodaya Puttalam District Centre) – Niramisiya (Sarvodaya village) – Chilaw – Sangattikulama (Sarvodaya village) – Anamaduwa – Galganuwa – Anuradhnapura. Meeting
- Ms Kusum Gamlath, Sarvodaya Coordinator Puttalam District, and staff
  - Sarvodaya societies of Niramisiya and Sangittikulama
  - Ms Anusha Indunil, Sarvodaya member in Niramisiya (interview)

- 19.10.03 Continuation of field mission I Anuradhnapura – Kabithigollawa (Sarvodaya Padaviya District Centre) – Wahalkada (Sarvodaya village) – Kuda Ratmale (ex-Sarvodaya village) – Anuradhapura. Meeting
- Manel Kulatunga, Sarvodaya Coordinator Padaviya District, and staff
  - Village mason trainees
  - Jayantha Senadeera, Secretary Kabithigollawa Division (gvt.)
  - Sarvodaya members and other people from Wahalkada and Kuda Ratmale
  - Ms. M. Kusumalatha, mother from Kuda Ratmale (interview)
- 20.10.03 Continuation of field mission I Anuradhapura – Kantale (Sarvodaya Kantale District Centre) – Jayanthi Gama (Sarvodaya village) – Trincomalee. Meeting
- Ms Chandra Kumari Seneviratne, Sarvodaya Coordinator Kantale District, and staff
  - Sarvodaya members and other people from Jayanthi Gama
  - Mr. M.G. Jayatunga, President Sarvodaya Society Jayanthi Gama (interview)
  - Ms. D.M. Sriyani Kumari, Manager Sarvodaya Development Bank Jayanthi Gama (interview)
- 21.10.03 Continuation of field mission I. Trincomalee (Sarvodaya Trincomalee District Centre) – Thambala Gama (Sarvodaya resettlement village) – Trincomalee (Government refugee camp Alles Garden) – Mount Lavinia. Meeting
- Susapillei Arulanandan, Sarvodaya Coordinator District Trincomalee, and staff
  - Sarvodaya members and other people from Thambala Gama
  - Kanagasinhm Vigneshwarah, internally displaced, shopkeeper in refugee camp (interview)
- 22.10.03 Presentation and discussion of Interim Assessment results to Sarvodaya management, being present
- Vinya Ariaratne
  - Harsha Liyanage
  - Raviindra Ariyawickrema
  - Subasena de Silva
- SWOT interviews with Community Capacity Building Unit
- M.D. Abeynayaka, Senior Executive Assistant – CCBU
  - Kulasiri Yithanawasam, Coordinator Community Capacity Building Unit
- Visit to Sarvodaya Economic Enterprise Development Services (SEEDS) (Gte) Ltd. Meeting
- Shakila Wijewardena, Managing Director SEEDS
- 23.10.03 Visit to the Nagarodaya Centre in Colombo City.



Field mission II with Ravindra Ariyawickrema, Senior Executive Assistant, Ms Vajira Samanthi, Coordinator Research Unit, and Poojitha Goowenardena, external translator.

Field mission II Colombo – Gampaha (Sarvodaya Gampaha District Centre) – Parakandeniya (Sarvodaya village) – Meewala (Sarvodaya village) – Mount Lavinia. Meeting

- G.D. Ariyapala, Sarvodaya Coordinator District Gampaha, and staff
- Manoj Edirisinghe, Volunteer in charge of Sarvodaya Telecentre Gampaha
- Sarvodaya members and other people from Meewala
- Kotagama Pannasiri Thero, Buddhist priest and President Sarvodaya Shramadana Society Meewala (interview)

24.10.03 Interviews in Moratuwa with

- Vincent Kanakarathne, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Anuradhapura West
- D.M.N. Disanayake, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Kandy
- B.A. Sumanadasa, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Kegalle
- P.V. Ariyawansa, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Kurunnegala

District Coordinators' monthly meeting: Participation, presentation of preliminary observations, discussion

Continuation of field mission III Moratuwa – Mahiyangana

25.10.03 Continuation field mission III Mahiyangana – Ampara (Sarvodaya District Centre) – Kumari Gama (Sarvodaya village) – Mahiyangana (Sarvodaya District Centre) – Mekapadawewa (Sarvodaya village) – Mahiyangana. Meeting

- Sri Lal Jayasundura, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Ampara, and staff
- Sarvodaya members and other people from Kumari Gama
- A.K. Werawella, Manager Credit Society Kumari Gama (interview)
- Hemapala de Zoysa, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Mahiyangana, and staff
- Sarvodaya members and other people from Mekapadawewa

26.10.03 Continuation field mission III: Mahiyangana – Badulla (Sarvodaya District Centre, peace meditation) – Nuwara Eliya (Sarvodaya District Centre Nuwara Eliya). Meeting

- K.G. Dassanayake, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Badulla, and staff
- Laksman Perera, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Nuwara Eliya, and staff
- Kahattewela Sirinivasa Thero, Buddhist priest Badulla (interview)
- Raja Mohideen, Muslim Imam Badulla (interview)
- Ruba Kumar Sharma, Hindu priest Badulla (interview)
- Glory Jeyarag, Catholic mother Badulla (interview)

- 27.10.03 Continuation field mission III: Nuwara Eliya – Menderipitiya (Sarvodaya village) – Concordia Tea Estate (Fair Trade supplier) – Nuwara Eliya (Sarvodaya District Centre) – Mount Lavinia. Meeting
- Laksman Perera, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Nuwara Eliya
  - Sarvodaya members and other people from Menderipitiya
  - N.M. Abeyratne, President Sarvodaya Society Menderipitiya and caretaker water supply (interview)
- 28.10.03 Presentation and discussion of draft assessment results to Sarvodaya management, being present
- Vinya Ariaratne
  - Harsha Liyanage
  - Ravindra Ariyawickrema
  - Subasena de Silva
- Interviews with
- Ananda Karunatileka, internal auditor of Sarvodaya
  - Sharif Abdullah, Executive Director of the Commonway Institute in Portland (US), Consultant to Sarvodaya
  - Jehan Perera, Director, National Peace Council of Sri Lanka
- 29.10.03 Presentation and discussion of revised draft assessment results to Vinya Ariaratne and 18 other leading Sarvodaya staff members.
- Presentation of the New Approach to Improving Community Health in Sri Lanka by Vinya Ariaratne.
- 30.10.03 Visit to the Sarvodaya Development Educational Institute in Banderagama with Ravindra Ariyawickrema.
- SWOT interview with
- K.L. Gunawardana, Senior Executive Assistant
- 31.10.03 Flight Colombo - Zurich

## Annex 3   References

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Wiederkehr Andres	25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sarvodaya – Helvetas Cooperation, March 29, 2003

### ***Resource persons***

Abdullah Sharif, Executive Director of the Commonway Institute in Portland (US), Consultant to Sarvodaya

Abeygoaawardana Bianca Ms., Coordinator Early Childhood Development, & staff

Abeynayaka M.D., Senior Executive Assistant – CCBU

Abeyratne N.M., President Sarvodaya Society Menderipitiya and caretaker water supply (interview)

Ariyapala G.D., Sarvodaya Coordinator District Gampaha, and staff

Ariyaratne A.T., President Sarvodaya, and family

Ariyaratne Vinya, Executive Director Sarvodaya

Ariyawansa P.V., Sarvodaya District Coordinator Kurunnegala

Ariyawickrema Ravindra S., Senior Executive Assistant

Arulanandan Susapillei, Sarvodaya Coordinator District Trincomalee, and staff

Dassanayake K.G., Sarvodaya District Coordinator Badulla, and staff

Disanayake D.M.N., Sarvodaya District Coordinator Kandy

Edirisinghe Manoj, Volunteer in charge of Sarvodaya Telecentre Gampaha

Gamlath Kusum (Ms.), Sarvodaya Coordinator Puttalam District, and staff

Gunawardana K.L., Senior Executive Assistant, Sarvodaya Development Educational Institute

Gunasena J.D., Senior Executive Assistant/Sarvodaya International Programmes

Herath Neil, Programme Officer Development of Rural Infrastructure, Helvetas Sri Lanka

Indunil Anusha (Ms.), Sarvodaya member in Niramisiya (interview)

Jayasundura Sri Lal, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Ampara, and staff

Jayatunga M.G., President Sarvodaya Society Jayanthi Gama (interview)

Jeyarag Glory, Catholic mother Badulla (interview)

Kanakarathne Vincent, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Anuradhapura West

Kandage Ravindra, Director Shanti Sena Sansadaya

Karunatileka Ananda, internal auditor of Sarvodaya

Kulatunga Manel, Sarvodaya Coordinator Padaviya District, and staff

Kumari D.M. Sriyani (Ms.), Manager Sarvodaya Development Bank Jayanthi Gama (interview)

Kumari Seneviratne Chandra (Ms.), Sarvodaya Coordinator Kantale District, and staff

Kusumalatha M. (Ms.), mother from Kuda Ratmale (interview)

Liyanage Harsha, Deputy Executive Director / Sarvodaya Social Programmes

Mendes Udani (Ms.), Deputy Executive Director/Coordinator Sarvodaya Rural Technical Service (SRTS), & staff

Mohideen Raja, Muslim Imam Badulla (interview)

Pannasiri Kotagama Thero, Buddhist priest and President Sarvodaya Shramadana Society Meewala (interview)

Pathirage Meneka, Project Co-ordinator Biodiversity Unit

Perera Jehan, Director, National Peace Council of Sri Lanka

Perera Laksman, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Nuwara Eliya, and staff

Pieris Lalitha (Ms.), Co-ordinator Peace Secretariat, & staff

Polgaspitiya J.K., external auditor, m/s Manoharan & Sangakkara, chartered accountants

Ranatunga Wimala (Ms.), Co-ordinator Community Health Unit

Samanthi Vajira (Ms.), Co-ordinator Research Unit

Senadheera A., Director Vishva Niketan Senadeera Jayantha, Secretary  
Kabithigollawa Division (gvt.)

Sharma Ruba Kumar, Hindu priest Badulla (interview)

Sirinivasa Kahattewela Thero, Buddhist priest Badulla (interview)

Stuerzinger Martin, Adviser for Peacebuilding, Swiss Embassy

Sumanadasa B.A., Sarvodaya District Coordinator Kegalle

Vigneshwarah Kanagasinhm, internally displaced, shopkeeper in refugee camp  
(interview)

Werawella A.K., Manager Credit Society Kumari Gama (interview)

Wiederkehr Andres, Programme Director Helvetas Sri Lanka

Wijewardena Shakila, Managing Director SEEDS

Yithanawasam Kulasiri, Co-ordinator Community Capacity Building Unit

de Zoysa Hemapala, Sarvodaya District Coordinator Mahiyangana, and staff

### ***Meetings***

Sarvodaya members and other people from Jayanthi Gama

Sarvodaya members and other people from Kuda Ratmale

Sarvodaya members and other people from Kumari Gama

Sarvodaya members and other people from Meewala

Sarvodaya members and other people from Mekapadawewa

Sarvodaya members and other people from Menderipitiya

Sarvodaya members and other people from Niramisiya

Sarvodaya members and other people from Sangittikulama

Sarvodaya members and other people from Thambala Gama

Sarvodaya members and other people from Wahalkada

Village mason trainees Kabithigollawa (Sarvodaya Padaviya District Centre)

#### **Annex 4 Selected interviews**

During the field visits a small number of in-depth interviews were made in a number of villages. They all followed a similar pattern: The interviewees were asked to describe in detail an average working day from early morning to late evening. The description was an opportunity to identify on what occasions and how Sarvodaya activities enter the village life, from a member's or beneficiary's point of view.

Overview:

Interview of 27 October 2003 with

**Mr. N.M. Abeyratne, Menderipitiya (Nuwara Eliya District), Sri Lanka**

40 years, married, four children (14, 12, 10, 9 years, two boys/two girls)  
President Sarvodaya Society of Menderipitiya and caretaker village water supply

Interview of 18 October 2003 with

**Ms. Anusha Indunil, Niramisiya (Puttalam District), Sri Lanka**

27 years, married, one child (3½ years, girl)  
Self-employed ladies' dress maker

Interview of 20 October 2003 with

**Ms. D.M. Sriyani Kumari, Jayanthi Gama (Kantale District) Sri Lanka**

30 years, married, 3 children (10, 8, 2; two boys, one girl)  
Manager Sarvodaya Development Bank Jayanthi Gama

Interview of 23 October 2003 with

**Mr. Kotagama Pannasiri Thero, Meewala (Gampaha District) Sri Lanka**

25 years, unmarried, Buddhist priest  
President Sarvodaya Society of Meewala

Interview of 21 October 2003 with

**Mr. Kanagasinhram Vigneshwarah (Trincomalee District) Sri Lanka**

28 years, unmarried, lives with his mother  
Shopkeeper in "Alles Garden" Refugee Camp

Interview of 27 October 2003 with

**Mr. N.M. Abeyratne, Menderipitiya (Nuwara Eliya District), Sri Lanka**

40 years, married, four children (14, 12, 10, 9 years, two boys/two girls)

President Sarvodaya Society of Menderipitiya and caretaker village water supply

05.00 – 05.30	Getting up, washing, and having tea, which his wife prepared – she gets up half an hour before him. Walking from house up to the reservoir of the water supply, built by the village and supported by the Sarvodaya Rural Technical Service (SRTS). No pumps are needed, the water flows by gravity.
05.30 – 07.00	Opening the valves at the reservoir to let the drinking water flow to the people of Menderipitiya. Going to the paddy fields to open the water gates there as the paddy fields are irrigated by a different water source. After some initial field work going back to his house. Children go to school.
07.30 – 08.00	Breakfast, rice and curry, prepared by his wife.
08.00 – 08.30	Closing valves of drinking water supply. To save water, the supply runs only 2½ hours in the early morning and another 2½ hours in the evening. There are 18 public taps for the 576 people living in Menderipitiya to collect water. All may consume 35 litres drinking water a day.
08.30 – 13.00	Work in paddy fields – he owns ¾ acres of paddy, and ¾ acres of highland vegetables, mainly red onion. If there is no work on his own fields he moves to other houses and fields to help others. He may also count on his neighbours if seasonally, during harvest, he needs manpower beyond his family. Four days a month, including full moon and dark night, he participates in the shramadana work of the Sarvodaya Society, for the common good. A big effort recently was the improvement of the access road to the village, which now can be reached by four-wheel drive cars. As president of the Sarvodaya Society, he opens his office which is in his own small house on Sunday the whole day and on Saturday afternoon.
10.00	A cup of tea, with milk and sugar
13.00 – 13.30	Lunch, rice and curry, with his wife
13.30 – 17.00	Back to work, same as in the morning and depending on the season. He produces paddy and vegetables for his family and for sale on the market. On an average, he earns 600 Rp a month from paddy sales and as caretaker of the water supply he gets another 260 Rp
17.00 – 17.30	Washing, and going up to the reservoir to open the valves for water.
17.30 – 20.00	Walking in the village, meeting friends and neighbours, discussions, reading a book. Going back up to the reservoir to close the valves.
20.00 – 20.30	Dinner, rice and curry, with his family
20.30 – 22.00	Administrative work and classifying documents of the Sarvodaya Society. He may also help his children with school work. As electricity has not (yet) reached Menderipitiya, there is no TV.
22.00	Goes to bed. Maybe he dreams of his future plans: to have a micro hydel in Menderipitiya, for electricity generation to run a grinding and a rice mill. He would also like to have more Sarvodaya trained people in the village, e.g. in carpentry. Top priority, however, is the renovation of the Sarvodaya pre-school.



Interview of 18 October 2003 with

**Ms. Anusha Indunil, Niramisiya (Puttalam District), Sri Lanka**

27 years, married, one child (3½ years, girl)

Self-employed ladies' dress maker

05.00 – 06.00	Anusha gets up, prepares herself, and cooks her husband's meal before he goes to work. As a Buddhist, she starts the day with a brief worshipping. When the first contacts were established between Niramisiya and Sarvodaya, the most urgent concern of the village was to construct a worshipping place around the holy Bodhi tree in the village. Sarvodaya contributed cash in the amount of 1500 Rp, and during one month village people added personal cash and shared free labour ("Shramadana") in the evening and on weekends.
06.00 – 07.30	Her daughter Marisha gets up. Her mother prepares her for the pre-school and takes her there. The pre-school starts at 07.30 hours. It is a Sarvodaya pre-school with a teacher who was trained by Sarvodaya. The parents pay 100 Rp per month to the teacher as a wage. On a rotating basis, each day one of the mothers brings lunch for all the children. The children of some parents who cannot pay are also accepted. Anusha does not only appreciate the quality of the pre-school but it is also cheaper compared to sending the daughter by van transport to another more distant pre-school.
07.30 – 09.30	Anusha cleans the house and the compound. She washes the clothes of her family and performs other household duties.
09.30 – 10.00	She has her breakfast, mostly rice and green grams.
10.00 – 11.00	It is time for self-employment work: She works as a ladies' dress-maker. To improve her skills, she attends training for three months organised by Sarvodaya; she pays 1500 Rp for it. Before marriage, she had been working in a garment factory.
11.00 – 12.30	Anusha prepares both lunch and dinner jointly. It is rice and curry with vegetables, dal and other ingredients. Around 12 o'clock the pre-school teacher brings the daughter back from school because she lives nearby.
12.30 – 13.00	Her husband arrives if he has work to be done in the neighbourhood. They have lunch together. He was trained by Sarvodaya in agriculture and works on farms and plantations. As a daily labourer in the coconut plantation he gets 110 Rp.. Unemployment is the biggest single problem in the village.
13.00 – 14.30	She assists Marisha if there is homework from school to be done and takes a rest. Often she sleeps together with Marisha.
14.30 – 17.00	It is time for dress making work again. At least once a month the Sarvodaya mothers' group meets in the afternoon to discuss pre-school affairs or other activities.
17.00 – 19.00	She cleans the house and the vicinity. Washed and dried clothes are removed from the lines and put in their place in the house.
19.00 – 19.30	It is time for religious activities at home, worshipping Lord Buddha.
19.30 – 21.00	Father and daughter are watching TV. She does some more household work. Family discussions take place.
21.00 – 22.00	Everybody has dinner. First Marisha goes to bed and later her parents, too.

Interview of 20 October 2003 with

**Ms. D.M. Sriyani Kumari, Jayanthi Gama (Kantale District) Sri Lanka**

30 years, married, 3 children (10, 8, 2; two boys, one girl)

Manager Sarvodaya Development Bank Jayanthi Gama

04.00 – 06.00	Sriyani gets up, prepares herself for the day, gets the firewood to cook the breakfast and meals for her family. It is rice and curry with vegetables, dal, etc.
06.00 – 06.30	Her husband returns home from his nightshift work. He is a home guard to defend the village against hostile attacks. Jayanthi Gama lies in the border zone of Sinhala and Tamil people, and the Government has recruited young men as 'Home Guards'. Since 5 December 2001, there has been a ceasefire but not yet a peace agreement. After the meal he sleeps.
06.30 – 07.45	She prepares the two elder children for school. The elder boy takes the bus, the younger one rides a bicycle to school. She cleans the house, washes the dishes, and looks after the garden.
07.45 – 08.15	Srivani has her breakfast.
08.15 – 12.00	On three days a week plus Saturday she takes her two-year-old daughter Ishara and walks to the Sarvodaya village bank she is managing. First she worships at the Buddhist shrine in the Bank. About 25 customers a day visit the bank, deposit or withdraw cash in their savings account, or ask for credit facilities. In particular, loans to open up new businesses like a shop or brick manufacturing are of interest. 1589 people live in Jayanthi Gama. On the days the Bank is closed, Srivani may have Sarvodaya meetings, or assist in the Sarvodaya pre-school, as she is an active member of the mothers' group, or participate in a Shramadana effort organised by the Sarvodaya Society in the village.
12.00 – 12.30	She takes a working lunch in the bank. Her assistant arrives, she is a teacher at the Sarvodaya pre-school.
12.30 – 14.00	Quite often people need an emergency loan to cover unforeseen expenditure for a funeral, for school books or transportation. In such cases she offers a standardised loan of 1500 Rp, to be repaid within one month with five percent interest.
14.00 – 15.00	After the bank closes the door around two o'clock, she checks the cash balance and completes the accounts. She had several Sarvodaya training sessions to do her work professionally. Since the bank was opened last year, no credit repayment or interest was lost or even delayed. Her monthly salary is 700 Rp. At 15.00 she is back home with Ishara.
15.00 – 17.30	The elder children return home from school. Srivani helps them in their homework from school, washes clothes, fetches water from the neighbour's well (her own has dried up), works in the half acre garden plot, and prepares the meal for her husband.
17.30 – 20.00	Her husband leaves for work. She may again look over the children's homework if necessary, talk to neighbours, read a book – she prefers novels – or watch TV.
20.00 – 21.00	She takes dinner together with her children. At 21.00 all go to bed.

Interview of 23 October 2003 with

**Mr. Kotagama Pannasiri Thero, Meewala (Gampaha District) Sri Lanka**

25 years, unmarried, Buddhist priest

President Sarvodaya Society of Meewala

05.00 – 06.00	Getting up, washing, collecting flowers in the neighbourhood
06.00 – 07.00	Going to temple, worshipping, meditation
07.00 – 08.00	People arrive with a cooked meal for an early morning breakfast for the priest and Lord Buddha. Every day a different person does this service and it's more than a pleasure for the people to do that. After one month it starts anew. He takes those present to the shrine and thanks Lord Buddha.
08.00 – 09.30	He offers people coming to the temple advice for good living, reads books and newspapers
09.30 – 10.30	As a Buddhist priest, he is by profession an Ayurvedic physician. Patients may also come earlier in emergency cases of course.
10.30 – 11.30	He takes a bath, using water from a well. Sarvodaya has encouraged and supported the construction of several public wells in the village. Also latrines have been built with Sarvodaya support.
11.30 – 13.00	More and more people come to the temple and bring lunch ("Danaya"). As in the morning, everyday a different person performs the task for one month. He talks with those present and offers advice.
13.00 – 14.30	Rest time
14.30 – 18.00	Mainly school children with grade 5 and above come to get education in Buddhism and other subjects. The children stay until 18.00 hours if he has no other duties. A funeral may require him to comfort relatives and friends before cremation takes place and the ashes are buried. On the 28 <sup>th</sup> of each month, the council of the Sarvodaya Society meets at 16.00 to discuss pending and future issues. Under his presidency, Sarvodaya played a very active role in the village. Just beside the temple, he initiated a Sarvodaya information centre, run by volunteers. School children, business people and farmers come to get information on local history, on who has to offer what products, on the contact details of the doctor in the area. He may go around in the village to collect the latest news. In the information centre, he shares his personal computer with others, e.g. to conduct a Sarvodaya course in computer education for children.
18.00 – 20.00	Many people come again and ask for advice. The time schedule changes every day according to peoples' needs. As a Buddhist priest he must not do physical work. That is why he does not directly participate when Shramadana work is on in the Meewala. Instead, he inspires people to work for the community and assists in its organisation. In compliance with Buddhist rules, people have asked him to stay during the rainy season for three months on the compound. As a consequence, people have to feed him and to care for his needs.
20.00 – 21.30	Religious work continues, including meditation. As a Buddhist priest he takes only two meals a day, therefore no dinner.
21.30 – 23.00	He writes letters or may be listens to the radio.
23.00	Goes to bed.

Interview of 21 October 2003 with

**Mr. Kanagasinhm Vigneshwarah (Trincomalee District) Sri Lanka**

28 years, unmarried, lives with his mother

Shopkeeper in "Alles Garden" Refugee Camp

06.00 – 06.30	Kanagasinhm gets up, washes and prepares for the day. Life is more complicated for him as his left leg was paralised when he suffered a polio attack when he was 10 years old. He is a Tamil who, since 1999, has lived with his mother in the Refugee Camp 'Alles Garden in Trincomalee. He had to leave the region after the civil war swept over his area. Sarvodaya is involved here on behalf of the High Commissioner for Refugees of the United Nations (UNHCR).
06.30 – 08.30	He opens his shop, one out of 10 in the camp. Customers pass by and buy rice, flour, dhal, bananas, vegetables, sugar, soap, biscuits, cigarettes, etc. It may be around 50 clients a day. At present he has a daily turnover of 5000 Rp. and a net income of 400 Rp. per working day.
08.30 – 11.30	Sometimes he goes to the town of Trincomalee to purchase items he needs for his shop. The shop remains open even during his absence, as his mother serves the customers in the meantime. If there is Shramadana work organised by the Sarvodaya field staff working in the camp, he participates. It is not possible to organise and maintain a Sarvodaya Society in the camp because many fluctuations occur and the vision of the people is not oriented towards staying but to leaving the place. To bridge the transitional period in a human way, Sarvodaya fieldworkers play a more active and directive role in the camp than they would do in villages.
11.30 – 13.00	When Kanagasinhm is back, he continues his business while his mother starts cooking lunch. She gets the water she needs from one of the six wells in the camp. Three large wells have been built with the assistance of Sarvodaya and Shramadana work of the refugees.
13.00 – 13.30	Lunchtime, rice and curry.
13.30 – 21.00	His or his mother's presence is continuously required in the shop, which he opened out of the mere wish to survive and stand on his own feet. The food rations the refugees get are not sufficient to cover all daily needs. To facilitate such initiatives, Sarvodaya has a micro credit scheme for the refugee camp. Kanagasinhm got a loan of 10,000 Rp. to establish the shop and has to pay 14 percent interest., He has already repaid eight out of ten monthly instalments of 1065 Rp., including interest.
21.00 – 21.30	He takes dinner with his mother who prepared it.
21.30 – 22.30	Finally, he has a rest, and goes to bed. Out of 2000 families previously in the refugee camp, 1500 have returned to their area. Kanagasinhm dreams of returning soon to Kilinocchi up North where he was living before the civil war broke out.